



# Pray without ceasing

June 3, 2019

**1 THESSALONIANS 5:17 NKJV - (17)** pray without ceasing.

I was puzzled by this verse, “Pray without ceasing.” Did Jesus pray nonstop? The Bible says (**Luke 2**) that he was a carpenter for at least 18 years before being baptized by John in the Jordan River. Surely this work prevented Jesus from continuous prayer, yet this Bible verse challenges us to pray continuously — to bathe our years, months, days and moments with prayer: “Pray without ceasing.”

As I grew and matured spiritually, I began to believe that it is indeed possible to pray nonstop. It’s possible because we can cultivate a spirit that is habitually devotional, keeping our hearts attuned to the transcendent. The Greek word for “without ceasing” in **1 Thessalonian 5:17** is “*Adialeiptos*”, which doesn’t mean nonstop — but actually means constantly recurring. In other words, we can punctuate our moments with intervals of recurring prayer.

I think it would be good to notice here that in real life some discipline in regular prayer times helps keep this kind of spontaneity alive. In other words, if you want to have a vital hour-by-hour spontaneous walk with God you must also have a disciplined regular meeting with God. Daniel had some remarkable communion with God when it was critically needed.

But look what it grew out of. The decree was passed that no one could pray except to the king, under penalty of death. But notice what Daniel does, according to **Daniel 6:10**. “Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.” The point here is that Daniel lived a life that combined discipline (three times a day) with spontaneous encounters with God. So it will be with us: if we hope to pray without ceasing day and night - enjoying a continual coming and communion with God - we will need to develop disciplined times of prayer.

Finally, then, focus on what you are praying in order to have the delight in God and his Word that will keep us meditating and fruitful and durable and spiritually prosperous?

**SCRIPTURE READING: JOB 22:27**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** Obedience in faith in the middle of a trial is the key to abundant life.