

# *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of August 31, 2008

Devotion engages the heart in prayer. It is not an easy task for the lips to try to pray while the heart is absent from it. The charge which God at one time made against His ancient Israel was, that they honoured Him with their lips while their hearts were far from Him. E. M. Bounds

## *The Life of Prayer*

### **More Persistence**

David Williamson

Most of the time, in history, we do not hear much of people who failed. They tend to be lost in the back wash of everyday life, never to be noticed by historian, and quickly forgotten by all but perhaps a few close family members. There are notable exceptions to this rule; Judas would be listed by most as a failure as a Disciple, yet everyone has heard of him. Most of the people who experience failures and are known by history are those who overcame their failures. These people are often remembered for the great and remarkable turn around.

Abraham Lincoln is an example of this. He failed as a businessman, he failed as a farmer, he failed in his first attempt to obtain political office, when elected to the legislature he failed when he sought the office of speaker, he failed in his first attempt to go to Congress, he failed when he sought the appointment to the United States Land Office, he failed when he ran for the United States Senate, and he failed when friends sought for him the nomination for the vice-presidency in 1856. There are actually other failures that could be listed, but here is a man who knew failure. There were plenty of opportunities for him to give up and become a permanent member of the forgotten failures club. However, this was not the case. One of the most famous Americans of all time, Lincoln experienced a remarkable reversal of the course of his life and became president of the United States. And while he experienced many failures while in office, he is viewed by most, as a very successful president, on many people's list, as one of the best.

Why do we know about Lincoln and not about so many other men who experienced a life filled with failures? One key factor is his persistence. He did not quit or give up. He put failure behind and pressed on to the next opportunity to succeed or fail. It was often a very difficult process to lift himself out of deep depression, but he did and tried again for success.

Last week we looked at one of the essentials of a meaningful prayer life from a list suggested by E. M. Bounds, persistence. We looked at continuing to practice prayer even if the answers we seek seem a long time in coming. In this fast pace world of instant gratification it is difficult to be persistent. It is valuable for us to wonder about the worlds affect on us and perhaps to review our choices and decisions. Are we where God said to be? Are we doing what God said to do? Or do we

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pull up stakes and move on at every whim? Persistence will stay put and continue to do what God has said to do regardless of the perceived results.

This has very practical application to our prayer life. What has God asked of you? He gives assignments to those who are willing to pray. Beyond your daily prayers, for what has God made you responsible in prayer? Like watchmen on the walls, we are to be at our post day and night until the answer comes. In a movie about D-day in World War Two, there is a man who is assigned the task of landing behind enemy lines and taking and holding a key bridge. In the movie several times we hear a voice over of his orders, "Hold until relieved, hold until relieved." We need to hear similar orders, "Pray until it is answered, pray until it is answered."

Persistence is a great challenge. It is hard to continue in faith; it is hard to fight off hindrances, and stumbling blocks. The challenges of life come to destroy persistence, just as they attempt to destroy faith. The question could be asked, what do we do, just grit our teeth and hold on? No, some people can do that for awhile, but that is a formula for failure. Sooner or later the world and its problems will get to you and you will break. The correct answer is to pursue persistence. We must practice persistence. And as mentioned last week, for success we must practice persistence properly.

An example may help to clarify proper practice of persistence. One key is a practicing persistence of our confession, proper confession. Too often people talk themselves out of faith and out of good activities of life. The statement, "I will never amount to anything," has been true for thousands of people. It did not need to be true, but people have said it and thought it until it came to pass. There was a phrase that was very popular a few years ago, "You are what you eat." While there is much to be said for this thought, it is far more accurate to say, "You are what you say." The most fundamental aspect of our Christian life is our confession of faith.

***that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.***

Romans 10:9-10 (NKJV)

The importance of our confession cannot be overstated. Confession continues to be important throughout our Christian life. It is fundamental to success in all aspects of Christian life. Our success and the level of our success in all endeavors are tied directly to our confession. Success in prayer comes from persistent proper confession. What are we to confess? We must agree with God, we say what God says. He has made clear through His word His view and wishes. This is what we should be saying and praying. In all our prayer we must persistently pray what God has said and what God wants for answers.

***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)

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This same persistence in confession needs to be applied to our faith, obedience, and actions. The application of persistent faith to our prayers brings answers. Obedience is a moment-by-moment decision and persistent obedience brings power to our prayers. Persistent positive actions results in a life of victory and an effective prayer life. Be persistent; let nothing deter you from the completion of His assignment. If need be, find success even with your last breath, but persist.

*praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--* Ephes. 6:18 (NKJV)

*Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' "Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"* Ephes. 6:18 (NKJV)  
Luke 18:1-8 (NKJV)

*Let us Pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

Pray for Israel and Jerusalem. Pray for peace and for protect for the land and city. Pray for the Jewish people to see their Messiah, Jesus Christ as Lord.

## **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.

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**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 in Longmont, Colorado, worship leader, and artist with a great new CD

**William Williamson** – Pastor of church in Holly, Colorado

**Charles and Janice Wilson** – Pastors in Wyola, Montana

**David Williamson**

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

*Voice of Thanksgiving* is published in a weekly version in English. *Voice of Thanksgiving* is also published monthly in German, Polish, and coming soon in Russian. You may want to read the new book on prayer, based on articles from *Voice of Thanksgiving*, *Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer*. To order go to <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/Book/Book.htm>.

- ✓ For an archive of past articles, short notes and studies on prayer, and other information go to [www.voiceofthanksgiving.com](http://www.voiceofthanksgiving.com)
- ✓ For a shortcut to *Stimme der Dankbarkeit* the German version go to: <http://voiceofthanksgiving.com/SdDPage.htm>
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- ✓ You may write to me at: [dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com](mailto:dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com)
- ✓ If you would be interested in hosting a *Prayer Initiative Seminar* contact me, Dave Williamson, at [dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com](mailto:dave@voiceofthanksgiving.com)