

European Evangelical Alliance Prayer Guide for Week of Prayer 2010



theme: ***You are My Witness!***

Introduction

About the theme

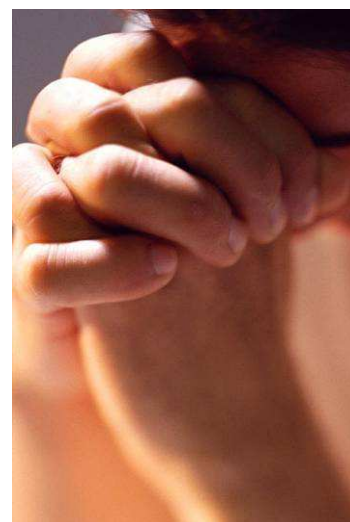
As Christians across Europe unite in prayer, we are aware that Europe has been deeply shaped by the coming of the Christian faith centuries ago. From Europe came a worldwide movement. In 1910 John Mott initiated the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. Christians of all churches celebrate the centennial of this visionary initiative in 2010 with gatherings in Edinburgh and Cape Town, organised by the World Council of Churches and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (together with the World Evangelical Alliance) respectively.

Many believe that Europe has changed in this past century: from being a continent that sent out Gospel messengers to becoming a part of the world that most needs to receive and welcome them. In this Week of Prayer, we shall pray to our God to work through His Holy Spirit to open eyes and hearts for His Message and His Love so that the Christian faith will be newly embraced in many parts of Europe. The European Evangelical Alliance welcomes all such initiatives and pledges to work with them for the blessing and benefit of the church and the coming of Christ's Kingdom

Partnership

"There are no ordinary people," says C.S Lewis in his book *The Weight of Glory*. "You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors. Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses." Prayer is essential to healthy relationships. Our unity, if it is not to be just an abstract term, has to lead to practical co-operation and partnerships. It must be nurtured by openness to God and each other, genuine interest, listening, vulnerability, respect and mutual learning.

Challenges that we are facing as evangelical Christians in Europe are far beyond the capacity of any individual. We need to learn and encourage each other, even from nation to nation. Also this prayer guide is one of many fruits of a long partnership between the Dutch and the Czech Evangelical Alliance. We desire that you will have a life full of deep and inspiring friendships that we can enjoy with each other and between our two alliances.



Content

In this prayer guide seven authors - from the Czech-Republic and The Netherlands - who are working as missionaries share different aspects of the theme 'being a witness', each from their own perspective. Following each 'Thought for the day' are prayer requests from all over Europe. Feel free to add others as we pray for one another as well as for ourselves. We pray that this Week of Prayer will inspire believers and local churches in all our nations: enabling our effective witness and enabling us all to make a difference.

Jiří Unger, General Secretary Czech Evangelical Alliance
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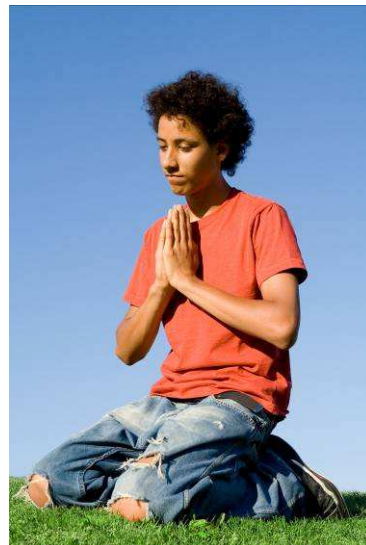
Week of Prayer

The European Evangelical Alliance unites people of evangelical conviction for witness to Christ. Europe and Eurasia need that witness in 2010 as much as ever. Each day's theme focuses on one aspect of our witness. Our prayer is that during this week we will all encounter the crucified and risen Christ and that He will enable us all to be more effective witnesses to Him in our complicated world.

I am deeply grateful to the Evangelical Alliances of the Netherlands and the Czech Republic for producing these notes. Their partnership has enriched both nations and now enriches all of us. Such synergy reminds us all of the benefit of working together. The themes they have chosen for this year's Week of Prayer are the same as those of the World Council of Churches 'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity'.

