

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of March 14, 2010

It is good for us to keep some account of our prayers, that we may not unsay them in our practice.
Matthew Henry

The Life of Prayer

Knowing What to Do

David Williamson

Twice in my life I had the privilege of association with very good marching bands. The first time I was a member, the second time, nearly forty years later, as a supervisor for the band. I have some very fond memories of these bands and both times, I was impressed with how a group of people could come to know what to do and do it so well.

When I was in high school, I was a member of the marching band. The fall of each year we would go to a contest for bands. At one contest, I remember standing in ranks, while the student leaders went from student to student checking to see that our uniform was perfect, with everything in place, straight and correct. This was just the final step of hours and hours of preparation for this competition. When it was our time to perform we were ready and did our best, a wonderful show well received by fans, parents, and the judges.

As a assistant principal for the same school, many years later, I was surprised to be told that I would accompany the marching band on their trip to Disney World in Florida. On a trip like this, there had to be the band directors, parent sponsors, and a school administrator. The band members and their parents had worked for two years to get ready for this trip. There are a lot of details and expenses. For example, we had a truck full of instruments and equipment that we had to fly to Florida and truck to each practice and performance, plus three buses full people and additional equipment.

It was very different being the administrator, however, one thing stood out, central to both experiences; I was very proud of both bands. With all of the planning and preparation, with all the rehearsing and practicing, with all the care and effort, these bands were very good. One of the keys to the success at contests and on trips was that each band member knew what to do and made sure that everything was in place.

To know what you are doing and have everything in place is a very good thing. In prayer this is a very good thing. When we know what we are doing and have everything in place, prayer is very effective for meeting all the needs we face. Prayer is Gods appointed means of affecting His will and plans here on Earth. When we choose to be an instrument of His workings, a man or woman of prayer, it is good for us to know what we are doing.

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To be an instrument of His working, we choose to work with Him and for Him to work in us. He is making us and molding us so we have everything in place. This working of the Holy Spirit is progressive. He is working in us day-by-day, working to conform us into the image and likeness of Christ. The Holy Spirit is working on you and me today; every day moving us closer and closer to perfection.

Sometimes we are good students, willing and obedient to His guide and direction, other times it is more difficult. As the perfect gentleman that the Holy Spirit is, He moves as quickly as we will move with Him. At times this means a rush of change, where people who know the person see him and ask, "Who is this guy?" because there has been such great change. Other times the change is so gradual that we do not see it except in the looking glass, looking back to where we have come. Daily we see no change, but daily this great teacher is working in us and change comes.

Isn't it funny how day by nothing changes but when you look back everything is different..."

C. S. Lewis in *Prince Caspian*

The work of having everything in place is a life time activity, but we must not wait until all is in place, we are directed to be working daily. This life is "on the job" training. In most jobs the trainee does not wait until he or she knows everything, before they begin work. The work is made of learning a little, practicing by doing the work, review and learning, followed by more practice and doing. This is especially true in prayer. Every day we are learning and practicing, growing and maturing, changing and progressing.

The marching bands I was associated with knew what they were doing, both the parades they would march in and the shows they would perform. With this knowledge, they would work to get everything in place. Daily they practiced and learned their music and role in the performance. They learned to be better at what they were doing, working toward mastery.

In prayer we can know what we are doing as well. God has made it clear what we are doing and with this knowledge, then we can practice and learn, working toward mastery. There is much the Holy Spirit will teach us, included in our learning and practice. When we pray we are practicing and learning. The Holy Spirit will direct us with more detailed assignments as we move toward mastery. Here are four examples of prayer assignments we should know. These are examples where we should be learning and be practicing, working toward mastery.

First, we are praying for laborers for the harvest. People everywhere are in a life and death situation. Without the saving grace of God, through Jesus Christ, they face death and damnation. People must hear the Gospel message. Jesus has directed us to pray for laborers to work for the harvest.

Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Matthew 9:38 (NKJV)

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Second, we are to be praying for open doors for the Word. We are to be praying for conditions to be right for speaking of the mystery of Christ. This includes dealing with any and all things that hinder the opportunity for the Word to be presented and to be working in the heart and live of men and women.

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)

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NKJV)

Third, we are to be praying for fruit that will remain. Jesus taught that when the Word of God is sown there is a danger that it will not go into good soil and produce a great harvest. The glory of fruit is that it produces life. We are to be praying for the work of the laborers and the open doors of opportunity to produce fruit and that this fruit will be strong, healthy, and long lasting.

Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

Philippians 4:17 (NKJV)

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, 2 Thessalonians 3:1 (NKJV)

Fourth, we are to be praying for support for missionary outreach. It costs money to take the Gospel to people. This expense is met first in prayer. We are to be praying for the sending of preachers and the efforts of going to the nations. We support these efforts by praying for the financial supply, as well as the other needs for getting the job done.

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

Romans 10:14-15 (NKJV)

Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. Psalm 2:8 (NKJV)

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And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.
Mark 16:15 (NKJV)

Fifth, we are to be praying for the peace of Jerusalem.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they prosper who love you. Psalm 122:6 (NKJV)

I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. you who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, Isaiah 62:6 (NKJV)

There are other directions for prayer, but this gives you the idea and a good start.

Every year there are schools who offer students an opportunity to participate in the marching band and some students do not take that opportunity. Every year there are students in marching bands who do not know what they are doing. Every year there are students in marching bands who know what to do, but never practice and learn their music and role in the performance. And every year there are students who join the marching band, find out what the band is doing, practice and learn their music and role in the performance and strive for mastery.

Every year there are prayers to be prayed.

Let us pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for Joyce Abrahamson Pray for the school in Brazil, the daily supplies and provisions, for the workers, and for the children of the school. Pray for health and healing for the students, there have been problems with diseases in the school and area.

Continue Faithful in Prayer

Continue to pray for the ministries listed here and use this as a spring board for praying for nations, churches, pastors, ministries, and people close to your heart and according to the Spirit's direction. Your faithful prayers make a difference!

Pray for Pastors of Churches

DK Limbu Daniel – Pastor of a church in Nepal

Jacek Gromadzki – Pastor of a church in Kolobrzeg, Poland

Mark and Patty Spencer – Pastors of a church in Longmont, Colorado

William (Bill) Williamson – Pastor of a church in Cedaredge, Colorado

Charles and Janice Wilson – Pastors in Wyola, Montana

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Pray for Nations and the Churches of Nations

Israel and the peace of Jerusalem
Churches in Belarus
Churches in Lithuania

Pray for Leadership over multiple Churches

DK Limbu Daniel – Church planter among Nepalese people
Marek Kaminski – Bishop of Poland and co-founder and leader of the BBB Conference

Pray for Christian Ministries

Joyce Abrahamson – Head of a Christian school in Brazil
John Coon – Ministry in Europe and the USA
Marianne and David Dean – Missionaries on college campuses in East Asia
Lori Farquhar – Children’s Ministry Director
Bernd and Heike Pastor – Ministry in Germany
Mark Spencer – Worldwide ministry, and co-founder and leader of BBB Conference
Patty Spencer – Worship leader, and musician
William (Bill) Williamson – Leader of a mission outreach to India
David Williamson – Writer and editor of *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling Christians to Effective Fervent Prayer

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Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer, A Life Of Prayer, and Faithful In Prayer

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