

All Prayer

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of praying always, with all prayer and supplication, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Duration: 21:16

Scripture: Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31, Mark 13:33-37, Luke 10:20, Philippians 4:4

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of waiting on the Lord and spending quality time in prayer. He shares a personal story of a friend who dedicated hours to prayer and gained deep insight into God's works. The speaker encourages listeners to abandon their busy agendas and prioritize time with God. He also highlights the need for fervent and diligent prayer, citing the example of Epaphras in Colossians 4:12.

Transcript

This is Bill McLeod from Winnipeg, Canada, bringing you a message on what I want to call all prayer. That phrase is found in Ephesians 6, 18, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching there unto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And then Paul adds this, and for me, and for me, all prayer.

To begin with, Romans 8, 26 says we do not know what we should pray for as we ought. We don't know what to pray for as we should. Okay, so that being true, then what do we do? Well, we ask the Holy Spirit to show us what we should be praying for, and he will do that.

That's what it says in Romans chapter 8. Okay, first of all, there is serving God, and Anna in Luke chapter 2, verse 37, she served God with fastings and prayers night and day. She served God with fasting and prayers night and day. So we can serve God by fasting.

Fasting you know is praying without words. The Bible speaks about fasting, crying to God over in Esther, the matter of the fastings and their cry. So when you're fasting, you're crying, it's praying without words, you're crying to God.

And so she served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And then the word persevering, Ephesians 6, 18, with all perseverance, that means never giving up. Genesis 32 gives us the example,

you remember Jacob, how he prayed all night, wrestling with the angel of God, and finally the angel said, let me go, the day is breaking, and he said, I will not let you go unless you bless me.

And so he was blessed, and so God changed the name from Jacob, which meant the supplanter or deceiver, to Israel, which meant prince of God. Because God said, you have power with God and with men. It revealed with God, and that gave him power with men.

Persevering, all perseverance. Thanksgiving, oh, be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and thanksgiving, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, that your requests may be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep, that is it will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

We say, I don't think we should ever start praying without starting with thanksgiving. Abounding therein with thanksgiving, we read in Colossians chapter 2. I remember one time seeing some men, they were not Christians, but they were fishing on a June morning in a wilderness river, and there were probably half a dozen men there, and they said, if you want to catch a big walleye, stand over there, you'll catch one every second or third cast. If you want to, if you don't mind, if you'd like to have smaller fish, two and three pounds, stand here, you'll get one every cast.

Men were literally filling baskets and big five-gallon cans with walleyes. Beautiful day, having a wonderful time catching fish, and what else? They were cursing and blaspheming all the day. I never heard anything like it.

I couldn't believe it, but that was unsaved men. And sometimes as Christians, we may not curse and blaspheme, but we have a sour heart. We're not thankful to God, we're not rejoicing as we should.

Rejoice in the Lord always, Paul wrote, and again I say, rejoice. Christ said don't rejoice because demons are subject unto you, rather rejoice because their names are written in heaven. There's that old song, written in heaven, oh glorious thought, this consolation to me Christ has brought.

So rejoice in the Lord always. Then Acts 6, 4, the apostles said we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Lord, beginning with prayer and ending with ministry to others. Giving ourselves, so the idea is throwing yourself into every ounce of energy you have.

Give yourself to it, that's Acts 6, verse 4. And we're to strive together, Romans 15, 30, Paul says, striving together with me in your prayers to God for me. And the word strive there comes from a word which really means agonize, and so we're to strive together with Paul to agonize to prayer, again like I say, to give it all you can. And then 2 Corinthians 1, 11 speaks about helping by prayer, you also help together by prayer.

You know the Bible speaks about the gift of helps, I've never heard of any Christians convening a conference and inviting people to come so they could spend a weekend trying to discover what helps God had given them. No, that's, it never happened, as far as I know it's never happened, it probably never will. Well people want to find out about more flashy gifts, you know, on the platform stuff, and so they want to find out, they want to get the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy and all this kind of stuff.

What about just having the gift of prayer? You also help me together by prayer. And then Paul spoke about travelling in prayer, over in Galatians 4, 19, he said, My little children of whom I travail and birth again until Christ be formed in you. The churches in Galatia, Paul had been there before, they had been completely alive, praying much, witnessing much, giving much.

He comes back some years later, and he sees they're all dead, and he said, You did run well, who drove you back? Who hindered you? Who drove you back? What's happened here? And so Paul went to prayer, and he likened it to having, to a woman having a child, he called it travailing in prayer. Travailing in birth again, until Christ be formed in you. Isaiah 66, 8 says, As soon as I'm travailed, she brought forth her children.

