

Pray Without Ceasing

June 7, 2015 AM

James 1:2-4

- 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;
- 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.
- 4 But **LET PATIENCE HAVE HER PERFECT WORK, THAT YE MAY BE PERFECT AND ENTIRE, WANTING NOTHING.**

THE PERFECT WORK OF PATIENCE provides you with spiritual skills and life experience that make you successful in your pursuit of God.

Hebrews 5:14

"But strong meat belongeth to them that are of **FULL AGE** (mature, complete, adult, perfect), **EVEN THOSE WHO BY REASON OF USE** (practice, habit) **HAVE THEIR SENSES EXERCISED** (to train, discipline) **TO DISCERN** (to distinguish) **BOTH GOOD AND EVIL.**"

Hebrews 12:10-11

- 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; **BUT HE FOR OUR PROFIT, THAT WE MIGHT BE PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS.**
- 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward **IT YIELDETH THE PEACEABLE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS UNTO THEM WHICH ARE EXERCISED THEREBY.**

TRIALS BRING US TO POINTS OF CRISIS, MOMENTS OF DECISION, WHICH DEFINE US FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES

God uses pain in our lives to bring us to Himself, to bring us to conviction and decision, to teach us what we can learn no other way!

"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word." Psalm 119:67

LEARNING I AM NOT EXEMPT NOR ENTITLED - don't be surprised or offended when the trial comes, be ready!

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." 1 Peter 4:12

"...When affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended." Mark 4:17

MANAGING YOUR MIND & THOUGHTS - your mind is the gatekeeper for life or death!

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5

MANAGING YOUR EMOTIONS - find peace in God - don't let your emotions toss you to and fro!

"Why art thou cast down, o my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help (yeshua - salvation, deliverance, victory, health, prosperity) of his countenance." Psalms 42:5

LEARNING TO LIVE BY GOD'S STRENGTH - God uses trials to press us far beyond our own natural limits, so we learn to live by His power!

"And he said unto me, 'My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.'" 2 Corinthians 12:9

LEARNING TO NEVER GIVE UP IN PRAYER

Luke 18:1–8

- 1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, **THAT MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY, AND NOT TO FAINT;**
- 2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:
- 3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.
- 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;
- 5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her **CONTINUAL COMING** she weary me.
- 6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.
- 7 **AND SHALL NOT GOD AVENGE HIS OWN ELECT, WHICH CRY DAY AND NIGHT UNTO HIM, THOUGH HE BEAR LONG WITH THEM?**
- 8 **I TELL YOU THAT HE WILL AVENGE THEM SPEEDILY. NEVERTHELESS WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMETH, SHALL HE FIND FAITH ON THE EARTH?**

Hebrews 11:13

"THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH, **NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, BUT HAVING SEEN THEM AFAR OFF, AND WERE PERSUADED OF THEM, AND EMBRACED THEM, AND CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH.**"

PRAYERLESSNESS

1. LOSS OF DESIRE FOR GOD

When the communication wanes, the communion slowly dies. When the communion dies, the relationship can be lost. The more you pray, the more you become addicted - the less you pray, the less you notice it's absence.

Psalm 63:1–2

1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: My soul thirsteth for thee, My flesh longeth for thee In a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

2 To see thy power and thy glory, So as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

2. PRIDE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

What habit have you exercised, practiced and cultivated? How are you more comfortable functioning?

Proverbs 3:5–6

5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge (yada - to know) him, And he shall direct thy paths.

3. POWERLESS & BLINDNESS TO RESIST TEMPTATION

Without the discernment of prayer you don't even recognize the traps of temptation before you, OR, you see the trap and think in presumption that you can manage it and the consequences (spiritual insanity).

Matthew 26:41

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

4. POWERLESS & BLINDNESS IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

You become unaware and unconscious to the spiritual world and its warfare, making you it's consenting prisoner and slave.

Ephesians 6:10–11

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

5. **LOSS OF FAITH**

When the natural and temporal are more real to you than the spiritual, you are in desperate need of prayer. What is your reality?

John 16:13

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

Romans 10:17

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

6. **LOSS OF DISCERNMENT AND CONVICTION IN HOLINESS**

The sharp distinction between good and evil becomes dull, blurry and gray. The passion for purity dies and there is an acceptance for what God hates.

