

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of October 25, 2009

The great cry of our day is work, work, work, new organizations, new methods, new machinery; the great need of our day is prayer. It was a master stroke of the devil when he got the church so generally to lay aside this mighty weapon of prayer. The devil is perfectly willing that the church should multiply its organizations, and deftly contrive machinery for the conquest of the world for Christ if it will only give up praying. He laughs as he looks at the church to-day and says to himself:

“You can have your Sunday-schools and your Young People's Societies, your Young Men's Christian Associations and your Women's Christian Temperance Unions, your Institutional Churches and your Industrial Schools, and your Boy's Brigades, your grand choirs and your fine organs, your brilliant preachers and your revival efforts too, if you don't bring the power of Almighty God into them by earnest, persistent, believing, mighty prayer.”

Prayer could work as marvelous results today as it ever could, if the church would only betake itself to it. ... It is not necessary that the whole church get to praying to begin with. Great revivals always begin first in the hearts of a few men and women whom God arouses by His Spirit to believe in Him as a living God, as a God who answers prayer, and upon whose heart He lays a burden from which no rest can be found except in importunate crying unto God.

From *How to Pray* by R.A. Torrey

The Life of Prayer

Dreams of Prayer

David Williamson

Coaches are dreamers. Before every season they dream. They dream about what could happen with the team and they dream about their players. The dream about the team is easy to see and know, win a lot of games and go to the championship game and win. The dream might be the perfect season, or it could be the team that comes out of the shadows and wins. The games of the season could be easy wins, showing the great superiority of the team or incredible battles fought against immense odds, and earning final victory just as the gun sounds to end the game. Hey, I told you coaches were dreamers. They also dream about the men or women on their team. The dream is for growth, maturity, and success in games and life. The good coaches are more concerned with the dreams for their players than the team. However, often the coach who is most concerned about players wins a lot of games. So year after year, coaches dream about the team and the individuals on the team.

In prayer there is room for dreams as well. The Bible records many wonderful promises made by God, directed to and for men and women. The greatest of these relates to the salvation of man. It is a great wonder that God was willing and able to deal with sin and rebellion in man. The promises

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given by the prophets Isaiah and others tell us that God would send His Son, Jesus Christ, to take the burden of mankind's wickedness and thereby provided for his salvation (Isaiah 53:6). And God did just what He promised.

After this first and greatest promise, God has also made other promises to believers. One of these promises is to listen to, hear, and then answer prayers. This promise is so powerful, so immense in its scope and promise that most fail to believe it is possible. And fewer still pursue the promise and its fruit. Prayer is a promise that most are satisfied with a little, when so much is available. This is where the dream of prayer is seen and hopefully felt.

The dream is to see God's promise concerning prayer fulfilled. There are many ways to express this concept, I express as a simple phrase, "People praying, more prayer, more effective prayers." The dream is first to have more people praying. The power of the promise is null and void for people if they do not pray. The second part of the dream is to have more people praying more prayers. A life of prayer is great, a life of an abundance of prayers is better. The third part of the dream is this abundance of prayers being effective, fervent prayers that avail much.

This dream is a blessing for individuals, the Body of Christ, and for the world. We can pray and we can have a great prayer life, and effective prayer life, it will be of great value to us and to the people around us. The dream is fulfilled in people who have a desire grow and mature in prayer. They see where they are, where they could be and their desire to find how to get there and then do it.

We need to pray. Jesus, Paul, John, and from the Old Testament David, Solomon, Moses, Joshua, and many others called for prayer. Nowhere in the Bible is there a restriction on who may pray. There is no IQ minimum, height standard, number of years of schooling, color or length of hair, skill with languages, or even an age requirement. All may, can, and should pray. All of the excuses as to why not to pray fall at Jesus' command; He said, "When you pray" (Luke 11:2). Make a dream come true, pray.

To pray is good, to pray a lot is better. There is a great need for prayer. However, we also need more people praying and more prayers. One of the great campaigns of Satan today is to make people too busy, tired, or stressed to pray. Andrew Murray once wrote, "Christ meant prayer to be the great power by which His Church should do its work, and that the neglect of prayer is the great reason the Church lacks greater power over the masses in Christian and in heathen countries." All of the efforts of Christian men and women, all of their work and ministry is better, more powerful and dynamic, if birthed, bathed, and borne by prayer. To meet the needs we face, our personal needs, family needs, church needs, and national needs, requires prayer, much prayer. Make a dream come true, pray and pray more and more.

He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor;
Isaiah 59:16 (NKJV)

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And there is no one who calls on Your name, Who stirs himself up to take hold of You;
Isaiah 64:7 (NKJV)

There was a man called Father Nash. His real name was Daniel Nash and he lived in upstate New York from 1763 to 1837. Nash had served as a pastor in the area near his home. After a number of years Nash caught an eye ailment. His eyes were inflamed and for several weeks he was shut up in a dark room; he was almost entirely blind for about six months. He could not read or write and he spent almost all of his time in prayer. This time brought a dramatic change in his life. He was a different man. He was a man of prayer and worked day and night to save men and women. Nash at age 48 decided to give himself totally to prayer for Finney's meetings. Nash was the man of prayer behind Finney, praying for revival, the ministry, and for men and women to be converted.

