



Open Water Ministries

~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, help me today to keep a right perspective of what You have called me to do. When I get tired and the devil tries to convince me to quit, please help me remember that if everyone stops rowing the boat, it won't go anywhere. Even if no one else notices what I am doing, I know that You see every move I make. Whatever I do, Lord, I do for You. Lord help me to stay focused on You, and to lean on You, for everything, in Your name, Jesus; I ask it.
Amen.

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1 AND THE whole congregation of the Israelites assembled at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there; and the land was subdued before them. **2** And there remained among the Israelites seven tribes who had not yet divided their inheritance. **3** Joshua asked the Israelites, How long will you be slack to go in and possess the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you? **4** Provide three men from each tribe, and I will send them to go through the land and write a description of it according to their [tribal] inheritances; then they shall return to me. **5** And they shall divide it into seven parts. Judah shall remain in its territory on the south and the house of Joseph shall remain in its territory on the north. **6** You shall describe the land in seven divisions, and bring the description here to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the Lord our God. **7** But the Levites have no portion among you, for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance. Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance east of the Jordan, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave them. **8** So the men arose and went, and Joshua charged them saying, Go and walk through the land and describe it and come again to me, and I will cast lots for you here before the Lord in Shiloh. **9** And the men went and passed through the land and described it by cities in seven portions in a book; and they came again to Joshua to the camp at Shiloh. **10** Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord, and there [he] divided the land to the Israelites, to each [tribe] his portion. **11** And the lot of the Benjamites came up according to their families; and the territory of their lot fell between the tribes of Judah and Joseph. **12** On the north side their boundary began at the Jordan; then it went up to the shoulder of Jericho on the north and up through the hill country westward and ended at the Beth-aven wilderness. **13** Then the boundary passed over southward toward Luz, to the shoulder of Luz (that is, Bethel); then it went down to Ataroth-addar by the mountain that lies south of Lower Beth-horon. **14** The boundary extended from there, and turning about on the western side southward from the mountain that lies to the south opposite Beth-horon, it ended at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a city of the tribe of Judah. This formed the western side [of Benjamin's territory]. **15** The southern side began at the edge of Kiriath-jearim, and the boundary went on westward to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. **16** Then the boundary went down to the edge of the mountain overlooking the Valley of Ben-hinnom [son of Hinnom], which is at the north end of the Valley of Rephaim; and it descended to the Valley of Hinnom, south of the shoulder of the Jebusites, and went on down to En-rogel. **17** Then it bent toward the north and went on to En-shemesh and on to Geliloth, which was opposite the ascent of Adummim, and went down to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. **18** And it went on to the north of the shoulder [of Beth]-Arabah and down to the Arabah. **19** Then the boundary passed along to the north of the shoulder of Beth-hoglah and ended at the northern bay of the Salt [Dead] Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This was the southern border. **20** And the Jordan was its boundary on the east side. This was the inheritance of the sons of Benjamin by their boundaries round about, according to their families. **21** Now the cities of the tribe of Benjamin according to [their] families were: Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, **22** Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, **23** Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, **24** Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba; twelve cities with their villages; **25** Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, **26** Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah, **27** Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, **28** Zelah, Haeleph, the Jebusite [city]—that is, Jerusalem—Gibeah, and Kiriath-[jearim]; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin according to their families.

Chapter 18

As we get into chapter eighteen we find that the tabernacle was then set up at Shiloh. Now the tabernacle, the place of the worship of God, which was with them there in the wilderness, and wherever they would go they would set up the tabernacle. It was the place where they would offer their sacrifices unto God. They were not allowed to offer their sacrifices to God just anyplace. Only one place could they really make an offering unto God, a sacrifice, and that was at the tabernacle.