Our longing and our prayer is that our witness to Christ and His Word might be more effective than ever, as we draw closer to Him by His Word, and the power of His Spirit.

*Gordon Showell-Rogers
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Former Prayer themes at the EEA Week of Prayer:

- 2009: *By Faith...*
- 2008: *The Presence of Jesus Christ in our World*
- 2007: *Epiphany – a Time to Manifest Christ!*
- 2006: *UN's Millennium Development Goals*
- 2005: *The Lord's prayer*
- 2004: *The Race of Faith*
- 2003: *Meeting with God*
- 2002: *Good Reasons to Believe*
- 2001: *The Message of the Cross*
- 2000: *Discovering God's Possibilities*

Sunday, 10.01.2010

... Being a Witness

Bible text: "you will be my witnesses" (Acts. 1: 8)

- Bible reading: Acts 1: 6-10.
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 1-5
- Old Testament: Isaiah 52: 7-10.



Thought for the day

You are my witness! This week we will think and read about being a witness of Christ. The Book of Acts and the history of Christianity start with the last words of Jesus on earth: "You will be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth." Many Christians know this passage by heart, but there are only a few who make it their way of life. Why is it so hard for us to follow Jesus' last words? Quite an uncomfortable and challenging theme for a week of prayer...

The most hopeful part of this Great Commission is the sentence before: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.." The good news for the world is that Jesus is alive. The good news for us as His disciples is that we don't have to convince the world with our words: that's the job of God's Holy Spirit! As Christians we are witnesses of the fact that we experience the work of God in our own life, by the presence of His Spirit in us. Being a witness has to do with who we are: beautiful creatures, beloved sons and daughters and the dwelling place of God's Holy Spirit.

We are witnesses in the way we live our life with our Lord, here and now. The world will see that God is real in our walking and talking, more than by showing our moral perfection or biblical knowledge. We portray God by living the way Jesus lived; loving God above all and our neighbors as our selves; paying attention to marginalized and lonely people; performing good deeds; and caring for the beggars and the sick. Through the work of God's Spirit we are like God's hands transforming our society. Being a witness is not synonymous with Christian activism. It's all about our spiritual life with Christ, which makes a difference in our world and society.

This week we will take a closer look at some important aspects of being a witness: confessing, calling to God, preaching, being sent, making jealous, and reaching out, concepts that might change your life and change your world. This movement starts with praying, looking for the ways and the presence of the Almighty, and in our daily prayers for the people around us.

Prayer requests

- *Israel and the Palestinian Territories:* Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; for a peaceful and just solution for all inhabitants of the region and for the Christians who face particular extra pressures.
- *Moldova:* Pray for Christian education and witness of hope in situations of severe poverty.
- *Montenegro:* Pray for the small church (around 120 believers) and missionaries in this young nation.
- *Hungary:* Because of the economic crisis many Hungarians are looking for spiritual answers. Pray that they will meet signs and messengers of God's kingdom of hope.
- *Romania:* The church in Romania has developed well since the fall of communism. Pray for flexibility and vision for the leadership of the church.
- *Minorities:* Pray for Roma-gypsies in Europe and Christians in the former Soviet Union and the Middle-East. Pray that the power of the gospel will bring new Life, Light, Hope and Change for the good.
- *Immigrants:* Many refugees have found a home in European countries. Pray they will meet Christian hospitality and open doors to spread (or receive) the Gospel of Hope.

Monday, 11.01.2010

... Confessing

Bible text: *'it is in your mouth and in your heart' (Romans 10: 8)*

- Bible reading: Romans 10: 8-10
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 13-17
- Old Testament: Deuteronomy 30: 9-16



Thought for the day

It is not how great we are, but how great our God is that makes the difference. We are called to confess before the world the reason for the hope we have. The world is searching for hope. The world is searching for what you and I have to offer, through our confession of Jesus Christ.

