

Somebody's Praying for Me

“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” (Ephesians 6:18, 19).

“We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you” (Colossians 1:3).

“Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto 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” (Colossians 4:3,4).

“Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way” (I Samuel 12:23).

“...My servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept...” (Job 42:8).

“...For he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee...” (Genesis 20:7).

“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you” (II Thessalonians 3:1).

“At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you” (John 16:26).

This past Tuesday, I became inspired to write these words. I was privileged to be in the “Alive at Five” group, the early morning men’s prayer meeting at Christchurch. I was caught off guard in a very pleasant way, as I heard one man after another praying for me, their pastor. As this intercessory work was going on, I was moved emotionally. To use the old expression, “I could feel your prayers,” was no exaggeration. I felt these prayers. I think about a song that was written by Rickey Skaggs a few years ago that says it so well:

Somebody's prayin', I can feel it;
Somebody's prayin' for me.
Mighty hands are guiding me
To protect what I can't see;
Lord, I believe; Lord, I believe
That somebody's prayin' for me.

I am the product of answered prayer. In just a couple of months I shall be celebrating 40 years as a preacher of the Gospel of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I do not take this for granted. I surrendered when many of my friends turned away from God’s perfect will for their life. I am not still preaching with the same crowd I started with, for many have fallen aside. I am no better than the fallen. I can honestly say, I am what I am by the grace of God (I Corinthians 15:10). I believe in the depths of my heart that I am where I am because of the intercessory work of other people for me. I am not alone in this kind of testimony. Evangelists, from Charles G. Finney to Billy Graham, have a given testimony of intercessors who prayed for them and who made the difference in a mediocre ministry and a mighty ministry.

In a few days, I’ll be speaking at Pensacola Christian College. The artist, Paul DeLuna sent me an email, informing me that he has a painting he wants to unveil in my presence. I did not realize what my wife and Mrs. Wilkening were doing a few months ago when they were both in my office to retrieve some likenesses of my mom. Paul had expressed to them that he had been inspired to do a painting from one of my sermons where I gave a personal testimony of the power of a mother’s prayer. So as I look forward to seeing the painting, let me share the picture with you. There were a

couple of years in my teen-age life that I was disobedient to the Lord. I was tempted on every hand. At my most rebellious moments, I could come home at night and find my dress shoes on my bed. And sometimes they were a wee bit damp. I did not know the rest of the story until after I gave my all to Christ and surrendered to preach. My mom would take my shoes out of my closet and place them on my bed and then pray over my shoes, with tears, asking the Lord to bring me back to Himself and she told the Lord she would be honored if He would place me in the ministry. As she wept over my shoes, she claimed the verse, Romans 10:15, *“And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”*

One of the greatest testimonies to intercessory prayer comes to us from a missionary in Africa. His kids had often talked about the elephants and their desire to get a closer look at them. One day, their dad announced that he knew of their watering hole. He said he had also discerned what time they would go there. So the dad proclaimed that the family was going to get a closer look at the elephants by going to the watering hole after the elephants arrived. The day came and they parked their jeep on the level plain and walked up a knoll to peek over to the elephants. Their father explained they would have to be very quiet so as not to disturb the elephants. So at about 100 yards from the jeep they got their first look. They enjoyed it and were in the midst of quiet conversation when these gentle giants became gigantic monsters. The elephants were somehow suddenly spooked and turned into the direction of the missionary family and began to run. It should be noted that elephant stampedes have been known to crush entire villages into the ground. The huts and houses offer little, if any, protection. When you have these mega-ton creatures break into a run, it can be devastating, to say the least. The dad and mom grabbed their three kids and ran as fast as they could, wondering with fright beyond description as to whether they would even make it back to the jeep. Yet even there, they did not have the assurance all was well, because frightened elephants have also been known to smash cars and trucks as flat as the machinery that does so in a junkyard. So in a stampede, jeeps offer little safety. The family hunkered inside the jeep as the earth shook around them as violently as the most severe earthquake. The family could see the elephants coming their way and just before they stepped on the jeep, with a mighty thud, they stepped to one side and occasionally the family witnessed elephants stepping directly over the vehicle. The jeep shook from side to side and backwards and forward. When the dust settled, there was not one scratch on the jeep and the family was fine! Back home in the mid-western United States, the grandmother, (the missionary's mom) asked what were you doing on (she named the date) at 2:00 in the morning (grandmother's time)? “Well, I shall never forget that date, Mom, nor shall I forget the time,” the missionary son answered. The son then related the story to his mother. He explained when they arrived at the jeep, trying to escape the elephant stampede, he happened to read the digital clock, which read 11:00 a.m. It was the very minute that Grandma noticed her digital time, which read nine hours earlier, 2:00 a.m. The dear lady prayed during the time of danger and when peace came to her, it was the estimated time of deliverance back in Africa. All the dear lady knew was that, she was awake, alert and greatly burdened to pray for her son and his family.

Let me encourage the discouraged to pray for those you love and don't give up until the answer comes. Pray for our preachers, pray for the families and pray for our country. Please don't forget to pray for our troops in harm's way. Distance is no barrier when it comes to prayer. Somebody's praying; I can feel it!

- Pastor Pope -

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