



PRAY FOR SCOTLAND

Dear Friends, this is the 4th instalment of the Summer of Prayer emails using Alvin Vander-Griend's Booklet "**How Do I PRAY for my neighbours?**"

I have found as I share with people here in the States that they all want to know more about H.O.P.E. I've also come to realise that I'm very single minded and passionate about seeing Light Houses of Prayer spring up all over Scotland. I'm again and again so impressed how simple the vision is to communicate PRAY, CARE and SHARE with your neighbours. It's a call to all people of God not only the seasoned Intercessor but of a "grassroots" movement of people meeting in their homes praying. I heard someone say that "Both The people of God and the enemies of God underestimate the power and effectiveness of Prayer".

This week I came across some interesting quotes on prayer.

"Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church. It is a goodly Christian's weapon" (Martin Luther).

"We can do nothing without prayer. All things can be done by importunate prayer. It surmounts or removes all obstacles, overcomes every resisting force and gains its ends in the face of invincible hindrances" (E.M Bounds).

"Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays" (Soren Kierkegaard).

"The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray (Samuel Chadwick).

The last thing Satan wants is for us to pray, finding comfort and strength in the arms and presence of God. Maybe this is why those who have spent a lot of time in prayer testify as to how hard it is. Martin Luther said, "No other work requires more labor and effort and therefore is more efficacious and fruitful" (Luther's Works, Vol. 25, p. 460).

My prayer is that we would see hundreds and hundreds of Homes lighting up, becoming Lighthouses of Prayer for their neighbours in 2009. In dark and stormy seas where would a lost boat go without the direction of the Light from a Lighthouse?

Blessings
Ola Nordstrom

The necessity of a clean heart - Alvin Vander-Griend

If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened: but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer. Psalm 66: 18-19

Sin hinders prayer. A person may pray and pray without receiving an answer, and then conclude that the problem is in God. In reality the problem may be in the person's heart. David understood that if he cherished sin his heart, the Lord would not hear him. One of the worst things about sin is that it obstructs prayer. We are shut out from God when we cherish sin because he is holy and cannot tolerate sin in his presence. When sin blocks prayer, the real problem is not that we have sinned but that, having sinned, we have not repented. It is only unconfessed sin, cherished in our hearts, that inhibits our prayers. Forgiven sin does not hinder prayer. Forgiven sinners are welcome in God's presence. Always eager to have us come into his presence, God has provided a way for sin to be removed through Jesus' blood so that we can come and not be hindered.

John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). When it's forgiven, our sin is gone, and it no longer impedes. The first requirement of prayer, then, is to confess anything in your heart that is not of God. When your sin is forgiven, you can be confident that God will hear and answer your prayer.

Don't be afraid to take inventory and to deal with what you find. Recently when I was confronted with a list of twenty sin-identifying Scripture texts, I at first thought, "My heart is clean before God. I don't have anything to confess." But I went through the list anyway, and to my amazement I found five areas of sin that needed to be dealt with. So I clearly identified what was offensive to God, confessed those things, and claimed God's forgiving grace. Through that I again discovered complete freedom in prayer. We can't have the privilege of prayer without purity of heart. Not only does sin hinder prayer; prayer hinders sin. The two are always opposed. The more careless we are about sin, the less we will pray. The more we pray, the less careless we will be about sin. Both sin and prayer are powerful forces. Which one is moving you?

Reflect

Is there any area of your life about which you are uneasy before God? Risk taking a closer look at it. You may find a "cherished" sin. Can you say to yourself with confidence what David said: "God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer"?

Prayer-Starters for Praying Psalm 66:18-19

Praise God that "he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9) Ask God to search your heart and life and reveal to you any sin that you may need to deal with. Then confess whatever he finds. Thank God for forgiving your sin and purifying you from all unrighteousness so that you can go confidently into his presence.

Pray a BLESSing on those who live or work near you:

Body (physical). Pray that God will meet their needs "according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19) **Labour (work).** Pray that they may live quiet lives, mind their own business, and work with their hands so that they may win the respect of others and not be dependent on anyone (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). **Emotional (inner life).** Pray for those who are depressed, that they may have peace of heart and mind and may put their hope in God (Psalm 42:5) **Social (relational).** Pray that they may have good friends who will stick by them at all times and family members who will stand by them in adversity (Proverbs 17:17) **Spiritual.** Pray that the kindness of God will lead them to repentance (Romans 2:4)

Pray for specific needs of individuals and families on your prayer list.

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