

# The Lakeview Lamp

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105*

**April 13, 2008**

## *Pray Without Ceasing*

Joe R. Price

I received the following Bible question recently: "How can we pray without ceasing and apply **Matthew 6:7**, *'But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen [do]: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.'* I mean, how can I stop myself from not repeating the same thing if I want to pray without giving up, eventually I am going to run out of words and will have to repeat! Help."

The instruction to "pray without ceasing" does not conflict with the Lord's teaching to avoid vain repetitions in prayer, because acceptable prayer is not based on the number of words we use or the length of our prayer. Praying without ceasing compliments Jesus' teaching *"that men ought always to pray and not lose heart"* (**Lk. 18:1**). Christians are prayerful people and must not become discouraged or give up on prayer.

We must not view prayer as an occasion to display ourselves before others. Hence, the Lord's warning not to use *"vain repetitions"* ("to repeat the same things over and over, to use many and idle words, to babble," Thayer, 99).

Jesus is not saying that we can never "repeat the same thing" when we pray. However, He is teaching us to be careful that our heart is fully engaged and involved in the words we speak to Almighty God in prayer.

God does not listen for the amount of words we pray, but for the heart that is speaking the words. We cannot turn prayer into a mindless exercise of spilling out liturgical phrases and thoughtless expressions and expect God to accept our prayers.

How can we be more effective in our prayers, wanting to both *"pray without ceasing"* and not use *"vain repetitions"*?

**Seek solitude.** In contrast to the self-righteous motive of wanting to be seen by men when we pray, Jesus said to *"go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly"* (**Matt. 6:6**). The objective of prayer is communication with God, not with men. Make time to be alone with God in prayer; away from the distractions of life. This does not mean we cannot pray any time of the day. It means that whenever we pray, our attention must be given to God and not to the reactions of those around us. Solitude helps us focus on what we want to say to God. For example, Jesus found a solitary place to pray (**Mk. 1:35**). So should we.

**Be specific.** There is a lot to be said for the song we sing; "count your many blessings, name them one by one...and it will surprise you what the Lord has done." Please note that just after saying we are to *"pray without ceasing,"* the apostle wrote, *"in everything giving thanks"* (**1 Ths. 5:17-18**). Keep a list of people you know, of brethren and the specific things they are going through, of the spiritual blessings you have in Christ, of the opportunities in your life, and so forth. Thank God specifically for the blessings you have. Supplicate the Master's help for specific trials or problems (yours and other's). When you are specific in

prayer you will be surprised what the Lord has done! And, you won't be vainly repeating yourself just to "have something to say."

**Be spontaneous.** Nehemiah gives us a good example of spontaneity in prayer (**Neh. 2:4**). Situations where prayer is helpful present themselves to us every day. But, unless we have a mindset to be a prayerful person, we can begin to view prayer as drudgery rather than a blessing. When we have a prayerful attitude our habit will be to pray throughout the day, not just at "set times." This helps us overcome "vain repetition" while becoming more earnest and vigilant in our prayers (**Col. 4:2**). Prayer is an expression of our faith in God (**Lk. 18:8**). In other words, don't wait to pray!

## *Daniel's Example of Prayer*

Troy Nicholson

Those who were jealous of Daniel tricked King Darius into signing a document that would cause anyone who petitioned any god or man besides him to be thrown into the lions' den (:1-9). What did Daniel do when he learned of this? *"He continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously"* (:10). The men came and *"found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God"* (:11). Are we so persistent in our prayers that others can expect to come and find us doing likewise?

# News and Notes

The **elders / deacons meeting** normally scheduled for the second Sunday evening at 5:15pm is being postponed until next Sunday.

There is a **meeting at Broadmoor** today through Friday. There is a singing today at 2:30, with the sermon to follow at 3:30. 7pm each week night.

**Jimmy Baker**, a 30-year-old friend of the Gertsch family, died Wednesday of a heart attack. His funeral was yesterday.

**Mary Burnett** is home from the hospital and feeling better.

**Metty Fain** remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.

**Ame White** had a procedure to stretch her throat. It is sore now, but she is able to swallow better. She is having more problems with her hearing.

**Out of town, Visiting:** Chris Gertsch (Dresden AM, here PM), Nicholson family (Shelbyville).

**New Reports from men we support:** Allen Malone (Indonesia).

**Note** – If you have any news for the bulletin (out of town, sick, etc.), then please let me know. I will be printing it most weeks on Saturday night, so please get the news to me by then. Thanks! – Troy

## Lakeview church of Christ

132 New Shackle Island Road

P.O. Box 514

Hendersonville TN 37077

Building: 615-824-1376

[www.BibleSaints.com](http://www.BibleSaints.com)

Bible Call: 615-824-1310

If you would like to subscribe, unsubscribe, or change your address to this bulletin, then simply respond to this message and state your request.

Troy Nicholson  
[troyjenn@ibellsouth.net](mailto:troyjenn@ibellsouth.net)

*"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).*