

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of May 17, 2009

Prayer without faith is just a religious exercise, but prayer with faith moves mountains.

From *Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Life of Prayer*

The Life of Prayer

A Platform for Effective Prayer

David Williamson

Many an afternoon was spent buying and selling property in and around Atlantic City, New Jersey. The buying and selling was over the famous board game Monopoly. The time spent would include great moments when someone would land on one of my properties and despair when I would land on theirs. Monopoly is one of the best know board game of all time. Millions of people have joined with the man with monocle, wearing morning dress and attempted to own the property of the board. The game features spaces marked as properties, streets, utilities, and railroads. The game also has several special spaces, one of these is a corner space labeled, “in Jail”. A player must serve their time before they can leave jail. The game also has spaces where if you land there, you must pick a card and do what the card says. The most valuable card is the “Get out of jail free” card. If you have this card and land in jail, you do not have to wait to get out.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12-13 (NKJV)

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:26-29 (NKJV)

The Christian life is so amazing, Stop for a moment and think about this wonder. God has given us the right to become children of God. He has made us His sons and daughters and heirs of God. God clothes us in His salvation and with a robe of righteousness. This is the greatest gift of all times, nothing can compare to the life we have in Him. We should and can walk like giants in the land, having His goodness and His promises which provide us with the good life!

A lot of people do not know this gift of God. They are mired in death and destruction. Their life is death happening around them and in all they do. They are caught up in the destructive cycle that is epitomized by the dealings of the thief and he comes to steal, kill, and destroy. This is their lot in life and try as they may with money, power, or position there is no peace for the raging war of

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devastation, except by faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Without hearing and receiving the Gospel, they have no hope.

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. John 10:10 (NKJV)

Unfortunately, many Christians fail to live in the abundant life Jesus gives us. They live life just like those who have no hope. One of the chief reasons for this failure is their view of the Gospel. They treat the good news and God's gift of salvation, as a, "Get out of jail free" card. Day-after-day they live like the Devil and try to use the Gospel to get them out of their mess. They try to make the verse, 1 John 1:9 say, "If we do anything God does not like, He will say it is okay, ignore our sin, and fix the problems we create". However, that is not what it says. This is not the Gospel and it is not the good life God has prepared for us.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9 (NKJV)

This "Get out of jail free" card mentality is not always manifest as riotous living. Sometimes it is manifest in subtle ways. We would never rob a bank, but there are, so called, little sins that we allow to continue in our life. This is especially true in character issues. We claim that this is the way I am, there is nothing I can do about this, or this is my nature. We see the great and might sins of evil people as horrible, however, there are little sins we allow to remain in our life, pet sins. We pick and chose what we want to obey and try to use the "Get out of jail free" card to allow us to continue with our pet sins. We try to make excuses for ourselves to justify ourselves. This is not the Gospel of Christ and it hinders our life and prayers. David knew this problem; David always lived his life big. When he followed God, it was with all of his heart, when he sinned he did it big. Read about David, his sin, and his cover up.

Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds. But the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel

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and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more! Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. 2 Samuel 12:1-9 (NKJV)

David thought he could just live with his sin, but God knew and revealed David's sin to one and all. On a much smaller, but just as evil, scale, we do the same thing. We hold on to our pet sins and try to cover it up. We quote 1 John 1:9, but we do not plan to, nor do we work to, make a change in our life. We are like David living in sin and his cover up. However, God will always send His Nathan. The question is what will we do? If we turn from our sin and repent, we are cleansed and can go on with God. If we try to use the "Get out of jail free" card and continue in sin, we miss His blessing.

This has great bearing on our success in every aspect of walking the Christian life, especially prayer. David bluntly explained and made it very clear that God will not hear our prayers if we try to use the "Get out of jail free" card. He said, ***If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear*** (Psalm 66:18 NKJV). If we want answers to prayer, we need to walk in the light of the Gospel message. This is not a license for sinning, but a call to walk free from sin.

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

1 John 1:5-2:2 (NKJV)

Every day we must pick up our cross and follow Jesus. One part of this daily walk is confessing our sin and turning away from sin. The great news is that God has made provision to help us. We can depart from evil and walk in His abundant life and when we are free from our sins and past, we can walk as Jesus walked and pray as Jesus prayed. God's forgiveness of sin is a platform for right living, not an excuse for sin.

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who keeps his way preserves his soul.
Proverbs 16:17 (NKJV)

Each day we can walk boldly through the day with Jesus. With the weight of sin off our shoulders, we can depart from evil. Jesus expects us to confess our sin and receive forgiveness and from this

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base of freedom and grace, He expects us to pick up our cross and follow Him. One part of carrying our cross is denying our self; walking free from sin. We resist the Devil and he fees. We fight the good fight and have the life God intended for us. We lay aside every weight and run the race. We overcome the world and all it throws at us and have great victories. We present our bodies as holy and acceptable sacrifice to God. This also means we can have great answers to our prayers. (See 1 Tim. 6:12, Hebrews 12:1, 1 John 5:4, and Romans 12:1)

The question is will we walk free from sin? There is a temptation to live with our pet sins; to go along with life as the world lives. So every day the “Get out of jail free” card will be there waiting for us, calling out for us to sin and then use the card. It is a true temptation, but it is one we do not have to give into. As a new creation in Christ we can and we must live in newness of life. Today, make a wise decision, pick up you cross and do not follow after that old sin. As we daily walk the way of the cross, we know *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). This is where we long to be and where we need to be in prayer. This is a platform for effective prayer.

We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. 1 John 5:18-21 (NKJV)

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

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

Pray for Joyce Abrahamson – Head of a school in Brazil Pray for the supply of the needs for the school. Daily there are many things these students need and there is often no way for them to be supplied from their homes. Pray for the sharing of the Gospel with the students and with their families. Pray for Joyce and the team of workers at the school. This is a difficult assignment, but one that is precious to the Lord. He is reaching out through our prayer and the work of this team to a place that would otherwise be held in darkness.

Pray for the Lost. We are in the last of the last days. Evil and darkness would try to take many from the light of the Gospel. Please pray for the lost to be capture by the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, draw by the Holy Spirit to life.

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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

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*

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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
- ❖ If you have questions you may email me at: david@voiceofthanksgiving.com

Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Live of Prayer

This new book, along with the first volume of the series, *Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer*, will challenge you and help you to develop a more effective prayer life. To order copies of these books email me or order online at www.voiceofthanksgiving.com