



Willing to Linger

Kimberly Mitchell

I was sitting in my boys' room one night when I began to pray over them. I had no reason to rush. I think twenty-five or thirty minutes passed before I finished praying. I decided that I needed to linger.

When I was willing to linger, I was able to allow the Holy Spirit to direct my prayers.

Today's life is so quick. We don't have to linger or wait, and if we do have to wait, we get impatient. Sometimes, we don't hear God speak in the five minutes we've allotted for prayer. Sometimes, we need to sit and press in and pray.

We have a problem when we can watch marathons on Netflix ... like whole seasons of shows in a week, but we can't sit and pray. I just wonder in the absence of lingering, if we miss so much more that the Lord has to offer us. Five minutes of prayer is great, but what would happen if we spent fifteen?

When I was praying over my middle child, the Lord told me something about him that I probably would have missed, had I not lingered. There was a pressing in my spirit to continue. I stayed and prayed deep. That's when the Lord spoke.

In my marriage, I don't walk up to my husband and speak with no intention to hear him speak back, then walk away. I speak with him, fully expecting him to hear me. I stay and listen and wait for his response. It wouldn't be a relationship if I did all the talking. There are other times when neither one of us say a single thing, but just sitting near each other makes our relationship stronger.

Friends, the Lord desires such a deep communication with His children. Make your prayer life a priority. Everything else comes second. When you pray, linger in His presence. He has so much for you!

Just Ask

Suzanne D. Williams

Ye have not, because ye ask not. (Jas 4:2)

It was such a simple thing. If she had only asked me, I would have done it for free. I believe in being generous, in helping others whose lives have affected mine.

But she didn't.

Instead, she went out under her own power and fixed it herself. She was able to do that. There were no strings attached between us. **Yet something as simple as asking would have changed the final outcome.**

God has given us this same instruction. He says, "Hey, just ask me. Believe I'm capable and willing, then ask, and I'll do it." Yet we rebel – against the God of the Universe, nonetheless – and try to fix things on our own. WHY?

It's like, instead of taking your car to the mechanic, you tinker with it on your own (or your computer or your cell phone. You get the idea.) There are people who know how it ought to work far better than you do. So, use them!

We're talking about Him, who made mankind. The Guy who wrote the manual. He knows every nut and bolt, every hinge and lock, every bone,

(Continued from "Just Ask")



Pray Without Ceasing

Becky Combee

muscle, and hair on your head.¹ He's definitely the smartest Mr. Fix-It out there.

You can't even say it's too expensive, because God's grace is given free of charge.² You can't earn it. You can't pay for it. You can't work your way toward it. You can't be good enough for it. You only have to receive it.

I saw an excellent example of receiving recently. A preacher held a key in his hand out to his wife and said, "Receive this key." You know what she did? She reached out and took hold of it. Our receiving requires us to act. We're not sitting in place, hands extended, waiting for God to drop it in our palm.

No! We're taking hold of God's goodness because Jesus died and was resurrected to give this to us.³ Because His grace is sufficient.⁴ Because God said, "Ask me."⁵ It's so simple.

"God, I need to get my finances out of this hole. I need enough money to pay my bills with some left over to feed my children. I need enough give generously to the church and to also help the poor."

"God, I don't feel well, and you said Jesus died for my healing, so that I don't have to be in pain or suffer. You said I can have many, well days."

"God, I'm confused. I have decisions to make, major ones, and I need your wisdom, so that I walk in your will for my life."

Ask. Whatever it is, however small or large you think the problem is, God put no qualifications on it.

He solves everything and anything, no matter what it is, no matter where you are, no matter how low or high you think life has placed you. He's a good God whose greatest desire is to take care of His children.⁶

Whether it's your next storyline, your next meal, your next tank of gas, the paper cut on your pinky, God cares about you and is right here waiting, His pockets full of change, His arms full of power, His heart full of love. You only have to ask.

It's a mystery. Isn't it? PRAY WITHOUT CEASING! When we hear this scriptural principle, most of us instantly retreat. We cannot fathom these overpowering words. After all, we have many important things to do! Certainly, it isn't possible to pray without ceasing. Yet, here are the words penned by the apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit. They are God's words!

Every Christian wants to obey God, but we cannot imagine giving our hearts to constant prayer. There is a very simple answer to this conundrum. When we read the Greek definition of the phrase "without ceasing," the fog and smoke that has inhibited our view is quickly blown away. Prayer without ceasing is NOT prayer that is uninterrupted, but prayer that is constantly recurring.⁸

Many things in life are constantly recurring. We frequently go back to the table and eat again. It is constantly recurring. Every day we drive our children to school and pick them up. This task is constantly recurring. There are daily, weekly and monthly responsibilities that are repeated over and over again. They are essential to a successful life.

Prayer is essential to our life in Christ. We cannot be lax or indifferent to this principle. We must watch and pray! The Scripture is clear. Colossians 4:2 says "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." In Ephesians we are told to pray in the spirit, "watching thereunto with all perseverance."⁹ When we watch and pray, we are alert and attentive to God's call to pray. We are constantly "on duty."

Here is an example of watchful prayer that has always helped me. If you have a cold, you have a tissue in one pocket and cough drops in the other. You are prepared because your cough is constantly recurring. You could not survive gracefully if you were coughing every single second, but because you are coughing frequently, you are armed with all that is needed.

We are servants of the Most High God, soldiers in His kingdom, and we are ready to pray. We are listening for His call and when He calls on us, we will answer. We are His laborers, His ambassadors, His prayer partners. We will pray without ceasing!

¹Mt 10:30 ²Rm 3:24 ³Eph 3:20 ⁴2Co 4:15; 2Co 8:7; 2Co 12:9 ⁵Mt 7:7; Lk 11:9 ⁶Mt 7:11; Lk 11:13 ⁸G89, The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible ⁹Eph 6:18