So now that they're in the land, the first place where the tabernacle was set up within the land was at Shiloh. So this is the place for the spiritual gathering together of the people. It would seem that the capital, if there were such a thing at that time, was probably in Shechem. But the spiritual center of the people was at Shiloh. That is where they set up the tabernacle; and thus, the offering of the sacrifices, the institution of the offerings of the priesthood and so forth, was made there at Shiloh.

Now at this point there remained seven tribes that had not yet received their inheritance. Only three of the tribes by this point had actually received the territory that belonged to them. So they chose three men from each of these tribes, that they might go into this territory as a survey team, and more or less mark out the territory, draw out the boundaries. Usually the boundaries were by cities and rivers, and valleys and mountains, and so forth, so that they could draw out the boundaries of the territories the tribes were to receive. So in the eighteenth chapter it deals with the drawing of the boundaries, and then of the casting of the lots for the various tribes. In verse eleven,

The lot of the tribe of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the lot of the tribe of Judah and the children of Judah (Jos 18:11).

Benjamin was to dwell right there actually around the area of Jerusalem and north of that, a narrow strip that went from Jordan on up through Bethel. (Through The Bible C-2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries; 1979-1986)

XVI. PAUL AND HIS REQUESTS FOR PRAYER (Continued)

"We announce the law of prayer as follows: A Christian's prayer is a joint agreement of the will and his cabinet, the emotions, the conscience, the intellect, working in harmony at white heat, while the body co-operates under certain hygienic conditions to make the prayer long enough sustained at high voltage to insure tremendous results, supernatural and unearthly."—Rev. Homer W. Hodge

We come to the request of Paul made to the Church at Ephesus, found in the latter part of Ephes. 6 of the Epistle to those Christians: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; "And for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, "For which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak." For this Church he had labored and prayed night and day, with many watchings and tears and much humility. As he drew a vivid picture of the Christian soldier, with his foes besetting him, he gave them this charge of praying specially for him.

To these Ephesian Christians he gave a comprehensive statement of the necessity, nature and special benefits of prayer. It was to be urgent, covering all times and embracing all manner of places. Supplication must give intensity, the Holy Spirit must be invoked, vigilance and perseverance must be added, and the whole family of saints were involved. The force of his request for prayer centered on him, that he might be able to talk with force, fluency, directness and courage. Paul did not depend upon his natural gifts, but on those which came to him in answer to prayer. He was afraid he would be a coward, a dull, dry speaker, or a hesitating stammerer, and he urged these believers to pray that he might have courage, not only to speak clearly, but freely and fully. He desired them to pray that he might have boldness. No quality seems more important to the preacher than that of boldness. It is that positive quality which does not reckon consequences, but with freedom and fullness meets the crisis, faces a present danger, and discharges unawed a present duty. It was one of the marked characteristics of apostolic preachers and apostolic preaching. They were bold men, they were bold preachers. The reference to the manifestation of the principle by them is almost the record of their trials. It is the applause of their faith. There are many chains which enslave the preacher. His very tenderness makes him weak. His attachments to the people tend to bring him into bondage. His personal intercourse, his obligations to his people, his love for them, all tend to hamper his freedom and restrain his pulpit deliverances. What great need to be continually praying for boldness to speak boldly as he ought to speak!

The prophets of old were charged not to be afraid of the faces of men. Unawed by the frowns of men, they were to declare the truth of God without apology, timidity, hesitancy or compromise. The warmth and freedom of conviction and of sincerity, the fearlessness of a vigorous faith, and above all the power of the Holy Ghost, are all wonderful helpers and elements of boldness. How all this should be coveted and sought with all earnestness by ministers of the Gospel in this day!

Meekness and humility are high virtues of the first importance in the preacher, but these qualities do not at all militate against boldness. This boldness is not the freedom of passionate utterances. It is not scolding nor rashness. It speaks the truth in love. Boldness is not rudeness. Roughness dishonors boldness. It is as gentle as a mother with a babe, but as fearless as a lion standing before a foe. Fear, in the mild and innocent form of timidity, or in the criminal form of cowardice, has no place in the true ministry. Humble but holy boldness is of the very first importance.

