

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of June 6, 2010

The Church has not yet touched the fringe of the possibilities of intercessory prayer. Her largest victories will be witnessed when individual Christians everywhere come to recognize their priesthood unto God and day by day give themselves unto prayer. John R. Mott

The Life of Prayer

Overcome the Obstacles

David Williamson

Who is your favorite character in the Bible? There could be that one special person or it could be several, depend on how you describe the situation. For example, I love the faith of Abraham, weighing what he saw in the mirror against what God said, and then agreeing with God. I love the faithfulness of Ruth choosing to stay with Naomi and becoming King David's grandmother. I love the bold, brashness, powered by faith, of David before Goliath and his mighty claim, "This day the Lord will..."! I love Isaiah peering down through history and seeing the coming Lord and His great sacrifice where, "the iniquity of us all to fall on Him". I love Peter walking on the water to Jesus (by his example I am encouraged to reach out to Jesus when I fall down). How about the time Paul and Silas were in the prison, and every verse of their song of praise was a little louder and stronger in faith, until the very foundation of the prison and even of Hell were shaken. So how about you who is your favorite?

Have you ever noticed that all our favorite characters of the Bible faced many obstacles and had many problems they had to overcome? Think of Abraham, too old for kids and his wife beyond the age of having children, big obstacles. Then for God to speak to him of a son, to a lesser man this would have been seen as some cruel torture. And yet, Abraham believed God.

And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Romans 4:19-21 (NKJV)

Ruth was a widow, foreigner, and living with a woman who had lost all her sons. David was the forgotten youngest son; his father did not even bring him out to stand before Samuel to have a chance to be king. Isaiah was a man of unclean lips standing before God and would stand before many kings. Peter faced not just the waves of the sea, but also the waves of weeping, embarrassment, and dread, when he denied His Lord; but was restored and feed the sheep and lambs. And Paul and Silas were not in the prison as visitors, the chains were there to give the

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authorities time to decide how these men should die; but the gates swung open and the chains no longer bound.

You face obstacles as well. Benjamin Franklin once said, "The only things certain in life are death and taxes". I would like to amend that slightly, "The only things certain in life are death and taxes and obstacles". We all, rich or poor, face obstacles. The question is what we do with the obstacles we face. Many a man has gone to his grave under the burden of obstacles. However, we can be like many of the characters of the Bible and by faith overcome our obstacles.

The man or woman of prayer must come to grips with this problem. The nature of prayer is facing obstacles. First there are the problems of life that would keep us from faith and prayer. Everyone has them, many face them, and some overcome them. Those who do overcome, then face the obstacles to prayer. Prayer is the power of God working through a man or woman of faith. It is the most powerful force on earth and God's chosen way to move mightily among men and nations. It is obvious that there would be obstacles to prayer. The devil must try to stop prayer and those who pray. So the man or woman of prayer will face obstacles, both personal and in prayer.

And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Matthew 15:22-28 (NKJV)

This woman had a problem, her daughter was in a struggle, and the situation was desperate. However, bad as that was there was more against this woman, there was a heap of obstacles. This woman wanted relief for her daughter; some people just accept the situation. This woman heard about Him and sought out Jesus; some people just wish something would happen. This woman spoke her faith (she spoke so much it troubled the disciples); some people only speak their complaint. This woman was not a Jew; some people let race, sex, creed, location, jobs, money, or other situations keep them from Jesus. This woman was challenged; some people stop at the first challenge to faith. This woman had faith; she had great faith!

God is calling to you today. First, He calls each of us to come to Him and receive His saving grace. Have you been struggling with problem of life that strives against you, working to keep you from salvation? Overcome the obstacles by faith and be saved. Next God is calling you to live your life in Him. His life is a life of abundance and blessing. He wants to bless you because He loves you and so you can be a blessing to others. The devil comes to steal, kill, and destroy; so he throws obstacles in

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your way. Overcome the obstacles by faith and live the life God has for you. God is calling you to pray. His call is to effective fervent prayer that avails much; His call is for intercessors joining with Jesus in His intercession. The ideal that you would pray, effective prayers, or that you would join with Jesus in intercession, scares the devil, so he throws obstacles in your way. Overcome the obstacles by faith and pray.

