



## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – September 2013

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.* Philipians 4: 6 ESV

Welcome to our September 2013 first Friday Call to Prayer. Our aim is to provide you with teaching that we trust will enhance your prayer experience and will be an encouragement to you. We will also provide you with praise items and prayer requests coming from within ANiC and the Anglican Communion worldwide.

We encourage you to set aside **the first Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>**, as a day of prayer and fasting for the Church in these critical days, ideally gathering with other believers in your parish or region for corporate prayer at some point in the day

### Prayer Quotes

*"...[the] power of prayer can never be overrated. They who cannot serve God by preaching need not regret. If a person can but pray he can do anything."*

*Charles H. Spurgeon 1834-1892*

## Ten Years Later - Part two

Last month, we began a two-part series leading up to October which will mark the ten year anniversary of the publication of this monthly first Friday Call to Prayer. What I have desired to do over these two months preceding October is to share seven things that I believe that the Lord has taught me through this decade-long process of preparing this monthly email. My goal is that, wherever we are in our knowledge and experience of prayer, we will be encouraged to go deeper.

So, let's examine these seven principles concerning prayer. Here are the first four that we looked at last month. (If you did not have an opportunity to read last month's meditation, it is available on the ANiC website. Just click [here](#) )

1. **Jesus himself was a man of prayer**

If the sinless Son of God in human form found it essential to spend time in prayer with his Father in order to carry out his ministry, how much more do we need to soak in his presence and learn to hear his voice in order to be obedient to him in our own lives!

2. **Prayer is a delight and privilege, not just an obligation or duty**

The truth is that, notwithstanding our sinful lives and repeated failures, we have unrestricted and unlimited access to Almighty God 24/7! We get to spend unlimited time, whenever or wherever we want, with the King of kings and Lord of lords!

3. **Prayer is the life-flow between God and us. Without it, we're out there on our own!**

Prayer is the two-way flow of life that energizes our relationship with God and provides us with power to obey.

4. **Prayer is for all of us, not just the hard core intercessors.**

Jesus wants to hear from everyone that he loves, that he died for, everyone in the family!

Now, let's look at the last three principles in some detail. Remember, the bottom line is growth in both our understanding *and experience* in prayer. I once heard a bible teacher and intercessor say that if we spent as much time praying as we did talking about prayer, the purposes of God would be more

evidently fulfilled in our midst. Our prayer life can and must be more than just a part of our orthodox evangelical theology. It can be a life-giving experience on a daily basis!

**5. Fear and guilt intimidate and rob us of the intimacy of prayer.**

Fear and guilt – they are like two home invaders who break into our lives to steal our sense of peace with God. Their attacks are relentless, insidious and common to us all.

Have you ever reflected on how these uninvited intruders operate in our lives? Guilt looks back to **the past**, bringing shame and condemnation. It screams at us “Failure! Disqualification! Unworthy! Unloved!” Just like Adam and Eve after the fall, we hide when we hear God coming. We’re ashamed to be too near him, and so we withdraw and isolate ourselves. That’s just where the enemy wants us, hopelessly focused on the past, and little or no threat to him.

Fear looks forward, bringing anxiety and apprehension about **the future**. It screams at us a thousand “what ifs”: “What if I can’t find a job! What if no one will like me! What if we run out of money! What if I get sick and can’t work! What if my marriage fails?” Again, the enemy plays on the vulnerability of our minds and conjures up all sorts of scenarios designed to entrap us in fear and anxiety.

Prayer brings us into an intimacy with Jesus that is in **the present**, right now; an absolutely safe place. He came among us, and died on the Cross to take all the guilt, shame and fear upon Himself! His sacrifice has mercifully dealt with the past, and his amazing love and provision securely holds our future. He’s made it possible for us to stop looking back and stop looking forward, and to just delight in Him in the present! Right now! Alleluia!

**6. If all of my prayers are requiring a specific answer from God, then I am missing out on some of the most rewarding ways to pray.**

There are some important types of prayer that do not require God to answer us. For instance:

- a) Thanksgiving; simply expressing our gratitude to the Lord for the prayers that he has already answered, and for his wonderful blessings in our lives, beginning with the greatest gift of all - our salvation. Brother Lawrence, in his classic book, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, shared that his most frequent prayer was simply, “Thank You, Father”, which he would repeat many times over as he went about his daily tasks. He felt that in faith it covered everything he needed to say.
- b) Worship or adoration; the prayers where we are putting into words our love and awe at who Almighty God really is in all his majestic splendor. We think of the Psalms as we read them or say them in church as the worship songs, the hymns of the Old Testament, and so they are. But if we consider them not just as lovely ancient world poetry, but as prayer, a prayer from the heart, then just listen to the poignant tone and the passion in these familiar words:

*As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*  
Psalm 42: 1-2

*It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre.*

*For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. How great are your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep!* Psalm 92: 1-5

*O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.*  
Psalm 8:1

We could look at dozens more examples, but here’s my point: if my whole prayer life is about seeking God for things that I want or need; in other words, where my total focus is on me rather than on him, then there is a whole refreshing side of prayer that I am missing completely!

