

Pray Without Ceasing Part II

A Word for 2021 & Beyond
14 - Nehemiah: A Time for Restoration
Church on the Park | Sunday, 7 FEB 2021 | Glen Gerhauser

Text: “Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Th 5:16–19).

Theme: Enjoying God is like a fire that keeps us burning in prayer.

Intro: The altar of incense in the temple continually offered up a beautiful smelling fragrance to God. In the same way, God wants to make us into living altars that continually burn and offer up prayer and worship to God. This altar of incense is a picture of what it means to ‘pray without ceasing.’ Praying without ceasing is not for the super-saint. Instead, it’s for every believer. We are all called to be like Jesus, the fulfillment of the altar of incense. In the second part of this message, I will continue to share practical tips to help you pray without ceasing. I also will cover some prophetic words God has put on my heart from 2021 and beyond. So let’s first recap the acrostic we have been spelling: RECEIVE. 1) R - Respond to every situation and stress with prayer, 2) E - Embark on every day and event with prayer, and 3) C - Converse with Jesus as a friend throughout your day.

1) E - Enjoy God (1 Thes. 5:16-19).

- Listen to Paul’s exhortation that enwraps his call to ‘pray without ceasing’: ‘Rejoice always...In everything give thanks.’
 - Rejoice and giving thanks.
 - Paul calls us to this way of living even though being a Christian meant lots of pain for him (2 Cor. 11:23-28).
 - How can you rejoice always and give thanks in all things?
 - Constantly remember who God is—he is good, full of kind love, compassionate, gracious, helpful. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Alef and Tav, the beginning and the end.
 - No one can overcome him and no one can defeat him.
 - Continually discern what Jesus is doing, what he has done and what he will do.
- Prayer is joyful. Listen to Isaiah 56:7.
- For 2021, the Lord gave me Psalm 20 and Psalm 21 .
 - A few weeks ago I shared this with our family during a family worship time.
 - He told me that this is what he wants to do in 2021 and this is what he wants to remind his people of.
 - Read Psalm 21:6.
- ‘The joy of the Lord is your strength’ (Neh. 8:10).
 - “For the joy of Yahweh, it is your mountain stronghold” (*my translation*).
- Enjoy God and enjoy God’s gifts.
 - Over the holidays Valerie said, “I’m bored.”
 - And I said, “Bored?! Bored??!! You’re bored a few days after Christmas? Play with all the gifts we got you.”
 - How many gifts of God are we not valuing and enjoying.
- We don’t endure God, we enjoy God.
 - We endure hardships but we do it through enjoying God.
 - You will live in joy when you focus on God and what he does rather than focus on yourself and the list of things you need to do.
- The dominant melody emanating from our lives should be joy and thanksgiving.
 - Why?
 - Because when you read the Scriptures you discover that Jesus is the victor—he has triumphed.
 - And anything the enemy throws at us, God turns for the good.
 - 2 Corinthians 2:14
- Paul goes on to say: “This is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
- There’s no greater joy than walking in personal intimacy and covenant with God.

- Can you imagine? The Creator of the universe is your friend and has humbled himself to hang out with you.
- This does not mean that there is no lamentations and sorrow.
- Rather it means that the sorrow is never final.
 - Sorrow is never the end of the sentence, instead it's a passing phrase encircled by God's goodness and victory.
 - He is the Alpha and the Omega.

2) I - Intake Jesus' grace, mercy, strength and forgiveness continually (John 6:53-58).

- When Jesus first explained Passover from his perspective, he told his disciples 'Do this in remembrance of me.'
- He told them the bread represented his body and the cup his blood for the forgiveness of sin.
- They need to continually intake and ingest the very life of Christ in order to remain in him (John 6).
- There was no other way.
- The greatest thing that quenches the Spirit of prayer is unconfessed sin.
 - Unconfessed sin causes us to run from God like Adam and Eve.
 - Unconfessed sin causes us to blame one another rather than take responsibility for yourself.
- Live in a covenant mindset.
- Receive forgiveness quickly
 - Get back up quickly.
- How many times should you forgive your brother? (Luke 17:4; Matthew 18:21).
 - Why so many times?
 - Because this is how much God is willing to forgive you.
- "This is a year to stand strong and find your strength in God. Casual Christians will become casualties. Only those on-fire for Jesus will last. My people must learn to let their whole lives be a living sacrifice of worship to me. 'Seek my face always. Seek my strength' (cf. Psalm 105:4; 1 Chron. 16:11). What is coming to the world will rock even the elect. Stay in my word. Remember I will provide. My people are called to rise to the challenge and reach the lost, for surely there will be a harvest in this time. The foolishness of world leaders and governors will be shown in this time. They have not done things my way. They have not sought the wisdom of men and women of God. They have all become corrupt. Darkness has fallen on the world but my people are its light. It's time to wake up" (8 DEC 2020, prophetic word from my journal).
- Grief robs your strength and joy.
 - You have to wipe the dust off your feet.
 - I had to wipe the dust off my feet from many griefs and pains of last year.
 - You'll need to forgive
 - You have to leave behind people who are not willing to walk with you.

