

Pray Without Ceasing

by Phil Beach Jr.

Praying without ceasing is a heart attitude of dependence on God, where we prioritize His will over our own desires and live in humble trust in His Word.

Duration: 1:03:44

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Topics: "Prayer", "Dependence On God"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the call to 'pray without ceasing' as a vital aspect of the Christian life, rooted in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. He acknowledges the challenges believers face in rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks, highlighting that these commands require divine assistance. Beach explains that praying without ceasing is not about physical posture or location, but rather a heart attitude of dependence on God. He encourages believers to cultivate a persistent desire for God, recognizing that true prayer stems from a deep relationship with Him. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to seek God earnestly, as this is essential for spiritual growth and understanding.

Transcript

Turn your Bibles to 1 Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians, and there's three particular scriptures that we want to mention this morning that I feel the Lord will give us light upon. And they're found in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 16, 17, and 18.

16, 17, and 18. Verse 16, rejoice evermore. Verse 17, pray without ceasing.

And verse 18, in everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Now, we just read three scriptures, and each of these scriptures are revealing to us God's will.

However, as we read these scriptures honestly, with open hearts before the Lord, we recognize that they are indeed tall orders for us. And that apart from divine intervention and divine assistance and divine enabling, we dreadfully fall short of complying with these scriptures. For example, rejoice evermore.

How frequently do we find ourselves in the state where there is an absence of rejoicing? Secondly, pray without ceasing. How frequently do we find ourselves in a state where we are, in fact, not praying? And thirdly, in everything give thanks. I suppose that this particular scripture and the failure to comply to it can be seen in two ways.

But I suppose that both of these two ways mean the same thing. We can either be not giving thanks, or we can be expressing unthankfulness. And I suppose that not being thankful is in and of itself a form of unthankfulness.

We don't necessarily have to be saying things that would indicate unthankfulness. Just the absence of thankfulness would indicate the presence of unthankfulness. I'd like, if you would turn your Bibles to Philippians, we're just going to find a few other scriptures that support this thought of rejoicing and giving thanks and praying.

Philippians chapter 4, beginning in verse 4. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. Now, we read a scripture in I Thessalonians chapter 5, verse 16. Rejoice evermore.

And now the Holy Spirit is saying rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. So there again the Holy Spirit is revealing to us that God wants us to rejoice evermore. Rejoice without ceasing.

And verse 5, let your moderation be known unto all men, for the Lord is at hand. Don't worry about anything. Be careful for nothing.

But in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God. So here we find not only is there the command to rejoice always, but also it says here that we're to pray about everything, which sounds like verse 17, pray without ceasing. And then in verse 18 it says in everything give thanks, and in verse number 6 it says that we are to pray with thanksgiving.

So we see a very parallel thought here in Philippians that we see in Thessalonians. Now if you turn your Bibles to Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 6, verse number 18. This is part of the armor that Paul tells us to put on that we frequently forget.

We talk about the helmet of salvation, we talk about the shield of faith, we talk about the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and our loins girt about with truth. But in verse number 18 we see that it says praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. So here we see again this exhortation to pray without ceasing, to pray always.

So we can find testimony after testimony in the epistles that God is wanting us to catch the vision, catch the revelation, to pray without ceasing, to pray never ending, to rejoice evermore, and not only to rejoice and pray but to give thanks. So the question this morning that we want to ask is this. How are we supposed to pray without ceasing, rejoice evermore, and give thanks in all things? How are we supposed to do this? We know that the commandment to pray without ceasing does not have to do with a particular place.

It does not have to do with a geographical location. Let's just write some of this down here. Bear with me this morning as we share this because I believe it's very, very profitable that we learn these things.

So praying without ceasing. Okay, look it. Now, does not, does not mean, number one, location.