John 16:7-8

"And when he (the Comforter, the Holy Spirit) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

7. **LOSS OF EXPECTANCY FOR ANSWERED PRAYER**

Don't use it - lose it! When faith is not used it atrophies. Prayer has been reduced to a religious ritual instead of a relationship filled with God's life and power.

James 4:2

"...ye have not, because ye ask not."

Matthew 13:58

"And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief."

8. **LOSS OF PEACE & JOY**

Peace and joy can only be found in God's presence. You will never be fulfilled or satisfied in this world or the things of this world.

Psalms 16:11

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: In thy presence is fulness of joy; At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

9. **LOSS OF SALVATION**

Hebrews 2:1-3

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation...

Luke 11:5-10

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, **THOUGH HE WILL NOT RISE AND GIVE HIM, BECAUSE HE IS HIS FRIEND, YET BECAUSE OF HIS IMPORTUNITY (shameless persistence) HE WILL RISE AND GIVE HIM AS MANY AS HE NEEDETH.**
 9 **AND I SAY UNTO YOU, ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU; SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND; KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED UNTO YOU.**
 10 **FOR EVERY ONE THAT ASKETH RECEIVETH; AND HE THAT SEEKETH FINDETH; AND TO HIM THAT KNOCKETH IT SHALL BE OPENED.**

The prayer of importunity is not the “much speaking” Jesus refers to in:

Matthew 6:7
“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”

Prayers of importunity are heard for the fervent cry of the heart, not the multitude of words.

“Importunate prayer is a mighty movement of the soul toward God. It is a stirring of the deepest forces of the soul, toward the throne of heavenly grace. It is the ability to hold on, press on, and wait.”
 E.M. Bounds “The Necessity of Prayer”, Chapter 6

James 5:16–18

16 **THE EFFECTUAL** (energeo - at work, active, accomplish, perform) **FERVENT** (beg, beseech, impore) **PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILETH** (to be strong enough, to have power) **MUCH.**
 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.
 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

“The wrestling quality in importunate prayer, does not spring from physical vehemence or fleshly energy. It is not an impulse of energy, not a mere earnestness of soul; it is an inwrought force, a faculty implanted and aroused by the Holy Spirit. Virtually, it is the intercession of the Spirit of God, in us; it is, moreover, ‘the effectual, fervent prayer, which availeth much.’” E.M. Bounds “The Necessity of Prayer”, Chapter 6

Romans 4:17-22

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.
 18 **WHO AGAINST HOPE BELIEVED IN HOPE**, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.
 19 **AND BEING NOT WEAK IN FAITH, HE CONSIDERED NOT HIS OWN BODY NOW DEAD, WHEN HE WAS ABOUT AN HUNDRED YEARS OLD, NEITHER YET THE DEADNESS OF SARA'S WOMB:**
 20 **HE STAGGERED NOT AT THE PROMISE OF GOD THROUGH UNBELIEF; BUT WAS STRONG IN FAITH, GIVING GLORY TO GOD;**
 21 **AND BEING FULLY PERSUADED THAT, WHAT HE HAD PROMISED, HE WAS ABLE ALSO TO PERFORM.**
 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Hebrews 11:1-3

1 **NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.**
 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.
 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Romans 10:13-18

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 **SO THEN FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.**

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Hebrews 11:13

"THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, BUT HAVING SEEN THEM AFAR OFF, AND WERE PERSUADED OF THEM, AND EMBRACED THEM, AND CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH."

"GEORGE MUELLER, the great Victorian Christian and social reformer, tells a story of persistent prayer in his diary:

In November 1844, I began to pray for the conversion of five individuals. I prayed every day without a single intermission, whether sick or in health, on the land, on the sea, and whatever the pressure of my engagements might be. Eighteen months elapsed before the first of the five was converted. I thanked God and prayed on for the others. Five years elapsed, and then the second was converted. I thanked God for the second, and prayed on for the other three. Day by day, I continued to pray for them, and six years passed before the third was converted. I thanked God for the three, and went on praying for the other two. These two remained unconverted.

Thirty-six years later he wrote that the other two, sons of one of Mueller's friends, were still not converted. He wrote, "But I hope in God, I pray on, and look for the answer. They are not converted yet, but they will be." In 1897, fifty-two years after he began to pray daily, without interruption, for these two men, they were finally converted—but after he died!"

Patterson, B., & Goetz, D. L. (1999). Deepening your conversation with God (Vol. 7, pp. 105–106). Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers.