

Breathing is a natural instinct. No one has to remind you to breathe every day. You simply breathe. I remember when my kids were quite small that when either of them got hurt like falling down, or running into a sharp edge, or a door shutting on their hand, that they would stop breathing. You could feel the cry winding up as they held their breath and then out came their cry. I always thought that there was a direct correlation between the amount of pain they felt and how long they held their breath. I would always yell, breathe. Other than that, we all breathe naturally, without being told to breathe. We do it without putting forth much thought or effort. God wired us for that.

When I was about five years old, I sat down at dinner one night and started singing out loud. My brother did not like my singing and told me to sing to myself. So, I sang out loud again a song to myself. He got mad at me. I told him, "I am singing to myself, you don't have to listen." Then he said something to me that I still remember. When you sing to yourself, you sing out loud in your mind so you are the only one that hears it. That opened up a whole new world to me. I could think out loud in my head and no one else will hear it. I could think anything I wanted to think and no one has to know.

Tonight I am speaking on the spiritual workout of prayer. I want prayer for all of us to be as natural as breathing, as we learn to pray without ceasing. Praying always is having an inner conversation with God throughout the day and night while you are awake. Praying always is living with the knowledge that your life is lived in the Presence of God and that you are always with Him and He with you. Praying always is sending forth to God your thoughts all day long without being told to do so or thinking that you have to. It is something you find yourself doing effortlessly. It is part of being a son or daughter of God. You have this continuous relationship with God that takes place in your inner life, where you think, feel, make decisions, reason, and debate. Your inner conversation is a prayer unto God, committing everything you do unto Him

for his help, pleasure, and blessing. Praying always is enjoying God, delighting in Him as you walk through the day, every step with Him on your mind or at least you know He is there even when your mind is elsewhere.

You and I have instant and constant access to the Lord God, and we do not even have to dial. All we do is think, Oh Lord, I sure need your help today. Lord, without your help, I am not going to do very well at all. Lord, I am dependent on you. A simple cry, “Help” reaches His ears before you even pray. The Bible tells us He knows our prayers even before we pray them (Ps 139:4).

Growing up on a farm has its advantages. You spend hours and hours on a tractor or a combine. In all honesty, you have to pay close attention to what you are doing. The machinery is expensive and used wrongly, the machinery is deadly. Farm accidents can end in death and often do. But one of the things farming taught me is that I can concentrate on what I am doing and still carry on a full-time conversation with the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, wherever we are, we are in God’s Presence and God enjoys conversing with us, fellowshiping with us. He enjoys His relationship with us even more than we do with Him. Thinking through everything you do with God is what life is all about. And it becomes something that you do freely, subconsciously, with very little effort on our part. But we experience enormous gain by doing this.

1. We learn that we are never alone.
2. Continual prayer is a stress reducer and a peace enhancer.
3. Continual prayer helps you to recognize the needs of others around you more readily.
4. Continual prayer helps you to react to life’s crises in a calmer fashion.
5. Continual prayer helps you to receive insights, wisdom, knowledge, and answers from God as He impresses His truth on your mind and heart.

Some of the greatest insights I have ever experienced have come through the line of prayer. As a matter of fact, the Holy Spirit is actually praying through us even when we are unaware.

Romans 8:26 And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will wake you up in the middle of the night and there is your answer, impressed on your mind, God's answer, God's direction. You see, whether you know it or not, there is constant prayer in your life, your spirit communicating with God's Spirit and God's Spirit communicating that to the Father and the Father communicates back to you.

6. Constant Prayer is not trying to get God to do what You want God to do. Constant prayer's goal is for us to live the way God wants us to live, turning everything over to Him continually.

7. Constant prayer helps you to make wiser decisions. When asked to do something, instead of saying yes and regretting it or no and regretting it, I have learned to say, "Let me pray on that for a few days and I will get back to you." This gives you time to seek God and His will. Just because you are asked to do something does not mean God wants you to do it.

Stormie Omartian wrote a book entitled, "The Power of a Praying Wife." She credits the importance of continual prayer for helping her rocky marriage. Instead of lashing out at him when he was combative, she prayed for him trying to understand what was making him so angry and what she could do to make things better. I quote, "It took time to realize that by praying first, I could avoid the unpleasant methods of interacting, arguing, pleading, ignoring, avoiding, confronting, debating, or silent treatments."

Now hear me on this. I am not saying there is a right way to pray and if you do it, your marriage will improve. I am saying that the practice of continual prayer that you will be different

for fellowshiping with God throughout the day will be of great help to you. You will be different. Moses glowed each time He spent time in the Lord's Presence. You won't glow, but you will be different.

The Bible says, Pray without ceasing. The Bible says, "Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." The Bible says, "Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. The Bible says, ⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Jesus lets us know that apart from Him we can do nothing.

ACTS - Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and supplication.

Praying always begins with simple small steps. It begins by thanking the Lord all day long for the good things that happen to you. And the further you go in continual prayer you begin to thank the Lord for everything that happens to you good or not so good. It is simply taking every step knowing that you are in the Presence of the Holy, having a long conversation with him that never ends. Amen and Amen. Peace be with you Amen.