Confession involves confessing our sins as well as confessing our faith. In 1 John 1:8,9 we see that it is important for us to acknowledge we have sinned before God. If we are unwilling to confess our own sinfulness before God, we are not able to confess our faith in a God who has saved us from our sins by dying on the cross. Confessing our sin leads to confessing our faith in Jesus and what He has done for us. Without the realization of the first, there would be no need for the second and we can't have a right relationship with God.

We acknowledge what God has done and confess our belief that He has raised Jesus from the dead and that He has saved us (Romans 10:9). It is by grace we have been saved through faith, and not by our own works (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

We are able to confess our belief, but the power to proclaim our belief and share with others does not come from simply knowing the truth. We read in Acts 1 that the disciples believed Jesus and knew that He had risen from the dead. However, the power to proclaim this to others in a new way came from the Holy Spirit. There was a transformation in the strength of the message they had to give because it is the Holy Spirit at work, not simply human words.

God has called us to be His witnesses and confess Jesus before other people. We see in Acts that the formerly timid disciples were transformed into people willing to die for their faith and witness to others. They were not afraid to confess their faith in Christ Jesus and the power that came along with that has reached all corners of our world today. If that could happen through Jesus telling his disciples to go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation (Mark 16:15) what is He able to do through you and me?

Prayer requests

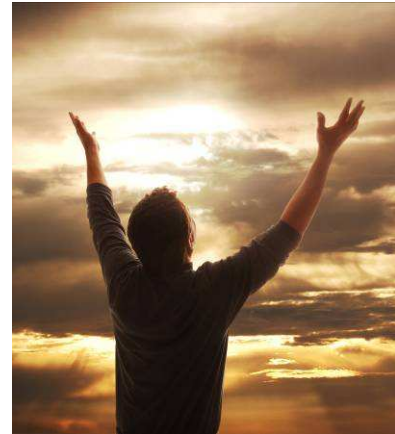
- *Norway:* Norway's commitment to world evangelism has been exemplary. Pray that vision for world evangelism may increase and bear much fruit.
- *Sweden:* Pray for the Alpha Course movement to grow and expand and reach many people with the life-changing truths of the gospel.
- *Iceland:* Pray for Icelanders who are facing dire economic consequences in this financial crisis. May God's Spirit touch the hearts of many and give them new hope for the future even in these hard times.
- *Finland:* Many have come to Finland to seek asylum. Pray that immigrants will meet with Christian witnesses and will receive Christ as their Savior.
- *Latvia:* Among Latvian youth, 80% believe in God, but few know Jesus personally. Pray for more workers with the vision to reach young people.
- *Lithuania:* Bible-based training schools are being founded. Pray that these institutions may be used to train godly, well-educated and visionary leaders for the nation.
- *Estonia:* Pray for an 'open atmosphere' for a spirit of belief to pervade believers so that their sharing of faith touches more hearts.

Tuesday, 12.01.2010

... Calling on Him

Bible text: *'The same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on Him' (Romans 10: 13)*

- Bible reading: Romans 10: 11-13
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 13-19a
- Old Testament: Genesis 12: 1-9



Thought for the day

There is one thing that binds Christians together and distinguishes them from others. They are part of the community of all those who call on the name of the Lord. This includes all people who have been called out of the world (*ekklesia*) but live dispersed all over the ancient world. God calls each individual by name and a person responds by calling on the name of the Lord.

Abraham, father of all believers, sets the pattern. He is called out of the land of Ur and arrives at the promised land. But that land turns out to be occupied and he has no other option than to wander around. When the Lord appears to him at the holy oak of Moreh, Abraham builds an altar openly in the sight of worshippers of other deities: "he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD" (Gen. 12: 8). Our first impression is that Abraham shelters and prays behind that altar and beseeches God for salvation and aid. Martin Luther, however, takes it a step further and translates: Abraham *proclaims* the name of the Lord. He does not only *cry unto*, but he also *cries out* the name over the land. He proclaims the Lord as the owner of the land upon which he stands. "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24).

