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Prayer Pt 3 Pray without ceasing and die to sin

This is our third study on prayer. In our previous teaching we established three points– (i) Pray for the brethren always, ii) Pray– giving thanks unto God, and iii) Pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you.

In this study we establish an additional three points– (i) pray when we give thanks for food, (ii) In everything pray, and (iii) pray without ceasing.

It is from our search of the scriptures that we establish our three points–

1. Pray when we give thanks for food– for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: [5] For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer” (1 Tim.4: 4, 5).

2. In **everything** pray

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil.4: 6).

3. Pray without ceasing

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes.5: 17). See also Rom.1: 9 and Eph.1: 16.

Illustration

According to some Muslim scholars Allah required them to pray 50 times a day but Mohammad negotiated that number down to five times a day. An example from the Qur’an– Suri 11: 114– “be constant in praying at the beginning and the end of the day, as well as during the early watches of the night: for, verily, good deeds drive away evil deeds...”

Questions of the scriptures

- i) To pray without ceasing suggests there is more to prayer than just talking to God– what else?
- ii) What are the implications to our relationship with God if we pray without ceasing?

Answers from the scriptures

“And after the earthquake a fire; [but] the Lord [was] not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice” (1Kgs 19:12).

ii) If we pray without ceasing –

- * we would not set out eyes on any wicked thing – because we would talk to God about it first!
- * We would not make provision for the flesh – because we would talk to God about it first – “do you want me to do this evil?”
- * We would not give in to temptation during a time when the devil is provoking us and we are “drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (Jam.1: 14) – because prior to jumping in flesh first (so to speak), we would ask God if He wanted us to do so?

The more we pray the more we are able to be guided by the Spirit, led of the Spirit and live in the Spirit. And as a consequence we do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh! Hence, when we pray without ceasing it is a form of dying to our flesh, our lusts are quenched– Hence, we sin less. Therefore, those in the body of Christ who pray more– sin less than during the times they pray less often.

Let us, in everything we do, pray without ceasing!