

Persistent in Prayer

Over the course of January we have taken a deep look into questions of self-examination. Am I deeply rooted in Jesus Christ? We've talked about building great habits, thinking great thoughts, being confident in our salvation, and following great Christians. Now, today we focus on another question of self-reflection: Am I persistent in prayer? There is a direct correlation our prayer life and being a strong Christian. Deeply rooted Christians are connected to God. One of the most effective ways to fuel our spiritual life is through prayer.

I. Romans 12.12c - Be Persistent in Prayer

- A. The imperative: 12.12c: *be **persistent** in prayer.*
 - 1. The sense: to persevere devotedly.
 - 2. More specifically: to persist obstinately in;
 - 3. To persist with intense effort - despite difficulty.
- B. Constant devotion to Prayer:
 - 1. Acts 1:14: *They all were **continually** united in prayer, along with the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.*
 - 2. Acts 2:42: *They devoted themselves to ... to **prayer**.*
 - 3. Acts 6:4: *But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.*
 - 4. Colossians 4:2: ***Devote** yourselves to prayer; **stay alert** in it with **thanksgiving**.*

II. Why Pray?

- A. It is God's expectation
 - 1. Romans 12.12c - *be persistent.*
 - 2. Philippians 4.6 - in **everything**...
- B. Needs are great. See Romans 10.1 and Paul's earnest prayer for the Jews.
- C. God acts when we pray. How you have experienced this personally?

III. How to Pray

- A. Unstructured
- B. Structured
 - 1. Use the Bible
 - a) praying for spiritual growth: Ephesians 3.16: **strengthened** with power in your inner being through his Spirit.
 - b) help following commands; thankfulness, etc.
 - 2. Make a list
 - 3. Form a pattern
- C. Alone
 - 1. Mark 1.35: *very early in the morning, while it was still dark, **he got up**, went out, and made his way to a deserted place, and there he was praying.*
- D. With Others
- E. In Sorrow and Joy
- F. Short and Long
- G. Spontaneous and Scheduled: 1 Thessalonians 5:17: *pray **constantly**,...*

IV. As We Close...

- A. When it comes to being constant in prayer, how are you doing?
- B. What really matters? Do you have your priorities in place?