What hidden, mysterious mighty force can add courage to apostolical preaching, and give bolder utterances to apostolic lips? There is one answer, and it is that prayer can do the deed. What force can so affect and dominate evil that the very results of evil will be changed into good? We have the answer in Paul's words again, in connection with prayers made for him: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; Ye also helping together in prayer for us. What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached, and therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

We can see how the promises of God are made real and personal by prayer. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Here is a jeweled promise. Paul loved God, but he did not leave the promise alone, as a matter of course, to work out its blessed results. So he wrote to the Corinthians as we have before seen, "I am in trouble. I trust in God to deliver. Ye also helping together by prayer." Helping me by prayer, you help God to make the promise strong and rich in realization. Paul's prayer requests embraced "supplication for all saints," but especially for apostolic courage for himself. How much he needed this courage just as all true preachers, called of God, need it! Prayer was to open doors for apostolical labors, but at the same time it was to open apostolic lips to utter bravely and truly the apostolic message.

Hear him as he speaks to the Church at Colosses: "Withal praying also for us, that God would open to us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; "That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak." How appropriate such a request to be made by a present-day preacher to his congregation! How great the need of those things by the present-day preacher which Paul desired for himself!

As in the request to the Ephesians, Paul wants a "door of utterance" given him, that he may preach with the liberty of the Spirit, be delivered from being straitened in thought or hampered in delivery. Furthermore, he desires the ability to make manifest in the clearest terms, without confusion of thought, and with force of utterance, the Gospel "as he ought to speak," and just as every preacher should speak. Happy that preacher who ministers to a people who pray thus for him! And happier still if he inwardly feels, as he faces his responsible task and realizes how much he needs these things to preach clearly, forcibly and effectively, that he has urged his people to pray for him!

Prayer transmutes crosses, trials and oppositions into blessings, and causes them to work together for good. "These shall turn to my salvation through your prayers," says Paul. Just as the same things today in the life of the preacher are transmuted into gracious blessings in the end, "ye also helping together by prayer." Sainly praying mightily helped Apostolic preaching and rescued apostolic men from many sore straits. So just such praying in these days will effect like results in faithful preaching done by brave, fearless ministers. Prayer for the preacher avails just as prayer by the preacher avails. Two things are always factors in the life and work of a true preacher: First when he prays constantly, fervently and persistently for those to whom he preaches; and secondly, when those to whom he ministers pray for their preacher. Happy is the preacher so situated. Blessed is that congregation thus favored.

To the Church at Thessalonica Paul sends this pressing request, pointed, clear, and forcible:

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you;

"And that we may be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men."

He has in mind a race-course, on which the racer is exerting himself to reach the goal. Hindrances are in the way of his success and must be removed, so that the racer may finally succeed and obtain the reward. The "Word of the Lord" is this racer, as preached by Paul. This Word is personified and there are serious impediments which embarrass the running of the Word. It must have "free course." Everything in the way and opposing its running must be taken out of its roadway. These impediments in the way of the Word of the Lord "running and being glorified" are found in the preacher himself, in the Church to whom he ministers, and in the sinners around him. The Word runs and is glorified when it has unobstructed access to the minds and hearts of those to whom it is preached, when sinners are convicted for sin, when they seriously consider the claims of God's Word on them, and when they are induced to pray for themselves, asking for pardoning mercy. It is glorified when saints are instructed in religious experience, corrected of errors of doctrine and mistakes in practice, and when they are led to seek for higher things and to pray for deeper experiences in the Divine life.

Mark you. It is not when the preacher is glorified because of the wonderful success wrought by the Word. It is not when people praise him unduly, and make much of him because of his wonderful sermons, his great eloquence and his remarkable gifts. The preacher is kept in the background in all this work of glorification, even though he is foremost as being the object of all this praying.

