

From: Hood County Pastor Council <business=pastorcouncil.org@mail2.suw13.rsgsv.net> on behalf of Hood County Pastor Council <business@pastorcouncil.org>
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ONE NATION UNDER GOD Devotional

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Pray Without Ceasing

Then he told them a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. He said, “There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, ‘Render a just decision for me against my adversary.’ For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, ‘While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, **because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.**’” The Lord said, “Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

Luke 18:1-8 (NABRE)

He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and

despised everyone else. “Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity – greedy, dishonest, adulterous – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income. **But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner.’** I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

Luke 18:9-14 (NABRE)

Reflection

Praying without ceasing is one of the hardest things to do in today’s world, we are not able to go and live like a hermit, or a monk. We have jobs and responsibilities that put demands on our lives (spouse, children, church, friends, etc.). We tell ourselves, I do not have time to be in prayer all the time. When we do take time out of our busy day we may give 5 or 10 minutes to prayer.

In Luke 18, we read two of Jesus’ parables. The first one is the persistent widow. (1-8). She keeps bothering the judge until he gives in to her demand and his decision was for her. This passage shows us that we must be persistent in our prayers.

The second parable is the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. We know how the Pharisee prayed, but the Tax Collector is the one that Jesus focused on and the one I try to be like. He kneels in a corner not looking up, beating his breast and praying “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” Years ago I read the 19th century Russian work, “The

Challenge

Try saying the Jesus Prayer (Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner.) 3000 times a day and see what happens in your life.

Pray daily for our country

For Discussion

How do I pray without ceasing?



Way of a Pilgrim”. This book tells the story of the writer’s journey...He went to different priests and asked, "How do you pray continually?" The last priest he visited told him to pray this verse 3000 times a day, “Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner.” (The Jesus Prayer). The writer does and the rest of the book tells how praying this way changed his life and the lives of everyone he met.

Craig McAlister is a Permanent Deacon in the Roman Catholic Church and a Secular Franciscan. He is married with 6 children, 18 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. He is also a Vietnam veteran.

Website:
www.stfrances.net

Prayer can change lives, especially our own, when we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us. We Ask God to do for us, and Seek that our will, will be His. We cannot keep knocking and asking for our will to be done. We need to let go and let God’s will be our goal.

In the morning when we offer our day to God, all our action and words, every act of kindness and every kind word continues our morning prayer.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, You have given us this promise, “If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek, my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 chronicles. 7:14)

So we pray to you. We turn from evil and look to you, Our God please, Unite and Strengthen us.

In the name of Christ we pray. Amen

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