That is the very thing we do every Sunday as we gather for worship. We cry out the reign of Christ over this world, in preaching, in our prayers and our songs. At the same time, as Christians we are called to go out beyond the walls of our churches into that world and confront modern paganism on its own turf with the gospel. Faith is not a private matter, but must be made visible in public space. Empowered by His Spirit, we call upon God and lift Him up by a missionary lifestyle, exactly in those areas where the masses bow before idols.

It is remarkable that God does not show favouritism. Whatever skin colour, social class or status we represent, we all worship the same Lord. As our Saviour He is equally generous to all who call upon His name and sanctify that name in their lives.

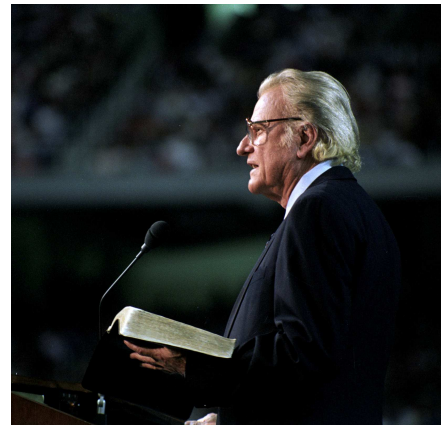
Prayer requests

- *Italy:* Pray that the church-planting strategy launched in 1997 will bear much fruit, increasing churches from 2,100 in 1997 to 11,260 by 2010 and exposing many Italians to the gospel.
- *Portugal:* Many congregations lack workers with adequate theological depth and spiritual maturity. Pray for God to raise up training centers to train leaders to meet the ministry needs of the churches.
- *Spain:* Pray for effective, culturally appropriate methods of outreach, for the lack of values in society and for a spiritual awareness in the whole nation.
- *Greece:* Pray for unity in the Spirit and greater growth among existing evangelical congregations.
- *Albania:* The evangelical witness in Albania has grown dramatically since 1991. Pray that evangelicals may be recognized as having a wholesome role in the recovery of the country.
- *Malta:* Pray that the many travelers, tourists and businessmen will be touched by the gospel of Christ.
- *Macedonia:* Recently two discipleship schools have been started in Macedonia. Pray that they might nurture godly, anointed leadership for the young church in this nation.

... Preaching

Bible text: 'How can they hear without someone preaching?' (Romans 10: 14)

- Bible reading: Romans 10: 14 and 15
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 17-21
- Old Testament: Jonah 3



Thought for the day

Christians have a mission to preach the gospel around the whole world. First among 'Christian' preachers is the Lord Jesus, who passed the tradition of preaching on to His disciples, who in turn considered preaching a priority (Acts 6:2). Church history further confirms this reality. The great servants of God have been first and foremost expositors of the Word: Tertullian, Eusebius, John Chrysostom, Francis of Assisi, John Hus, John Calvin, John Wesley, Charles Spurgeon, Karl Barth, Billy Graham, etc. In spite of our highly sophisticated communication technology and media finesse, it is absolutely clear that simple exposition of God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit remains an effective means of sharing the Gospel.

It would be a mistake to leave this task only to 'the professionals', that is, to preachers and priests. We live among people whose path to a church has become exceedingly overgrown. We cannot expect the miracle that people will themselves start seeking out the shelter of the cathedral in order to listen to spirit-filled preaching and so find their way to God. Therefore, Christ's "Go!" becomes all the more urgent. Go to the people where they live, speak and live the Gospel among them. The contemporary person will more likely than not be reached by lifestyle and an authentic life story which, however imperfect, bears Christ's imprint. A sterilized Gospel concentrate does not exist, something that can be distilled out of the Bible, neatly packaged and then given out with a guaranteed product value. Christ's Gospel is always united with the person who brings it. Such a person becomes a 'Fifth Gospel', the visible Word of God.