Stories of Nash are nearly legendary, but several documented stories serve our purpose here. For example, Nash carried a prayer list. On this list were names of people he had made the focus of his prayers. Every day and often several times a day, he would pray for these people. People described his prayers as "wonderful" and "almost miraculous", but the most important point was he prayed for the people on his list until they got saved and time after time they did get saved.

His power in prayer was overwhelming. There was a man named Dresser who went out of his way to rail against the local revival and to swear and blaspheme if he saw Christians. Nash heard about Dresser and put him on his prayer list and prayed. Nash left town to go to pray for the next meeting, but a couple of days after he left, Dresser came to the local meeting, confessed his sins and was converted.

There were other men also associated with Finney and called to prayer, for example Abel Clary. Clary was described as a good man and an elder of the church, who had been licensed to preach, but he had a burden for winning men to Christ and prayer. The burden was so strong he gave all of his time to prayer. Nash and Clary would come quietly into towns three or four weeks before Finney's meeting. They would rent a room, gather some Christians for prayer, and pray.

They would be so burdened for the meetings and for people that they would not be seen for days. Finney records the following incident.

When I got to town to start a revival a lady contacted me who ran a boarding house. She said, "Brother Finney, do you know a Father Nash? He and two other men have been at my boarding house for the last three days, but they haven't eaten a bite of food. I opened the door and peeped in at them because I could hear them groaning, and I saw them down on their faces. They have been this way for three days, lying prostrate on the floor and groaning. I thought something awful must have happened to them. I was afraid to go in and I didn't know what to do. Would you please come see about them?"

"No it isn't necessary," I replied. "They just have a spirit of travail in prayer."

From *Lecture on Revival* by Charles Finney

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This was his norm, travail in prayer. Nash did not attend many of the meetings, but would pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to convict people of the crowd and soften their hearts so they would be saved. If there was opposition to the meetings Nash prayed harder.

In public Nash could be bold as well. There was a time when some young men decided to break up the meetings. Nash had been praying nearby and stepped out of the shadows and announced, “Now mark me, young men! God will break your ranks in less than one week, either by converting some of you, or by sending some of you to hell. He will do this certainly as the Lord is my God!” Finney in relating this story tells how he thought his friend had “lost his sense”. However, by the next week the leader of the group had come and confessed his sinful attitude and began to tell all his friends about Christ. Before the week was out nearly the entire group had come to Christ.

It is reported that in one town all Nash could find was a dank, dark cellar, but that place was soon illumined with holy light as he made it the place of intercession. Nash in 1831 he wrote: “I am now convinced, it is my duty and privilege, and the duty of every other Christian, to pray for as much of the Holy Spirit as came down on the day of Pentecost, and a great deal more. . . . I have only just begun to understand what Jesus meant when he said, “All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

Time and space in this article do not allow other stories of Nash and Clary, nor of other men and women of effective prayer, like Brainerd, Hyde, Studd, Murray, Müller, Knox, Guyon, Erskine, Edwards, Backus, McGready, Bounds, Howells, and others. Not satisfied with the conditions around them, they gave themselves to prayer, and not just prayer, but effective prayer.

There is a high call, from God, to Christians to step up to effective, fervent prayer that avails much. Response to this call will be the deciding factor of success or failure of churches and ministries, families and individuals. Without the backing of effective prayer our attempts to touch this generation, with the Gospel, will fail. We cannot go enough, preach enough, give enough, broadcast enough, minister enough, or any other of the good things we must do to reach this generation, if we do not have effective prayer backing our efforts. Without the prayers of Father Nash there would not have been the revivals of Finney. Without the effective prayers of men and women today, sold out to God for prayer, stepping up to the high call of Christ concerning prayer, there will not be the revivals we so desperately want and need. Make a dream come true, pray and pray more and pray effective prayers that avail much. Will you pray?

Let us pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem Pray for the Jewish people and their homeland. Pray for peace that comes through knowing the Messiah.

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Pray for Pastor Daniel in Nepal Pray for Pastor Daniel and his trip into east Nepal and then into India. Pray for safety as the areas is politically unstable. Pray for students who will graduate from the World School in Kathmandu on the 30th. They have seen God move mightily as they preached as part of their Practice Field Ministry, as more than 100 people have been saved. Also pray for the beginning of the new students of the World School that begins November 2.

Pray for You – Yes I want you to take time this week, I know you are to busy, but you must make time and pray for you. Please pray that God would speak to you about your prayer life. Ask Him to direct your efforts so they are pleasing to Him.

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 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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