Much of my prayer should not require a specific answer from God other than his delight in me as I delight in him!

#### 7. **Satan fears our prayers more than anything else we can do**

In our secularized, rational culture, we Christians often lose sight of the true spiritual nature of our struggle. Listen to a few quotes from some saints of the past on how the devil reacts to the prayers of the saints:

*"When a Christian shuns fellowship with other Christians, the devil smiles. When he stops studying the Bible, the devil laughs. When he stops praying, the devil shouts for joy."* Corrie Ten Boom, a Dutch woman of God imprisoned for sheltering Jews in World War II; author of *The Hiding Place*.

*"Satan does not care how many people read about prayer if only he can keep them from praying."* Paul E. Billheimer, noted mid-20<sup>th</sup> century author of *Destined for the Throne*.

*"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 he trembles when we pray."* Samuel Chadwick, a Wesleyan Methodist preacher of late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*"Satan trembles when he sees the weakest Christian on his knees."* William Cowper, 18<sup>th</sup> century popular English poet and hymnodist.

Dear brothers, and sisters, if there is an activity available to us that Jesus loves so much and the devil hates so much, should we not want to grab hold of it with all the energy, commitment and joy that we can muster?

There are many more principles about prayer that we could have shared together. I am sure that many of you could add some helpful insights that God has shown you in your own prayer experience. However, these seven seemed to be the ones that the Lord wanted highlighted at this time. May I suggest that we read them over several times? Let their truth take firm root in our hearts and bring forth an increased fruitfulness in our prayer experience. As Oswald Chamber put it, "*Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work.*"

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#### **Praise God ...**

- For the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made upon the cross of Calvary for you and for me.
- For the incredible privilege that we can come boldly into the presence of Almighty God where we can delight in the joy of intimacy with Him, free from the ravages of guilt and fear.
- That we can depend fully and unreservedly on our loving Father for every aspect of our lives.
- For the many ANiC "projects" and church plants – the small, but growing congregations of faithful Anglicans that He is adding to our number.
- For faithful Anglican primates, bishops, clergy and laity – throughout the Communion – who are standing for truth even when their stand for Christ and His Word makes them targets of attack.

#### **Confess if needed...**

- How easily we slide into mere prayers of habit or prayerlessness altogether robbing us of the life-flow from our Heavenly Father that we so desperately require.
- How much our prayers tend to focus on ourselves and our desires, and how little on God and His great provision.

**Please pray...**

- For a **renewed focus on prayer** in ANiC churches across the nation so that each member may understand and experience the joy of personally communing with our loving Father.
- For a new visitation of the **Holy Spirit** upon our bishops and clergy, our parishes and our diocese. Pray that the fresh wind of the Spirit will bring renewal, healing and empowerment.
- For **Bishops** Donald Harvey, Charlie Masters, Stephen Leung, Trevor Walters, Ronald Ferris and Malcolm Harding (retired) – and their families. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and renewal, for wisdom, and for a daily closer walk with God.
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Paul Charbonneau (Ontario), Tim Parent (Ottawa Valley), Paul Crossland (Prairies), Michael McKinnon (New England, USA), and Darrell Critch (Atlantic Region & Quebec) – and our Dean of Multicultural Ministries, the Very Rev Dr Archie Pell.
- For all of our **ANiC clergy** and families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- That God would continue His work in and through the **Anglican Church in North America**
- For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara), especially for wisdom as he seeks to give godly leadership through any growing pains our province may encounter.
- **GAFCon Primates and Fellowship of Confessing Anglican (FCA) leaders** – Pray for the Lord's courage and wisdom as they seek to guide the orthodox reformation and realignment that is taking place in the Anglican Communion.
- Pray for the second **GAFCon gathering** this October in Nairobi. Please pray for:
  - Financial support for delegates
  - Last minute documentation and travel issues to be cleared
  - God's blessing as delegates stand for God's truth
  - An outpouring of the Holy Spirit that will radiate revival throughout the Anglican Communion
  - Media coverage of GAFCON/GFCA especially during the gathering in Nairobi
- **Southern Cone** – Pray for Presiding Bishop Tito Zavala in his primatial duties and for this province which includes much of South America.
- For the Archbishop of Canterbury **Justin Welby**. Pray that the Lord will grace him with wisdom, courage and the faithfulness to follow the teachings of Scripture in his decision-making.
- For the **ANiC congregations** that have lost their places of worship and are meeting in temporary facilities. May God comfort and pour out His blessing on them. May they be filled with the joy of the Lord as they seek His guidance for more permanent worship facilities.
- For the Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (**ARDFC**) as it raising funds for a training and education centre in the **Diocese of Recife** (Brazil).
- For **Christians in the Middle East** who are facing increasing pressure and persecution as many of their countries embrace a more aggressive and extreme form of Islam – especially Christians in Egypt, Syria and Nigeria.