



PRAY WITHOUT CEASING? ...REALLY?

June 2021

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

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Is it possible to “pray without ceasing?” I’m sure I couldn’t do so if praying meant to sit still and talk to God hour after hour. I think I’m far too distracted by daily life to be able to do that continually. I have things to do. How could I possibly? And yet the apostle Paul, in this message to the Thessalonians, instructs them to pray continually.

I’ve come to believe that the unceasing prayer Paul talks about refers to prayer more as an attitude rather than activity. As I see it, consciously talking to God in prayer is quite a bit different than living prayerfully aware of God’s presence. Perhaps this is what Paul’s command

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to the Thessalonians was intending to say.

I've done a lot of photography at sunrise, overlooking a small lake in the Chilcotin area of British Columbia. One morning I was captivated by the constantly changing cloudscape, thoroughly enjoyed the process of capturing it all with my camera.

Although I wasn't consciously praying, it was certainly time spent with God. I didn't read my Bible; I didn't talk to God. But I did feel myself in the presence of God. Joyfully and thankfully I worshipped. I celebrated what God was showing me, recording each moment to share with others. The photos I took became memories which—each time I look at them—bring back feelings of that wonderful time all over again. It was almost like I had written a hymn that I could sing any time I wanted to.

In this picture I captured something unusual. Just after sunrise I saw some interesting clouds making reflections on the surface of the lake. I had never seen anything like it. Amazing how often God will surprise us with something unusual if we take the time to look carefully! Amazing how God will help our prayerful hearts be aware!

When we witness all that our Almighty God shows us, feeling his presence, we *will* feel joyful. We *will* feel grateful. We'll be worshiping.

What is God showing you today? Enter into his presence and admire what he has made. You don't need a camera. Looking closely at a rose for example, using a magnifying glass, can give you a thrill not unlike viewing it through a camera lens. Prayerfully focus on what draws your attention most, eliminating everything else from your field of vision.

Do you see the wonder of it all?

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