

May 2014

The “dynamite” power of the Holy Spirit

Every morning I begin my time with God with the prayer that Paul prayed for the church in Ephesus (Eph. 1:17-23). I have made this my own personal prayer to the Father. Among other things, Paul prays that God would open the eyes of the hearts of believers so that they would know the incomparably great power of God that he works in them. The Greek word for power is “dynamis” from which we get the word “dynamite”. God’s “dynamite” power enables each one of us to do whatever he asks of us. This is not just the power of authority to act in Jesus’ name. It is the Spirit’s power to help us to fully accomplish what we set out to do. Without this “dynamite” power even prayer can be arduous. So let us all make the words in Ephesians 1:17-23 our prayer for one another this month. -RS-

Answers to prayer – but keep praying

The first **prayer and fasting week** of the Call of the Watchmen, with a focus on the “Education Policy 2015”, was supported night and day in prayer, with only a few hours not covered. Thank you! The prayers of many believers and strong public pressure from those who are opposing the education policy are showing the first results. In the middle of the prayer and fasting week, possible corrections to the education policy were all of a sudden discussed in a meeting of the cabinet in Stuttgart. Instead of the promotion of “sexual diversity” in all areas, there will now be a more general principle of “education for toleration and acceptance of diversity”. The acceptance of sexual diversity however is still included. The education policy will now be revised in the Ministry of Education and can no longer become effective by 2015. Following this initial achievement, we must continue to pray, since the plans for the sex education of children at an early age are not yet off the table. **Prayer:**

Thanks for this development and pray for the Spirit of wisdom, counsel and understanding (Isaiah 11:2) for those planning the next steps in opposing this policy.

On April 10th there was a public hearing in the European Parliament of the **European citizens initiative “One of us”** which generally went very well despite strong opposition. The initiative requires the exclusion of EU funds for research projects where human embryos are destroyed. The proposers of the initiative convened with high ranking officials in the EU Commission before the hearing and presented their case in the context of EU law. The Commission committed to issue a statement by May 28th. The initiative will receive further attention and consideration in the next legislative period. **Prayer:**

That the Spirit of the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2) will guide the members of the EU Commission to make a pro-life statement and that candidates who are pro-life will be elected to the European Parliament in May.

The **Prostitution Law** is currently being revised. Please pray for the legislative process. Encouraging amendments have been proposed in answer to our prayers. -RS-

A time to stand – an historic moment

A call is going out to the people of God in Germany on a scale that we have never experienced until now. The call is being sent out jointly by the German Evangelical Alliance, the German YMCA organisation (CVJM), the Charismatic Renewal in the Protestant Church (GGE) and the “Together for Europe” movement. The initiators of this call have already collected signatures from 360 leaders of evangelical Christian organisations.

The call addresses, in a very clear and precise manner, specific points in the current teaching of the German Protestant Church (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland – EKD) and in current public and social discussion and debate, with which Christians, whose faith and lives are based on the Bible, must disagree. The statement of the call includes the following:

1. Salvation may only be found in Christ, in his death and his bodily (!) resurrection.
2. The sanctity of human life from conception until death.
3. “We stand for marriage between a man and a woman and for the family.”
4. Freedom of faith and practice for all religions worldwide.

We are asking for your support in prayer and by signing the full call statement at: www.zeit-zum-aufstehen.de.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the unity of the people of God at this important time in history.**
- **For hundreds of thousands of signatures. (Ephesians 5:11-14)**
- **For a spiritual breakthrough in the German Protestant Church in response to this call and the statement. -OS-**

A reform that is long overdue

Hermann Groehe, the new Health Minister, has taken the matter in hand and initiated fundamental changes to the social care system.

First of all the definition of “social care” has been revised. Until now only physical disability was considered when assigning a patient to one of three levels of social care. Therefore physically fit patients with dementia were always at a disadvantage. This will now be totally changed. Instead of three levels of care there will be five levels, which will be assigned in accordance with how patients can still look after themselves, such that patients with dementia and mental illness are now also covered.

There will be a trial period for the implementation of the changes, but they will be introduced nation-wide by 2017. With this reform, those who care for family members at home should be in a much more favourable position. Likewise the staff-patient ratio should become much better in care homes. This reform will of course cost more money because of the expanded range of services and the social care insurance contribution rate in Germany will be increased by 0.5% to 2.55% in two steps. An increase of just 0.1% raises one billion Euros per annum.

