



PRAY FOR SCOTLAND

Dear Friends

This is the 6th instalment of the Summer of Prayer emails using Alvin Vander-Griend's Booklet "**How Do I PRAY for my neighbours?**"

As this is the last email in this series I want to focus on Alvin's material, so this time you are getting two of the chapters out of the booklet.

We HOPE to hear how you are getting on with the Lighthouses of Prayer. Please email us and let us know if we can support your **Lighthouse** or give you more training. Also let us know what is happening around Scotland, testimonies of God touching our communities.

I am in Sweden at the moment and I have already meet 2 families who said that this is exactly what they have been thinking about ..how can we learn more? ...how do we start? I think that God is putting **PRAY-CARE - SHARE** on peoples' hearts all over the world and now it is up to us to respond!

Blessings
Ola Nordstrom

The Life that can pray - Alvin Vander-Griend

We have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. 1 John 33:21-22

Obedience is fundamental to effective prayer. Only those who obey God have the right to go into his presence with requests.

God delights in the prayers of his obedient children. When we want what God wants and live the way he likes, then we will tend to pray prayers that God will answer in the way we expect. And God, in answering our prayers, is supporting what he approves. Were he to answer the prayers of the disobedient, he would be aiding and abetting what he does not approve. That would not be like God.

To put it in other words, if we expect God to do for us what we ask, we should be prepared to do for him what he asks. If we listen to his words of command, God will listen to our words of request.

This principle also explains much of the weakness of prayer. Lack of power, lack of perseverance, and lack of confidence in prayer all stem from some lack in the Christian life. Often when prayer fails and we receive no answers, we assume the problem is in God, while in reality the problem really is in us.

The obedience God expects of us is not beyond our reach. God, who is committed to hearing the prayers of his obedient children, also gives enabling grace so that we will be able to live obediently. Touched by his grace and indwelt by his Spirit, we have both the desire and strength to do his will.

If you want to become powerful in prayer, spend time with the Lord and spend much time in the Word. That's where you will find the will of God clearly stated. Let "the word of Christ dwell in you richly" and control what you do and say (Colossians 3:16). Jesus reminds us that if we remain in him, and his words remain in us, we may ask whatever we wish and it will be given us (John 15:17)

Or, to put it more simply, let me ask, Do you want to have confidence when you pray and receive from God what you ask for? Commit yourself to living a life of obedience. By God's grace and with his Spirit living in you, you can do it! That's the bottom line.

Reflect

What difference will confidence make in your prayer life?

What kinds of things will confident pray-ers ask for?

What kinds of things do you think God is eager to give to those who obey his commands?

Prayer-Starts for Praying 1 John 3:21-22

Praise God for his generous, giving nature.

Confess any failure to keep God's commands or to do what pleases him.

Ask God for the desires of your obedient heart.

Thank God for this amazing promise to answer prayer.

Pray for the persons around you, using ideas from Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9-12

Pray that they may be full of knowledge of God's will.

Pray that they may learn to live in a way that is worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him.

Pray that they may bear fruit for God in all their works.

Pray that they may grow in their knowledge of God.

Pray that they may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to do good and resist evil.

Pray that they will be able to joyfully give thanks to the Father.

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.

Praying in Jesus' Name - Alvin Vander-Griend

"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." John 16:24

By offering to let us pray in his name, Jesus is offering an amazingly great privilege. It's as if he is giving us blank cheques to be drawn on his account, knowing we will use them for his honour and his advantage.

Jesus is demonstrating great trust in us. He is trusting that his honour and his interests are safe in our hands. Consider what it would mean to place your estate in the hands of another person: your credit cards, your home, your investments, your automobiles, your responsibilities, everything. You'd pick that person very carefully, wouldn't you? You'd really be giving that person control over your life and your future.

That's essentially what Jesus did when he authorized us to use his name in prayer. He gave us authority over his accounts. He asked us to exercise control over his estate –the kingdom of God.

We exercise our authority by prayer. By prayer we ask the Father for all that we need to do the job. By prayer we ask God to deal with demonic forces contrary to his will. By prayer we direct God's grace and power to strategic locations where it is needed.

Three phrases in particular help us understand what it means to pray in Jesus' name. First, we are authorized to be Christ's representatives. When we come to the Father in Jesus' name, we come as those who are authorized to act in his place. We "re-present" him. When we stand before the throne, the Father recognizes us as persons who stand in the place of his Son. That makes us acceptable.

Second, we come to God on the basis of Christ's merit. You and I have no claim on God, but Christ does. He merited the Father's favour by his perfect life and sacrifice. When we come in Jesus' name, we are identified with him. We come on the grounds of his claim on the Father. Our access depends solely on what Jesus has done.

Try to imagine yourself coming to the Father on your own, apart from Christ. You are unauthorized to come, because you have no claim on God's favour. In fact, you have a huge debt with God because of

your sins and you can expect nothing but his blazing wrath. That's the opposite of coming in the name of Jesus.

Third, we come asking in accord with Christ's will. We have the mind of Christ in us, so what we ask is what he would ask. He is asking us to ask for him. We are able to ask what he would ask because our wills are in sync with his will.

The Father so loves the Son that when we introduce the Son's name in prayer, we have his ear, we have secured his willingness, we have touched his heart.

Reflect

Think about the part of Christ's kingdom for which you have been given responsibility. What's needed there to advance the kingdom?

What can you do to learn how to pray more consciously in Jesus's name?

Prayer-Starters for Praying John 16:24

Praise God for his gracious provision of his Son, Jesus Christ, as the One through whom you are able to approach the throne and receive a hearing from God.

Confess any selfish praying that has not truly represented the mind of Christ and has not been in accord with his will.

Ask for anything you need in order to accomplish God's will in your life and in your world.

Pray an expanded version of the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) for those who live or work near you:

God's Concerns. Pray that they may know the Father who is in heaven, that their lives will glorify God, that his kingdom will be established in their homes and workplaces, and that they will desire to do his will as the angels in heaven.

Human Concerns. Pray that God will provide for their daily needs, forgive their sins, keep them from falling into temptation, and protect them from the devil's schemes.

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