

How to Pray --- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

March 28, 2021

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Introduction and Review

- we are in the exhortation or the command section in the book of 1 Thessalonians 4-5
- 4:1-2 – Paul starts with a general focus upon living a life that is o_____ to the Lord
- 4:3-8 – Paul exhorts people in how they are to live holy lives in the area of s_____ purity
- 4:9-12 – Paul speaks about brotherly l_____ and w_____ hard for the sake of others in the church
- 4:13-5:11 – Paul deals with the topic of the _____ coming of Jesus
 - a) those who have fallen asleep before the 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus
 - b) the timing of the 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus
- 5:12-13 – Paul addresses the relationship between the church l_____ and congregation
- 5:13-15 – Paul addresses the issues of how they are to relate to one a_____
- 5:16-18 – Paul addresses the topic of p_____
- 5:19-22 – Paul addresses the topic of how we discover t_____

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV)

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Two overriding concerns

1) the concern of prayer

- 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 – Paul prays for their _____ to increase and an increase in personal _____
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 – Paul prays again for their personal _____ growth

2) the gospel of Jesus Christ

- we must even consider the grace of God and the Cross of Christ in this section!
- think of _____ and _____

- so now we can look at how Paul instructs us to live our life with regards to prayer

1) (5:16) Continual _____

2) (5:17) Continual _____

3) (5:18) Continual _____

1) (5:16) Continual Joy

Rejoice always,

- always be j_____ or be continually joyful!

- in the book of Philippians Paul focuses upon joy in the Lord!

Philippians 3:1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

- what does this joy actually mean and what does it look like?

- Biblical joy is the pleasure g_____ by God found only in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ

- just think for a moment of the w_____ of the Lord Jesus Christ!

- let us look at one of the most joyful passages in scripture since joy is the pleasure resulting from the person and work of Jesus Christ!

Romans 3:21-26 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it-- ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

- we as humans are sinful, and our s_____ has alienated us from God

- but God provided for us the ability to be made righteous in His sight by the person and w_____ of the Lord Jesus

- we receive this gift -- this ability to be made right with God comes through faith

- we receive the f_____ of sins, we receive the ability to be a part of the f_____ of God, we receive a clean slate for all the e_____ we have done

- through f_____ and t_____ in the Lord Jesus Christ, the benefits and joys of knowing Christ are ours!

- we cannot w_____ for this gift it can only be received

- Jesus Christ gives us r_____ – this means that we were in slavery and in bondage to sin but Jesus Christ has set us free to new life in Him

- the New Living Translation of Romans 3:25 helps us understand this sacrifice of propitiation

Romans 3:25 For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past,

- Jesus bears the punishment for our sin so that we can be free from the demands of the law which requires that we bear the punishment for our own sin

- because of Jesus and His w_____ let us have continual j_____!

2) (5:17) Continual Prayer

pray without ceasing,

- Paul instructs us that prayer is not something that we do lightly or o_____ in a while!

- Jesus says this about prayer!

Luke 18:1-8 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ² He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. ³ And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' ⁴ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" ⁶ And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

- this "always to pray and not lose heart" also lines up with how the Lord Jesus lived His l_____!

Luke 6:12 In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God.

- the disciples and early Christians were people who persevered in p_____!

- just look at the book of A_____!

- but how are we to pray? The prayers in the Bible they could be summarized by the acronym **ACTS**

- a) Adoration
- b) Confession
- c) Thanksgiving
- d) Supplication

a) A_____

- we p_____ and d_____ the greatness of God

- esteem God for who He t_____ is!

Daniel 9:4 I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,

- we d_____ the greatness of God as found in His Word

- then we respond by a_____ and appreciating God's character

b) C_____

- this means the Lord is a h_____ God and we are not!

- we acknowledge our sinfulness before a holy God

- we have s_____ and sadness for our sin and wickedness before God

Daniel 9:5-7 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. ⁶ We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. ⁷ To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you.

c) Thanksgiving (see point 3 (5:18))

d) S _____

- this is where we lay our requests before the Lord but these r _____ ought to be asked in the name of Jesus

- our motivation must be for the g _____ of Christ!

- we ought to be a people who a _____ God, c _____ our sins before God and lay our requests before God who is h _____, gracious and merciful!

