

# *Voice of Thanksgiving*

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of April 25, 2010

Bear up the hands that hang down, by faith and prayer; support the tottering knees. Have you any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace and persevere therein, and mercy will come down.

John Wesley

## *The Life of Prayer*

### *With You*

David Williamson

“Lights out!” with this command and a flip of the switch the lights went out on a long and memorable day. Before the crack of dawn my family had dropped me at the Federal Center in Denver where I was inducted into the United States Air Force. What with a physical, the swearing in, travel to San Antonio, Texas (my first airplane flight), and meeting the other men in my unit. That was a long day.

Sergeant Thomas had met the bus bringing us from the San Antonio airport. From the first moment he began the work of changing a group of young men, college kids, and hippies into airmen fit and ready for military service. He was on top of everything we said or did. Our sloppy ways and actions had to change; the way we stood, walked, and talked, but he did all the talking. He was able to express himself quite well, his voice could strip the paint off a wall; it completely caught our attention and straightened our backbones.

I followed his instructions and began to learn the Air Force ways. Finally we went to our barrack room, our assigned locker, and bed. Sergeant Thomas gave us some final instructions for the night; he explained we would wake at 4 am. I was very tired, Sergeant Thomas, the new surroundings, the commands and requirements; it was all very frightening to me. I knew that the Air Force and all those working to train us were for us, their job was to make us a great success. However, I was afraid. I was fearful of breaking the rules, of messing up, or of making a fool of myself. What if I failed? What if I did something stupid? My fear was so strong it churned up my stomach and made it ache. The fear and the ache grew all day and into the night, by the time we finally got to go to bed, I was all tied up in knots.

Before a new flight of men move into a barracks room, a group of men from another flight, one that has been in training several weeks, prepares that room and makes the beds, for the first night. The men who had prepared for us had seen to everything, even short sheeting our beds. To make the bed, you can fold the sheets in a way that they keep the occupant from stretching out fully, short sheeting the bed. The occupant is deny the full length of the bed and must either curl up in just the open half of the bed or get up and tear the bed linens off and remake the bed. That night I was too

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afraid to get out of bed and so I spent my first night in the barracks curled up in a ball trying to sleep. I was able to capture a few short snatches of sleep, but it was a horrible, nearly sleepless night, all because of fear.

The storm was so fierce they had given up all hope. The clouds were so thick they had not see sun or stars for days. The ship had been tossed about like a leaf in a raging river and now even the crew of the ship had given up all hope they would ever survive. Luke records for the world to see the true nature of real fear. Paul on his way to Rome and all of those on the ship had something very real to fear; there is as a very real possibility, now even a real probability, they would all drown.

Unlike me in the barrack room, these men faced a real dangerous situation; at any moment a wave could slam into the ship and break it apart. In a storm like that it was becoming certain that everyone would die. Fear comes in many ways, it can be just as terrifying regardless of what we face, even if it is an irrational fear. Fear is an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by an anticipation or awareness of danger. It is also a reason for alarm. It can be a painful agitation in the presence of anticipation of danger. Fear can also be to consider or expect something with alarm.

Men and women have always faced opportunities to have fear. Today is no different; the world around us flourishes with a plethora of occasions and prospects of fear. Every day there is a new threat, a new problem, a new situation, all of which strive to bring fear. In many spheres of life today, fear is a tool of seeking change, sales, and legislation. We are told of a great fearful situation and then given a method of change, an item to buy, or a new rule or regulation, all promising to deal with the problem. In the world people must learn to deal with this emotional rollercoaster and constant threat. Christians overcome fear.

One of the keys to success in the Christian life and in the life of effective prayer is dealing with this issue, dealing with fear. Everyone faces fear and has opportunities to overcome. It is so sad to see the extreme results of loosing out to fear. We have heard of people who have been conquered by fear and are no longer even able to leave their homes. While these are extreme cases, undealt with fear, limits, hinders, and destroys in the life of many people. This should not be.

God commands, throughout the Bible, for His people not to fear. A search of the phrase, “fear not” brings dozens of examples, in both the Old and New Testaments. God does not leave fearing as an option, except for one thing. He will not have us fear, things, people, or events; we are only to fear Him.