Okay? It doesn't mean that there's a particular location that we are to pray unless we have to stay in that location at all times. All right, number two, it does not mean bodily posture. In order to pray without ceasing, it certainly can't mean that we have to be on our knees continuously because then we couldn't do anything except what we could do on our knees which isn't very much.

So we know that praying without ceasing has nothing to do with a particular location or it could for a season we might all gather together and it has nothing to do with bodily position. Although it could for a season mean that we get on our knees before the Lord. Okay? Thirdly, it is not necessarily a conscious thing which means we are not necessarily called to consciously verbally be praying at all times.

It would be very difficult to talk on the phone with somebody and at the same time be praying verbally. It would be very difficult to engage in business and be praying if you have to talk to somebody. So when the scripture says pray without ceasing, there is an understanding, there is a meaning, there is a thought that God has that goes beyond the location, it goes beyond the bodily posture, and it goes beyond a conscious thing, something we are necessarily doing verbally at all times.

It goes beyond this into what it really is, what the true meaning is, and that is it is a heart attitude or posture. A heart attitude or posture. So what the Lord is wanting to do through this pray without ceasing is to fashion our hearts in such a way in so much that our hearts, the inner being of our true self, is in a posture of heartily prayer unto the Lord.

Heartily prayer unto the Lord. It indicates a heart that is in dependence upon the Lord. A heart that is in dependence upon the Lord.

Now, beloved, let me ask a question. Do you remember last week we talked about John chapter 15? And we'll go there and read it. I like to read it.

John chapter 15. Jesus said in verse number 12 of John 16. Excuse me, John 16 verse number 12.

I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. And you remember we had a list on the board of several things. Each one of the items that we had listed on the board were subjects that Jesus was talking about briefly in his exhortation of John chapter 14 to John chapter 17.

And it was most likely in the context of what he was talking about in these chapters that he was, when he spoke of, I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them yet. No doubt, the many things that he had to say to us related specifically to possibly little seed thoughts, little mentions of these topics that we discussed yesterday that he talked about briefly, but he couldn't expound on them. And we had mentioned several topics last week.

Number one, the truth about prayer. Now, believe it or not, some of the most profound, incredible scriptures teaching us about prayer are found in John 14 through John 17. For example, and we used this example last week, John chapter 15.

If you abide in me, verse 7, and my words, plural, abide in you, you shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. That is perhaps one of the most profound statements in the entire Bible on the subject of prayer. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you will ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Now, I'm quite sure that the Lord Jesus had many, many things to say regarding this incredible ministry of prayer that he was unable to say because his disciples were unable to hear them. Not only did we mention prayer as one of those things, but we also mentioned the throne ministry. Now, the throne ministry and prayer are directly related.

The throne indicates authority. The throne indicates power. The throne indicates the place where Christ is set down.

But also, it indicates the place where Christ promised the overcomers would sit in Revelation chapter 3. You remember Revelation chapter 3, verse 21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. So, we see the prayer ministry.

We see the throne ministry. Then we also mention the mystery of our union with Christ, being one with him. Many, many things to say to us about this mystery of being one with him.

And of course, in John 15, Jesus used the illustration in order to help us understand the magnitude of this unity and union that we have with him of the vine and the branches. He is the vine, we are the branches. There is an incredible truth there that if the believer individually got a hold of this and the believers corporately got a hold of this revelation, it would utterly transform everything about our lives.

It would transform the way we think. It would transform the way we act. It would transform the way we look at other believers.

So, we have prayer, the throne ministry, the mystery of the unity, the union, the oneness that the believer has with Christ. These are just a few of the topics that we mentioned last week, which Jesus, I believe, had many more things to teach us, but what? He couldn't because we were dull of hearing. Now, do you remember last week what it was that we concluded was the basic root cause of why we were dull of hearing? Now, before we answer that question, we showed that even after the church received what? The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was still making this statement. Some people would say, well, the reason why this is true is because the Holy Spirit had not yet come. But after the book of Acts, after the Pentecostal experience, Paul said the same thing in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. The Holy Spirit was communicating the same burden in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 as He's communicating here through the Lord Jesus Christ, but yet the church in Corinth, according to the Bible, was what? Well, let's read it.