3) (5:18) Continual Thanks

give thanks in all circumstances;

- Does that mean Paul wants us to give thanks in _____ circumstances even the bad ones, even the ones that have been painful?

- How can one be thankful?

- j _____ and thankfulness stem from and flow from the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ

- Paul writes several times in his letters that he is thankful to God for the Lord's work among the churches

Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.

1 Corinthians 1:4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 1:16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

1 Thessalonians 1:2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers,

1 Thessalonians 2:13 And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God, which is at work in you believers.

- thankfulness is the acknowledgment of God and His character and all the g _____ that He g _____!

- we see thankfulness overflowing in the letters of Paul even in not so great circumstances

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- often people tie this phrase “the will of God” only to Paul’s command to be thankful, but in fact this phrase is connected to these three commands of j____, prayer and thankfulness
- to be joyful, to be continually praying and to be persisting in t_____ is the w_____ of God for you in Christ Jesus
- the will of God for our lives is to be h_____ -- that we forsake sin and pursue p_____ in our lives
- but we see another desire of God for us is that we live joyful, p_____ and thankful lives!

Application

1) Are You Joyful?

- have you analyzed your attitude lately?
 - do you have an attitude of joy or do have a complaining spirit?
 - if you are not experiencing the joy of Christ, pray that by the p_____ of the Holy Spirit you would!
 - notice this joy simply depends on the wonderful g_____ of God
 - this relationship with God through Jesus offers joy and contentment!
 - David knew that the only source of joy was in the Lord and His salvation.
- Psalms 51:12** Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- Psalms 90:14** Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
- these Psalms point us forward to the p_____ and work of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - there is also a b_____ for your joy
 - the world, the sinful flesh and even the devil are seeking for us to have joy in them, but the world the flesh and the devil do not bring joy! -- there is no joy in s_____
 - today remind yourself of the glories of Christ and His gospel, His Mercy and Grace!
 - pray that your life would overflow with the f_____ of the Holy Spirit – namely joy!

2) Are You Thankful?

- we need to be extremely thankful for what Jesus has done for us
- 1) He created Us (Genesis 1-2; Colossians 1:16)

- 2) He loves Us (John 3:16; John 15:13)
- 3) He _____ Us (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10)
- 4) He provides for Us (Matthew 7:11)
- 5) He will take Us to heaven to be with Him forever (1 Thessalonians 4:14)

- we are _____ to be thankful in _____ things, that is the will of God for our lives!

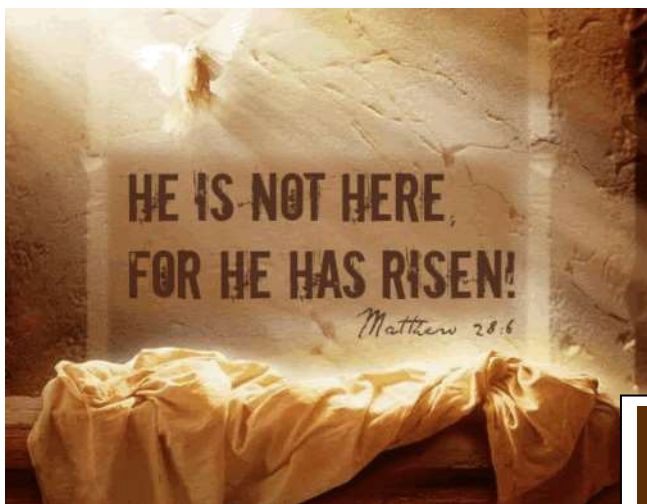
- Paul describes a life filled with the Holy S _____ as one that is thankful for all things
Ephesians 5:20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- today if you have no joy and no thankfulness I _____ to the person and work of the Lord Jesus

- t _____ in the work of the Lord Jesus on the Cross, bearing the suffering, shame and punishment for sin

- so that you could have new life and this joy!

- do not wallow in the mud and slime of sin, be cleansed and renewed by the blood of the Lord Jesus



Good Friday – April 2nd
God's Mediator -- 1 Tim 2:1-6

Sunday – April 4th
Resurrected Life – Col 3:1-4
Communion at 9:30am