

Prayer in Daily Life

There are many places in the Bible where we are directed to pray continually, ceaselessly, and about all things. One place you see this is Ephesians 6:18.

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And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

You've got to wonder who he was writing that to. I mean, who has time to be constantly in prayer besides a monk locked away in a monastery? I don't know about you, but my plate's full. And I know others have even more on your plate than I do. You know, the book of Ephesians was actually a letter written by the Apostle Paul while he was in prison in Rome. Now, I'm not saying that life was easy in prison but, the man had some time on his hands. Here he is writing a letter to the church in Ephesus that was meant to be distributed to all the believers telling everyone to spend all day praying about everything. And I'm thinking that they're thinking Easy for you to say. You've got nothing to do but sit around all day. I've got things to do!

How am I supposed to find time in my day to pray when I have things to do? I'm constantly running around trying to do everything I'm responsible for. Well here's a question. How do you pray? What, exactly, does prayer look like? I know I really enjoy being able to kneel here in the prayer garden and spend some time in prayer with no interruptions and no noise. But it isn't practical and, really, it isn't necessary if my goal is to communicate to God.

Matthew 6:5-13

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

God knows when we are trying to communicate with him. He already knows what we need and want before we ask. Our asking is simply our part of the bargain of acknowledging that we need Him in our lives and we're struggling. We don't need much time, and we don't need to say much. But He will be listening and He will honor our requests.

Matthew 7:7-12

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a

snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Perhaps the first request on our lips when we're overwhelmed and need a break is to ask Him for that time. Ask God to make 10 or 15 minutes available to you to relax and gather yourself. When He makes it available you may even feel like spending a few of those minutes praising Him for His faithfulness. Do you think God would miraculously open 10 minutes in your day so you could recoup and praise Him?

But when you pray there is something else I would suggest you think about. Some times when I'm frustrated about a situation or a person I just want the whole thing to go away. I want God to make things the way I want them so I will be happy. I want the frustration removed and it doesn't matter how it happens so long as I'm happy. I can be tempted to pray that way.

Matthew 5:43-47

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?"

I would like to suggest that praying for and not against a stress in our life will be more productive because God wants us to build each other up, not tear each other down. Sometimes instead of praying for our own peace, we need to pray for the healing of someone else. And through that healing we will receive the peace we desire.

Prayer is our way of showing God that we know He is in charge and that we can't do anything right without Him and His wisdom. He doesn't need us to pray to make things happen. He does plenty of things all on His own just for us. Prayer shouldn't just be about a peaceful place and time to ourselves. It should be that constant feeling in our hearts and minds as we go about the day that we need God in every aspect of our lives every minute of every day. And we can ask these things in a moment in our hearts, out loud, in our room, or in a crowded store. He is in all places all the time waiting for us. We don't have to feel a certain way to be speaking to God. Every thought we think and every word we speak is our prayer to Him.