

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of July 20, 2008

“A desire for God which cannot break the chains of sleep is a weak thing and will do but little good for God after it has indulged itself fully. The desire for God that keeps so far behind the devil and the world at the beginning of the day will never catch up.” Power Through Prayer by E. M. Bounds

The Life of Prayer

Take Inventory

David Williamson

Prayer is very simple and yet it is very complex. It is easy to slip into bad habits or to forget keys to success. So, we should, on a regular basis take inventory of our practice of prayer. As we go through this inventory of prayer, make note of the things you should be doing. Watch for areas that you need to improve or fix. An inventory is a scorecard, but also it is a prescription as well. The inventory prescription is a list of things you could and should do better.

Question One

A good place to begin an inventory review is with faith. Every aspect of Christian life and Christian prayer in particular must be by faith. We know from the book of Romans that everything that is not from faith is sin (Romans 14:23). So our first inventory question must be; are you praying in faith? This is a multi-part question because faith is so important and so powerful. Are you pleasing God with your faith? To please Him we must believe that He is God and that He rewards people who diligently seek Him. So do you believe God is God? Is He Lord of your life and situation? Do you believe that He can and will do what He has said He will do? Are you seeking God first and foremost in your life? Do you believe that God rewards, that He answers prayers those who pray, for people who diligently seek Him?

Now that you have considered these questions, please check and see if your lifestyle and actions would agree with the answers you just gave. Next check to see if your confessions agree with the answers you gave. If we say one thing and do another or we claim to believe something but do and say other things, we are not walking in faith. You might want to share what you find in this inventory with your personal prayer trainer, the Holy Spirit. You and He could determine if there are areas where you need to step-up, clean-up, or grow-up? Also remember that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We learn from this and grow from this, but it does not condemn us. Hebrews 11:6 and 1Timothy 6:12

Question Two

How is your daily prayer life? This is a tough question because so many things fall within this area. This time look at your habits of life. For this review, measure your time and practices. Do you have

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a regular time of prayer? Do you make time to pray or do you leave God waiting for you to show up? Are you building a prayer life, ever deeper and further in? One key to growth in prayer, a key for building a prayer life is Bible study. Do you regularly and diligently hear it, read it, study it, memorize it, and meditate on it? The man or woman who does these things will grow and mature.

Question Three

Daily there are battles that face the Christian. We must work our way through problems and hindrances. To be successful in prayer we must wage a good warfare. So here is the question for today; are you day-by-day winning the battles of warfare? Are you hindering hindrances to prayer or are they hindering your prayers? 2 Corinthians 10:3-6, 1 Timothy 1:18, and 2 Timothy 2:4

Question Four

Do you eat your Oreo cookies with the two sides together? Do you eat the white part first? Do you eat your Oreo cookies dark part first or not at all? For many people what and how we eat is a habit. Habits can be good. Other habits can be bad. A prayer life is made of many general habits. We must check to see that we continue in the good habits and eliminate the bad habits.

Jesus had many good habits in prayer. He prayed early in the morning. He prayed often. He prayed in faith. He prayed to His Father and knew that His Father heard His prayers. He prayed when He needed to make a decision. It is time to check your daily prayer life. What are the habits of your prayer life? A good investigation here is to list your habits, both good and bad. What is missing that should be there and what should be gone from your prayer life.

Question Five

This question concerns your lifestyle of prayer. So our question for today is very simple, is prayer a key part of your day or just something you do when you have time and inclination to pray? Do you have a set time for prayer? How hard is it for something to interrupt your prayer time schedule? Have you changed the things you do so that they do not interfere with prayer? What do you need to change?

Question Six

Where do you like to pray? Is there a special spot you have reserved for your prayer times? A place where God and you can talk about your needs and cares? A place where you can share your concerns and make requests for people and nations? A place where He and you can spend quality time together? That place is what I call your prayer closet.

Having said all of that here is today's question. Our devotion to God is measured in the prayer-closet. The prayer-closet requires self-denial. There are hundreds of things we could be doing instead of praying. The flesh wants to do its own desires, it needs rest, it needs fun, it needs recreation, it needs primping, it needs extra time in bed, it needs praise, and it needs recognition and so forth. The prayer-closet requires time, effort, frequency of visits, and self-denial. Are you spending time with God in your prayer closet? 1 Cor. 9:25-27 and Luke 18:1

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Question Seven

Our prayers can be effective, fervent prayers that avail much. Then in a moment, we can pray fluff; with no substance and more importantly with no faith. Our lack of faith limits the effectiveness of our prayers. So question seven for our inventory is very simple, but important, do you lift up prayers of faith or prayers of fluff? Fluff can be just wasted words thrown into the wind, or they can be words of pride and arrogances. Either of these will result in nothing from God. However, prayer lifted in faith gets God's attention and God's results. Ephes. 4:14, James 1:5-8, and Matthew 21:21

Question Eight

Earnest prayer desires and requires answers from God. It will not be satisfied with anything less. It is prayer that avails much. It brings God's power and His answers to bear on the problems and needs of this generation. It draws people because they see the power and are overwhelmed by its relevance to today. So question number eight in our inventory of prayer, do you pray earnest or careless prayer? Here is the high standard; how do you stack-up? James 5:17 and Jeremiah 29:12-13

So How Did You Do?

Well there is so much more that could be included, trust, desire, fervency, persistence, and character to name just a few areas, but this gives us a good snap shot inventory of our prayer life. So, how did you do with the test? Well, or not as well as you wish? You can grow and mature in prayer. I recommend using a personal trainer. The best one is the Holy Spirit. He knows you well and knows the standard of perfection. Ask Him to help you improve the areas that need help and he will work with you to make the changes and improvements you long for and need.

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for the governments of the country where you live and for the governments of places where you have a call to a ministry of prayer. Pray that these governments allow the free presentation of the Gospel. Pray for open doors of opportunities to share with people and groups. Pray for unimpeded meetings for church and outreach.

Basic Prayer Focus

Praying for Israel and the Peace of Jerusalem

Praying for the reaching of Souls from Every Nation

Praying for the government of your country (so the Gospel can be preached)

Praying for your home Church

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Continuing Faithful in Prayer

Pray for these ministers and ministries. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct your prayers.

Joyce Abrahamson – Head of school in Brazil

John Coon – Ministry in Europe and the USA

Churches in Belarus – Growing number of churches in Belarus

Churches in Lithuania – Growing number of churches in Lithuania

DK Limbu Daniel – Pastor of a church in Nepal and church planting among Nepalese people

Marianne and David Dean – Missionaries on college campuses in East Asia

Jacek Gromadzki – Pastor of a church in Kołobrzeg, Poland

Marek Kaminski – Pastor of church in Kaszalin, Poland, leader in Polish churches, and co-founder and leader of BBB Conference

Bernd and Heike Pastor – Ministry in Germany

Mark Spencer – Pastor of church in Longmont, Colorado, worldwide ministry, and co-founder and leader of BBB Conference

Patty Spencer – Pastor of church in Longmont, Colorado and worship leader

William Williamson – Pastor of church in Holly, Colorado

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