

# Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of October 4, 2009

Full consecration is the highest type of a Christian life. It is the one Divine standard of experience, of living and of service. It is the one thing at which the believer should aim. Nothing short of entire consecration must satisfy him. From *Essentials of Prayer* by E. M. Bounds

## The Life of Prayer

### **Blessed Back**

David Williamson

Happy Birthday! Simple words that mean a lot, but one time they were extra special. The first year I was in the military, I was sent to Germany. It was hard to be away from my family. And to make things worse, at that time it was expensive to make calls overseas, so I very rarely called home. However, I decided to make arrangements to make a surprise call to my mom on her birthday. I wrote to my friend Mark and asked him to contact my dad. The plan was to set up for mom to be home at a certain time on her birthday and I would call. Mark and my dad got everything arranged.

Making phone calls in those days was not just expensive, but took some effort. On my mom's birthday, I went to the German Bundestpost; this is the post office and telephone exchange all in one. This was where GIs and others would go to make personal overseas calls. When I got there I had a big surprise. They were just closing for the night. I had assumed they were open 24-7. All I could think of was everyone at home waiting for a call, a call that never comes. I talked with the man who was closing, his English was good, and finally he said he would stay open for my call. He setup the call and finally it went through. My brother Bill answered and I told him to get mom. In a few seconds she answered and I got to say, "Happy Birthday!"

Communications have come a long way. Phone calls were difficult then. Today we carry phones and can call anywhere in the world at any time. One time while I was in Poland at a conference, I had some free time so I went to a nearby park. I thought I should call someone to make sure that my cell phone was working. So I called my mom. No set up or plans were needed, just dial, correction, I just entered a few numbers, the phone rang, and I was talking to my mom.

With computers communication is faster than ever. We have a subscriber to *Voice of Thanksgiving* who lives in Asia. This man has setup his email to send a message letting you know he is out of the office. One night I sent out *Voice of Thanksgiving* and before I could check to see if my emails had gone through, I got this message back from him. This is fast, to Asia and back.

In the last few issues of *Voice of Thanksgiving* we have been investigating components of effective prayer. It is important to regularly review these basic components. We need to check for conformity

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with God's Word and consistency of our practices. It is easy to assume knowledge and good practices, but sometimes we slip into mistakes or omissions. The components last week were Component #1 - dealing with faith destroying forces – doubt, fear, and unbelief, Component #2 - authority in the name of Jesus, and Component #3 - standing firm.

The components this week are part of effective prayer; both of these play a central role in our prayer life and daily practices. These components also come with a blessing beyond answers to prayer. When we pray with these components, God sends a blessing back to us. Like the email message of notification for being out of the office returned to me with an immediate blessing. Answers to prayer and a blessing, now that is a good deal!

## **Component #4 - Praise and Thanksgiving**

Praise and thanksgiving should be central to all our prayers. They are actually a form of prayer and a component of power in other forms of prayer. Praise is offered to God for who He is and what He has done in general. Thanksgiving is offered to God for what He has done for us in particular. If we come with difficulties and troubles on our mind, something that is common in prayer; praise and thanksgiving changes our attitude. They create the attitude for power.

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised* Psalm 48:1 (NKJV)

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;* Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)

*Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.* Psalm 100:4 (NKJV)

*You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)

Praise and thanksgiving give us direct access to God. The gate leads into the courts, the courts lead into His presence. You get through the gates with thanksgiving and through the courts with praise. In His presence is fullness of joy and answered prayers. The ten lepers stood far off and cried out. Not a great way to pray, but they did receive healing. One came back to thank Jesus. He had direct access and was saved. By giving thanks he got spiritual as well as physical benefits.

Praise and thanksgiving is a great way to open our prayer times and they should be a central part throughout. Faith is required for successful prayer; and praise and thanksgiving encourages and expresses our faith. Prayer with thanksgiving and praise is giving thanks before something happens. This is a great demonstration of faith.

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***Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)

**Component #5 – Praying in the Holy Spirit – the release of power**

***For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

Romans 8:14 (NKJV)

This is the continuing present tense in the Greek, so we can read it as, “As many as are regularly led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”. This is accomplished by being regularly, continually led by the Holy Spirit. Paul, later in this same chapter, applies this leading of the Holy Spirit specifically to prayer.

***Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.***

Romans 8:26-27 (NKJV)

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; this weakness is problem we all face in prayer. As Paul writes, we do not know what we should pray. Derek Prince expresses Paul’s lament as, “We do not know what to pray for as we ought. Or to state it another way, we do not always know what to pray for, and even if we do, many times we still do not know how to pray for it. You might know that your son needs prayer or your friend needs prayer, but you still do not know how to pray” (from *Secrets of a Prayer Warrior* by Derek Prince).

However, God has given us help so we can pray effectively; He has given the Holy Spirit to help us. We can and should turn to the Holy Spirit and let Him pray through us. When we pray in unknown tongues, praying in the Spirit, we are praying the prayer He wants prayed, praying according to God’s will. You do the talking, but the Holy Spirit gives you the words to say. The direction to your speaking comes from the Holy Spirit, to your spirit, instead of from your mind. We do the praying, the Holy Spirit helps us to pray Spirit-directed prayers. This makes for very powerful and effective praying.

***praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--*** Ephesians 6:18 (NKJV)

***For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.***

This verse in the Amplified version is, “***My spirit (by the Holy Spirit within me) prays.***”

1 Corinthians 14:14 (NKJV)

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Both of these components are central to powerful prayer. They help us to pray effective prayers that avail much. They should be in the arsenal of everyone seeking power in prayer and they come with a direct blessing from God. Praise and thanksgiving must have first place, regular place, and final place in prayer. Giving thanks has a very important psychological function. It builds our faith. The more we stop and thank God for all He has done for us, the easier it is for us to believe that He is going to do what we are going to ask next.

And a life of prayer without praying in the Holy Spirit is like fighting a huge fire with a bucket, when a fire hose is available for our use. Praying in the Spirit helps us to learn more fully to trust God. It helps keep worldly ideas from our prayers. It also comes with an extra blessing, praying in the Holy Spirit gives us a spiritual refreshing. Praying in tongues is an exercise of faith in God and the Holy Spirit and it helps edify the believer.

***For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "This is the refreshing"; Yet they would not hear.*** Isaiah 28:11-12 (NKJV)

***But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,*** Jude 1:20 (NKJV)

*Let us pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

**Pray for Israel.** This is too important a time for Israel, for us to stop praying. Please continue to be faithful in prayer for these people, nation, and region.

***But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.*** 2 Corinthians 3:14-16 (NKJV)

**Pray for the opening of doors of ministry of the word of God.** In all our ministries, personal and corporate, we have areas that are closed to the Gospel. Pray for the doors to be opened to the Gospel message and its delivery and acceptance.

***Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.***

Colossians 4:2-4 (NKJV)

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## Continue Faithful in Prayer

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

**Joyce Abrahamson** – Head of a Christian 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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