And then he applied that to praying for souls to be saved. And he said, You can't, I can't, he said, I can't. I can't speak effectually to individuals or publicly to groups of people if I ever lose the spirit of prayer.

And he made much of this, having the spirit of prayer, so that he could truly travail in prayer for the souls of others and for other matters. Finney made a great deal of this, I think we should do. Then the Bible speaks about us watching and waiting.

In Colossians 4, 2, Watching the same with thanksgiving. Watching and waiting, well, you know, it really means spending time. In Mark 13, 33-37, there are four such references.

When I say unto you, I say unto all, watch, watch, watch. Psalm 27, 14 says, Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord.

So wait on the Lord. And dear people, listen, wait in any language means wait. Wait on God.

You know, in Isaiah 48, 31, They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, They shall mutter with wings as eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. But wait on God, wait on God. I had a friend, he taught psychology in a university in Canada.

He was a Christian. He came to me one time and said, Pastor, could you give me some books or recommend some books that would be helpful to me? And I said, yes. I suggested four books.

Two books on Spurgeon's life, The Early Years and Full Harvest, and then the two-volume set done by Pastor Dallimore, a pastor from Ontario, on the life of George Whitefield. Well, he bought the ones on the life of George Whitefield, and his life was totally transformed. He might walk up to you in the church and say, Would you wait with me in prayer for a while? Now, if he asked you to do this, you have to think in terms of maybe two hours, you know.

He was constantly waiting and watching with God. It was amazing. You rarely saw him in the church services.

During the services, he'd be up there in the prayer meeting, which in that church overlooked the congregation, and he'd be up there praying the whole time, watching and waiting, waiting and watching. And he knew what that meant. He just spent hours at it and had a wonderful insight into God and into the works of God.

And so, they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with eagles. They shall run.

They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. It's a promise of God.

Get alone with God. You've got to scrap the system you have now, your agenda, you know, doing running here, running there, getting this done, doing something else, and rattling off a two-sentence prayer at the end of the day or maybe starting the day with a one-sentence prayer. People, that's an insult to God.

Give God quality time, watching and waiting, and then laboring. It speaks about Epaphras in Colossians 4.12, and Paul says he was always laboring fervently for you in prayer. So it's work, it's hard work, laboring fervently.

It's hard partly because we are opposed. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but we do wrestle against principalities and powers, against what Paul called the rulers of the darkness of this world. They hate to see you praying.

The devil is always at you if you spend a lot of time in prayer, but we overcome him through prayer, always laboring fervently in prayer, okay? Colossians 4.12. And then in Colossians 4.13, it speaks about this man Epaphras again, and Paul said, I bear witness to him that he has great zeal for you in prayer, great zeal. You know, somebody said, I know a Christian is very zealous. Would you think in terms of some person who is praying? No, he's a zealous Christian.

He's giving no tracks. He's a zealous Christian. He's always witnessing for Christ.

He's a zealous Christian. He's tearing around the country holding meetings. No, no.

Great zeal in prayer. Oh, people, this is what God is saying. And then the Bible speaks about people praying night and day.

Psalms 88.1. I've cried night and day, David said. I have cried night and day. 1 Thessalonians 3.10. Paul said, Night and day, praying exceedingly, that I might see your face and might perfect that which is lacking in your life.

And so, night and day praying. 2 Timothy 1.3. Paul said to Timothy, I remember you in my prayers night and day. Now, people, it doesn't mean he's praying all night and all day.

It's just a phrase he's using, demonstrating or illustrating that we should find ourselves. You know, prayer has been called the breathing of the soul in Lamentations 3.56. Do not hide your ear at my breathing, at my cry. Okay, so, prayer is a matter of spiritually breathing.

So we should pray without ceasing and everything give thanks. We should find ourselves praying constantly through each day. We don't have to be on our knees praying.

We can be praying as we're driving in a car. We can be praying as we're studying a book. We can be praying as we're washing the dishes.

We can be praying at our job, whatever it is. Praying in our hearts. Many examples in the Bible are praying in their hearts.

The Eliezer, Abraham's servant, he prayed in his heart. And God gave him instant guidance, which is what he needed at that particular time. Nehemiah prayed standing before a king, and so we can pray standing.

And Joshua prayed riding in a chariot. When he was faced with danger, he cried to God, so you can pray when you're driving your car. And Jonah, I'm sure he prayed in a horizontal measure because that's where he was, in a fish's belly, when he cried again to God.

And God set him free. All right, laboring fervently. See you night and day, day and night.

Then, people, we have the wonderful example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 14, 23. He went up into a mountain, a park, to pray alone.

Mark 1, 35. Rising a great while before day, he prayed. Long before the sun was up, Christ was out there just praying.

