Prayer Focus: February 2014

This is what the LORD says: do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of the oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place’ (Jeremiah 22:3 NIV).

‘Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?’ (James 2:15, 16).

Loving our Neighbours

Reflection
How do we show our love? How do we love with the same love as God has shown for us? It is easy to donate to a certain cause and think that in doing so we have loved our neighbour – but the Lord requires much more. Jesus didn’t simply heal the sick – he gave them the good news as well. So what does the Lord require of us when we show love to our neighbour? One hand should contain an offering to meet a practical need, whilst the other hand should offer a life of fulfilment through Christ. We can no longer afford to serve only the physical needs of our neighbours. As God’s children we must take the additional step and serve their spiritual needs also.

‘If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn’t love others, I would have gained nothing… Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!’ (1 Corinthians 13:3, 8 New Living Translation).

Reflection
In 1 Corinthians 13:3 Paul challenges us that our acts mean nothing if they are not motivated by love. Have you ever received an apology that was given out of duty rather than in true love? This is similar to us giving service without love to those who face social injustice. We apologise for their situation without truly helping them – we only extend one arm! Service motivated by the love of God brings responsibility for our brothers and sisters. It holds us accountable until the day the Lord returns. Love will last forever!

Love I ask for, love I claim,
A dying love like thine,
A love that feels for all the world,
Saviour, give me a love like thine.

Salvation Army Song Book (SASB) Chorus 83
Prayer
Lord, we thank you for the gift of love. We thank you for love perfected. Help us to love more so that others may know you. Let us take care of our brothers and sisters and bring them back to you. Give us a love like yours – a love that gives all and grows your Kingdom. We know that, even as your people, we often fall short, so we ask you to step in when we are inadequate. May we rely on you when love seems impossible. Amen.

O the love that sought me!
O the blood that bought me!
O the grace that brought me to the fold,
Wondrous grace that brought me to the fold.
SASB Chorus 218

Prayer
Lord, you sought us and loved us. You sent your one and only Son to live, love and die for us. You still love us through our imperfections. What grace! May our love be unconditional and reach all who need it. We are your servants – help us to have a true servant’s heart. Bless your people, Lord. Amen.

Reflection
In what ways do your acts lack love? How can you love more? Write a list of the ways you can serve with love this year and keep them in your Bible as a daily reminder to love.