It is amazing that Groeche has met hardly any opposition so far. People are sensing that there is wisdom behind these reasonable measures and realise the needs of our ageing society.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for these well balanced reform proposals and the new definition of social care that will help many families. (James 1:27)**
- **Continuing wisdom and favour for Minister Groeche in handling these complex issues of health policy.**
- **Gratitude towards the younger generation who will pay the extra contributions and blessings on them from the older generation. (Psalm 128)** -OS-

European elections and prayer

In no way does the leadership of the Call of the Watchmen prayer network believe that the peaceful coexistence of the people of Europe in the context of the European Union is the kingdom of God on earth. We do believe however that the EU is a *gift from God* to our continent and we thank him for it.

We do not believe that the EU is an evil beast-like god that swallows up everything, but we do believe that the EU is a political entity where its citizens must be actively involved in its structure and operation – especially Christians.

We see however a constant tension between the requirement to build an international community in this global age and the necessity to protect national interests. Disciples of Jesus should want to love their (weaker) neighbour as themselves – also in the political arena.

We very much value the *democratic endeavours* of the community, and want to stay in it along the way as it moves forward. For this reason we go and vote.

We know about the *Judeo-Christian foundation of Europe* and how today it is endangered. We therefore consciously vote for candidates and parties that protect life against abortion and euthanasia, defend marriage between a man and woman and the family, and stand for Israel.

We do not believe that politics can function without the *Lord of History*. Therefore we want to pray together with you and open the door to the good will of God. Also for these elections. And to bless Europe. -OS-

Ukraine

The future of the Ukraine is uncertain. Since the uprising in Maidan Square, the country has begun to fall apart. The interim government in Kiev is not recognised in the eastern region where many Russians live. Here there are rebel movements with different political motives. Some want autonomy, others annexation by Russia. In Geneva Russia made an agreement with the EU, USA and the interim government of the Ukraine to disarm all paramilitary forces. This however requires the authority of the state which is now disintegrating. Agitators are having an easy game. Where do they come from? America and Russia are accusing one another. It is really difficult in these days to discriminate between true and misleading information, none of which can be verified. Verbal reports tell of an increasingly dangerous polarisation in the country.

Parliamentary elections are due to take place on May 25th. If the authority of the state deteriorates further, these elections will be called into question.

Prayer:

- **For God's mercy on the Ukraine, that this country does not fall into complete chaos. (Micah 7:18-19)**
- **Blessings on diplomatic negotiations – wisdom for our own government. (Proverbs 11:14)**
- **That God will raise up peacemakers for the Ukraine. (2 Corinthians 5:18)** -RS-

Messianic Jews in Germany

Since 1960 there has been a continuous rise in the number of Jews in Israel who believe in Yeshua (Jesus) as their Messiah. Today there are about 15,000 such "Messianic Jews" in Israel. Jewish institutions and the state of Israel consider that they have turned away from their Jewish faith. For example, Messianic Jews outside of Israel are not automatically granted the "right of return" to Israel as for all other Jews. The Messianic Jewish movement began to grow significantly in Germany after reunification. There are now as many as 40 Messianic congregations in our land and they have joined together in an association with a common statement of faith. In many locations they have joined the "German Evangelical Alliance" or a city prayer network like "Together for Berlin". In Germany their missionary activities among Jewish people meet with much criticism, especially from the German Protestant Church (EKD) which considers that these activities endanger the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Messianic congregations are not allowed to participate in the EKD annual conference. The Catholic Church at Vatican level has been involved in theological discussions with the Messianic Jews for some time in order to clarify their status. Last year the EKD began also to open such discussions in some areas. The Messianic Jews must now present their case to the Gentile believers in the nations – the Jerusalem Council in reverse! (Acts 15:4-21)

Prayer:

- **That the Holy Spirit will help the established churches to accept the Messianic Jews and recognise them and their calling in the body of Jesus. (1 Corinthians 12:13-14; Ephesians 2:14-16)**
- **That Messianic Jewish believers in Israel will be fully accepted as Jews and be protected from hostile treatment by Jewish groups or the state. (Psalm 27:5)**
- **That many more Jews come to know their Messiah in our land and in Israel. (Romans 10:1-3)** -RS-

Dates for your diary:

- 24.05** Jesus March in Strasbourg
- 24.05** "Open Doors Day 2014" in Kassel
- 28.05-01.06** 99th German Catholic Conference in Regensburg.
- 29.05-01.06** National conference of the GGE (Protestant Charismatic Renewal) in Chemnitz.

*God's blessings from
Ortwin Schweitzer and Rosemarie Stresemann*