Verse number 4, I thank my God always in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus. So the church in Corinth was full of the grace of God, that in everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance. So the church in Corinth was enriched by Christ with all utterance.

Who are some of the teachers that came to the church in Corinth and preached to them the word of the Lord? Paul, Apollos, most likely Cephas was involved in the ministry there. Who else traveled with Paul quite a bit? Barnabas. So that's just to mention a few.

Do you think the church in Corinth lacked good Bible teaching? Huh? Do you think the church in Corinth lacked sound doctrine? Do you think the church in Corinth lacked grace? Do you think the church in Corinth was a church that was in existence before or after the day of Pentecost? Did the church in Corinth have the Holy Spirit? Okay. Now the Scripture says that they were enriched with all utterance and all knowledge. That's incredible.

All knowledge. That's unbelievable. What that tells me is that the church in Corinth had taught to them that information that the Holy Spirit considered to be all knowledge.

They were not lacking in any of the knowledge of God. The ministers that God raised up in the midst of Corinth surely did a good job, didn't they? They communicated and taught the people of God in a wonderful way. Can you imagine the Apostle Paul standing up in the midst of the church in Corinth and opening up his mouth and beginning to read the Scriptures in the Old Testament regarding the stone which the builders rejected hath now become the head cornerstone and begin to expound on Christ as the living stone and we are the living stones built together to make up a holy priesthood? Okay.

So they were enriched with all knowledge even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. So here the church in Corinth also was a church known as those in whom the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them. So you see there was a whole lot of good things going on in the church in Corinth.

But yet in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul said, I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are you able. Aren't they almost the same words that Jesus spoke in John 16? You're not able to bear it. Now the Holy Spirit's been in the church.

The church has even sat under the greatest ministers that possibly were ever in the earth. And now the Apostle's saying, you're not able to bear the meat. So therefore this surely disproves the belief that the only reason why Jesus couldn't tell these things to the disciples was because they hadn't known the Pentecostal experience, or they hadn't known the fullness of the Spirit, or they hadn't known the reception of the Spirit.

Wrong they did. And yet there was still an inability that the Holy Spirit had in communicating and bringing the meat, the deeper things of God. This same thought is carried over into the book of Hebrews.

The writer of Hebrews, wanting to talk about the Melchizedek priesthood in Hebrews chapter 5, verse 11, of whom we have many things to say and are hard to be uttered, seeing that ye are dull of hearing. So not only was the church in Corinth dull of hearing, who were recipients of the Holy Spirit, but the Hebrew believers were dull of hearing. And they also had become the recipients of the Holy Spirit.

And therefore the scripture says that they were unable to receive the strong meat which belongs to them that are of full age, verse 14, even to those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. And then we have this testimony carried over even into the book of Revelation where there was a church in Laodicea. And Jesus Himself said, you are blind, you are wretched, you are miserable, you are naked, you are poor.

Now I would think that in such a state it was difficult for the Lord to really open up His heart to the Laodiceans and share with them the things that He longs to share with those who are called by His name. Wouldn't you think so? Of course. So why is there this testimony that we've walked through in the scriptures supporting this statement that the Lord makes in John chapter 16? What is it? What was our conclusion last week? Why was there such a dullness in the hearts of the believers that prevented the Lord from opening up the depths of His heart to them? What was the cause of this? Remember? Well, yes, of course it's always because of sin, but what was it specifically that we had dealt with? What's the word that we had mentioned last week? Self-love.

What is it? Huh? Narcissism. How many have ever heard that? Narcissism. What does that mean in your idea? That's exactly right.

It's from the mythology, and what it is, it's self-absorption to the point of self-love. I'm so absorbed with myself that I love myself. My chief love is myself.

