

Foundations Bible Study - Prayer
Lesson 5

Scripture Readings:

- I Thessalonians 5:16-22
- Psalm 5

Lesson

I wanted to write one more lesson on the importance of prayer. I know books have been written about prayer, but I do not want to leave the topic without looking at this scripture and addressing some things we all can do to make prayer more a part of our daily spiritual lives.

Pray without ceasing, Pray always, Pray all the time: What does this Bible verse mean. Is it possible, and more than that, is it profitable? I always heard growing up that this verse meant to have a prayer in your heart, at all time through out the day. Sounded good at the time, but now, well, my heart is not always in the mood for prayer. Some days it is a real hard job just to pray a few times during the day. So, what does it mean, pray all the time?

I think there are at least two meanings here for us all. First is the importance of prayer. God created us to have a spiritual connection with God and the spiritual world. This is why prayer is so important it is our connecting force. It is a lot like cell phones, they are a great way to stay connected with our friends and family. I can call my kids anytime, and they can call me. I feel much more secure knowing I have that connection with them. It is the same with prayer. It is how we stay connected with God, and it makes me feel much more secure just knowing that God is always there. One big advantage to having God's number is God always hears my calls, sometimes my children do not. Praying all the time is a way for God to say to us: "I love you, I care for you, stay in touch, it will be a great life as we journey together."

A second lesson here is that our prayers should be consistent and frequent. As I said earlier, I find it hard to pray all the time, but I do think that is one of the points of the text. We should be praying more and talking less, praying more before we act, praying more as we go about our days. We are just so busy and the things we do each day are so very important, that we do not have time for God and prayer. Give me a break, I need, you need, we all need to be reminded that prayer is more, much, much more than, "God is great and God is good...."

There are many ways we can pray more often through the day, here are a few suggestions.

Reminder Card

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Make a short list of things and people to pray for, maybe 5-10 things on your list. Write the list on a 3X5 card; take the card with you each day. Use the card at the stop lights, waiting in the check out line, during lunch break, any time you have a minute or two.

Listening/ Meditation

Praying is not just me asking things, it is listening also. Take time to be still and meditate, listen, and feel God's presence in your life. When can you do this? Well, first before you get out of bed, in the middle of the day, sitting in the car, walking in the park, walking the dog, back in bed at night. Or, make a special time each day to do nothing except think of the things of God.

Music and praying

Find a song, or two, or more that lead your mind, heart, and soul to God and prayer. Make this your prayer song. Play the song in the car, at the house, on your i-pod, or phone. Pray through the music, or the words, or say your own prayer while the music is playing. Hey, even stop and listen instead of doing any asking. This is a good way to time your prayer time, so you don't worry about praying to long if you are praying during a break or before you leave for work. This also helps guide you to do the Godly things that are so important in life.

Use the internet

Use the church's web site. We have many prayer requests listed. Use other web sites, some designed for personal prayer times. These are complete with music, words as guides and pictures.

Take a walk

Walk and think of God. Walk and ask God for help. Walk and just enjoy the world God has given you.

One last thing I will share today. Have you ever heard the letters BFF used together? You maybe have seen them written, they seem to be written more than spoken. These three letters stand for "Best Friends Forever" and are used much in the text messaging world on-line and on cell phones. Do you have a BFF, and how often do you talk with them? Daily, 20 times a day, once a week... How often do you check on them?

Jesus longs to be my BFF, for real! Maybe, just maybe I should talk with him more. What do you think?

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Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. What does pray without ceasing mean to you personally?
2. How often do you pray during the day?
3. Do you speak often to your BFF? And why not Christ?
4. Do you listen to your BFF? And why not God?