

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of May 3, 2009

It is all right to urge men to give of their means to the missionary cause. But it is much more important to urge them to give their prayers to the movement. Foreign missions need, today, more the power of prayer than the power of money. Prayer can make even poverty in the missionary cause move on amidst difficulties and hindrances. Much money without prayer is helpless and powerless in the face of the utter darkness and sin and wretchedness on the foreign field.

E. M. Bounds from *The Essentials of Prayer*

The Life of Prayer

The Goodness of God

David Williamson

A few days ago I was out for my early morning walk; it was an especially beautiful morning. The sun was not yet up, but the eastern sky was beginning to turn pink. To the west it was still dark and the sky was filled with stars. In the eastern sky it was getting bright enough that the stars were hidden, but a planet twinkled brightly near the visible crescent of the moon. The birds had begun their morning choruses, but there was no other sound. It was so beautiful and peaceful. I had to stop and just look around. As I tried to take it all in, I was overwhelmed with the goodness of God.

Many of us live in places where we see the splendor of God's creation. We live in or near to places where we can see great beauty. It is wonderful to take time and look at what God has given us. He has placed such magnificence in creation that we can see His handy work. We know more of His love and nature because we see Him in his creation. He is a loving, caring Father, who delights to give generously. The heavens declare God and all creation shouts out His craftsmanship and loving nature. And remember at this time creation groans under the curse; think what creation was like in the Garden before the curse and what it will be.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.
Romans 8:18-22 (NKJV)

It is valuable for us to remember the goodness of God, not just in His wonderful creation, but in all of His goodness to us. It is easy to become callused and jaded by the cares and worries of life. There is so much bad news and so many difficult issues we face these days. Life in the world is a struggle

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

and can bring us to despair, if we are not careful. However, one of the great antidotes to the cares of life, to worries, and despair is a refreshing look at the goodness of God.

Our look at His goodness is more than just a trip to the park to enjoy the beauty, but a time to meditate on what God has created and what He has done. Some of this review is subtle things. Such as remembering that there is no need for food to taste good or for us to see creation in full color, but God, out of His goodness, gave these things to us. Of even greater value is remembering the goodness of His salvation. God, while we were yet sinners, reached out and drew us into His goodness, saving us from our sins. We have received reconciliation with God. Now that is the goodness of God!

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Romans 5:8-11 (NKJV)

The goodness of God is life altering. Our review of this goodness is a powerful key to walking in faith, power, and having an effective prayer life. We must not forget where we came from and where we are going; remembering how different we are from where we once were. This difference is due to the goodness of God. The Devil would like to cause us to forget. He wants us to live so as to make of no effect the goodness of God and thus remove God's blessing in our life and through our ministry. However, as we meditate on God's goodness we war against and overcome the Devil's plans and schemes. Now that is the goodness of God!

Beyond just remembering and reviewing the goodness of God, we also have a responsibility concerning the goodness of God. To those to whom much has been given, much is expected. The goodness of God is an immeasurable blessing, and with this blessing we are called to respond. God has blessed us and called us to be a part of His goodness. He wants us to walk in His blessing, enjoying the fruit of His great salvation. He also wants us to fulfill all of His calling. Very simply expressed, He wants us to be blessed and to be a blessing. We glorify God when we enjoy His goodness. Even more we glorify God when we walk in our calling bring His goodness to others.

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 (NKJV)

God is calling you and me to walk in our individual callings. He has given to each of us a special assignment. This assignment places us in His goodness. This assignment includes placement in a family, in a church, in a location to live, and in an opportunity for work and ministry. Walking in our

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

assignment, being faithful and full of faith, we fulfill all of the good pleasure of His goodness. We please God. Walking in our assignment, bring the goodness of God to the world of our assignment, walking our unique calling, brings glory to Him.

Unfortunately, too often, people have been slack concerning the promises of God and concerning the goodness of God. We have slipped into inactivity and failed to fulfill the good pleasure of God. We do not work at our assignment or fail to walk in faith, or both. The result is we live in less than the goodness of God and we do not glorify Him as we should. We suffer as does those around us that need the blessing that comes from our faithful work.

God is glorified if we will walk in faith and do what He has called us to do. This is especially true in prayer. The prayer of a righteous man avails much, so we can and should bring great glory to God by our prayers. Often we have not because we have not asked believing He would answer and thus we have rejected the goodness of God for our own life and family. God delights to bless us and answer our prayers. This is a wonderful part of the goodness of God.

In addition to blessing us, God wants to respond to our prayers to draw people into the Kingdom. When we live in the goodness of God and when we pray in and for the goodness of God, we become a force of change in this world. We announce to people that God is good and He has a wonderful plan for their life. When people hear, and they may need to see it in our life to be able to hear, they come to repentance and then they can experience the blessing of the goodness of God.

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Romans 2:4 (NKJV)

To glorify God we must fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness. In prayer this is praying for the needs of others. Their needs begin with salvation. They may need healing, a job, a place to live, or food, and we should pray for these things for them, but of far greater importance is prayer for them to see the goodness of God and to be lead to repentance and salvation.

Too often we have fallen short in our callings. We do some things; we try a little, but the day in which we live needs men and women to pray in a way that brings the goodness of God into men and women's lives. This includes bringing the goodness of God to dark places and into hard situation. This brings great glory to God.

Oh, how great is Your goodness, Which You have laid up for those who fear You, Which You have prepared for those who trust in You In the presence of the sons of men! You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence From the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion From the strife of tongues. Psalm 31:19-20 (NKJV)

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness. Psalm 107:8-9 (NKJV)

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for David, Marianne, and Sarah Dean. Pray for knowledge and understanding for the new parents. Pray for adjustments to schedules and roles in ministry. Join with the Dean's in asking the Lord to bring 20 younger students to Christ this spring, who will join the campus fellowship group (there have been four already). Pray for the Christian students who are graduating this spring and transitioning to the working world.

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

Pray for the Lost. Pray for ministries reaching out to the lost. Pray for the work of people willing to share the Gospel with people. Pray for opportunities for sharing. Pray for soft hearts willing to receive the Gospel message.

Pray for Opportunities. Pray for opportunities for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray for hearts of men and women to be prepared to receive the Word. Pray for open doors for witnessing. Pray for willing ministers of the Gospel (not just pastors, but all who are Christians. Pray that we will reach this generation with the Gospel.

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

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

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

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.

- ❖ For an archive of past articles, copies of the German and Polish editions, short notes and studies on prayer, and other information, or to order copies of my books please go to www.voiceofthanksgiving.com
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