Okay? Self-absorption. We showed that the essential cause in the life of the disciples when they walked with the Lord Jesus until Pentecost, the essential cause of their failure and their blindness was that they had not been delivered from their commitment to themselves. Though they saw the Lord, and though they acknowledged Him as Lord, and though they were loved by the Lord, and though perhaps they had a love for the Lord, yet that love was very mixed with self-love.

And much of that love was a commitment to Christ based on what they got out of it for themselves. And therefore, my commitment to Christ based on what I get out of it for myself will surely be shaken if in fact my commitment to Christ possibly will lead me into a way or on a path that is not really good for myself. Like remember when Jesus said He was going to the cross, what did Peter say? God forbid, Lord, be kind to yourself.

That's what He said. Be kind to yourself. Don't go to the cross.

And Jesus very candidly looked at Peter and said what? Get behind me, Satan. Now, why was Peter so concerned about the Lord going to the cross? Do you think that it was springing out of a broken heart at the thought of Jesus dying? Or could it have been the thought that if I'm committed to Him, and I'm going to follow Him, and He's going to the cross, where does that lead me? To the cross. So here Peter, unknowingly possibly, was speaking out of the abundance of his heart.

And Jesus not only heard his words, but knew from whence they were coming. And Peter, Jesus heard not only the devil trying to turn him from the cross, but see, the devil has to have a hold in us if he's going to use us. See, he has a hold in us if he's going to use us.

So not only did he hear Peter, or the devil, trying to tell him not to go to the cross, but he heard Peter crying out because his own lack of desire, his own desire for preserving himself was exposed. Self-preservation, he wanted to preserve himself. So Jesus rebuked the devil and said get away from me.

You don't understand the things of God, not only the things of man. So having understood the essential cause of blindness from a scriptural point of view, and you can follow this right on through, in Corinthians we know why there was blindness in the church. Because the eye was so much in predominance.

It was so much in preeminence. The eye. The I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas.

The envying, the strife, the jealousy, the contention. The things springing out of the part of us that ought to be crucified with Christ. That whole realm of our soul life is under the sentence of death.

That whole realm. The self-grasping, self-satisfying, self-preserving part of our soul is under the sentence of death. There's no place for that in the kingdom of God.

That's where the soul needs to be saved. The soul needs to be saved from itself. From all of the inordinate desires in it that would reach in contradiction to what God's will would be.

The soul has to be brought to the place where it lives in humble dependence and trust in the Word of God and lets the things of God take preeminence over its own desires. Even the natural desires that are not unlawful in themselves must be subject to the cross. Is it wrong for a husband to love his wife? No.

But Jesus said, Woe unto the man that loves his wife more than me. He's not worthy of me. Is it wrong for a man to love his children? No.

But Jesus said, Woe unto the man that loves his family more than me. He's not worthy of me. Is it lawful for a man to care for himself? No.

But Jesus says, Woe unto the man that hateth not his own life. He's not worthy of me. Now are those desires in us to love our wife and to love our children and to take care of our own self, are they unlawful in and of themselves? Certainly not.

God is not against families. He's for families. But the soul must be stripped from its love even the things that are lawful because the soul in and of itself always wants to reach out and love something and grab a hold of it and get it out of proportion.

So even those lawful desires that we have must find their way to the cross where they are stripped from the unlawful holding on of things so that the soul is adoring Christ alone and has no rivals but Christ. Okay, so getting back to prayer. Pray without ceasing.

What it doesn't mean, what it does mean. Prayer is one of those subjects, beloved, that the Lord Jesus Christ was expounding on in John 14, 15, 16, and 17 that he could not speak much of. The reason being is because the revelation of prayer and the actual participation in prayer grows in us, listen closely, in direct proportion to, in direct relation to the work of God in us, freeing us from self-love, self-dependence, self-confidence, in a wrong way.

