Prayer Focus: July 2013

Reflection
In his book *The World is Not Ours to Save*, Reverend Tyler Wigg-Stevenson proposes nine possible modes of distinctively Christian activism. He labels the first *Priestly*, which he then describes as intervening through corporate and individual prayer and fasting for the public good. He then says:

‘This is not simply prayer to baptise our activity, but rather genuine searching for God’s will and requesting his intervention and strength.’

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

(1 Timothy 2:1, 2 NIV)

Reflection
Although God is all-knowing, all-powerful and everywhere, he chooses to let us help him change the world through our prayers. The gospel message is universal – not limited to one nation, gender or background. God loves the whole world and sent his Son to save sinners. No one is outside of God’s mercy or beyond the reach of the salvation that he offers.

*Called to be God’s People* (The International Spiritual Life Commission’s report) confirms in ‘Call to the Inner Life’ the need for renewal of ‘faithful, disciplined and persistent prayer’, stating that the ‘consistent cultivation of the inner life is essential for our faith life and for our fighting fitness’.

Ours is not a life of good works alone. The ‘how’ and ‘why’ of our deeds are as significant as the actions themselves. To be active for God’s Kingdom without the power and presence of God directing and empowering the activity is to be limited in potential and outcomes, and perhaps even the vision itself.

Prayer
Lord, as we serve you in the world, may we rejoice in you always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for we know this in God’s will for us (based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Prayer
Lord, as we engage our world in service may we place our hope in you for the people, and for their circumstances. As we rise from our prayers, to act, we ask that we will not only do what you require of us but also make our service an act of worship.
Prayer

Shout out, do not hold back! (Isaiah 51:1) This is no time to speak softly. The risks are too high, the people of Israel are on a dark path, their postures are pious but their deeds are evil. The prophet Isaiah blows his trumpet – ‘God’s people are pretenders, they fast in public to feel good in private, they parade virtue but practice vice, their form of godliness is drowned in their hypocrisy.’ Then – the prophet takes a deep breath and changes his tone – ‘There is still time to worship and pray and be still, but true Godliness breaks out of the prison of self-interest. Fasting is converted into feeding the hungry, prayers are translated into shelter out of the cold, worship inspires the work of lightening the load of the poor, the oppressed are given keys to unlock their restraints.’ The light of justice breaks into the dawn of a new day. And the God who waits for hypocrisy to subside and injustice to be defeated whispers, ‘Here I am’.

(Excerpt from When Justice is the Measure)

Prayer:

The world for God! The world for God!
There’s nothing else will meet the hunger of my soul.
I see forsaken children, I see the tears that fall
From women’s eyes, once merry, now never laugh at all;
I see the sins and sorrows of those who sit in darkness;
I see in lands far distant, the hungry and oppressed.
But behold! On a hill, Calvary! Calvary!

The world for God! The world for God!
I give my heart! I’ll do my part!
The world for God! The world for God!
I give my heart! I will do my part!

(SASB 830)