The most natural location for sharing then is our place of residence or work: the employee who is an expert in her profession, the resident in his neighbourhood or the student among his classmates. It is here that every Christian has an irreplaceable role, where day after day he or she goes out into God's world to practise the advice of Francis of Assisi: *Preach the Gospel at all times – if necessary, use words.*

Prayer requests

- *Luxembourg:* Pray that Christians in Luxembourg will continue to set aside their differences and learn to love each other more and together take Christ's love to the people.
- *Liechtenstein:* Pray that God will call believers to serve in outreach and evangelism.
- *Monaco:* Pray that God's Spirit will spark revival in the Christian churches of Monaco.
- *Andorra:* Pray that the evangelical churches in Andorra will have a vision to creatively reach out to other Andorrans and immigrants with God's love.
- *Belarus:* Pray for the cultural bias against evangelical Christians to be overcome by the love of God.
- *San Marino:* Pray that there would be freedom for Christians to witness about their faith in Jesus Christ.
- *Belgium:* The lack of Belgian, and especially Flemish, Christian workers and pastors is crippling indigenous growth. Pray for this to change and for many to be called into ministry.

Thursday, 14.01.2010

... Being sent

Bible text: *'How can they preach unless they are sent?'*
(Romans 10:15)

- Bible reading: Romans 10: 15-17
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 25-27
- Old Testament: Isaiah 6: 5-9



Thought for the day

Romans 10 speaks of the unimaginable grace God offers to humankind. He removed every hindrance so that we might be reconciled with him. At the same time God seems to shout out loud in verse 14: "How will they be enabled to call on me, as they have not believed in me and cannot hear the good news as it is not preached to them as yet?" From there the question arises, 'Who is the preacher?'

If the preacher is available things will start to happen for the good, as *faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the word of Christ*. Apparently the preacher plays a crucial role, but who is he or she?

The preacher is the one called by God: *'he preaches (as) he is sent.'* As Christians we need to be aware that all of us are called by God for this purpose.

Obviously we might look (again) at the familiar 'mission passages' like Matthew 28:19 *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations* and Acts 1:8 *You will be my witnesses*. But these texts have been used so often that they have started to take on a life of their own and are used to focus on a specific group with a specific calling, the 'missionaries.' And this releases us, the 'non-missionaries' from our responsibility - or so we often think.

The reality though is that we all are called. There is no such thing as 'missionaries' and 'other believers'. All of us can live and speak the word of Christ in fellowship with Him. God is faithful, so He will convert our 'fellowship message' into faith for those who hear us.

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus explains to the disciples on the way to Emmaus His suffering and His entering into glory (Luke 24:26). After Jesus' return to heaven, we as His disciples are called to make this explanation alive and clear in the world. Like Isaiah we may respond, *Here I am. Send me!*

Prayer requests

- *Poland:* Pray for Unshakeable Hope, a movement of Polish Christians from diverse backgrounds who have begun reaching the 39 million Polish people with the gospel. Pray for openness and courage.
- *Austria:* Pray that God would raise up a new generation of young and responsible people who truly follow Christ, and who will start making a difference in this country.
- *Slovakia:* Pray for passion of churches for outsiders, and bold everyday witness to Jesus Christ.
- *Switzerland:* Pray that true believers in both the Cantonal Reformed Church and Free Churches may be more effectively motivated and activated for outreach.
- *Slovenia:* Pray for continuing partnerships among Christians in reaching this country with the gospel.
- *Russia:* Pray for the men of Russia that they would see their need and call out to God, that they will meet the Lord of Creation personally and become responsible men, good husbands and good fathers.
- *Ukraine:* Churches are growing fast. Pray for the equipping of Ukrainians to become pastors and church leaders, the Biblical Education by Extension program and that their passion will be kept alive.

Friday, 15.01.2010

... Making jealous

Bible text: *'I will make you envious' (Romans 10:19)*

- Bible reading: Rom. 10: 18-19
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 28-35
- Old Testament: Psalm 19



Thought for the day

Being jealous is not a very good attitude and usually centres on possessions. My neighbour has a new car, so I need a new car as well. My friend has the latest mobile phone, so I really should have a new one too. Sometimes people envy another person's character or positive attitude: If I could only be like him... *Making* others jealous is even worse. To show off your new gadget or to emphasize your own talents and look down on someone else is wrong.

