

**BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS**  
**EXHORTATION TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING**  
**1 THESSALONIANS 5:17**

**Introduction**

In our last message we saw the Exhortation To Rejoice Evermore!  
If you remember, we said that it is tied to our relationship with Christ!

We who are saved have reason to rejoice even in the midst of dire  
circumstances because of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ!

Circumstances may change and will change, but Christ remains the same!  
And nothing can change His abiding love for us or His relationship with us!

Tonight we look here at the next exhortation in Paul's list of exhortations to  
these believers in Thessalonica that were going through great difficulty!

In 1Thessalonians 5:17, Paul says, "*Pray without ceasing.*"  
What does that even mean and how can we possibly accomplish it!

**I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"?**  
**"Praying without ceasing" means at least three things.**

**A. It Means Having A Spirit Of Constant Dependence On  
The LORD In Our Lives!**

A **spirit of dependence on the LORD** should permeate all  
we say and do as believers! **Dependence on the LORD** is  
the very spirit and essence of prayer!

So, even when we are not consciously speaking to the LORD,  
there still should be a **deep, abiding dependence on Him**  
that is woven into the very fabric of our hearts because of **our  
relationship with Him and our faith in Him!**

The LORD indwells us through His Holy Spirit that He has  
given us, but **we must learn to lean on Him continually!**

*Proverbs 3:5-8*

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**We are to have a spirit of prayer continuously by being  
consciously aware of God's presence and help and by  
learning to lean on His presence and help!**

So, Paul is NOT referring to non-stop talking to God, but  
rather **an attitude of God-consciousness and  
God-surrender that we carry with us all the time.**

Every waking moment is to be lived in **an awareness that  
God is with us and that He is actively involved and  
engaged in both our thoughts and our actions!**

*Praying Without Ceasing...Means Having A Spirit Of  
Constant Dependence On The LORD In Our Lives!*

**B. It Means Actively Praying Repeatedly And Often!**

I base this on the use of the words "*without ceasing*" in  
*Romans 1:9*, where Paul says, "*For God is my witness, whom  
I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that **without  
ceasing** I make mention of you always in my prayers.*"

Now we can be sure that Paul did not mention the Romans  
every minute of his waking life, or even every minute of his  
prayers. He prayed about many other things. **But he did  
mentioned them over and over, and often.**

So "*without ceasing*" doesn't mean that, verbally or mentally,  
we have to be speaking prayers every minute of the day as we  
live life. But it does mean **we should pray repeatedly, and  
often.** Our default mental state should be: "*O God, help...*"

When our thoughts turn to **worry, fear, discouragement,  
anger, or other such things that disturb our spirit**, we  
should **consciously and quickly turn to prayer!**

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For example, in his letter to the Philippian Church, Paul said: *Philippians 4:6-7* **6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

Also, in his letter to the Colossian Church, Paul said: *Colossians 4:2-4* **2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; 3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: 4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.**

Paul also exhorted the believers at Ephesus to see **prayer as a weapon to use in fighting spiritual battles:** *Ephesians 6:18* *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

As we go through the day, **prayer should be our first response to every fearful situation, every anxious thought, and every undesired task that God commands.**

**A lack of prayer will cause us to depend on ourselves** instead of depending on God's grace. **Unceasing prayer is, in essence, continual dependence upon and communion with the Father.**

SO, **PRAYING WITHOUT CEASING...**  
*Means Having A Spirit Of Constant Dependence On The LORD In Our Lives!*

*Means Actively Praying Repeatedly And Often!*

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**C. It Means Being Persistent And Not Giving Up On Prayer!**  
Don't ever come to a point in your life where you **stop praying! Don't abandon the God of hope** and say, *"There's just no use in praying anymore!"*

Paul told the believers at Rome that they were to be: *Romans 12:12* *"...continuing instant in prayer;"*  
*"Continuing instant"* is translated from a word that means *"to be earnest towards, to persevere, to be constantly diligent."*  
(i.e. Be serious about your praying!)

The Lord Jesus wanted His disciples (and us ) to learn this lesson. In fact, one of his parables is introduced by the words, *Luke 18:1* *"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;"*

And then He told the parable of the persistent widow and the unjust judge! **(Luke 18:1-11)**

We also read that as Jesus taught His disciples to pray earlier, He told His disciples another parable in **Luke 11:5-10!**  
**(The Parable of the Persistent Friend.)**

Jesus knew that sometimes **our experience in prayer might tempt us to just quit praying altogether!** So he, along with the Apostle Paul, tells us in so many words that we should **never lose heart! But rather keep on praying! Don't give up! Don't cease!**

*WHAT IT MEANS TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING*  
*...Having A Spirit Of Constant Dependence On The LORD*  
*...Praying Repeatedly And Often*  
*...Being Persistent And Never Giving Up On Prayer*

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**II. WHY DO WE NEED TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING?**

**A. To Be Obedient To Biblical Exhortation!**

We've seen the commands and exhortations both from our LORD and from the Apostle Paul! We could just quit right there and just say, the only reason we need to do it is because God's Word says so!

**B. To Properly Praise God!**

*Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

*Psalms 147:1 Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.*

*Psalms 50:23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*

*Ephesians 3:20-21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

**C. To Properly Acknowledge God In All Things!**

**1. Acknowledging God In His Will!**

Jesus taught His disciples (and us) to pray for God's will on earth to be done!

*Matthew 6:10 "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."*

**2. Acknowledging God In Our Daily Needs!**

*Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.*

*Matthew 6:25-34*

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**3. Acknowledging God In Our Sins And Shortcomings!**

*Matthew 6:12 And forgive us our debts (trespasses), as we forgive our debtors (those who trespass against us).*

*1 John 1: 6-10*

**4. Acknowledging God For Our Protection From Evil And The Evil One!**

*Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

**5. Acknowledging God In Our Cares!**

*Philippians 4:6-7 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

*1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

**6. Acknowledging God In Our Battles!**

*Ephesians 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;*

*Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,*

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7. **Acknowledging God In Our Need For Wisdom!**  
**(James 1:5-8)**
  
8. **Acknowledging God In His Gracious Benevolence!**  
*Colossians 4:2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;*

*1 Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

For these reasons and so many more and because there is power and privilege in prayer, we should pray as often as we can!

**Conclusion**  
***Hebrews 4:14-16***

And so we see that it is the will of God for us to "*pray without ceasing*",

1. So that we maintain a conscious awareness of the presence of the LORD in our lives and develop a spirit of constant or continual dependance on Him! (Walk with Him!) And...
  
2. So that we might enjoy both the privilege and power of prayer in our lives!
  - a. By Being Obedient To Him!
  
  - b. By Praising And Acknowledging Him In All Things In Our Lives!