Luke 5, 16. He withdrew into the wilderness and prayed. Luke 6, 12.

He prayed all night before choosing the 12 apostles. And then Luke 9, 28 and 9. On the Mount of Transfiguration, with Peter, James, and John, he prayed, and Moses and Elijah showed up on the mountain. It was called the Mount of Transfiguration.

It says that Christ was transfigured before the apostles. When they looked at him, they couldn't believe what they were seeing. That's why it was called the Mount of Transfiguration.

So that's a wonderful example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, people, let's pick up on that. And then, we have the wonderful example of other people you know.

Abel Clare and Father Nash, two of Finney's helpers. When Finney was going somewhere for special meetings, and they found out about it, he would tell them, and they would take off and go to that place and rent a place to stay and start their prayer ministry. They prayed 8 to 10 hours a day.

And they might be there a week or two weeks before Finney got there. And Finney said, when I got there, the prayer had already started, had already begun through the prayers of these men. There were some men called the praying men of Barvis in Scotland, and Duncan Campbell told me about them.

He said, these men, they give up their job and have supper and go to bed right after supper and they sleep until 9 o'clock at night. Then at 9 o'clock, they rise up and they pray until 2 o'clock in the morning. Then they go to bed and sleep until 7 when they get up to take care of their day's work or chores.

Praying men. They didn't meet together to pray, they just prayed. They loved to pray.

And he told me something of their power in prayer because he'd gone to the Isle of Skye. And I was interested in this story because that's where the McLeod clan came from, the Isle of Skye. So he was trying to reopen a church that had been closed for years.

He started on Sunday, five people showed up, nothing happened. Monday, five people, same five, nothing happened. Tuesday, Wednesday, nothing happened.

Same people, five people. So he got a message that praying men above us, he said, asking them to take this need on their hearts. And they did.

And after spending that night in prayer, the next night, there were 60 or 70 people showed up and a revival began and there were seven people, I believe he said, saved in that one meeting. And the church was reopened as a consequence of praying men above us. Praying Hyde in India, you know, he prayed constantly.

On the compound where he stayed with other missionaries, when the dinner bell rang, he lifted his heart and said, God, do you want me to go for dinner or do you want me to continue praying? And if God said pray, he would stay and pray. He missed many meals this way. And then he began asking God for one

soul a day.

And God gave him one soul a day. And then he asked for two souls a day. Then three souls a day.

And I think he finally began asking for four souls a day. And he prayed and believed God. And God gave him what he asked for.

You know, I was reading in one of Dr. Edwin J. Orr's books on revival about a Baptist church in the early 1800s. Wanted revival so bad. Do you know what they did? Listen carefully.

They established three prayer meetings every day. One in the morning at seven, one in the afternoon, maybe two or three, and one in the evening. And they continued this, three prayer meetings a day for two years.

And then a mighty revival came and hundreds of people found Christ as their Savior. Well, our text, Ephesians 6 to 18, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And Paul adds, and then from me, because he said he wanted to open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.

Are you into this thing called all prayer? Oh, I hope that you are. Praying with all prayer, serving God with prayer, persevering in prayer, praying with thanksgiving, giving ourselves to prayer, striving in prayer, helping others by prayer, travailing in prayer, watching and waiting in prayer, laboring fervently in prayer, zealous in prayer, having great zeal in prayer, praying night and day, praying night and day, following the wonderful example of the Lord Jesus Christ and then following the wonderful example of others, Abel, Clarion, Father Nash, the praying men of Barvey, praying Hyde, and that Baptist church, three prayer meetings daily for two years and then revival came. Well, my dear friend, I've done my best today and my best is not all that great, but listen.

Give yourself, continue to prayer. Give yourself to prayer. Pray without ceasing and everything give thanks.

This is the will of God and Christ Jesus concerning you. So we read in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, praying always, always, always. Perhaps what you should do at this point is get on your knees and ask God to forgive you for the poor prayer warrior you've been.

Ask God to forgive you and to give you a gift of prayer and start setting aside time. If necessary, rise early in the morning. Give yourself an hour or two early in the morning.

I heard a Christian worker whom God was mightily using, he said this, I decided to follow the example of Dwight L. Moody and Charles Finney rising at 4 o'clock in the morning. He said, I didn't want to get up before that was too early, so I started getting up at 7. I normally get up at 8. And then he said, that didn't do it, so I got up at 6 and that didn't do it, so I started getting up at 5 and that didn't do it and finally I started getting up at 4 and that did it. And so it's just a challenge to your people.

Accept the challenge. Don't do something about it. In this area of prayer, everything depends on it and the work of God.

We should know that. God bless you. Thank you.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16233.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/bill-mcleod/all-prayer/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net