

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

1 Thess. 5:17

April 13, 2013

Introduction: Prayer and the Word of God has been said to be like the two wings of a bird in flight to our Father in Heaven. Prayer is simply a heart to heart conversation with The Father. It is the way to true intimacy with our loving Father. It will give growth and maturity to your relationship with God and grow a trust, love and praise that will greater glorify our Father as the world sees us delight and feel safe in Him.. Paul urges us to pray unceasingly that we may grow in the transforming knowledge and revelation of God. Prayer, Paul showed is the way to grow in love with God, ,through Christ, by His Spirit. Knowing God is our call by God to relationship, and prayer is the means to this intimacy with our Heavenly Father.

I. Knowing People of Prayer. The Apostle Paul was a scholar of the Scriptures and was able to see the effectiveness of prayer through the great men of faith in the Old Testament.

- A. Paul has a repetitive theme when you examine the epistles. In the beginning, middle and end of chapters he writes urging prayer: The necessity of prayer.
- B. Paul before his conversion was a Zealot. The Pharisee of Pharisees. He was a scholar of the Old Testament. He was well aware of the men of great Faith that God called friend and talked face to face with.
- C. Abraham, Moses, Noah: He knew these men were praying and God talked to them. That was their joy.
- D. Moses desired His presence, “ If your presence does not go with me I do not want to go”. Moses delight and joy was the presence of God.
- E. Joshua 1:8 tells us to meditate day and night. Paul would read the likes and desires of Joshua.
- F. Psalmist: Early in the morning... I will arise... at midnight... and night watches.
Psalm 1:2 – But His delight is in the Law of the Lord and He meditates day and night (unceasing prayer) and will be like a tree planted by the rivers and will be prosperous.
- G. Jeremiah 17:7-8; Jeremiah 29:11 – Blessed trust: Be like a tree.
- H. Moses – Be Bold & Honest. Show me your Glory! Show me your way so I can know you.
- I. Jonah – Give thanks in despair.
- J. Jeremiah – Call upon me and I will tell you great and wonderful things... Jeremiah 33:3.

II. The Key to Loving God was Knowing God and this was by Prayer/Word.

To know God is our call: Then we delight and then we can serve when we know His way.

- A. Prayer is a heart to heart conversation. Pouring out our praise, thanksgiving, anguish, all our needs and requests

Walk with your Best Friend:

Blue Tooth: Constant prayer. Admiring and seeing, exclaiming and requesting

- B. As Paul wanted to know God you can find this in Isaiah 43:7-10 verses that typified Paul's major prayers. "To know and believe Him", that is why we are chosen.

Glory: Verse 10) Chosen (special).

Verse 11) Witness and Servant.

Verse 12) To know and believe I am God.

You see this is His prayers and exhortation. His entire quest TO KNOW GOD!

a.. Phillipians 3:7: "But whatever things were gain to me, I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that I count as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that I count all things loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my LORD,... (vs. 10)...that I might know Him and the power of His resurrection and fellowship of His suffering, being to his Death.... " Reaching forward and press toward the goal of Christ Jesus. Knowing: means – to know experientially or personally; a sharing of life.

b. Ephesians 1:15-19: For this reason I too having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for the saints. Do not cease giving thanks for you while making mention in my PRAYERS, that the God of our LORD Jesus Christ, the father of glory may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

Paul knew Saul's knew God: They would have Hope, Joy, Peace of Christ and know His will.... To know Him= praying with out ceasing.

c. Ephesians 3:14: For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. (Read)

d. Colossians 1:9: For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

e. Isaiah 43:10: To know Him is what Paul saw was the key – To know/to Love and Prayer: It is what Jesus said was Eternal Life.

f. John 17:3: This is Eternal Life, that they may know you and the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

III. Delight in Him.

- A. The prescription to delight in God is given in Job 22: 21-30. It basically says to take all His words to heart and lay down what you consider your great things (idols). And apply His ways and practice them and when you do you will find then delight in Him and despise your old ways. Then you will pray to Him and He will hear you.
- B. Proverbs 2:1-5. When you come after me with all your heart ,(paraphrase) and search for me with all you have, then you will find Me , delight in Me and grow in wisdom and knowledge of Me.

So total abandon of self for God will yield, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a pure desire and delight for God that will lead to unceasing prayer .For intimacy with God is now your supreme desire.

IV. Growth and Personifying Christ.

As we grow in prayer, we are becoming sanctified and thus growing in Christ likeness resembling His character. When we read I Thessalonians 5, we see that the verses before and after verse 17(pray without ceasing), that what Paul exhorts the saints to do can only occur by the power of His Spirit and maturity that is a result of prayer.

A. Power.. 2nd Corinthians 9:12,” My grace is sufficient for you, for My Power is perfected in weakness.” verse 13 , ..”.. that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”

B.Identity, Acts 17:28, “ For in Him I live and move and have my being.”

Galations 2:20 I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live but not I, but Christ lives in me.”

C .Guidance. As you seek Gods guidance He will so do so by His Spirit . Acts 16:6. “ They passed through the Phrygia and the region Galatia having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.”

D. Comfort/Refuge/Safety. 2nd Corinthians 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation...”

E. Joy, peace, righteousness, Romans 14:17.

F. Faith, Romans 10:17, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

G. Needs, Petitions, Phillipians 4:6 & Romans 8:2

H. Love, Ephesians 3:19 “...and know the love of God that surpasses knowledge,”

V. How To Pray.

- A. In reverence, Hebrews 5:7
- B. Pray in faith, Hebrews 11:6 & John 11:41
- C. Watchful and vigilant during prayer, Matthew 26:41 & Colossians 4:2.
- D. Come boldly in prayer, Hebrews 4:16
- E. Come intentionally to a certain place, Luke 6:12 & Matthew 6:6.
- F. Pray in the Spirit, Ephesians 6:18 & Jude 20
- G. Pray with thanksgiving, Psalms & The Epistles

Conclusion.

Prayer ultimately glorifies God. For this we were created, Isaiah 43:7. Prayer leads to greater dependence and fellowship and knowledge of God. As we grow in His knowledge, we grow in loving Him. This leads to a greater thanksgiving and praise. This will lead to a greater obedience which will lead to a greater witness of God in our lives. This is what the world will see and thus, God is glorified. Therefore, pray unceasingly.