The revelation of prayer and participating in it works in us in direct relation to the believer's deliverance from a life of sufficiency in oneself. So therefore, our understanding, listen closely, of this one statement, pray without ceasing, and our participating in the truth of this statement is in direct relation to the work and grace of God and his word working in us, delivering us, and emancipating us from the depths of our dependence and confidence and trust in something other than God. For he that trusts in something other than God doesn't need to pray to God.

He that trusts in something other than God doesn't feel the need to pray to God. Now we're beyond theory now because none of us, none of us, would claim that we don't believe in prayer or that we don't trust in God. And it's true in measure.

We all do believe in God, and we all do trust in God. But when we say that, God knows our hearts, but he also sees that in the depths of our being, there's a whole lot of what we are that still trusts in something other than God. So what God does as the shepherd, as the king, as the loving heavenly father, as the one who purifies the sons of Levi, is he sovereignly allows us to go through things so that we find ourselves in a posture where we discover that there is more dependence in us on things than we actually thought, and gives us opportunity at those times to what? Cry out to him and experience in a subjective way the realities of the objective fact.

And that is, the moment we believed, we put our trust in God. And now God is committed to work that trust that we placed in him, that he gave us the faith to acknowledge. Now God's committed to work that trust into the depths of our being so that all of us, every bit of us, is reaching out and trusting in God.

So therefore, there is no plan that God has for us this morning that if we learn six steps, we can pray without ceasing. There's no book you can read. After reading that book, you could say, ah, now I know I

can pray without ceasing.

All the things that Jesus taught regarding prayer hang upon the work of God in the believer's life, delivering the believer from all the things that we trust in. There are seven words in the book of John that are sufficient. If there was no other Bible, if there was nothing else in the Bible but these seven words, these seven words are sufficient in and of themselves to make the church a house of prayer, which Jesus said it ought to be, which it isn't now.

And if we had become, if we were a house of prayer according to God's thought, and you know what the house of prayer according to God's thought is in the Old Testament, how frequently were the incense to be burning? How often? Continuously. How about the lights? Perpetually. Perpetual illumination by the Holy Spirit.

Perpetual prayer ascending up to the throne of God, out from the shrine of the spirit of the believer. Okay. Seven words in the New Testament sufficient enough to make every blood-washed child of God a praying saint.

We've read them before. The words of Jesus in John 15. For without me ye can do nothing.

Seven words. Now believe it or not, everything you're going through right now as a believer is ultimately going to become an opportunity for you to discover the reality and significance of those seven words. For without me ye can do nothing.

Not even one thing. Not even one thing. We are at God's mercy regarding this issue.

For the Lord himself and he alone is able to take one of his dear ones and teach that soul how to pray. To teach that soul, without me ye can do nothing. But beloved, may I say that though we are at God's mercy and though it is God alone who can do it, the other side of the coin is this.

Oh God, earnestly will I seek you. We must pray that God puts in us a hunger and a passion and a craving to know him. Specifically, to know what it is to pray without ceasing.

And we must be persistent, just like Norman's been teaching the children about persistence. We must pray that God will give us divine persistence. For the scriptures are very clear that God is a rewarder of those who what? Diligently and earnestly seek him.

Jesus taught that we are to ask and keep asking. Seek and keep seeking. Knock and keep knocking.

The widow woman was granted her petition because why? Importunity. Stubbornness. Audacious audacity.

Persistence. Where is this persistence? Where is this craving? I'm sorry? When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth? Where is this passion? Where is this persistence? Where is this hunger? Where are the blessed people today? Where are the blessed ones? The blessed ones are not those who are whoring and dealing at Wall Street. The blessed ones are not the nieces and nephews of Mr. Gates.

Where are the blessed ones? Where are the blind ones? Where are the lame? Where are the weak? Where are the beggars? Where are the ones crying out to God? Oh, Lord, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy. Lord, I'm hungry after you.

