

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of August 16, 2009

The trust which inspires our prayer must be not only trust in the Person of God, and of Christ, but in their ability and willingness to grant the thing prayed for. It is not only, "Trust, ye, in the Lord," but, also, "for in the Lord Jehovah, is everlasting strength."

From *Necessity of Prayer* by E. M. Bounds

The Life of Prayer

Listening

David Williamson

The sights and sounds were something completely new and different. I was in the US Air Force and the excitement of going to my first assignment after training was made even more exciting by having my first look at Germany. Everything was new to me, even the Air Force base was different from the one I had come from in Texas. I had flown into Frankfurt and had been taken to the base where I would live. I was picked up from the base where I lived and driven to the little base where I worked, this was my first real look at Germany. I got to see the streets of a German city, a small town, and a little of the rolling hills of the German country side. There was so much that was new and interesting to see; it was overwhelming.

The base where I worked was about the size of a large city block and located in the middle of a small town near the Rhine River. It had been used as a hospital in World War II. It had three main building, one housed the computer room. And in the middle of the base there was a small bunker made into offices for the computer programmers. Until my security clearance came through, this is where I worked.

This first morning they showed me the base and introduced me to the people I would be working for and with. Mid-morning they had a meeting for all personnel, but you had to have a security clearance to go to the meeting so they left me in the bunker. I wandered around the offices looking at the books and computer files. About a half hour after they went to the meeting the air raid siren went off. It sounded just like the air raid siren in the movies about World War II. This caught my attention and scared me; the thought crossed my mind that I had come all the way from America to get bombs dropped on me. I assumed that if something bad had happened someone would come and get me and it was just a regularly schedule test of the warning system. However, the sound of that siren was unmistakable; it was a sound you would know if you ever heard it.

Sounds can be very powerful; they remind us of special times, event, places, and people. It is interesting that as powerful as sounds are, listening can be a problem. As children, our parents would be upset and we got into trouble, if we did not listen. As parents we sometime get annoyed with our children if they do not listen. As a teacher I would be frustrated with students who did not

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listen. At times we get irritated with our government when our representatives and authorities do not listen. We even get mad at manufactures who do not listen to our wants concerning their products. Listening can be a problem.

Listening can be a problem and this is especially true in prayer. Listening is a lost art in prayer. Far too often people are too busy to pray and even if they make time for prayer, they have too much to say to take time to listen. Many people do not know the voice of God and so they are worried that they might hear from a bad source, so they do not listen. Some people do not know the nature of God and so they are not sure they want to listen; they are concerned with what they might hear.

Listening is especially important for Christians. We have someone important to listen to, Our Father. He speaks to His children if we listen and shares with us crucial things. We have an all knowing, expert on every subject, who cares deeply about our welfare, who longs to help us and instruct us in successful living. When you stop and think about it this is very strange; God knows everything we need to know, even the future, but too often we do not listen to Him.

Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'
Isaiah 46:9-10 (NKJV)

Some people claim God does not speak to them. This could be true. God often does not speak to people with an evil heart or to those who have turn away from Him and refused His council and help. But these are extreme cases, and even here God continues to try to reach out to these people. However, this is not your case. You have received the saving grace of God. He is speaking to you.

As Christians we should know the voice of our master. We have made hearing from God difficult. God wants to speak to us and bless us with His input into our life. He is our Father and He enjoys our company and blessing us. Jesus is the good Shepard; His sheep know His voice and follow Him. He guides them to green pastures. The Holy Spirit has come to help us to do the work God has called us to do. We have a wonderful opportunity to listen to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as they speak to us. With such a great benefit awaiting those who listen, why do we not listen? And even among those who try to listen, why is it so hard to hear what God is saying to us?

And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. John 10:4 (NKJV)

Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.
John 16:7 (NKJV)

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What is blocking our hearing, why do we struggle to listen? There are many answers to this question, many of them come from dealing with issues of the heart. Each one of us must deal with a desire to build and rule the Kingdom of Self. This kingdom is the place where I rule and reign as king. Now most Christians disavow any knowledge of or interest in ruling the Kingdom of Self. However, deep in our heart there is a tyrant that wants his way and to rule.

This is the basis for rebellion, I want my way. This is the basis for rejecting God's rule over us, we long to do what we want. Most of the time people cover rebellion with a facade of decency. We act and talk in acceptable manner. And just when we are convinced that we have this rebellion mastered something happens and the evil lurking in our heart is revealed. The rebel in each of us does not want to hear from God.

