

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of August 30, 2009

There are two kinds of Christians; those who pray their way through life, and those who butt their way through life. Which kind will you be? From *Praying to Change the World* by Gordon Lindsay

The Life of Prayer

A Key Factor to Success in Prayer

David Williamson

They are everywhere, signs here, signs there, on every tree and pole. They are hand written and not to fancy, but they proclaim a great opportunity that no one should miss. It is a yard sale! For some people this is like waving a red towel in front of a bull. They must stop and shop. They know this yard has treasures beyond compare. This is the sale they have been waiting for; they are going to make a great find and get it for a great price. A block away there is another sale waiting, it is the best sale of all time and one where they must stop and shop, another block another sale.

The great sale is a wonderful event for many people, to find something they want or need is enjoyable. To get it at a great price is electric. The Bible tells us of a great find at a yard sale. What, you thought yard sales were a new thing? No way. They go way back, Solomon was right, there is nothing new under the sun. There have been yard sales since the beginning of time. In the time of Jesus they were common and men and women searched through the wares offered to find things of value. I am thinking of the merchant seeking beautiful pearls. Jesus is telling His disciples about the great value of the kingdom of heaven and how to seek it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:45-46 (NKJV)

When we find something of great value we go to great lengths to obtain it. We might save or give up something else so we can buy it. We might hint about it, hoping someone would give it to us. However, in this case the pearl was of such great value that the merchant sold all he had (do you suppose he had a yard sale?) so he could buy the pearl. Often, great value will take great effort or cost, but the result is special. This week I wish to offer you a pearl of great value for effective prayer.

Jesus is the best example of a man of prayer. His prayer life was what we long for and aspire to. He received answers and those answers were very powerful and useful for meeting the needs of the situations presented to Him. Please remember that when Jesus was here, He lived as a man. He was fully man and the things He did, He did as a man. He leaned fully on the Holy Spirit just as you and I do. We can live and pray as He did, so it is good for us to emulate His prayer life. We should take

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note of what He did and work to make His practices our own. Take notice of this report from Hebrews speaking of Jesus.

who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Hebrews 5:7-8 (NKJV)

Prayer is a wonderful thing. And a key to success in prayer is being heard by God. There are many factors of being heard by God, the condition of the heart, iniquity in the heart, forgiveness, praying in the will of God, and unbelief to name a few. Another factor of being heard is seen in the life of Jesus in this verse from Hebrews, we see that Jesus was heard because of His godly fear.

Jesus was heard because of His godly fear. This is a very powerful statement. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, considered it necessary to fear God. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the writer of Hebrews says that Jesus was heard because of this fear. If Jesus was successful because He feared God, how much more do we need to have a healthy fear of the Lord?

People struggle with this concept of fear of the Lord and thereby miss this key for effective prayer. The fear of the Lord is not natural fear, like a rollercoaster ride or a soldier going into battle. The fear of the Lord is not demonic fear, which is from Satan, not God, it holds people back from God and doing what God wants, and it comes with torment, like claustrophobia. The fear of the Lord is not religious fear, which is taught by man, it is superficial (dealing with outward conduct and not the heart of man), and it has slavish obedience, not free obedience, motivated by love of God. The fear of the Lord is not the fear of man, which makes man more important than God, it holds people back from obedience to God (it ensnares people), and it is the opposite of trusting God.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

Therefore the Lord said: Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men, Isaiah 29:13 (NKJV)

The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.
Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV)

The fear of the Lord is an awe and reverence of God. A good way to understand this is look at and apply the first commandment, "You shall have no gods before me." Having no god before God requires putting God first in our life in all things. We are not to have anything before Him; we are not to put any person, thing, or influence before God. This is only reasonable as He has given us

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salvation and all that comes with it. So we should not presume to negate His command or give Him less than the premier place in our life.

You shall have no other gods before Me. Exodus 20:3 (NKJV)

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:36-40 (NKJV)

As Christians we are quick to declare that we have no other gods. We fervently declare *Soli Deo gloria* (glory to God alone). We proudly proclaim we have no God, but God. However, in practice it is very easy to put other things before God. These things can be objects or people; they can be ideas or desires. If when challenged, by events of life, we choose these things over the will of God then they have become a god before God.

Two of the most common of these gods that try to take God’s rightful place are will and fear. The battle of wills, my will verses God’s will, is a common, complex, and thorny struggle. To die to self is commanded by God, but is often more difficult in execution. We want to have the benefits promised by God, but we long to rule over our life as we see fit. Our old man, our natural nature and flesh, want to be king over what is sometimes called the Kingdom of Self. When we allow our will to rule over God’s will, we have placed a god before God. We are not walking in the fear of the Lord and we hinder the effectiveness of our prayers. Jesus battled over wills and made God’s will the winner over His will.

saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” Luke 22:42 (NKJV)

The second god that tries to take its place before God is fear. This fear can take many forms, but as Derek Prince has said, “What you fear most is your God”. We stand in danger of responding to events, pressures, and needs with fear; the fear of the demonic, the fear of religious pressures and persuasion, or the fear of man. These fears can become gods in our life and take the place of God. However, if we cultivate and hold tight to the fear of the Lord, then these other gods will not have His place and we have success in life and prayer.

For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, And what I dreaded has happened to me. Job 3:25 (NKJV)

Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied. Acts 9:31 (NKJV)

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We can declare our belief of the fear of the Lord. However, in reality this is something that we must nurture in our life and thinking. We cultivate the fear of the Lord because we love God, because of His great gift of salvation, and knowing that our work will be judged. We also develop the fear of the Lord in our life because we long to be effective in prayer. We know that God heard the prayers of Jesus because of His godly fear. He will hear our prayers because of our fear of the Lord.

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Peter 1:17-19 (NKJV)

Jesus learned obedience and so we, as sons and daughters, must learn obedience. An important part of obedience is obedience to the first commandment, allowing no gods before God. Here is a pearl of great value; daily checking to be certain that no god has been placed before God. This is walking in the fear of the Lord. If we learn this lesson and cultivate good practices of obedience by placing our affections in the correct order with God first, then we will have our prayers heard by God.

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, 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 (NKJV)

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Hebrews 12:28 (NKJV)

Let us pray!

A Call for Prayer

Time for our Monthly review of Prayer

Pray for Pastor Charles, the Wyola Baptist Church, and the Crow Indians in Montana

We are praying for the breaking of a spiritual stronghold, for revival among the churches, and for Pastor Charles and Janice Wilson and the Wyola congregation.

Pray for David and Marianne Dean

We are praying for their new ministry focus; working with graduates and young professionals, and for David and Marianne as they grow as parents raising Sarah.

Pray for Pastor DK Limbu Daniel

We are praying for funds for the Missionary Training School. We are also praying for the New Life School of Ministry for the Pastors and Leaders the 2nd week in Nov to the 2nd week in December.

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Pray for Joyce Abrahamson

We are praying for more practical helps to the community stretched along the road and that the Bible study group will find lodging in their hearts of the Gospel and attend church.

Pray for Marek Kaminski

We are praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our nation and the church, for a smooth transition into new place of living, for wisdom how to use the time between ministry, family, doctorate studies and leisure, and for resources for fulfill the Kingdom dreams.

Continue Faithful in Prayer

Please pray; your faithful prayers change situations, remove hindrances, and empower ministry

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

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 – 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

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 editor of *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling Christians to Effective Fervent Prayer

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