1st Wednesday Reflection & Prayer Hour

November 19

*MMI keeps the first Wednesday of the month as a day for corporate prayer. The hour set aside is 9.00am-10.00am, but for those who are not able to join in prayer then, please use these notes to pray for an hour at some time during the day.*

Reflection:

**Read: 1 Kings 19: 11- 13 and Mark 1:32-38**

At the prayer day in October, we spent some time thinking about listening to God in prayer.

Why? Because the day was about strategic praying – not praying for individual people and situations but zooming out and looking at the big picture, identifying what needs to change through prayer to allow, or further, the ministry in each region.

To pray strategically we need to listen to God first. Praying should be a conversation between God and us.

We want to work with God – we want to join in with what he is doing, -  Missio Dei – seeing where God is working and what he is doing and joining in – not doing our own well-intentioned thing, not asking for a blessing on our own plans.

Our prayer is ‘let us be part of your work, Lord.”

Listening is key, but we need to give God space and our time, we need to listen – we might not hear what we want to hear, but it will take us on the right path.

A few months ago I heard the Bishop of Guildford share his understanding of some verses in Mark 1, particularly Mk 1:32-38, which was thought provoking. It was about Jesus taking time to be with the Father and the discernment he then received.

How DO we listen to God?

Well, usually it is not a booming, audible voice from heaven, (although there have been times when I have asked the Lord to shout at me because I am not hearing!!)

Remember Elijah in 1Kings 19:11-13, told by the Lord to go and stand out on the mountain. Usually we are waiting for the gentle whisper, but  we won’t ‘hear’ it unless we are quiet.

**It all starts with a pause.**

**With an intentional putting all else aside.**

**Intentionally being in the presence of God.**

Just to be, and to be open, not silently running through our prayer list, although maybe we could ask –‘ How do you see this Lord?,  what is your plan here, father?

To be open to scriptures, pictures, ideas and thoughts coming into our mind. Some will be from God, some probably will not.

Pete Grieg suggests a quick check we can do by asking 2 questions

• Is this like Jesus: Would the resulting action reflect his character and purpose?

• What is the worst that can happen if it is wrong?

If being wrong would be a disaster – then we definitely need to corroborate from scripture and other praying Christians.

These different ways of hearing from God are often listed as

•  Through scripture

•  Through Dreams, visions and pictures

•  Through the counsel of wise, praying Christians, and Common sense

•   Personal Reflection .

 Isn’t it interesting that our word ‘OBEY’ comes from a Latin word which also translates as ‘pay attention’ ‘give ear to’ and ‘listen’.

When we pray for the way ahead we usually want the whole answer, the whole strategy laid out for us, but usually God will only give us the next couple of steps. Roddy describes it as seeing the picture on the outside of a jigsaw puzzle box, and then having to put the pieces together, or like slowly unrolling a poster to reveal the picture.

It keeps us close to God, walking by faith and not by sight.

So it is good to be in conversation with God.

We need to set aside time when we withdraw from all other distractions.

We need to discern Gods voice with integrity and humility.

So, now let’s take 5 minutes to be silent and still, reflecting on the readings, but not praying yet – 5 minutes of being on receive.

*Some additional scriptures you may want to read around and reflect on:*

 Jn 10:27:  *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me*

2 Timothy 3:16  *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,*

Ps 119:105: *Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light on my path*.

Isaiah 30:21:  *Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”*

*Sue Millard, Prayer and Communications Nov 19*

Prayer for November.

**We give thanks** for the IAEC chaplain training in Madagascar, for  many MCF meetings that took place in Oct, and for the AMCF Quinquennial meeting.

**WE give thanks for answered prayer this week,**

**In India** Paddy messaged “we had a wonderful time of praise, healing prayer, blessing, Bible teaching and encouragement. There were 2 JCO Official religious teachers with the group who seem prepared to run  Alpha”.

**In Europe**  Grozdan is at a conference in Athens, with 200 Southern Balkan pastors. Today (Tuesday) he and Slavica received an unexpected invitation to lunch with the Greek orthodox Chief Army Chaplain, who is also Abbot of St John Chrysostom monastery in Athens. Grozdan reports “God has given MMI great favour with the Chief Army Chaplain, he has agreed to attend and speak at EMCM”

**In November we pray for:**

**6-8 Nov:** India Road trip continues. Pray for safety and protection over Paddy and Blesson, for God-given meetings and for the right words to speak.

**8-10 Nov**: MCF India conference. Pray for divine wisdom for the leaders of MCF India. Pray for RTL S Asia as he presents the Alpha for Forces programme, available in Hindi.

**12-13 Nov:**  International Orthodox Consultation, being hosted by the Theological department of Sofia University. Pray all invited delegates are able to attend and for a further development of understanding and co-operation. Pray for Grozdan, joining with 3 professors to run the event, and for MMI Trustee David Gilchrist who will be attending the consultation.

**Nov:**  RTL Middle East, will be in Amman principally for Flame, but will also meet AMCF VP and other friends.

**16 Nov:** Nepal  Annual meeting of NMCF

**17-20 Nov**  Nepal MCF Leadership seminar in Pokhara. Pray too for the ‘Married for Life’ 12 week course being run by the NMCF (Steve Sharma leading)

**Pray for protection** over all the MMI team and their families and for guidance, encouragement and energy to manage their multiple tasks