Prayer is to do all these things. So Paul urges, entreats, insists, "Pray for us." And it is not so much prayer for Paul personally in his Christian life and religious experience. All this needed much prayer. It was really for him officially, prayer for him in the office and work of a Gospel minister. His tongue must be unloosed in preaching, his mouth unstopped, and his mind set free. Prayer must help in his religious life not so much because it would help to "work out his own salvation," but rather because right living would give strength to the Word of the Lord, and would save him from being a hindrance to the Word which he preached. And as he desires that no hindrance should be in himself which would defeat his own preaching, so he wants all hindrances taken away from the churches to whom he ministers that Church people may not stand in the way or weigh down the Word as it runs on the race-course attempting to reach the goal, even the minds and hearts of the people. Furthermore, he wishes hindrances in the unsaved to be set aside that God's Word as preached by him may reach their hearts and be glorified in their salvation.

With all this before him, Paul sends this pressing request to these believers at Thessalonica, "Pray for us," because praying by true Christians would greatly help in the running of the Word of the Lord.

Wise that preacher who has the eyes to see these things, and who realizes that his success largely depends upon praying of this kind on the part of his people for him. How much do we need churches now who, having the preacher in mind and the preached Word on their hearts, pray for him that "the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified."

One other item in this request is worth noting: "That we may be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men." Such men are hindrances in the way of the Word of the Lord. Few preachers but are harassed by them and need to be delivered from them. Prayer helps to bring such a deliverance to preachers from "unreasonable and wicked men." Paul was annoyed by such characters, and for this very reason he urged prayer for him that he might find deliverance from them.

Summing it all up, we find that Paul feels that the success of the Word, its liberty and largeness, are bound up in their prayers, and that their failure to pray would restrict its influence and its glory. His deliverance from unreasonable and wicked men as well as his safety, he asserts, are in some way dependent upon their prayers. These prayers, while they greatly helped him to preach, would at the same time protect his person from the cruel purposes of wicked and unreasonable men.

In Hebrews 13:9, Paul thus opens his heart to those Hebrew Christians in asking them to pray for him:

"Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly."

In this prayer request, Paul's inward consciousness of his integrity of heart and his internal witness to his personal honesty come out and are a basic truth of his Christian character. No room for blame does he find in himself. "Pray for us." Your prayers for us will find in me honest integrity and honest execution and honest administration of all prayer results.

The request is intended to stir up the saints to more earnest praying, more devotion to prayer, and more urgency in prayer. Prayer must affect his visit to them, would hasten it and enlarge its beneficial results.

Paul is on the most cordial and freest terms with Philemon. He is anxious and expects to visit him at some future day and makes the appointment. He takes it for granted that Philemon is praying, for as this man had been converted under his ministry, it is assumed that he has been taught the Pauline lesson of prayer. He assumes also that prayer will open up the way for his visit, remove the hindrances and bring them graciously together. So he requests Philemon to prepare a lodging place for him, adding, "I trust through your prayers I shall be given to you." Paul had the idea that his movements were hindered or helped by the prayers of his brethren.

(Prayer and Praying Men; EM Bounds; Chapter 16 ; Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer.)

PURPOSE IN PRAYER; by Edward M. Bounds

I."My Creed leads me to think that prayer is efficacious, and surely a day's asking God to overrule all events for good is not lost. Still there is a great feeling that when a man is praying he's doing nothing, and this feeling makes us give undue importance to work, sometimes even to the hurrying over or even to the neglect of prayer.

"Do not we rest in our day too much on the arm of flesh? Cannot the same wonders be done now as of old? Do not the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth still to show Himself strong on behalf of those who put their trust in Him? Oh that God would give me more practical faith in Him! Where is now the Lord God of Elijah? He is waiting for Elijah to call on Him."—James Gilmour of Mongolia

The more praying there is in the world the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil everywhere. Prayer, in one phase of its operation, is a disinfectant and a preventive. It purifies the air; it destroys the contagion of evil. Prayer is no fitful, shortlived thing. It is no voice crying unheard and unheeded in the silence. It is a voice which goes into God's ear, and it lives as long as God's ear is open to holy pleas, as long as God's heart is alive to holy things.

