

# Voice of Thanksgiving

Calling a Company of Believers Together for Prayer

For the Week of February 5, 2012

The battle of prayer is against two things in the earthlies: wandering thoughts and lack of intimacy with God's character as revealed in His word. Neither can be cured at once, but they can be cured by discipline.

Oswald Chambers

## *The Life of Prayer*

### Ask

David Williamson

Life is filled with questions. From the earliest day of man, questions have been asked. For example, "Now we have before you a species much like a horse. This one is wrapped in alternating black and white stripes and will delight children of all ages though all time. Adam what are you going to call this animal?" Sometimes the questions have been sad, like the time God asked Adam and Eve, "Where are you?" There have been powerful questions such as those of the great intercession of Abraham, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" There have been surprising questions like Samuel ready to anoint the new king and asking, "Are all the young men here?" The answer surprised everyone when they asked a question of Zacharias as to the name of his son. In response to this question, Zacharias wrote the answer, "His name is John". There are life changing questions as well, such as on the Day of Pentecost. In response to mighty workings of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of Peter, the people were cut to the heart, and asked Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Family life is filled with questions. Many are wonderful and exciting questions, "Will you marry me?" and "Where shall we live?" Later there are questions like, "What shall be the name of this child?" and "What was his first word?" There are at times the questions are tougher like, "What does Timmy's teacher want to talk to us about?"

Life is filled with questions. First and foremost is the question asked by the people in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, "What must we do to be saved?" Other very important questions are those we ask in prayer.

We have been talking about TDA (Temporary Duty Assignments) in prayer, and we began to look at an important question, "How can we be effective in completing a TDA in prayer?" In answer to that question we began to look at one of the answers presented by Jesus as recorded in the Bible. Our goal is to learn more and in greater depth how to be successful and effective in prayer, so we can complete our TDAs in prayer.

***Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*** Mark 11:24 (KJV)

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The first lesson of this teaching is ***What things soever ye desire***. Effective prayer begins with desire. And to be effective our desire must be whole hearted desire. We cannot mix or dilute our desire, if we are going to receive the answers we need.

***And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.***

Jeremiah 29:13 (NKJV)

## LESSON TWO – ***What things soever ye desire, when ye pray***

It is not enough to just desire, we must also pray and effective prayer is a spoken expression of our desire. Jesus asked the blind man, “What do you want Me to do for you?” Think about this question. Everyone present at that place knew what the man wanted, he was blind! You can almost hear the collective ‘Duh’ from the crowd. And yet it was so important for the man to say what he wanted. This is a very important lesson of effective prayer. Lesson two of this teaching on prayer is to ask!

***So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?” The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”*** Mark 10:51 (NKJV)

When we read through teaching on prayer in the Bible we repeatedly see this command over and over Jesus says, ask. For example there are these verses:

***Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*** Matthew 7:7 (NKJV)

***Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*** Matthew 7:9-11 (NKJV)

***And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.*** Matthew 21:22 (NKJV)

The word translated ask in these verses and many other verses is the Greek word, “aiteo” which means to ask, to beg, to call for, to crave, to desire, to require. Simple study of the Greek words used show that it is speaking the request out loud. The Greek language is very exact in the use of words. Some people claim we can ask in our heart, but the Bible use of Greek words does not bear this out. For example if your “prayer” is something you ponder in your heart, you would use the word “noieo” to exercise the mind, to consider, or to think.

Asking, forces a person to identify their desire; removing it from some general ideas and wants. The blind man could have answered Jesus by saying, “I would like to be better”, but this is too nebulous for faith. Effective prayer is our desire asked for in faith, to do this we must form our desire into words and speak our prayer request.

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About now someone will mention the teaching in James chapter four. And just by way of note; each time James writes “ask” he used the Greek word “aiteo”. Yes, we can ask amiss and it hinders our prayers, but this also means we can pray properly and have great success.

***You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*** James 4:2-3 (NKJV)

Please note the prayer problems presented by James. He begins with some obvious things, but the most important is “You do not have because you do not ask.” Today, at your appointed prayer time and place, God was there and waiting for you. His words to you were the same as those Jesus asked the blind man, ***“What do you want Me to do for you?”*** For what did you ask?

Once people ask, there is the concern about asking amiss. We get hung up on “pleasures” or as the King James Version has it “lusts. However, the Greek word here is “kakos” and it can be translated as: badly, amiss, diseased, evil, grievously, miserably, sick, sore. James is telling us that if we ask when we pray, we still may not get our answers because we ask badly. Too often people prayers are grievous, miserable, and sickly. That is praying badly.

