

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of March 21, 2010

What the Church needs to-day is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men—men of prayer.

From *Power in Prayer* by E. M. Bounds

The Life of Prayer

Government Prayers

David Williamson

One of the things you are expected to do, as teachers, the first few days of school, is go over the rules for the class. I always tried to keep the number of rules to a minimum, striving for a form of self-governance from the students; with the caveat that we would respect one another and that I would add rules as I thought they were needed.

During the year, when we came to the first required written assignment, we would talk about the requirements for the paper. I was very careful about these requirements; I had learned by experience that if you were not very clear, you got strange results. For example, the first year I taught at Niwot High School, I had a student who did not like US History. He did as little as possible. I gave the class a writing assignment that required a five page paper. On the day the paper was due, this student turned in a paper complete with the required cover page and what looked to be five pages. I was so excited and convinced that I was starting to get through to this young man. As soon as the class was over I rushed to my office to look at what he had written. Yes, it was five pages, but it was written in a huge font and consisted of 58 words total!

After that I always made the requirements for papers very exact. I also required a specific due date and would talk to the students about learning to be on time with their work. I would review with them the excuses I would accept for late papers and as they made suggestions as to acceptable reasons for late papers, I would dismiss each one as unacceptable.

“What if I lose the file on my computer?” No, you should have a backup copy. “What if my Mom breaks the printer?” No, you should print it somewhere else. “What if my dog eats it?” No, you should not let your dog near your paper and if it happens, print another copy. Soon they would get desperate for an excuse I would accept. “What if I am in the hospital?” No, have someone deliver a copy on time for you. Finally someone would ask, “Is there any excuse you will accept for late papers?” “I will accept a late paper, if the sun comes up, on the day the paper is due, in the West.”

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Since the beginning of man's existence, there have been rules and governments. Adam and Eve had some dealings with rules and since then we have worked at relating to one another and to God. There have been a wide range of rules and governments. Some governments have had kings to set and enforce the rulers, and other governments have been loose coalition of people with a minimum of rules. Some have been small, others have ruled over vast territories, such as the Roman Empire. Paul lived under this government, and with this as his point of reference he wrote to Timothy about a Christian's dealings with government.

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)

Paul knew what could happen with governments. He knew of the good they could do; he was able to travel great distances in relative safety due to the Roman government, their roads and protection of sea lanes. He also knew how a government could hinder and disrupt the preaching of the Gospel. He had seen this with both the Jewish and Roman governing authorities as well as local authorities. He knew it was important for and necessary for Christians to make a difference in the governments they lived under.

Paul also knew the power of prayer. He knew that God has ordained prayer as the means of manifesting His power. Paul knew it was a praying people who would have good government. He even defined for Timothy and all Christians what good government would be. While there can be many forms of government, we should be praying for government that allows for a quiet and peaceable life, one free to be lived in godliness and reverence for God. It must allow, if not promote, opportunities for men to hear and acknowledge the truth (truth found in Christ Jesus) and be saved.

This is what we should be praying for. Regardless of the format of the government, if it does not meet Paul's stated requirements, then Christians should be praying for change. If it does meet the requirements, then we should be praying for it to continue properly. Central to Paul's message is that we, as praying Christians, have in our hands the opportunity to make a difference in governments. We can pray and see the worst changed. We can pray and see a good government maintained. This also means we can fail in our job and watch as a government fails or is subversive to the stated goal of good government. Christians hold the key; prayer. Good government is so important we must be praying for our government and for governments of other nations. One of the first steps to evangelization of a people is praying for the government that is over that people.

“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.”

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Paul's call applies to more than just the government of nations and cities. He also knew the importance of prayer for the government of businesses. He faced difficulties, in presenting the Gospel, from businesses as well as political governments. Note his experience in Ephesus recorded in Acts chapter 19. The silversmith, Demetrius, got the craftsmen of the city to riot and force Paul out of the city because they saw his message as a threat to their business.

After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia. Acts 20:1 (NKJV)

We are to pray for the governing of businesses. This is important, first for opportunities for the Gospel, but also for work and provision for people. Without our prayers businesses will fail and not be there for meeting people's needs and providing jobs. Without our prayers businesses will stand that fight against the Gospel and that are injurious to the good of people.

“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.”

There is still more to Paul's call for prayer for governments. Christians are to be praying for the government of churches. The proper government of a church is important to the propagation of the Gospel and for the protection and betterment of people. This is not a prescription as to what form the government of the church should take, but a call to pray that the government be well lead and carry out its proper functions. Paul's call is for the government of a church to provide for teaching and training so the people can do the work of the ministry that is leading other men to salvation.

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;
Ephesians 4:11-13 (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.”

Finally Paul calls for prayer for the government of individuals. This call is found throughout his teaching and is of great need today. It is a call for good self-governing, what is sometimes called a moral internal track. Without prayer people throw off restraint and run amuck. We have seen this throughout history the echoing lament of the early history of the Jews is ***“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”*** Judges 21:25 (NKJV)

Our prayers must be for ourselves, for our family, friends, and others that we will each be self-governed under God's guidance and His law. God's law forced on a people causes religious ritual

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and death. However, His law lovingly applied and obeyed by an individual, yields a peace beyond measure. It leads to guidance and direction from God. It opens doors of ministry and power.

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law. Proverbs 29:18 (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.”

As we get further along in the “Last Days”, the pressures on all governments is growing. The pressure is from the Devil and its goal is the breakdown of morals, harm to businesses and families, and destruction of churches, hindrance to the preaching of the Gospel; he comes to kill, steal, and destroy. However, in Christ Jesus there is life. There has never been a time with a greater need for effective, fervent prayer for governments. Paul’s call to you and me is to pray.

“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.”

Let us pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for Governments

“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.”

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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