

## **Week #6 – Created for Relationship, to be Intimate Allies**

**Pray continually...** have you heard that verse before? (1 Thess. 5:17). What does that mean? Simply put, it means we were designed for a constant, ongoing personal relationship with God, an *intimate ally*.

Up to this point, we have described prayer as an activity—as if it were simply a part of our daily to-do list. This concept would never be applied with any other close relationship and expected to flourish; a connection with God is no different. If we limit it to a momentary act we perform from time to time, then we are missing the fullness of prayer.

Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 1:3, and 1 Thessalonians 5:17 all speak to the regularity of prayer; the last one in particular saying *“Pray continually.”* It’s one thing for us to be focused on prayer, or for us to avoid making prayer something on our spiritual checklist, but how in the world do we go about praying all the time?

Before you start worrying, this is not something else to make you feel guilty. Paul (the author of all these letters noted above) actually is not giving us a task at all but describing the way day-to-day life functions. Where our natural tendency is to see “pray always” as a divine standard that cannot be lived up to, Paul is saying that being in constant connection with God is a way of life for a Christ-follower.

That is a life of prayer—the connection God made us for. It is a life of ups, downs, success, failure, sorrow, and restoration. It will be messy, but it will be beautiful.

### **Thought to Ponder:**

- Don’t miss the significance of this—prayer is not an activity in Paul’s mind, but a description of our relationship with God.

### **Prayer Activator:**

The idea of constant prayer—of continually communicating with God—can be quite overwhelming for us at first. Even with the best of intentions, we often end up getting sidetracked, distracted, and allowing our mind to fill with the same old worries and concerns without even realizing it. As you go throughout the week, make a conscious effort to have God as a consistent part of the stream of thoughts going through your head.

Eventually, there will come a time when you’ll realize that you’re caught up in your worries with no thought of God in sight. When that happens, simply say to Him, *“God, bring me back to you.”* Allow that simple phrase to be a constant theme echoing throughout your day and constantly calling you back to the foundation of a loving union with God.

**Pastor Pro Tip:** Pick 3 days this week on your calendar (i.e. Mon-Wed-Fri) and set a time each day to activate your communication with God. Find a quiet corner, set a timer for 2 minutes, breath deep, and listen for God’s voice. If you feel your mind racing or drifting, simply come back to the phrase, *“God, bring me back to you.”*