The blind man could have asked for an aide to walk him around so he could have a better life, although still blind. That would have been asking for sickly things. It would have hindered what Jesus wanted to do; He wanted to heal not just help. It minimizes our faith in God and what He can and will do, if we ask badly or sickly, or miserably. It would be on par with asking for help so we could rob a bank; that is just not within God’s nature or plans. Not asking amiss comes from spending time with God and in His Word. His nature is caught; it comes on those who walk closely with Him.

***If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*** John 15:7 (NKJV)

We also ask amiss by changing our prayers from asking to explaining things. Many prayers are weak because so often they are not asking, but have become an explanation of the problem or situation. Prayers are often like if the blind man had responded to Jesus, by saying, “The eye is the greatest of all of Gods creation, so marvelous in design and function. A study of just the muscles around the eye and their function is too great for most to comprehend...”

Jesus taught us to pray, ***“Give us day by day our daily bread”***. But many times prayers are more like, “The cells of the body need nutrients and these come by various foods. One of these foods is bread and it can provide for the needs of the body...” And then the prayer goes on to explain how to bake bread and the history of “Wonder Bread”. This is explaining not asking. Often people pray amiss by explaining the problem, the situation, the need, the rules, the traditions, and the world’s

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beliefs and positions. What we should pray is to ask like the blind man; when Jesus said, ***“What do you want Me to do for you?”*** The blind man asked, ***“Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”***

Explanation instead of asking is a big problem. When we explain we are limiting things to what we think and observe. It is a form of saying, “You see God; this is the way it is.” Compare that mentality to that of the blind man. The thinking of the world at that time was that blind men are blind for life. But this blind man opened the door for God to do exceedingly abundantly above all that man thinks.

***Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,*** Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)

The Greek word translated as “think” in this verse means, to exercise the mind (observe) to comprehend, to heed and is sometimes translated as consider, perceive, think, or understand. If answers to my prayers are limited to my understanding, then I will miss out on the exceedingly abundant answers of an all knowing, all powerful, supernatural God. The key is to ask by faith, not to limit by explaining.

Lesson two in our quest to be effective in prayer is to learn to ask in prayer. We have not if we do not ask. And anything short of speaking the words of our request is not asking. When we ask then we must guard against asking amiss. Obviously this includes asking to consume as part of our lust, but we also must guard against asking badly, making our prayers grievous, miserable, and sickly, killing faith.. And we must guard against the changing of our asking into just an explanation of things and how we see things and limiting God’s answers by what we think. We can and should pray asking and in faith receive God’s wonderful answers.

***And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*** John 14:13-14 (NKJV)

*Let us pray!*

## **A Call for Prayer**

***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)

This week please ask for the nations. We are to ask for opportunity for the Gospel to be preached and for the winning of the people to Christ. In some nations the opportunities are there for the taking, but prayer is needed to draw people to take the opportunity. In other nations preaching of the Gospel is restricted or even illegal; government, rules, regulations, and policies must change. This comes by prayer. Many places people must be sent to tell the “Good News”. They are sent by

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prayer. And opportunities must come for the Holy Spirit to work on and in hearts. These come by prayer. Will you ask for a nation?

## **Pray for God's favor and blessing working in these and other countries:**

Churches in Belarus  
Churches of Germany  
Churches in USA  
Churches in Poland  
Churches in Nepal  
Churches in your nation and on your heart

**Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem** – Pray for Jerusalem and Israel, God's protection and deliverance from the attacks by Satan and the world. Pray that the hearts of Jews would be open to receiving the Messiah who has come, Jesus Christ.

**Pray for Mark and Patty Spencer** – Pray for Mark and Patty, they are on Sabbatical. Pray for provision, protection, refreshing, as well as for guidance and direction from God.

**Pray for Pastor Daniel and Nepal** – Pray for continued favor of God for help and protection in their evangelistic efforts and raising-up churches and ministry across this land, with the Nepali people in other countries.

**Pray for Joyce Abrahamson** – Pray for protection and help for the students and staff of the school in Brazil.

**Pray for Charles and Janice Wilson** – Pray for continued strengthening for Charles and for outreach to the people of the Crow reservation and that region of Montana.

## **Pray for these and other Pastors:**

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

## **Calling Christians to Effective Fervent Prayer**

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