

# Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of July 27, 2008

There was a great cape at the south of Africa and so many storms and so much loss of life until it was called the Cape of Death. One day in 1789 a bold navigator shoved the prow of his vessel into the storms that thundered around it and found a calm sea. He then named it the Cape of Good Hope. So there is a cape that jutted out from earth into the sea of eternity called death. All were afraid of it. All navigators, sooner or later, must contend with these murky waters. But once upon a time, nearly two thousand years ago, a brave navigator from heaven came and drove the prow of His frail humanity bark down into the gloomy waters of this cape and lay under its awful power for three days. Emerging therefrom, He found it to be the door to endless calm and joy, and now we call it Good Hope.—John W. Baker

## *The Life of Prayer*

### **The First is Faith**

David Williamson

If you are interested in prayer you should be interested in answers. A prayer life includes spending time with God and that is valuable. When we spend time with Him, His nature, His will, His life rubs off on us. We are changed in His presence. In God's presence there is fullness of joy.

***You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*** Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)

Spending time with God is valuable; however a prayer life without answers is far from God's best. He has prepared the way, opened the door, and invited us to come and partake of answers to prayers. It is not polite to reject is offer, but many people do. However, we are not of those who reject Him, we desire all that God has for us. We desire His best and we seek to offer our best. When God says, ask, we can trust Him to answer.

***You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*** John 15:16 (NKJV)

It is very exciting that there is power in prayer. Unfortunately we do not always see this in action in our prayer life. We are still learning and growing in prayer. There is much to learn, many great men and women of prayer have spent a lifetime learning to pray. Now it is our time, we need to be learning all we can and applying all we learn. This leads us to a question. Is there something we can do to facilitate the regular receiving of answers to prayer?

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A few weeks ago there was a quote from E. M. Bounds that may shed some light on this question. He was asked what was made up the essence of prayer. The essence of something is its ultimate nature; the properties or attributes by which we can identify something. E. M. Bounds, the great writer on prayer, was asked what made up the essence of a meaningful prayer life, he gave the following. “The essentials of a meaningful prayer life are: faith, trust, desire, fervency, persistence, good character and conduct, obedience, and vigilance,”

It is not by chance that Bounds begins his list with faith. Everything we obtain in the Christian life is by faith. Our salvation, our deliverance, our healing, and all of our answers to prayer are by faith. Any other means of obtaining from God will fail. The key stone to an effective prayer life, one that avails much, is faith.

***But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*** James 1:6-8 (NKJV)

Returning to our question, is there something we can do to facilitate regularly receiving answers to prayer? The first part of the answer is we must pray in faith. All who will pray effective prayer will pray in faith. An important verse in helping us to have faith in prayer is found in Hebrews 11:6.

***But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*** Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

There are two keys to faith mentioned here. We must understand and practice both. First is, believe that God is. This seems easy at first glance. Almost everyone believes that there is a God and that God is God. Well this is true, but there is much more as well. We must believe that God is who and what He says He is. God is all powerful and knowing. Do you believe that He can answer prayers? If you said yes that is good, but there is one step further, do you believe He will answer your prayer? Faith demands that you believe this. Most people are okay as long as we stay in the general about prayer. If the idea that God answers prayers is left to the general concept and general application we are okay. However, when faith demands that we believe God will answer our prayers, then the pressure is on.

God has made promises to those who will pray, by faith we must believe that He is telling the truth. It is God’s nature to state who He is and what He is capable of doing. It is by faith that we believe that He is who He says He is and is capable of doing what He says He can do. Abraham left his home by faith to live in the land of the promise of God. By faith he did not let fact that he was old keep him from believing the promise of God of having a son. This is what the man of faith, Abraham did. This is what we must do.

***By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in***

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*the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* Hebrews 11:8-10 (NKJV)

*And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.*

Romans 4:19-21 (NKJV)

The second key in Hebrews 11:6, we must believe that God is a rewarder of those who seek Him. When we seek Him in prayer we are seeking answers to prayer. Jesus knew that God always heard His prayers and when God heard, He answered. Faith demands that we believe the same. Faith believes God and knows that God can and will answer prayer. By faith we have confidence in God.

*And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.* John 11:42 (NKJV)

*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.* 1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV)

The first essential of a meaningful prayer life, as suggested by Bounds, is faith. The others, trust, desire, fervency, persistence, good character and conduct, obedience, and vigilance, all build on the foundation of faith. This can be a difficult statement for some people to take in, but it should not cause us trouble. God has made provision for us concerning faith. First faith comes by the word of God. If we will take in the word of God in ever increasing measure, if we will seek to apply His word to our life, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can have faith. And if we still struggle we can ask for help. Let us pray, but more importantly, let us pray by faith!

*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

*Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"* Mark 9:23-24 (NKJV)

*Let us Pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

Pray for the men and women to respond to God's call to evangelization and missions. God is calling for people who will share the Gospel with their neighbors and friends; He is also calling for active

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participation in missions. This is a call for people to go, people to send, and for people to give for the finances to do the job of reaching the nations for Jesus. Pray for faithful willing obedience to His call and command.

## 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**

## 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

## *Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer*

*Voice of Thanksgiving* is published in a weekly version in English. There are two monthly versions, one in German and one in Polish. Now available as a book, ***Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer***. To order go to <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/Book/Book.htm>.

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