

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of November 22, 2009

“Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon their knees”. – William Cowper

The Life of Prayer

Faith In

David Williamson

While I was stationed in Germany in the US Air Force, I was invited to go with a group lead by several chaplains from military bases in Europe to Israel. It was a great trip; we saw many of the key sites of Jerusalem and Israel, and went to a wonderful conference in Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv. The visit to places mentioned in the Bible was very special. It was wonderful to see the places where people of the Bible had lived and worked. It was fantastic to walk where Jesus lived and walked. It brought the stories to life.

One of the places we traveled, was the town of Sychar the site of Jacob's well. Here the story of the Samaritan woman who met Jesus at the well, flooded over us. You could almost hear Jesus telling this woman all about her life. In this story the woman and then later the people of the town had a powerful encounter with Jesus. Their story can be very useful for us today. After Jesus and the woman had talked, John's account tells us that she went and told the people, “***Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did***”. The people of Sychar came out to the well and talked with Jesus. After they had talked with Him, they said, “***Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him***”.

The most important key to successful prayer is relationship with God. Without access to Him and His listening to our prayers, there is no prayer. The second most important key is faith. The lessons of faith well learned and applied, change prayer from a religious duty to the joy of walking in concert with Our Father. Much has been written about faith, but there is still much more to learn.

Most teachings on faith deal with the speaking and doing aspect of faith. What we say and do makes a huge difference in having faith. We destroy our faith if we do not say the right things. People, too often, agree with circumstances and the world, over what God and the Bible say. So they get nothing from faith. The same is true with actions; they act on the pressure of the circumstances and the world. They do not act on faith; they act on fear, doubt, and unbelief.

If we are going to have success in prayer, we must say and do what the Bible directs. However, there is more to faith than just speaking and doing. Understanding more fully will help us to walk in faith and have powerful prayers.

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There is a difficulty that most people must address; they do not know what faith is. They know the catch phrases, they can say the right words, but their understanding is clouded at best. We know that, “***Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen***” (Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)). And for most people this leaves them with a vague longing for faith, but not a clear understanding of what faith is and more importantly, what is needed for faith to operate in their life and prayers.

One of the most powerful passages on prayer is found in Mark chapter 11. Jesus’ teaching speaks of unlimited power in prayer. “***Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them***” (Mark 11:24) is a very powerful promise. It is important to understand that the strength of a promise is based on the person making the promise. We have more faith in a promise that is made by a person we know and trust. A promise is powerful when it comes from one who is capable and willing to do what he promises.

Our story of the events at Jacob’s well, can help us understand this. In the story, the woman told the people, come and see, later the people said, we have heard. Here are two important ingredients in faith, see and hear. We must see and hear God. Notice that before Jesus gives the promise of power in prayer in Mark chapter 11, He tells His disciples to “***Have faith in God.***” The beginning of faith is belief in God. He is the surety and power making good the promise. We can and must believe that God is and that He will do what He has promised. Effective faith is faith in God and in His promises. For faith we need to see and hear Him.

Just as the woman at the well was so impressed with Jesus that she went and told them to come and see. So we must be impressed with God by seeing Him. It is in His presence that we see His nature and faithfulness. When we see Him, we can have faith. Paul’s faith was not in a creed, traditions of man, or even in rumors. Paul was the great man of faith because he knew Jesus.

For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. 2 Timothy 1:12 (NKJV)

“Believing God is simply looking at God and what He is, and allowing Him to reveal His presence to us. Give Him time and completely yield to Him, receiving and rejoicing in His love. Faith is the eye through which the light of God’s presence and the vigor of His power stream into the soul. As that which I see lives in me, so by faith God lives in me, too.”

From *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray

We also need to hear His voice and allow it to fill our heart. One of the limitations of the use of email is not hearing the voice of the person we are dealing with. We depend greatly on hearing the voice of the other person to know what they are saying. This is true with God. His voice is the voice of authority, love, blessing, correction, provision, answers, guidance, and comfort. It is all this and

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more because His voice reflects who and what He is. We can have great faith, if we hear His voice. He is speaking great promises to us and by his voice we know that He will do what He says.

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. John 6:63 (NKJV)

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.
1 Corinthians 2:9-10 (NKJV)

Faith in the promise is the fruit of faith in the promiser. The prayer of faith is rooted in the life of faith. And in this way the faith that prays effectively is indeed a gift from God. It is not something He bestows or infuses all at once, but is far deeper and truer. It is the blessed disposition or habit of soul that grows up in us through a life of communion with Him. Surely for one who knows our Father well and lives in constant close communion with Him, it is a simple thing to believe the promise that He will do what His child wishes.

From *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Philippians 3:8-11 (NKJV)

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:9 (NKJV)

So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God".
Mark 11:22 (NKJV)

Our faith is based on God's promises and His willingness and ability to fulfill His promises for us. Without the seeing of our eyes and hearing of our ears, our heart will not be filled with the promises of God, have faith in God, or be filled with faith. With the seeing of our eyes and hearing of our ears, we can have confidence in God and be full of faith.

Let us pray!

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A Call for Prayer

Pray for Mark Spencer – Pray that his three books, *A Portrait of Intercession*, *The Cry for Spiritual Reality* and *Surely God Will Do Me Good*, which have just gone to the publisher, may be used by the Lord for His purposes and glory.

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

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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A New Book on Effective Prayer

The third volume of the book series *Prayer: A Force that Causes Change* is now available. The subtitle of this volume is *Faithful in Prayer*. For further information or to order your copy of this book or others in the series, go to the *Voice of Thanksgiving* website at www.voiceofthanksgiving.com