Where's those that are crying out? Oh, God, I hunger and thirst after righteousness. Oh, God, I am mourning because I see that in myself I am totally bankrupt. But, Lord, thou art the treasure of heaven.

Lord, how I long for thee more than silver and gold. Where are those? Where are they? Where are they? Where are those who can't sleep at night because they're so hungry for God? Woe unto you that are filled, Jesus said. Woe unto you that laugh now.

But blessed are the poor. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst. Blessed are they that mourn.

Blessed are the meek. This is a war, beloved. Everything in the world today is warring against the desire that God is putting in your heart to know Him.

It is warring against it. The Holy Spirit would want to gather those that are called by His name and place within them a passion and a longing and a craving for the Son of God, for the Lord Jesus Christ, even as an undefiled bride would have for her husband a desire to know Him more than anything else. There is a war for your mind today, beloved.

There is a war for your affections today, beloved. There is a war for your desires today, for the Spirit that now is working in the world would want to take your desires, would want to take your passions and turn them from the Lord onto things and desires, things that revolve around the temporary things of life and seduce you and rob you from the simplicity that is in Christ. This is a warfare, beloved.

It is not a normal, natural thing for a person to wake up and say, God, I want You. That must come from God Himself. But let me tell you, once the devil sees that there is a woman in travail, what does he do? He comes as a serpent and just waits to stalk.

He waits to stalk what that birth is going to produce. Think it not strange, beloved, the enemy is a lying and he's seeking to infall whom he might devour. Any kind of desire that is working in you that's the result of God's love getting in your heart, that's the result of God's Spirit working in you that is causing you to want to go heavenward, upward, closer to God is going to be contested and fall by all the powers of darkness.

It's going to be, it's being fought right now. Beloved, the more God births in you the reality of His Word and you find in your spirit a yea and amen to the call of the Spirit to say, come unto me. You say, yes, Lord.

You find yourself waking up at night, Lord, I am a dry and a thirsty lame, I need You. You find yourself looking at people and inside you're saying, Lord, I no longer see black and white. I no longer see fat and skinny.

I no longer see good looking and bad looking. But I see sheep without a shepherd. I see things begin to awaken in you.

Don't think the battle's over. Don't think, hallelujah, I must be getting there. Praise God, this is pretty good.

You better be on your guard. You better watch and pray. You better cry out, oh God, preserve in me the work that you're doing.

Lest the enemy come and seduce me. Lest I yield to the weakness of my flesh and I turn from the things that you are putting in me and I go after my own will and my own way. This is a battle.

This is a spiritual battle, beloved. We are called, we are called to become heavenly creatures in Christ Jesus. But everything about our mortality and everything about the world that we're living in contradicts everything that God is wanting to do in us.

That's why Christians struggle. That's why we have so many difficulties. It's because God is birthing in the womb of the church a man who will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

A man, a man child. God is forming in the womb something that comes from him that is undefiled. That is pure and holy wherein there is no guile.

Virgins, they don't know women. They are holy, the lords. And the serpent is there to destroy and to devour.

We're in a warfare, beloved. So praying without ceasing hangs upon God working in our life. Hangs upon God opening up the eyes of our understanding and calling us to a life under his discipline, under his chastening, whereby we discover more and more.

This morning that you can see that we're in a warfare and that everything that God is doing in you, as Paul said to Timothy, so the Holy Ghost and the Word of God says to us today, guard that thing! Guard it! Guard everything in you that is toward God. If you wake up with a desire and you want to know God, guard it! Thank him! Thank God, beloved, that you are a mortal man desiring God. It's an evidence that God has got his hand on your life.

But guard it because it is a sure sign that if there's something of the Christ that's working in you, you're going to be in measure in the battle of Psalm 2. Why do the heathen rage? Why do they imagine a vain thing? Why am I surrounded with what seems to be darkness and distress and perplexity? Why is my mind filled with doubts and questions? Why do at times do I want to just give up? Why? Why? It's because the enemy comes when Christ is doing something in you. Oh, sure, you're in bondage if you're living after the flesh. You're in bondage if you're living in adultery and fornication, if you're indulging in the things of this world.