We must transform our heart from a camp of rebellion to submission to the will and reign of God. This takes daily input of the Word of God and diligently seeking of God's will for our life. It requires obedience to God's commands. These commands are the little things God wants us to do each day, all through the day. As we seek to hear and do His will, we tune our ear to hear His voice. The more we hear and obey, the clearer we will hear.

Another obstacle to hearing God is a lack of an invitation. Often we walk through our day without God. He is always present, but we seem to be far from Him. We do not hear His voice because He seems so far away. We can, and should, invite Him to be close to us and a constant presence in our life. If my heart is hard, I do not want to have God near, so I do not invite Him to come and be with me. Also when I regard iniquity in my heart, I do not want God close by. When I am trying to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, I do not want God present. And in these cases and others I do not invite God to be near and so I do not hear His voice. Please note that even if I do not call on Him, sometimes He will break through and speak even when my heart is not right toward Him. He loves His children and strives to correct our mistakes and errors. Remember, while we were sinners, Christ died for us, that is true love. With that love He continues to try to draw near to us and speak.

Other heart issues affect our hearing God's voice. Our conduct, thinking, and speaking can make God uncomfortable. He tends not to go places where He is uncomfortable. If you invited a great man or woman to come to your house for a visit, your conduct would be your best. You would clean the house, prepare special food, and make sure everything is nice for your special guest. However, sometimes with God we do not clean our heart, our thinking, or actions. We live like the Devil was coming to visit and then wonder why God is not comfortable drawing near to us.

Things do not have to be this way. We living in a body of the flesh and we in this world with all of its impact, but we can overcome the hardness of our heart and the influence of the world. We can stop making provision for our body, resist the Devil, and if we desire to hear God's voice, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can do what it takes to hear.

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We need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. We must treat Him like we would a very special guest in our home. We need to be careful not to grieve the Him. This requires right conduct, thinking, and speech. This is vital. When He is welcome and comfortable with us, He comes. He is the counselor, helper, comforter, guide, enabler, and anointer, the one who empowers and He comes and helps us to hear. We also need to seek God with our whole heart. It is important that He is our primary focus. If we are seeking Him, we cannot be seeking our own kingdom. Many people talk a good talk about this, but weak in action. When we seek God, make Him our primary focus, and choose to obey Him, we will hear His voice.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30 (NKJV)

Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. Daniel 9:3 (NKJV)

Longing to hear God's voice is a good thing and we can trust the Lord and His still, small voice to speak to us and guide our steps. If we deal with rebellion, invite God to come and walk with us, all day every day, make God comfortable to be with us, make no provision for sinning, and seek God with our whole heart we will hear. We must hear His voice, and allow Him to direct our prayers and bring His answers. Effective prayer comes from listening to God.

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for Pastor DK Limbu Daniel

Greetings in Jesus' Name! In coming week we are closing our Missionary Training School. I was not able to raise fund for the training School here in Nepal and our ministry also could not afford expenses because of tight economy in country. It's sad that we have to close our training school with 17 students in training. Our school session was to go into October, so we are closing 3½ months early. Our monthly expense is \$400 (including student meals, electricity, water and teacher's allowance). We were not able to take care of the \$1600 we need to complete the course.

There are challenges ahead of us in resuming the New Life School of Ministry for the Pastors and Leaders the 2nd week in Nov to the 2nd week in Dec with 40 Pastors and Leaders from different parts of Nepal and India. We need your prayers to train and refresh these pastors with the faith and power of the Holy Spirit. May God bless you!

Pray for Joyce Abrahamson

Thank you for lifting us up to the Throne of grace, as you will. Our team continues firm in our conviction that a child (or adult) must be won to Christ or the child (adult) will be lost to Christ.

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Please pray as we are aiming to bring more practical helps to the community stretched along the road. We are seeing a great influx of people from the interior, as a result of the two big dams being built here. Many are seeking jobs and are invading lands along the river road that the owners seem to have abandoned. August 17th we will start sewing classes for 20 local women. This has been long time in coming and praise God it will be directed by a County Government Department of Social Service. Young women need to know how to sew for their family, especially when they cannot afford to buy things. Pray for these women as they juggle their work in their fields, their little ones and classes. Pray that our Bible study with the group will find lodging in these hearts and they will attend church.

Love, in His amazing Grace, Joyce

Continue Faithful in Prayer

In addition to our weekly specific prayer requests please remember to be in prayer for these ministers and ministries.

DK Limbu Daniel – Pastor of a church in Nepal and church planting among Nepalese people

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

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 (Bill) Williamson – Pastor of a church in Cedaredge, Colorado

Charles and Janice Wilson – Pastors in Wyola, Montana

David Williamson – Editor of *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling Christians to Effective Fervent Prayer

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