3) V - Value the Word and spiritual friends (Daniel 2:17-18).

- Daniel calls his friends to pray with him.
 - Enlist your friends to pray with you .
- Pray according to God's Word.
 - The word is the fuel and spices of the incense of prayer.

4) E - End everyday with prayer (Psalm 42:8).

- We remember that the priests had to keep the incense in the temple burning morning and evening.
- Go through your day with the Holy Spirit.
 - Give thanks.
 - Examine yourself.
 - Pray for protection.
 - Leave your burdens and worries at his feet.
- Enjoying God is catchy like enjoying ice-cream.
 - When you see others enjoying ice-cream, often you want one too.

Conclusion: When you pray without ceasing you receive God's presence and presents—his joy, grace and strength. So let's recap or acrostic: RECEIVE. 1) R - Respond to every situation and

stress with prayer; 2) E - Embark on every day and event with prayer; and 3) C - Converse with Jesus as a friend throughout your day; 4) Enjoy God, 5) Intake Jesus' grace, mercy, strength and forgiveness continually; 6) Value the Word and spiritual friends; 7) End everyday with prayer.

God's Kingdom is going to increase, grow and expand exponentially in these days. So if you are in the Kingdom you will be a part of this.

END NOTES

"um, it actually means 'pray without being distracted' or 'focused prayer', greek word *adialeiptos*" - comment on Facebook.

Actually, the above comment is not correct, see below...

'Without Ceasing' - Word Study - *adialeiptos*

ἀδιαλείπτως adv. (since Metrodorus Philos. [IV/III b.c.]: PHercul 831, 8; Polyb. 9, 3, 8; SIG 1104, 15; 1171, 4; pap fr. II b.c. on [Mayser 458]; 1, 2, 3 Macc; EpArist 92; 294; Aristobulus in Eus., PE 13, 12, 4; TestLevi 13:2; TestSol 3:7; Jos., Bell. 3, 164; 241; Just., D. 133, 6) **constantly, unceasingly** μείαν ποιείσθαι Ro 1:9; 1 Th 1:2. εὐχαριστεῖν 2:13. προσεύχεσθαι 5:17; IEph 10:1; Hs 9, 11, 7; cp. Pol 4:3. προσκαρτερεῖν τῇ ἐλπίδι Pol 8:1. δίδόναι (of God) Hs 5, 4, 4 v.l. (for ἀδιστάκτως). σκεπάζειν Hs 9, 27, 2. —DELG s.v. λείπω.

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature (3rd ed., p. 20). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

89. ἀδιαλείπτως *adialeíptōs*; adv. from *adiáleiptos* (88), **permanent, without ceasing. Continually, without intermission.** In Rom. 1:9, Paul tells the believers in Rome that they are constantly in his mind, not meaning, however, that other things were excluded. Whenever Paul encountered evidence of their faith, he did not fail to pray for them. In 1 Thess. 1:3, he mentions constantly remembering the believers' work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope. Their example left a permanent example for him. In 1 Thess. 2:13, he mentions his constant thanksgiving on behalf of the Thessalonians. In 1 Thess. 5:17, we find Paul's injunction to incessantly pray, which means to pray every time an opportunity presents itself and to be in a constant attitude of dependence upon God (Luke 18:1; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18). This does not imply that the believer should neglect everything else and should utter unending prayer, or that he should abstain from work and cloister himself in a monastery where he can constantly pray. The word for "pray" here is *proseúchomai* (4336), a word which never refers to praying to men, but always to God. Therefore Paul's injunction means that one should be constantly conscious of his full dependence upon God.

Syn.: *nuchthémeron* (3574), night and day; *pántote* (3842), always; *aeí* (104), always, ever; *diá pantós*, forever (*diá* [1223], for; *pantós*, the gen. of the neut. of *pás* [3956], all).

Ant.: *oudéποτε* (3763), not even at any time, never at all, used with more absoluteness than *mēdéποτε* (3368), never, or not even ever, which is more subjective and relative.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.