**March 17, 2019 “Pray at All Times”, Pt 1 Ephesians 6:18-24**

Today we are going to begin to wrap up our study on Ephesians. I feel that I have personally learned so much concerning our Christian walk with God through the study of this book and I hope you feel the same way.

In the first three chapters of this book, we learned about all the things God has done for us and all the great and precious promises that are ours through the finished work of Christ on the Cross. **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”**

Through our study in the last three chapters, we learned that because of all that God the Father has promised us through the finished work of Christ at Calvary, we should walk in manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called. **“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.”**

The second half of this book tells us that our lives are meant to be lived as a living, breathing, walking testimony. Yesterday Terry and I were in the Golden Corral in Maplewood when a man approached us who said he had been watching all those dining in the area where we were seated and Terry and I were the only two who prayed with each other before our meal other than him and his wife. I say this not to aggrandize ourselves but rather to prove the point that others are watching you and me to see if we are living out the testimony that we are Christians. That is why it is so important that we live out our faith in Christ daily for all to see, starting with our families, our community and finally in our church.

Interestingly, Paul wraps up this wonderful book with a closing theme of prayer. What the Holy Spirit is saying to us is that all that we have learned and attempt to put into practice in our lives must be wrapped in prayer.

Note Luke 18:1-8 where Jesus is teaching through a parable of the persistent widow. Note the two options… pray or lose heart. That is why He ends this parable with a question, will He find faith on the earth or will He find prayerlessness? Note again verse 17… who cry to Him day and night…

Note also Revelation 3:14-22. This is Christ’s message to the latter-day Church. Herein lies the problem in many of the churches and in the lives of many Christians today. It is not that we do not have enough books on theology or have enough television and radio programs; many of which tell us how much God wants to bless us and how we are to walk in victory at all times. Sadly, it is my observation that many of those so-called experts, never even mention Jesus except in a passing note here and there. Why is that? I believe it is much like the church at Laodicea who probably knew much about Jesus… really didn’t think they had much use of Him… they had all they needed without Him.

Illustration of Dr. David Jeremiah… Jesus knocking on the door of the Church and on the door of our hearts… no knob with which to open the door because it must be opened from the inside to let Him in.

1. Ephesians 6:18
   1. Note the four “alls”
      1. All prayer
      2. At all times
      3. With all perseverance
      4. For all saints
2. All prayer at all times
   1. What does this mean?
      1. How do you and I pray at all times?
   2. All prayers
      1. Is that prayers of
         1. Frustration? Sorrow? Concern?
         2. Petition? Thanksgiving? Comfort?
      2. Best illustration I can come up with is driving a truck
         1. How often do you check your mirrors?
         2. How often do you look out the front window?
         3. How often do you look out the side windows?
         4. How often do you check your gauges?
         5. How often do you have to shift gears?
         6. How often do you have to step on the brakes?
         7. How often do step on the throttle?
   3. So, it is with prayer… it is second nature to the Christians
      1. Prayer is that automatic response
         1. I need to communicate with God
         2. Everything that comes my way I recognize that
            1. I need to run this past God

Every temptation

Every frustration

Every happiness

Every sorrow

Every disappointment

Every fear

* + - * 1. Why?

God has saved you and me to have fellowship with Him

At all times, in every circumstance, with everything that comes our way

Prayer is literally the life breath of the Christian. It is not a set time of prayer although that should not be neglected but rather it is that on-going realization that I need to be in fellowship with God at all times. It is like breathing… you and I don’t think about… we just do it

Sing the song… “Breathe”

Now… “May the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26)

Amen