

# Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of April 19, 2009

You need not utterly despair even of those who for the present “turn again and rend you.” For if all your arguments and persuasives fail, there is yet another remedy left, and one that is frequently found effectual, when no other method avails. This is prayer. Therefore, whatsoever you desire or want, either for others or for your own soul, “Ask, and it shall be given you.”—John Wesley

## *The Life of Prayer*

### Heroic Fruit

David Williamson

*And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.* Matthew 24:6-14 (NKJV)

Wars, famines, pestilence, and earthquakes in various places, these were predicted by Jesus and are to be expected in the end times. We live in a time where there is a marked increase in these types of things. Daily we hear of wars and rumor of wars, nations are against other nations. There are famines and pestilence racing unchecked through countries. Never in recorded history have there been so many disasters such as earthquakes. And Jesus said, ***and then the end will come.***

In the mist of disasters we also see special moments, times when people do things that remind us that people can be heroic, if even only for a moment. There are hundreds of stories of great things people have done for others. People reaching out to help others in their moment of need, rising above their reaction for self preservation, they do something unusual and this captures the attention of people. Sometimes, especially with all of our high tech communications today, these heroic deeds come to the attention of people around the world.

For example, in the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games, Yao Ming, a professional basketball star and Lin Hao carried the torch for awhile. Yao Ming is more than seven feet tall and Lin Hao is a 9 year old student, who looked tiny beside him. Lin Hao was a student at a school

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destroyed in Yingxiu, China. His school collapsed and Lin Hao went back in to rescue two classmates. In a moment his story was spoken of throughout the whole world.

There are thousands of stories like Lin Hao, where someone has done something special or extraordinary and has become a hero, known far and wide. It is so refreshing to hear their stories because we hear so much of the negative things people do. Great books, poems, movies, and plays have been written about these special moments and people. One example, a little different than most, is recorded in the Bible. Paul tells us of a group of people known throughout the whole world. What did they do that was heroic? They had faith!

***First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*** Romans 1:8 (NKJV)

For several weeks we have been looking at this verse from Romans; using Paul's prayer as a guide for learning more about effective prayer. We can and should learn from his example and teaching, just as we must study the prayers and prayer life of Jesus if we desire to grow and mature in prayer. Paul writes of priority, relationship, empowerment, focus, and so much more even in this single verse. He also writes of a group of famous people, the Roman Christians. Who were, and are spoken of throughout the world.

How did their faith come to be spoken of throughout the world? There are two possibilities. One they told everyone. They broadcast to everyone, trumpeting the news to all who would listen; telling everyone, our faith is great! This sounds strange, besides they did not have the internet to flash the news around the world. The second possibility is that their faith was known because of their fruit. I think it is clear the second option is the correct one.

***Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.*** Matthew 12:33 (KJV)

Jesus made it abundantly clear that we are not to trumpet our faith around the world. Paul and the world knew of the Roman Christian's faith by their fruit. They were obedient followers of Jesus Christ and the fruit of their faith was known to all. In all that they did, they worked by faith. By this faith they had great fruit.

***“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.***

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***“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:1-6 (NKJV)***

***For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. Romans 16:19 (NKJV)***

This leaves us with questions about its application for us. I have two questions for you. In the articles for *Voice of Thanksgiving*, I relate everything back to prayer, so the first question. Are you having fruit from your prayers? The most important fruit of prayer is relationship with God and answers to prayers. In your life, are these fruits evident? This question does not imply that your fruit will be known to all, but that as you and the Holy Spirit look at your life is there fruit to look at? An effective prayer life will have fruit. There will be an enriched relationship with the Father. You and He will draw closer and work better together. The man or woman of prayer may be unknown to most, hidden away in their prayer closet, but there will be fruit of a maturing relationship with God. There is a conforming to the image and nature of Christ. There is a walk of increasing holiness. There is a deepening depth of love of God and man. The Bible records this type of growth, Luke writes that, ***Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men*** (Luke 2:52 NKJV). Is there evidence of fruit of increase in wisdom and maturity, in favor with God and men? This is a fruit of prayer.

The second question also relates to our prayers. Is the faith in our prayers reaching out to the world? The Roman Christian's faith was known throughout the world because it meant something to the world. While many rejected Jesus Christ and His gift of salvation, still the Roman Christian's faith reached out. It made a difference in the world and for the world. This is why it was known far and wide. It is easy for you and me to get caught up in our immediate needs and concerns. We can spend all our time in prayer, praying for things close to home, my bread, my job, my family, my work, my play, my... However, effective, fervent prayer is prayer that reaches out to the world and its needs.

When God formed you, even before you were born, He put in your heart a heroic plan. By definition this means that God put in your heart a grand, noble, large, powerful, potent, impressive in effect plan. It is unique and very special. And while your story may not be broadcast on TV or flashed world wide on the internet, it is planned to be very heroic. Our second question, is the faith in our prayers reaching out to the world, is a very important question. One we will give an account of before God. Will our prayers extract from God a response of well done or just well...?

Today we need heroes. We need men and women, boys and girls doing extraordinary things. As we see the end of time approaching, there will be more and more opportunities like that of Lin Hao. Of far greater importance, are the opportunities we have in prayer. The destiny of people and nations hangs in the balance. Perhaps God's heroic plan in your heart is to pray. Perhaps He is waiting for

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you to join with Him in bringing light to dark places, healing to the sick, deliverance to captives, soundness to the broken, homes to the homeless, love to the hated, and salvation to the lost. What is being spoken throughout the whole world about you?

*Let us Pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

**Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem** Pray for protection and safety of the Jewish people and for the land.

**Pray for People** Join with Jesus in bringing light to dark places, healing to the sick, deliverance to captives, soundness to the broken, homes to the homeless, love to the hated, and salvation to the lost.

**Pray for Provision** Pray for God's provision for the churches and ministries listed here.

## **Basic Prayer Focus**

Remember to be always in prayer for the following:

**For Israel and the Peace of Jerusalem**

**For the reaching of souls from every nation**

**For governments of your country and other countries to be open to the Gospel**

**For your home Church and the people of the church and community**

## **Continuing Faithful in Prayer**

Remember to be in prayer for these ministers and ministries. Ask the Holy Spirit to each week guide and direct the specifics of 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

**Lori Farquhar** – Children's Ministry Director

**Jacek Gromadzki** – Pastor of a church in Kolobrzeg, Poland

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

**Bernd and Heike Pastor** – Ministry in Germany

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**Mark Spencer** – Pastor of a 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 a church in Cedaredge, Colorado

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

**David Williamson** – Editor of *Voice of Thanksgiving*

## *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 and Polish and is available in book form, *Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer*.

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