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. James 5:16b (NKJV)

So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. Ezekiel 22:30 (NKJV)

Overcoming is possible and it is necessary if we are going to be effective in prayer. We can see the record in the Bible of dozens and dozens of people who overcame the obstacles they faced, we can overcome as well. There are basic principles to overcoming, those who follow the principles, with faith and endurance, will overcome. First, keep focused on Jesus, not on the obstacle. Second seek all Jesus has for us, His salvation wins for us an abundant life, not just a “get by” life. Third, speak what God says, his Word is the final word on the matter, not what the obstacles say. Fourth, act on your faith, the Bible record is consistent, every obstacle over comer acted on their faith. Fifth, do not take “no” for an answer, “no” is brought by the obstacles. Keep coming, stand in faith and do not give up and you will have answers from God.

Abraham overcame obstacles and his example gives us many points to consider and follow as we overcome. Abraham kept his focus on God. Abraham was looking for the Lord when the Lord came to check on Sodom. Abraham sought the blessing God had for him. He continued to seek for, believe for, and then received Isaac the answer to God’s promise. Abraham spoke his faith, his name and Sarah’s were statements of faith in God. He spoke faith not the obstacles. He did not go around saying, she is so old, but called her Sarah, mother of nations. Abraham acted on his faith, he served the Lord; making a meal for Him, walking with Him, keeping the ways of the Lord by doing what is right and just, and in meekness he prayed and interceded for others. And he keep coming in faith, he believed the promise and promiser over the evidence of his eye and the years of the calendar. In Genesis Chapter 18 it says, Abraham returned to his place. This was after his intercession for Sodom. Please note this is not a physical place, he later went to Egypt, this was a return or continuing to stand in his place of faith.

It worked for Abraham; he overcame the obstacles. It has worked for many others, who have overcome many obstacles. It will work for you. There is no obstacle that can stand before your God; so stand with Him and be victorious. The call of salvation, the call to abundant life, and the call to prayer and intercession is answered by the man or woman who will overcome obstacles.

And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)

Let us pray!

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A Call for Prayer

Pray for Joyce – Pray for the children of the school, their families, and for the staff of the school. All of life is fragile and lived on the edge, but for many at the school their lives are closer to the edge than most people. Great concerns are there daily for them; some like a snake or wild animal are obvious, others are just as deadly, but more hidden and subtle. Please continue to pray for safety, help, provision, and guidance as Joyce and her team reach out to this region of Brazil and to these people. Your prayers and gifts make a huge difference for this ministry and through the ministry to these people, especially the young people of the school.

Pray for the BBB Conference in Poland the last weekend in June. Pray for the men and women going to the conference. Pray for provision and opportunity to go. Pray for the messages to be preached, taught, shared, and lived, among the participants and those at home, as they return.

Pray to Overcome – Pray for yourself, your church, and ministries that we would be over comers in Christ. Pray that the walls of obstacles would not stop the work of the ministry and answers to our prayers. Jesus has begun a good work in you; He will fulfill it!

being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

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 the Peace of Jerusalem

Pray for Pastors of Churches

DK Limbu Daniel – Pastor in Nepal
Jacek Gromadzki – Pastor in Kolobrzeg, Poland
William (Bill) Williamson – Pastor in Cedaredge, Colorado
Charles and Janice Wilson – Pastors in Wyola, Montana
Ewa and Sylwester Sobczak – Pastors in Bialogard, Poland
Mark and Patty Spencer – Pastors in Longmont, Colorado

Pray for the Churches

Churches in Belarus
Churches in Poland
Churches of Germany

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Churches in Nepal
Churches in USA
Churches in your nation and on your heart

Pray for Leadership over multiple Churches

DK Limbu Daniel – Church planter among the 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

- Volume 1 – *A Call to Prayer*,
- Volume 2 – *A Life Of Prayer*,
- Volume 3 – *Faithful in Prayer*
- Volume 4 – *Effective in Prayer*

The books of this series on effective prayer are available at www.voiceofthanksgiving.com