

# Pray Without Ceasing

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1 Thessalonians 5:17

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15-22

*"What's heaven but an everlasting access to God, and present access is a pledge of it...This life of communion with God, and constant attendance upon him, is a heaven upon earth." – Matthew Henry*

## **Big Idea: Christians Should Pray Without Ceasing.**

### **1.) We Begin the Day With God.**

*"My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to You," (Psalm 5:3)*

#### A.) We Pray Because Faith Compels Us

*"A companion ready in all their solitudes, so that they are never less alone than when alone. Do we need better society than fellowship with the Father?" –Matthew Henry*

*"a counsellor ready in all their doubts, a guide, who has promised to direct with his eye, to lead us in the way wherein we should go. A comforter ready in all their sorrows. . .to support sinking spirits, and be the strength of a fainting heart. A supply ready in all their wants. They that have access to God have access to a full fountain, an inexhaustible treasure, a rich mine. A support ready under all their burdens. They have access to him as Adonia [my Lord], my stay and the strength of my heart. A shelter ready in all their dangers, a city of refuge near at hand. The name of the Lord is a strong tower. Strength ready for all their performances in doing work, fighting work. He is their arm every morning. Salvation insured by a sweet and undeceiving earnest. If he thus guides us by his counsel he will receive us to glory." –Matthew Henry*

#### B.) We Pray Because Our Father Requires It

C.) Unceasing Prayer is an Unceasing Reminder That We Have Unceasing Communion with the Father Through Christ by His Holy Spirit.

*"You always have something to talk to God about. He is a dear friend, so it is a pleasure to know him personally and to walk with him intimately. He is also Lord over you and over everything that touches your life. Shall a servant not talk to his master? Shall a dependent not talk to his provider? Shall one in danger not converse with his defender?" –Mark Jones*

#### D.) The Target of Our Prayers is Always God's Glory

*"Let not self carnal self be the spring and center of your prayers, but God. Let the eye of the soul be fixed upon him as your highest end in all your application to him and let this be your design and all your desires, that God may be glorified. By this let them all be directed, determined, sanctified, and when need is overruled."–Matthew Henry*

*"just as the burnt offering was offered every morning in Israel, just as singers thanked the Lord every morning, in the same way we who are spiritual priest in Christ should offer our spiritual sacrifices every morning to God."–Matthew Henry*

*"Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." So here's the deal praying without ceasing begins in the morning. (Mark 1:35)*

## **2.) We Spend the Day With God**

*"...For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day." (Ps. 25:5)*

#### A.) Waiting Upon the Lord Involves A Patient Expectation and a Constant Attendance

*"To wait on God, is to live a life of desire towards him, delight in him, dependence on him, and devotedness to him,"- Matthew Henry*

*"We should spend our days desiring God, like a beggar constantly looking to his benefactor, hungering not only for His gifts but for the One who is the Bread of Life. We should live in delight of God, like a lover with his beloved....We must wait on God every day, both in public worship on the Lord's Day and in the work of our callings on weekdays. We must wait on Him in the days of prosperity when the world smiles on us and in the days of adversity when the world frowns on us. We must lean on Him in the days of youth and in the days of old age....Are you burdened with cares? Cast them on the Lord. Do you have responsibilities to fulfill? In your business do you know that God assigned you this "calling and employment" and requires that*

*you work according to the precepts of His Word? God alone can bless your efforts, and the glory of God should be the ultimate goal of all your work. Are you tempted to follow another way? Shelter yourself under His grace. Are you suffering? Submit to His will, and trust the love behind His fatherly corrections. Is your mind caught up in hopes or fears about the future? Wait on God, who rules over life and death, good and evil. Henry's writings show us that every minute of every day contains ample reasons to look to the Lord." –Mark Jones*

B.) Every Day we Should Search for Abundant Reasons for Prayer and Praise

*"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms." (James 5:13)*

### **3.) We Close the Day With God**

*"I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." (Psalm 4:8)*

A.) Our Days Should End in Contentment if we Have the Lord as Our God.

*"Let this still every storm, command and create a calm in thy soul. Having God to be our God in covenant, we have enough; we have all. And though the gracious soul still desires more of God, it never desires more than God in him it reposes itself with a perfect complacency; in him it is at home, it is at rest." –Matthew Henry*

B.) Our Days Should End with Thanksgiving to God

*"Every bite we eat, and every drop we drink, is mercy. Every step we take, and every breath we draw, mercy." –Matthew Henry*

C.) Our Days Should End with Confession to God.

*"Henry taught us continually to plead for repentance with godly sorrow, making fresh application of the blood of Christ to our souls for forgiveness and drawing near to the throne of grace for peace and pardon each night." –Mark Jones*

D.) Our Days Should End with Reflections Upon Our Mortality and Christian Hope.

*"Bedtime also offers an opportunity to reflect upon both our mortality and our Christian hope."—  
Matthew Henry*

*"Just as we take off our clothes at night, so we will put off this body until we receive a new one  
the morning of Christ's return. Just as we lie down in our beds to rest, so we will lie down in  
death to rest in Christ's presence where no nightmares can trouble us. Henry's focus on death  
was not unhealthy morbidity but a realistic consideration in a fallen world where many people  
die each day with or without the Christian hope that extends beyond this life to eternal glory." —  
Mark Jones*

*"To thy glory, O God, I now go to sleep. Whether we eat or drink, yea, or sleep, for this is  
included in whatever we do, - we must do it to the glory of God ... To thy grace, O God, and to  
the word of thy grace I now commend myself. It is good to fall asleep, with a fresh surrender of  
our whole selves, body, soul, and spirit, to God; now, 'return to God as thy rest, O my soul; for he  
has dealt bountifully with thee.'... O that when I awake I may be still with God; that the  
parenthesis of sleep, though long, may not break off the thread of my communion with God,  
but that as soon as I awake I may resume it!" —Matthew Henry*