God shapes the world by prayer. Prayers are deathless. The lips that uttered them may be closed in death, the heart that felt them may have ceased to beat, but the prayers live before God, and God's heart is set on them and prayers outlive the lives of those who uttered them; outlive a generation, outlive an age, outlive a world.

That man is the most immortal who has done the most and the best praying. They are God's heroes, God's saints, God's servants, God's vicegerents. A man can pray better because of the prayers of the past; a man can live holier because of the prayers of the past, the man of many and acceptable prayers has done the truest and greatest service to the incoming generation. The prayers of God's saints strengthen the unborn generation against the desolating waves of sin and evil. Woe to the generation of sons who find their censers empty of the rich incense of prayer; whose fathers have been too busy or too unbelieving to pray, and perils inexpressible and consequences untold are their unhappy heritage. Fortunate are they whose fathers and mothers have left them a wealthy patrimony of prayer.

The prayers of God's saints are the capital stock in heaven by which Christ carries on His great work upon earth. The great throes and mighty convulsions on earth are the results of these prayers. Earth is changed, revolutionised, angels move on more powerful, more rapid wing, and God's policy is shaped as the prayers are more numerous, more efficient.

It is true that the mightiest successes that come to God's cause are created and carried on by prayer. God's day of power; the angelic days of activity and power are when God's Church comes into its mightiest inheritance of mightiest faith and mightiest prayer. God's conquering days are when the saints have given themselves to mightiest prayer. When God's house on earth is a house of prayer, then God's house in heaven is busy and all potent in its plans and movements, then His earthly armies are clothed with the triumphs and spoils of victory and His enemies defeated on every hand.

God conditions the very life and prosperity of His cause on prayer. The condition was put in the very existence of God's cause in this world. Ask of Me is the one condition God puts in the very advance and triumph of His cause.

Men are to pray—to pray for the advance of God's cause. Prayer puts God in full force in the world. To a prayerful man God is present in realised force; to a prayerful Church God is present in glorious power, and the Second Psalm is the Divine description of the establishment of God's cause through Jesus Christ. All inferior dispensations have merged in the enthronement of Jesus Christ. God declares the enthronement of His Son. The nations are incensed with bitter hatred against His cause. God is described as laughing at their enfeebled hate. The Lord will laugh; The Lord will have them in derision. "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." The decree has passed immutable and eternal: I will tell of the decree: The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son; This day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Ask of Me is the condition a praying people willing and obedient. "And men shall pray for Him continually." Under this universal and simple promise men and women of old laid themselves out for God. They prayed and God answered their prayers, and the cause of God was kept alive in the world by the flame of their praying.

Prayer became a settled and only condition to move His Son's Kingdom. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened." The strongest one in Christ's kingdom is he who is the best knocker. The secret of success in Christ's Kingdom is the ability to pray. The one who can wield the power of prayer is the strong one, the holy one in Christ's Kingdom. The most important lesson we can learn is how to pray.

Prayer is the keynote of the most sanctified life, of the holiest ministry. He does the most for God who is the highest skilled in prayer. Jesus Christ exercised His ministry after this order.

PURPOSE IN PRAYER; by Edward M. Bounds

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Ezekiel 36:25; 36:26

Romans 8:15; 8:26-27

Galatians 4:6

Ephesians 2:18; 6:18

1 Timothy 2:1-3

James 1:14-18

Jude 1:20-21

(Purpose In Prayer; EM Bounds; Chapter 1 ; Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer.)

(Bible; Amplified; 2005; Page 356; Joyce Meyers; Word Software 9; 2008; Bible KJV 2005)

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 340-341)

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