Surprisingly, Paul talks in today's scripture about *God* making Israel jealous (Romans 10:19). Not all Israelites have accepted the good news of Jesus, and Paul makes clear that the problem is not with the gospel. If gentiles ('a nation of fools', GNB) could understand it, Israel could too.

How should we as Christians in Europe make non-believers jealous of the good news of Jesus Christ? Isn't that a mission impossible? A lot of European citizens have a very negative view of the church. They see it as the source of moral oppression and conservatism. How can we change the tide? I think the key is to think relationships. It is indeed almost impossible to change people's views on abstract concepts such as 'Christianity' or 'the church'. But small groups of Christians and individuals *can* make a huge difference in this regard.

We can show people with our *words* that Christians promote peace, truth and reconciliation. Often more visible is our lifestyle. Are we making others jealous of our deepest values by showing care, support and love to others in need? Actions speak as loud as words! It would be wonderful if we, as 21st Century Christians, could find a lifestyle that reflects that "in keeping God's law there is great reward" (Psalm 19:11).

Turning back to Romans 10:19 there is one important emphasis we need to realize. It is God himself speaking in the quotation from the Old Testament: *He* will make Israel jealous. We are his fellow workers and it is important that we reflect Christ in what we say and do, but in the end it is God who will convince people of His gospel and His grace. We have all the more reason to pray that God will open doors for the gospel in Europe and that we as His church can make others jealous so that they might recognize Jesus as the risen Saviour (Luke 24:31).

Prayer requests

- *Bosnia and Herzegovina*: Pray for justice for those who committed heinous crimes and for healing and comfort for those who were abused, tortured and enslaved.
- *Croatia*: Pray for the Christian outreaches to refugees of all communities and their lasting spiritual impact. Pray for effective church planting in every part of Croatia.
- *Bulgaria*: Pray for the body of Christ to play a significant part in the reconstruction of this country where 50% live in severe poverty, abortions exceed the number of live births and hope for the future is rare.
- *Serbia*: Pray that the Serbian Orthodox Church, which has growing influence, would support true religious freedom in its beliefs.
- *Kosovo*: Pray for Christian mission agencies to be able to establish long-term ministries in Kosovo. Pray that development projects in villages will result in transformed communities as people come to Christ.
- *Turkey*: Pray that the barriers and prejudices against Christianity will melt down. Pray for God's protection of all Christians who are threatened, intimidated and sometimes rejected by their families.
- *Cyprus*: Cyprus is a major base for Christian organizations ministering to the surrounding Middle Eastern states. Pray for the organizations to thrive and have effective ministries.

Saturday, 16.01.2010

... Reaching out

Bible text: *'All day long I have held out my hands' (Rom. 10: 21)*

- Bible reading: Rom. 10: 20-21
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 36-53
- Old Testament: Isaiah 65: 1-3, 16-25



Thought for the day

Christian mission starts with God's compassion for all of His creation. He is reaching out His hands to a broken world. He sends us as messengers and 'letters of Christ' to the people around us. *'... You show that you are a letter from Christ' (2 Corinthians 3: 3).*

These days an e-mail is what a letter used to be in the past; written and sent to reach its addressee in order to pass on a message. Paul underlines that the believers themselves are a letter from Christ. They are a letter that needs to find its addressee. Who is this? It could be people around us, our neighbours, colleagues at work, schoolmates or people who live further away - "to the ends of the world" - in foreign countries or on different continents.

People need to read Christ's letter. It contains a vital message – God loves the world. He sent His son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to mediate God's saving love to every human being. We are the letter written by the hand of Christ. This is not primarily a task for a few professionals, but a challenge to all Christians. Many people from a variety of cultures are moving into our neighbourhoods so we need to become missionaries. This forms a healthy foundation that helps us to understand the life of a local body of Christ, in the vicarage, the local church, in fellowship and community.

If we fail to remember that we are a letter of Christ with a message written on to our hearts by the Holy Spirit for people around us, then our programmes, projects and meetings will lose 'the touch of heaven'.