But let me tell you, there is a greater warfare occurring right now in the section of the church that is pushing towards heaven with all of the power of grace provided and guarding their lives with all the power of grace than there is in the section of the church that is still flirting with the world. There's a much greater war going on. And a lot of times Christians think that when they understand the cross as it relates to the desires of the flesh and that they come to where in Christ they cease from sin and that when they do sin, they deal with it and they go on with God and they're finding that more and more the desires of the flesh are just starving because they're hungry for God.

They think that they're coming out of the great warfare and that they're finally, finally being free to serve God without any conflict. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Ephesians 6 battle is the battle that we come into when we are most devoted and committed by the grace of God to the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's the battle in the heavens against the position of Christ in me, my life. I will live by Christ. I will move by the desires that are in me by Christ.

I will strive toward heaven by Christ. I will labor by Christ. I will serve by Christ.

I will love by Christ. It is a decision of the will energized by the power of God behind it. I will do what God wants me to do by His grace.

I am trusting in the dependency that comes from Him. It is a life that is committed to Christ and His expression plus nothing. It is a life that quickly deals with sin in any shape or form.

There's where Ephesians 6 is. That's the battle. It's the church living in the identity of Christ and saying regarding the old man, I don't know him, and I want nothing to do with him.

It is a life where the word of God and the words of Christ mean more to the soul than anything else. It is a life where God is putting within the soul a passion and a hunger for the things of God in the word of God that surpasses any other desire. It is a life that lives by the word of God.

It is a life that's coming in to the good of praying without ceasing. It is a life that is realizing that as God's word becomes part of me, as God's word becomes what I am on the inside, I can ask what I will because my will, my desires are more and more and more conforming to what God wants. I know I have confidence then that I can ask what I will and God will do it.

It is the life where believers begin to pray and God takes notice. It's a life where we enter into the Melchizedek priesthood, the life of ministry and prayer to God for men. It is a life where the church comes into the realization that Jesus said pray like this and he goes on and says, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

It is a life where the believer discerns what the will of God is in heaven, sees that there's a contradiction on earth and prays until that contradiction conforms to what God says. It's not mind power. It's grace.

It's Christ power. It's the revelation of the word of God. It's the ministry of sons and daughters who have put away childish things, have reckoned themselves to be crucified with Christ, have become the off-scouring of the world, who are fools for Christ, who are looking for a city whose builder and maker is of God, who have forsaken all to follow Christ, who might possess things, but golly gee, there's nothing that possesses them.

They are preserved in Christ. They have wept over the Scriptures and continue to weep. And any form of sin or dividedness that they discover God reveals, they pray and they weep and they beg God to change it.

It's beyond just emotion. It's not just an emotional repentance. Oh God, I'm so sorry.

And then the next day we're dabbling in the pig's thighs again. No, it is something that goes beyond emotion. It's the very depths of the Spirit.

Yes, beloved, this is where God wants His people today. This is where we begin to hear the voice of God in the Scriptures and the Word of God begins to open up to us and suddenly the things that Jesus said are hard to be uttered. He starts uttering.

He starts talking to us about prayer. He starts talking to us about the mystery of being one with Him. He starts saying, let us do this together.

We're laborers together with Christ. The mystery. Christ considers us His co-workers.

The mystery of union. The mystery of being one with God. The mystery that God will do nothing except He what? Reveal it unto His servants, the prophets.

The mystery of we discover that God is no longer wanting us to say, have my heart. But now He's waiting for His sons to cry out, God, give me your heart. Give me your heart.

As I shared a few weeks ago, the Holy Spirit started speaking. Went into a season of praying. Groanings that couldn't be uttered.

