

Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of Aug 8, 2010

Seven days without prayer makes one weak.

Allen E. Vartlett

The Life of Prayer

Searching for Prayer

David Williamson

There have been many great searches in history, but none more famous than the search by Henry Stanley for Dr. Livingstone. Dr. David Livingstone was a missionary explorer in Africa in the late 19th century. Livingstone would travel to parts of Africa unknown to the Western World and then return weeks or months later and give a series of meetings to scientific organizations and lectures open to the public. All of these meetings were covered in detail in the newspapers, making Livingstone a national and even international sensation.

At this same time there was a cadre of newspapermen who were part explorer, traveler, and adventurer. They would go to unusual places, talk to interesting people, and find unusual news stories and then report them via their home newspaper. Newspapers would then reprint articles from these papers, and articles would be read in papers around the world. These newspapermen became famous, in some case more so than the famous people and stories they covered. Henry Stanley was rapidly becoming one of the most famous newspapermen in the world.

In the late 1860s Livingstone left for yet another trip into Africa, only this time he did not return when expected. As time passed people began to speculate what had happened. Was Dr. Livingstone alive, if so, why had he not returned or was he dead? Questions about Livingstone were bantered about in newspapers across Europe, America, and Asia. It was clear that the newspaperman, who found Livingstone or what had happened to him, would have the greatest story of the decade. Henry Stanley and the editor of the New York Herald newspaper, James Gordon Bennett, decided that Stanley should go and find Livingstone.

After weeks of searching Stanley entered a village on the shores of Lake Tanganyika in Africa and out of a hut came a white man. Stanley walked up to him, offered his hand and is reported to have said, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" It was the much sought after doctor. The search was over and Livingstone was found. He had stayed in Africa because he had been ill and trying to press on in his explorations, including a search for the true source of the Nile River. Stanley stayed with Livingstone for a time and then returned to write his a book about his search. The search is important in prayer as well.

There are three basic forms of prayer, first is fellowship with God. The complete and perfect work of Jesus on the cross, coupled with His resurrection, has open the way for us to come to the Father.

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As we fellowship with Him we are changed, guided, and empowered. God has desired and continues to long for fellowship with His children. This fellowship is a form of prayer that we receive from God and cultivate by walking with Him. “Of necessity it includes confession on my part and forgiveness upon God’s part, for only so can we come into the relation of fellowship. Adoration, worship belong to this first phase of prayer” S. D. Gordon from *Quite Talks on Prayer*.

The second form of prayer is petition. Petition is a definite request of God for something I need. “Everything we need comes from Him. Our friendships, ability to make money, health, strength in temptation, and in sorrow, guidance in difficult circumstances, and in all of life’s movements: help of all sorts, financial, bodily, mental, spiritual—all come from God, and necessitate a constant touch with Him” S. D. Gordon from *Quite Talks on Prayer*. Petition must be a constant part of our life. As we go through the day we lift our request to God and receive from Him His answers and supply.

Building on these first two types of prayer, fellowship and petition, is the third form of prayer, intercession. There is much to learn about intercession, and as I use the term here it encompasses a wide range of activities of prayer, but the foundation of this form is praying for others. “It is standing in the gap as a go-between, mutual friend, between God and some one who is either out of touch with Him, or is needing special help” S. D. Gordon from *Quite Talks on Prayer*. Intercession is an alliance with God on behalf of a need or situation that God in His love and plans wants to rectify. The intercessor joins with Jesus, who ever lives to make intercession, and as God’s representative on Earth, prays with Jesus for a person or nation, for a situation or event, for a need or condition.

Central to success in prayer, in all three types of prayer, is the teaming together of God and man. In effective prayer there is no such thing as the “Lone Ranger” type person. No man prays alone with success; it is by definition impossible, to pray, we must draw near to God. Relationship with God makes prayer effective and powerful. Relationship with God opens the door for God to do what He longs to do here on earth and with individuals and nations.

The great power of prayer is in making our self available for God to team up with us. All that is necessary for effective prayer is provided by God, He has the compassion, the knowledge, and the wherewithal to do great and mighty things. And by the work of Christ, His redeemed children can come and join with Him in prayer. This relationship for prayer is similar to what we know in salvation. Christ won us the right and way for receiving, God is waiting and longing for us to come, and when we respond to the call of the Holy Spirit, we are saved.

Effective prayer is the same. Jesus did the work by His sacrifice and victory to open the way. God is searching for those who will come to Him, fellowship with Him, petition Him, and intercedes with Him. The Holy Spirit is beckoning us to come. The only thing remaining is will we respond. One way to look at effective prayer is to think of God searching for a man or woman with whom He can join in prayer, God and man or God and woman. When this teaming up happens, then we have effective prayer, our asking gives God the opportunity to do as He has planned. He, in His great

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love and justice, desires to do things here on Earth. He is searching for a man or woman with whom He might partner in prayer and work.

We all say, here I am Lord, work with me. However, it is not that easy. God is searching for a person of faith; without faith it is impossible to please God. God is searching for a person who desires God's will over their own will. God is searching for a person who is not bearing unforgiveness. God is searching for a person who believes the promises of God are for today and are the answer to our every need. God is searching for a person who has a proper heart attitude. God is searching for a person who is motivated by love, not lust, fear, emotions, worldliness, sin, doubts, anger, stress, or the rest of the worldly range of motivations. You see there is a great challenge to being the person God is searching for. His search is for the prayer partner who will and can work with Him.

If we are going to be a prayer partner then we must be made ready and willing to come, believe, act, and respond as God desires and demands. This is the requirement He places on His prayer partners. We must come to the Holy Spirit School of Prayer. Here He (the Holy Spirit) teaches not so much how to pray, but how to have relationship with God, faith in God, and the character of God. Students who grow and mature in these areas are candidates for partnership with God in prayer.

As we walk in the Holy Spirit training we come to be more useful, prepared for when God is looking for a partner for the prayer project of His choosing. Our training allows us to say, God you can stop here, here is the one you are searching for. Pray with and through me, for this need you want to address. This also means that we are increasingly available for God to use for great and mighty things as part of our prayer partnership. It also means He can hold us in reserve for that special project or decisive moment.

Father, here I am, teach me, prepare me, and work with and through me. Father, I long to be useful to you in prayer, I long to team up with you and work with You, and I long to be a prayer partner with you. Father search me, and mold me, so your search for a prayer partner need go no further.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24 (NKJV)

Let us pray!

A Call for Prayer

Pray for Pastor Daniel – Continue to pray for health, strengthening, and rest.

Pray for Pastor Charles – Continue to pray for health, strengthening, and rest.

Then pray for the other pastors in our *Continue Faithful in Prayer* list and for your pastor

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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 Białogard, Poland
Mark and Patty Spencer – Pastors in Longmont, Colorado

Pray for the Churches

Churches in Belarus
Churches in Poland
Churches of Germany
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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