God's purpose for us is not only to be the letter, but also to comprehend its message and receive forgiveness, hope and joy, which were written on our hearts. Jesus did not come to be served but to serve. We are challenged to follow Christ's example. Since the church consists of individuals, let us pray for the ability to always see the riches we have received in Christ Jesus. Let us pray that each of us will perceive our call to be a missionary – Christ's letter to other people.

Prayer requests

- *Kazakhstan*: Religious liberty in Central Asia (where Evangelical Alliances are EEA members) is under growing pressure. Pray for Christians who face great problems simply because of their faith.
- *Kyrgyzstan* - Churches and pastors struggle with new discriminatory laws. Pray for wisdom in how to respond to these laws and how to live in the midst of serious opposition.
- *Tajikistan* - Many non-government organizations have been closed by the government. Pray for those who seek to set up their own small businesses to serve the people there.
- *Uzbekistan* - Pray for the remaining expatriates and networks of churches who meet for prayer. Pray for those churches and pastors who have to meet 'underground.'
- *Azerbaijan* - Pray for the oppressed Christian leaders who seek to communicate and work together. Pray for twenty pastors who are imprisoned for crimes they did not commit.
- *Turkmenistan* - Pray for the churches who are isolated from international Christian support. Pray for courage to meet together in the midst of oppression and to be witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Sunday, 17.01.2010

... Be Bold!

Bible text: '*..they spoke the word of God with boldness*'
(Acts 4: 31)

- Bible reading: Acts 4:19-31 and 28: 28-31
- Gospel reading: Luke 24: 48-53
- Old Testament: Psalm 51:12-17



Thought for the day

Believers are supposed to go out and share the Message of Jesus with others. They should be motivated, equipped and looking for opportunities. As true as that may be, in reality it is still often a real challenge to do so without fear...

There are several lists in the New Testament of the fruit and the gifts of the Spirit. One of the gifts of the Spirit, not necessarily so identified, is "boldness." We find the Greek word *parrhèsia* a number of times in the Bible, which points to something that only God's Spirit can give to very timid and fearful people. There is a supernatural aspect to it, a heavenly fragrance.

Boldness stems from a harmonious relationship with God, though not with absence of sin. As we read in Psalm 51 king David confesses grave sin and prays, "do not take your Holy Spirit away from me... and give again to me a free spirit." (KJV) For the apostle Paul fearlessness is not something to be achieved once and for all, an acquired characteristic. It must be given, time and again, from above.

Acts 4 says more about "boldness" than any other part of Scripture. We learn there that it has nothing to do with intellect or a well-stocked library. The ability to communicate the gospel without inward fear for others is as important as doing so without external hindrance. "Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me, so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:20). This is stated directly after mentioning the need for spiritual warfare and the putting on of spiritual armour.

Most interesting is perhaps what we read at the end of Acts. Paul has appealed to the emperor and he is to stand on trial before him. He lives in a house in Rome under close supervision of the emperor's guards. He cannot move away from the Roman soldier chained to his wrist, but then neither can the soldier move away from him! People of all sorts of backgrounds and belief systems come and visit him. The last verse in Acts and also of our Week of Prayer states: "Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ." Let's join Paul in boldness, and practise it in our homes, with our families, in the streets, in our schools and work situations.

Prayer requests

- *United Kingdom:* Pray that Christians can reach out to the needs of Britain's growing ethnic minorities.
- *Ireland:* Ireland is a young country with half its population under 28 years old. Pray that the spiritual openness among this population group would be turned toward Jesus.
- *France:* Church attendance is plummeting and Christianity is seen as irrelevant and out of date in this secularized society. Pray for a dramatic and ongoing spiritual change over France.
- *Denmark:* Pray for leaders to be raised up who are able to communicate with the modern youth culture.
- *Germany:* In the Eastern part communism has left many people with distrust and feeling generally empty. There is an increasing openness to the gospel. Pray for boldness to reach others despite personal risk.
- *The Netherlands:* Pray for the unity of churches and new mutual co-operation between evangelical, traditional and migrant churches as a bright witness of God's kingdom in Dutch society.
- *Czech Republic:* Pray for the indigenous churches to mature into open, relevant and supportive churches, fulfilling their vision for sending missionaries both at home and abroad.