

Remembering America in Our Prayers

By Rev. Franklin Graham, Honorary Chairman, 2010 National Day of Prayer

Prayer is the most powerful resource we have in this life; yet, many only turn to it as a last resort. When unbelievers pray for repentance of sin and ask for God's forgiveness, prayer is the spiritual dynamite that obliterates the darkness and despair of a sin-soaked soul.

For those who have already experienced the grace of Almighty God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, prayer becomes the catalyst for fellowship with the Lord of our souls, redeemed by His blood. By tapping into the channel by which we commune with the One who calls His children 'friends,' we can receive His strength in our weakness; His guidance in our steps; and His mercy when we stumble along life's path.

The Bible has a great deal to say about personal relationships between the Lord and His Creation. He deals with each of us individually. But He is also the Lord of the Universe and His eyes are fixed upon the nations and deals with them individually. The heart of a nation cannot be connected to God if the nation's people are far from Him. America is in peril because many of God's children have become passive about obeying God's Word.... We have some serious work ahead of us if we are to see our beloved nation restored by the Hand of God. When God's people go wandering it is not so easy to get back on track. So where do we begin?"

Christ's followers are instructed to pray. You may ask, "What are we to pray for?" First, we should consider where we stand before the Lord so that our prayers will not be hindered. The Bible teaches the multi-facets of communing with Almighty God. We should praise Him for who He is, regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves. The Lord's heart is delighted to hear the praise of His people. When we acknowledge Him above all things—our worries, our fears, and even the requests we plan to make of Him—these begin to pale in the light of His abundant love toward us. This helps prepare our hearts to receive His word of rebuke or blessing; conviction or comfort.

When Paul and Silas found themselves persecuted and imprisoned for preaching the Gospel, we are in awe to read their response. They prayed to God and praised Him (Acts 16:25 KJV). What follows thrills my heart. The Bible says, "And the prisoners heard them." Can you imagine the power of the preachers' testimonies as they focused their thoughts on the Lord Jesus and raised their voices with assurance that He heard them? I am sure that their worship, while in chains, silenced the other prisoners' cursing and filled their darkened hearts with hope.

Another important element of prayer is repentance. When I think of how we have collectively strayed from God as a nation, this word repentance comes to mind. If we as His people do not repent of our own disobedience, if we as the collective Body of Christ do not repent of rebellion against His commands, how can we expect America, a country founded on His principles and truths, to keep its heart focused upon Him? The Bible says, "Your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of your wickedness, and pray" (Acts 8:21-22 NKJV).

When we come to a merciful God with an attitude of praise and a spirit of repentance, we discover His peace. We learn the comfort of abiding in His presence. We don't hear the word abide very much today. It's a word that means remain. You may ask, "How does that apply?" The Gospel of John records the words of Jesus that speak of oneness in Christ, "I pray the Father [will]...abide with you forever" (John 14:16 NKJV). Have you ever gone on vacation and never wanted to leave...you wanted to remain and bask in the warmth and carefree environment that gave your body and mind complete rest? This is what Jesus was saying in John 15:4 NKJV, "Abide in Me, and I in you." He will never leave us and, in Christ, we never outstay our welcome.

I have to admit I like to stay in motion—and I'm not alone. Most of us lead busy lives. But if our lifeline of prayer is to stay connected to the Power Source, we must learn to yield our wills in favor of God's will. We have to ask God to empower us to put 'self' on the sideline and put on Christ—for it is only in His steps that we can walk with Him in victory. The apostle Paul prayed for the believers of his day and exhorted them, "Yield yourselves unto God" (Romans 6:13 KJV). This command is for us also. And when we do, we learn more of Him and we experience blessings that overflow from the salvation He died to give us.

Praise His Promises
Repent by His Power
Abide in His Presence
Yield to Christ's Plan

So while we are ultimately citizens of heaven, until we get there we are pilgrims living among the nations with the responsibility to pray. Today, may we lift our prayers and pray for our nation to repent.

Moses interceded for his nation Israel, asking that the Lord glorify Himself by showing mercy to a sinful people as a testimony to other nations. "Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy" (Numbers 14:19 NKJV).

King Hezekiah said, "I pray...that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Lord, are God." (2 Kings 19:19 NAS).

David prayed for his people suffering because of the rebellious acts of King Saul and the Bible records that, "God was moved by prayer for the land" (2 Samuel 21:14 KJV).

It is obvious what action these three men took—they prayed. May we as followers in Christ and citizens of the United States humble ourselves before the only One who blessed the prayers of our forefathers and showered this land with greatness. May we remember their petitions of old and their praises for the gift of freedom to worship Him in truth and love. May we ask His forgiveness, turn our backs on tolerance of sin, and bow in submission to God and seek His redemption for our people, so that future generations will know His blessed Hand has not been removed. May God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, be once again exalted in our halls of government, in our sanctuaries of worship and in human hearts that need His healing touch. Join me in prayer for America...

[Click here to listen](#) to a Podcast of Rev. Graham's May 6, 2010 National Day of Prayer message in Washington, DC, "America Needs the Touch of Jesus."

http://www.ifapray.org/audio/FranklinGrahamNDP_May6_2010.mp3