Deep groanings. Oh God, oh God. And then suddenly the Holy Spirit was gracious and said, would you like to know what you were praying? Would you like to know what I was praying to the Father? I was interpreting, this is the word, I was interpreting to God what you were saying.

Wow! What was it that I was praying, Lord? Because I knew I was praying, but I had no clue up here. Because it was too deep. The Holy Spirit says, you were praying in the depths of your spirit, Phil.

Oh God, I know that you will never forsake me. But Lord, make it be, Lord, that I would never forsake you. Lord, I know that whatever I do, you will remain faithful to me.

But oh God, please make it so that no matter what you do, I will remain faithful to you. And as the Holy Spirit showed me, this was what my spirit was praying. I began to weep before God because I saw what God was doing.

He's making a Son. He's making a Son. It's what He's doing in all of those that love Him and are called by His name.

God wants to put in us the heart of His Son. And the heart of His Son had a commitment to His Father equal to the commitment the Father had to Him. Now I don't know about you, beloved, but such things are out of our hands.

We cannot conjure up, Peter said, though all men forsake you, I won't. When you try to take a hold of this revelation and you try out of the goodness of your might to come up to God and say, God, I'm going to be faithful to you, God will look and say, Oh, Son, forget it. This is the kind of work that God does when He brings us along the path of total emptying of self, where we realize that God alone can do it.

Do you know what kind of a commitment God has to you? Incredible, isn't it? He wants to produce in you by the power of His almighty grace a commitment in you for Him. Birthed from Him, nurtured from Him, matured from Him, so that the end result is that which He has done in your life, so that it is to the praise and glory of His name and His hands. That's what He's looking for, a people who will be as His Son is on this earth.

That's where Job comes in. There's a battle going on, and this praying without ceasing hangs upon this work of grace that God is doing in each and every one of us. As I said in Luke chapter 12, I just want to read this scripture in verse 42.

This is one that we've read before. Now listen closely. Who then is that faithful and wise store whom His Lord shall make ruler over His household to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom His Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing.

Of a truth I say unto you, He that will make Him ruler over all that He hath. This is a scripture that Jesus mentioned, and it has to do with the very original question that was brought to Jesus in verse 13. It's the same thought from verse 13, and it ends way back to verse number 58.

It's all one thought. The original question was some brothers came to Jesus, and what did they say? Lord, bid my brother to share the inheritance with me. And then Jesus started.

What did He do? Was He an arbitrator? Did He arbitrate between the brothers? No. He basically heard what His brother had said and went to the heart and saw that He was saying it out of a heart of covetousness. And therefore, He didn't want to be a fair arbitrator because He was the Lord of glory.

He wanted to be the righteous God, and He dealt with covetousness. He dealt with covetousness, and then in verse number 22, He deals with the heart being freed from drives for things and coming into the place where it is after the Lord and His righteousness. And then He talks in verse 34 about the treasure and the heart, and where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

And then in verse 35, it talks about, let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching. And He talks about in verse 40, be ready therefore for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when you think not.

And then He goes into verse 42. Peter said, are you talking this parable to us or to others? And Jesus then said, who shall be? A store, a wise store. So when Jesus mentions verse 42 and this thing about Him making His servant a ruler in His house, He's starting with a process, and it starts in verse 13.

And this process is the stripping of the Lord in the life of the believer, delivering us from all of those things that divide us, that divide our allegiance to Him. If we'll cry out to Him day and night and let Him hold us, He will take us from verse 13, which is where we all start, and we'll end up in verse number 44, blessed is that servant. Now I want to challenge you to pray through these verses, because this is the journey every soul must go on, the journey of being stripped, the journey of learning dependence upon the Lord.

May the Lord do it this morning in our hearts, may He take His Word and prosper it for the good pleasure of His own purpose. Be encouraged, beloved. Don't be distressed if you're in a battle, but keep praying, keep letting the Word of God feed you, and Jesus will complete what He's begun in our lives.

Hallelujah.

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