

LET US PRAY

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

I can remember hearing this passage of scripture as I was growing up. Even though I wanted these promises to be true for my life, I wasn't quite certain how to get there. Let's look at the verses and see some of the things this passage is trying to teach us.

Look at verse 16. What does it say that believer's should always be?

Is that true for your Christian walk? _____ Are you always "joyful"?

I can remember how difficult it was to swallow this verse, especially while growing up in a non-Christian home with an alcoholic father. How was I supposed to be joyful?

I have learned a great deal about joy in the midst of struggles. God did not call us to be "happy". Happiness comes with what is "happening". Joy comes from the Father at all times. No matter what happens...good or bad, we can have joy. If we are indeed Christians, we can always experience the joy of salvation and what that will bring for our future regardless of the things that we are facing in the present.

Are you joyful about that right now? Do you have your eyes on the circumstances you are facing or on the God who can control those circumstances?

Look at verse 17. How does it say we should pray? _____

Do you know what it means to pray continually...without ceasing? _____

What a verse! What a challenge! How in the world can we pray without ceasing and still go to school, work, raise a family and have fun?

When I learned of this verse, I had mental pictures of me in a constant kneeling state...24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I thought, "Lord, if I do this, how am I ever going to get anything else done? I don't have time to pray without ceasing."

SIMPLE TRUTH

Our prayer life is a reflection of our relationship with God. All He wants is to communicate with us. Simply take the time to talk to

God began to teach me what He meant. First of all, God only wants us to communicate to Him. He wants us to be so in tune with Him that He knows our every thought and that we begin to know His. As I began to seek the Lord, I realized I was praying continually and didn't even know it. I can even remember times that I started to sin and I would be having a conversation with God about why I shouldn't be doing it. He would flood my mind with Himself and His Word.

Praying continually simply means to be in constant communication with God the Father. Nothing is too small for Him to know about. Nothing is too big that we should hide or be afraid to talk to Him about. Hey, He knows about it anyway. We might as well tell Him.

Read verse 18 once more. In what kind of circumstances should we give God thanks? _____

Remember that God is orchestrating all things for the good of those who love Him. He has a plan. What we think will devastate us, God uses to make us stronger believers. He knows our breaking point. Again, if we get our eyes off of ourselves and our pity parties and begin to praise God, it shows where our faith is.

Where is your faith today? In yourself? In your circumstance? In God? Only you know.

SIMPLE PRAYER

Pray and ask God to increase your prayer life. Ask Him to give you confidence to come before Him. Thank Him for the blessings and the trials. Tell Him that you trust Him with your circumstances.

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