



PRAY FOR SCOTLAND

Dear Friends, this is the 5th instalment of the Summer of Prayer emails using Alvin Vander-Griend's Booklet "**How Do I PRAY for my neighbours?**"

I was just re-reading Alvin's booklet Make your Home a Lighthouse (If you have not yet read it you can request it from PfS) and I love Alvin's statement on page 3**YOU CAN** Make your Home a Light-House!

Picture a small lighthouse on the shore of a vast sea or a great lake. It stands atop a hill or juts out on a pier to give ships a beacon into the darkness. It's a light to guide the way and protect them from danger. A lighthouse shining in the darkness gives the mariners a landmark to chart their journey by and support them.

Jesus calls us to bring His light into this dark world. "While I am in the world" he said," I am the light of the world" (John9:5), and now as He reigns in heaven, Jesus sends His spirit to remind us, "You are the light of the world....let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven" (Matthew5:14-16)

You **CAN** fulfil Jesus' command by being a light of His love to others making your home a *Light-House*.

When believers band together to pray for their neighbours, they are a spiritual lighthouse. They ask the Lord to shine the light of His grace and blessing into their neighbour' lives- into their homes, families, workplaces and communities.

I was struck again by YOU CAN, not because we are great or can work hard but only because God has made everything available for us to fulfil His great commission and that He wants no one to perish. It is His will that we Pray and Care and Share with and for our neighbours, as God wants them all to come to the Wedding Feast.

So many statements we hear are saying YOU CAN NOT... but what a positive statement - YOU CAN. I wanted to write that again and again for my self and for all of us who feel, "Hmmm, I don't think I could do this or that! With the risk of being repetitive I say - YOU CAN... YOU CAN.... YOU CAN because God wants to equip and lead us to bring His light to our neighbours all over Scotland.

I have a little allotment to grow vegetables and I wanted to build a little hut on it to be able to be there and maybe sleep over once in a while. So I went to the farmer and asked for His permission to build and he said sure that would be great. Now it's up to me to get a start on foundations and most important of all calculating the cost so I know that I can finish what I started. So two thoughts: When you want to build you have to have permission and know that it will cost something to get it built!

When I was traveling around praying asking God to establish and call forth people for Houses Of Prayer Everywhere in Ayrshire, I sensed Him saying PERMISSION GRANTED several times. That made me determined to go to every town and village with faith in my heart asking God "that we will see light after light being lit throughout the shire".

On the cost part: I once heard Bert McKaig speak on "Time" being our Kingdom currency, something that we have to "spend". That made me think and wrestle with the question: What is it that holds me back from praying - spending more time in fellowship with the Father? For me I think that the TV often can get an disproportionate amount of time out of my day. I wrestled with my own arguments "But they're not bad programmes," "the preaching and movies are uplifting ",etc etc.... I realized that they are still something that I call "my time" and that's the heart of the matter, the "my time". As I asked in one of the previous emails , "how do we get time for praying ?" I have been thinking of a TV / media fast. A 40 day one, spending the time fellowshiping instead. I must say it feels like a challenge for me and a cost!

I guess as we seek The Lord for our neighbours God will point out different areas that we could put aside to BE LIGHT in our communities. Blessings, Ola Nordstrom

The Faith that receives - Alvin Vander-Griend

“Have faith in God.” Jesus answered.....”Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” Mark 11:22-24

Faith is a second requirement of true prayer. Prayers without faith are incomplete. Millions of prayers have been prayed with no faith and have thus failed in their intent. They were not true prayer. The astounding promise Jesus makes in Mark 11:24 seems to offer too much. How can God offer to do “whatever [we] ask for in prayer”? And why have so many believers asked, trusting him, and not received? The difficulty we have with this passage is really a difficulty in understanding faith. We tend to think of faith as a personal possession that exists wholly within us. We figure that if we have enough faith, we get what we ask for — and if we don't, we won't get it. But faith is not simply a possession.

It's an aspect of relationship. It's not something we own like an idea or a feeling. Faith always involves another person. It trusts the other person to think and act in a certain way. For example, throughout all the years my parents were alive, I knew they would welcome me anytime I came home. I knew they loved me. I trusted that they cared for me and were willing to help me anytime. In other words, I had faith in them. This faith was based on what I knew about them.

Faith in God is like that. It's a conviction about who he is, what he is like, and how he will always act. Praying in faith is not an inner conviction that God will act according to our desires if only we believe hard enough. It's believing that God will always respond to our prayers in accord with his nature, his purposes, and his promises. God does not want us simply to toss requests at him, hoping that some of them will be answered. He wants us to ask, knowing he is there, claiming what he promises, trusting that he will act in line with his nature and that his purposes will be achieved.

That's praying in faith. When you ask a person for something in good faith you don't ask for something the person would not be willing to give. I could never, for example, asked my parents to give me more than my share of their inheritance. I knew them too well to ask that. Similarly, if you truly know God, you will only ask for what is in accord with his will and not for anything that is purely selfish. If you want to grow strong in prayer, grow strong in faith. If you want to grow strong in faith, get to know God better.

If you want to get to know God better, spend time with him, reading his Word and listening to his Spirit.

Reflect

- Why do you think God has made faith such an indispensable condition of prayer?
- What kinds of things can you do to increase your faith?

Prayer - Starters for Praying Mark 11:22-24

Praise God for being trustworthy. Ask God to increase your faith so that you can pray more powerfully. Thank God for his willingness to hear and answer the prayers you bring him in faith.

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

Body. Pray that God will give them the discipline to eat healthfully, to exercise as needed, and to maintain habits that will enhance their health.

Labour. Pray that whatever their hands find to do, they may do it with all their might (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

Emotional. Isaiah said, “The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect on righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever” (Isaiah 32:17). Pray that they may be righteous and may experience the fruits of peace, quietness, and confidence.

Social. Give thanks for your neighbours. Pray that God will help them see the qualities of, and give thanks for, the people they relate to (Philippians 1:3).

Spiritual. Pray that they may have faith to believe that God exists ” and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Hebrews 11:6)

Pray for the needs of those who live or work near you, as prompted by the Holy Spirit. Trust that God is moving in response to your prayers.

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