Fear can and must be dealt with if we are going to live a successful and profitable Christian life. Far too many of the problems we face and too much of our struggle with life revolves around fear. And as the world goes further and further into the “last days” we will see more and more problems related to fear. Only those who have by reason of practice, have learned to obey God’s command, “fear not” will be able to walk in the victory and great success God seeks.

# Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

This is especially true in prayer. The man or woman caught up in fear limits their effectiveness in prayer. Yes, we are to cry out when we have a need, and a time of fear is a time of need, but we are to walk in God's command and fear not. We must come to the place where we can and do walk free of fear. One of the constant descriptive terms of the great men and women of prayer of the past is that they were fearless. We must come to the place where that description is true of us.

Luke in his description of the threat of shipwreck of Paul, mentioned above, gives us the answer for dealing with fear. Luke was on that ship, his was a firsthand account of the fear that was so strong; fear was even driving the actions of those veteran sailors. For days no one had eaten and had been driven to extremes of action and even desperation. In this cauldron of fear and despair, Paul urged them to take heart. He gave the key to not fearing, it is the same today as it was then. Throughout history, men and women have found this simple but profound answer. To conquer fear, do not be alone.

You may say it did not work, there were more than 270 men on that ship; they were not alone in their fear. You may say you are not alone in your fear, there are people all over the world that are afraid of events that seem to be spiraling out of control, there are people who suffer with these same fears, we are not alone. Okay, but the key is the person you are with, so you are not alone. Standing beside a sailor caught up in fear, did not help Luke deal with fear. Read once again what Paul said.

***And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.*** Acts 27:22-25 (NKJV)

Paul's experience was unique in some ways; most of us will not face certain shipwreck while on our way to Rome. However, his answer that night is the same answer that breaks the hold of fear and brings us victory regardless of what we face or where we are, just as it did for him. Fear must flee before our Lord. When we draw near to Him, fear must run and hide. This is the key, when we draw near to Him and trust Him with our life, family, work, ministry, and prayers, fear cannot have its way.

David knew of and wrote about this same victory key. Notice that even when he was in a place where fear was all around him, he was not going to fear. He was not ignoring the situation, if he was ignoring the danger he would not need comfort. He was confident that God would walk with Him and that His presence made the difference. With God, David did not have to fear.

***Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*** Psalm 23:4 (NKJV)

Isaiah's writings are filled with this same theme. In the presence of God, Isaiah did not need to fear.

# Voice of Thanksgiving

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***Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*** Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV)

***For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'*** Isaiah 41:13 (NKJV)

We can be very successful in life and in our prayers, if we properly deal with fear. Daily we need to draw close to our God and King. It is in the throne room of His grace that we are strong and fearless. King David wrote to us the value, strength, and comfort of the Lord in our life in Psalm 27. Read through these verses and allow the truth of God's power and willingness to work in our life, take fear from you. When disasters strike, seek God. When darkness comes, seek God. When evils tries to reign, seek God. When people turn against you, seek God. When your prayers seem silent and unanswered, seek God. When your heart is shaken, seek God.

*Let us pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

**Pray for Children** – Pray for the children of Brazil. In Joyce Abrahamson's school and in the area around it, there are many children who face difficult situations and life. Pray for the salvation and provision for these young people of the rainforest. For example there is the ministry to backwoods girls. The ministry is to bring these girls together for different learning experiences and the Word. Listen as Joyce describes the usual pattern that faces these girls. "They marry the boy next door, escape to the city and prostitution or we can help put hope and another path into their lives." Please pray for these girls and the difficulties they face.

There are many places where prayer is needed for children, in Brazil and all over South America, in Asia, in Europe, and in North America, children are falling victim to breakdown of the family, problems with schools, struggles with the economy, drugs, sexual exploitation and many other problems. The answer for them is life in Christ Jesus, who will pray?

## **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 Kołobrzeg, Poland

# Voice of Thanksgiving

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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

## **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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Books on Prayer:

*Prayer: A Force that Causes Change – A Call to Prayer, A Life Of Prayer, Faithful In Prayer* and now a new volume, *Effective Prayer*, are available at [www.voiceofthanksgiving.com](http://www.voiceofthanksgiving.com) or by email at [david@voiceofthanksgiving.com](mailto:david@voiceofthanksgiving.com)