

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of August 23, 2009

“David Brainerd was pursued by unearthly adversaries, who were resolved to rob him of his guerdon. He knew he must never quit his armour, but lie down to rest, with his corselet laced. The stains that marred the perfection of his lustrous dress, the spots of rust on his gleaming shield, are imperceptible to us; but they were, to him, the source of much sorrow and ardency of yearning.”

From *The Life of David Brainerd* by Edwards

The description of the Christian soldier given by Paul in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, is compact and comprehensive. He is depicted as being ever in the conflict, which has many fluctuating seasons—seasons of prosperity and adversity, light and darkness, victory and defeat. He is to pray at all seasons, and with all prayer, this to be added to the armour in which he is to fare forth to battle. At all times, he is to have the full panoply of prayer. The Christian soldier, if he fight to win, must pray much. By this means, only, is he enabled to defeat his inveterate enemy, the devil, together with the Evil One’s manifold emissaries. “Praying always, with all prayer,” is the Divine direction given him. This covers all seasons, and embraces all manner of praying.

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

The Life of Prayer

Okay, Guard, and Desire

David Williamson

When I get to visit my friends Mathias and Ursula, I also visit the ice cream stand near their house. At this stand you can get about a dozen different flavors and the biggest predicament is deciding which flavor to enjoy (the pistachio and several others are wonderful!). I like ice cream and it is easy for me to make excuses for going to get ice cream any time of the day or night. I can be creative and so it is easy for me to come up with reasons to say it is okay for me to eat ice cream.

It is important for us to review and study to improve our prayer life, which is the building of our relationship with God, and our effectiveness in prayer. There are three words I would like to include in this study on effective prayer and a successful prayer life. They are simple words, words we use every day, but words that can help us to make improvements. The first word is okay, this is a very simple word we use often by some people, it means to approve or authorize. Please note that okay works two ways, it is to approve or authorize someone to do or not do something. I can say I approve of you doing that, this tells you what to do. I can say it is okay not to do something. With this usage I am stating that you are not required to do something. For example, the Devil says you must sin, but God has said it is okay not to sin. He has approved of and authorized you not to sin. The second word in this little study is guard. Guard means the act of protecting or defending. We protect and defend those things that are important to us. The third word is desire. Desire means to wish or long for something.

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Let us begin with desire. This is a good place to begin because it is so important. Our desire will greatly affect our life and how we live. We long to have a close relationship with our Father. Part of an effective prayer life is drawing ever closer to God and the strengthening of our relationship with Him. We also long to serve God and one way to do this is to be effective in prayer. One way to say this is, God blesses us, so we can be a blessing. Here we might say God helps us to have a close relationship with Him, so we can be effective in praying for others.

This then, simply expressed, is our desire; unfortunately, our desire can be beaten down. Jesus taught us about the thorns and their affect. He explained that the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and desires for other things can choke the word and it is unfruitful. This same pressure is on our good desires. The cares of the world, day after day, pound on our desires, they work to suppress or demolish our desires. The deceitfulness of riches can hinder and spoil our desires. The words used in the verse from Jesus' teaching, in the fourth chapter of Mark (4:19), mean the delusion about riches. Thinking that wealth, money, possession, abundance, riches, or valuable bestowments can supply our needs, so we do not have to trust God, is a delusion and it brings impediment to or the destruction of our good, God given desires.

If we are going to pursue our desires, we must have our guard up. In this case there are three main areas that we must guard; our body, soul, and spirit. Guarding the body is important for success in prayer. This is an area where Eastern thinking can creep into our thinking. Eastern philosophies teach that the body is evil and should be suppressed. This is not the teaching of the Bible. God made the body of man good, unfortunately as a consequence of the fall of man, our bodies are under the curse. We long for the day when we will receive our new bodies, like Jesus, but until then these bodies we have must serve us and the work we are doing. Paul explains that our bodies can be vessels for honor and useful for the master, prepared for good work. Guarding our body is cleansing ourselves so we can have a body of honor, useful for prayer.

We must guard our soul. This is working to protect our soul, which is our mind, will, and emotions. Guarding our soul is important because it affects everything else in our life. We can and must guard our soul and this will cause us to be far from the thorns and snares of the world. As we mentioned before these thorns work to defeat our desires. Guarding our soul is a key to all success. In everything we do and even in health, our success is measured by the prosperity of our soul. If our mind is not renewed by the word of God we cannot prosper. If our will rules above the will of God and above the rule of our God given spirit, then we cannot prosper. If our emotions rule us, casting us about from moment to moment, then we cannot prosper.

Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; He who guards his soul will be far from them. Proverbs 22:5 (NKJV)

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. 3 John 1:2 (NKJV)

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We must guard our spirit. Our spirit is born again. If we have made Jesus Lord of our life we have become a new person. We have a new spirit. This spirit must be guarded. Spirits flourish on relationship. This is what we are to guard, our relationship with God and Christians. When we have that feeling that God is far from us, it has come from failing to guard our relationship. God has invited us to come boldly to Him; He has not limited that close relationship and access. With access permitted and encouraged, we must guard against anything that would try to separate us from God.

The third word in our little study is okay. One of the keys to successful guarding is how we deal with giving of permission. The guard on duty at a gate of a factory does not guard well if he gives permission to enter to those who should not be given access. This guard also fails if he does not give entrance to those who should be given access. As we study desire and guarding, we must look at who, what, and when we give permission; to whom, what, and when do we say okay.

I shared a little about my love of ice cream at the beginning of this study. If I always okay the eating of ice cream, then I am not guarding my body. Giving my okay too often, in this case, would destroy my body's ability to support the work of prayer that God has called me to do. By contrast, I should say okay to good diet and rest for my body, so I can fulfill the desires God has given me. I must guard my soul. It is receptive to the inputs it receives. If we allow it to do its own thing, the soul will run amuck, if we feed it the cares of the world or the disillusionment of riches, then we will hinder or destroy fulfilling of our desires. If I do not guard my relationships with God and man, I hinder and could crush fulfillment of my desires.

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NKJV)

I must be careful giving of my okay and guarding my body, soul, and spirit. Careful giving of okay, careful guarding, support the fulfillment of my God given desires. Paul tells us of the issues we face. He tells us to turn away from people like this, but he also is telling us to be on guard against these things when we find them lurking in our life. I can be a champion of prayer, with a rich, overflowing relationship with the Father and I can be effective in prayer. I am blessed, so I can be a blessing.

Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who

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call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

2 Timothy 2:19-26 (NKJV)

Let us Pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for Marek Kaminski

Marek writes:

- ✓ Pray for the ministry. Pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our nation and the church. Pray for growth of wisdom for leading the church. Pray for sufficient supplies and for more people to sacrifice their life for the sake of ministry.
- ✓ Pray for my family. Pray for a smooth transition into new place of living. Pray for the new school. This is a big challenge for kids and parents, this is especially important in a new city. Pray for fixing the flat in Warsaw. This is still a big challenge, both financially and in terms of arrangements.
- ✓ Pray for me for wisdom how to use the time between ministry, family, doctorate studies and leisure.
- ✓ Pray for resources. Pray for the resources needed to fulfill the Kingdom dreams.

Thank you so much for your prayers. Marek

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 – Bishop of Poland and co-founder and leader of the 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

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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 – Writer and speaker and editor of *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling Christians to Effective Fervent Prayer

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