

Why Pray?



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The first reason why we ought to pray is that God commands it. There are many passages in the Bible that speak of it, but I only remind you of three. The first is Luke 18-1: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." That word *faint* means "become disheartened" or "weary." The second is Colossians 4:2: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." The third is 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."

These are familiar verses, but I was interested to find that each one has a slightly different emphasis. The word *always* used in Luke 18:1 is the usual word in the New Testament for "always" and means in "every situation and circumstance." In Colossians 4:2 the verb *continue* is a compound verb built on a root which means "strength." In other words, to continue in prayer means to "give strength" to your praying. The idea is that we are to be energetic in prayer. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 we are told to pray without ceasing. This word *without ceasing* is used of having a hacking cough. Now when you have a hacking cough you are not actually coughing all the time even though the cough is always there. This is the meaning of praying without ceasing. The meaning is not that every waking moment shall be spent in actual praying, but it does mean that every

moment should be prayerful. And this prayerful attitude will erupt into actual prayer many times during the course of a day.

The second reason why we ought to pray is that we need to. But we all have excuses. One is that God is too great to be interested in me and my needs. It is true that a great person cannot be personally interested in everything and everybody under him. People are limited. But God has another quality besides greatness, and that is infinity. He is not only great, but also being infinite. He can always be interested in you personally and individually.

The third reason why we ought to pray is this: God needs our fellowship in prayer. We do not believe in a deistic concept of God which says that although He started everything He now has no interest in His creation. God does desire our fellowship in prayer.

Suppose I should announce to you today that I had just made arrangements to move into the dormitory.

You would be astonished, and you would say, "What about your wife and cute little baby?" Well, I intend to take care of them. I am going to continue to pay the bills. They will go on living at home. I will buy the groceries. I will even do the shopping. But I am going to move into the dorm. You would say: "You are crazy." And I think you would be right. I could insist to you over and over that I love them, but you would not believe me if I were living in the dorm without them. And you can tell me that you love the Lord, but I have trouble believing you unless you spend time with Him in prayer. You need it and He needs it, just as I need my family and they need me. If you really love Him, you will spend time in fellowship with Him.

(from *Let's Talk Turkey*, II. By Charles C. Ryrie. pp. 41-43)