



Dear Fellow Eagles,

Often when people leave a traditional church-structure they feel dislocated from a shared purpose and ministry, and find themselves drifting in a 'no-man's land'—and frequently wracked by guilt, often fed by the comments of other well-meaning Christians. One of the thoughts behind these Eagles' Wings emails is to redirect faith from historical concepts of 'church' into other biblically-based possibilities of 'ecclesia' (see last email).

Last time we explored the idea that an ecclesia, consisting of two or three people, could bring change to their community by releasing blessing through actions, or faith-filled pronouncements. In this letter I would like to look at the power of prayer in the context of ecclesia.

In times of crisis even unbelievers turn to prayer, and God being full of grace, often answers. However, as Christians, not only are we called to a life of prayer in order to develop our relationship with the Lord, but also to partner with Him to see His kingdom come on earth. And we are told

... our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms [Ephesians 6:12].

The battle has already been won by Jesus on the cross, but we have the job of partnering with the Lord to enforce that victory in our circles of influence.

Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. [Matthew 18:18]

Verse 18 can equally be translated as 'Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth *will have been* bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth *will have been* loosed in heaven'. I think this is the better translation, as things always move *from* heaven *to* earth. We pray that the 'Father's will be done on earth *as it is* in heaven'. His will is *always* done in heaven; the Kingdom of God coming to earth means that God's will is also released on earth. In other words, what is bound in heaven needs to be bound on earth, what is loosed in heaven needs to be loosed on earth. This is our prayer-mandate.

However, before we can pray effectively, we need three things. The first is to know that our right of access to heaven's throne room, is not through any merit of our own, but entirely through the blood of Jesus [Hebrews 10:19]. You can read more on this on the [Rhythm of Devotion](#) page of the website. The second is to know what Jesus has purchased for us—and our communities—on the

Cross. You can find resources for this on [The Power of the Cross](#) page. This crucial understanding forms the rock on which we build prayer warfare. The third thing is to know that our prayers do have power to change things.

This brings us to the question of numbers—a huge issue for those who have found themselves without a conventional local church. Many Christians have unconsciously bought into the belief that numbers equals power in prayer. The bigger the prayer-meeting, the more likely the prayer is to be answered, especially if there is a well-known leader and recognised prayer-warriors present, and there has been anointed worship. This is not to denigrate such a meeting, but people often end up thinking that praying in their front room with a couple of friends is a very poor reflection of the ‘real thing’. For the many Christians who are in situations where they cannot meet to pray with a large group, this can be a faith-undermining belief, and can make them feel completely impotent.

Fortunately, there is an answer. While there is nothing wrong with conventional prayer meetings—because all prayer is important—what Jesus actually taught is interesting:

‘Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.’
[Matthew 18:19-20]

‘Two or three’ was an important term in the Hebrew Scriptures, being the legal requirement for witnesses in a court case.

One witness is not enough to convict anyone accused of any crime or offence they may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses [Deuteronomy 19:15].

And likewise, it was the number referred to by Jesus, in the previous verses in Matthew 18, when the ecclesia had to decide on an appropriate response to a sin-issue in the local Christian community.

When two or three (spouses, business partners, housemates, friends, family members...), gather ‘in His name’ (including by video-link!) Jesus has promised to come present in a specific way. And, bearing in mind the legal aspect of this, “*every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses*”, when those two or three *agree* about something in prayer, their prayer has power in the heavenly realms—in fact Jesus promises it will be done for them!

What an amazing promise; what a faith-builder! Praying in a small group is not second best; in fact it packs a punch. Praying in your front room, or your office, or out for a walk with friends—without the atmosphere and personalities—is not an inferior experience; it *is* the real deal. Two or three people

really can transform a community. And imagine if that was multiplied throughout a city or area...

Does that mean that all our prayers will be answered? Probably not. We are all on a learning curve, taking action in a fallen world. Learning what it means to pray in harmony takes time and effort, the word for 'agree' literally means to 'sound together'—like musical instruments. Likewise, learning to discern the Lord's will correctly, depends on our grasp of His character and ways, insights which are not gained overnight. But the more we pray, the more success we will have...

I hope you have been blessed by these thoughts, and inspired to lift your expectation of what the Lord can accomplish through you and your ecclesia. And if you haven't yet got another person to pray with, do be encouraged to continue to ask for that need to be filled—God has promised to give you good gifts [Matthew 7:7-12].

That's all until the next email on 7th June. In the interim I hope you and your loved ones will have fresh revelations of the Fathers' all-encompassing love for you, and the works He has planned for you.

For (you) are God's handiwork, created in Christ to do good works, which God prepared in advance for (you) to do. [Ephesians 2:10]

Do write and tell me how you are getting on!
God bless,

Kate W at Rhythms of Grace