

**40 Days of Prayer**  
**Three Lakes Evangelical Free Church**  
**Day 28**

***Praying on the Run***  
**1 Thessalonians 5:17**

I have been thinking recently about a way to describe the daily lifestyle of a fully-devoted follower of Jesus. A phrase, that is not original with me, seems to say it well. "I have decided to be a Christian  (insert your vocation)  rather than a  (insert your vocation)  who happens to be a Christian. What this phrase says is that we are followers of Jesus 24/7. Someone who is fully devoted to Jesus is not just a teacher who happens to be a Christian, but he/she is a Christian teacher. That means that every activity, every decision, every thought is influenced by a Christian perspective on life. We are Christians and that worldview defines us, it guides us, and it keeps us biblically accountable.

If you will give me some grace to jump categories, I would like to suggest that this is the way we should approach prayer. We should not, to keep our illustration consistent, be a teacher who sometimes prays, but a praying Christian teacher. Full devotion to God means being in constant communion with God. I believe that this is what Paul means when he writes to the Thessalonians:

*...pray continually... 1 Thessalonians 5:17*

Praying continually does not mean that we cease all of our activity and fall on our knees, close our eyes and say a prayer. Praying continually means that God is in our thoughts and we have an internal dialogue with him on a moment-by-moment basis. We all have heard of people who cry out to God in a crisis with so-called foxhole prayers. What I believe Paul is challenging us to do is live prayerful lives all the time, not just when bullets are flying over our heads. An illustration of this idea is the life of Nehemiah.

When you have time, do a quick read of Nehemiah and notice the times when Nehemiah engages in lifestyle prayer. Now, it is true that when he hears of the condition of the wall of Jerusalem, he takes time out of his life for an extended season of prayer and fasting. But, there are also several times when he prays what are commonly known as arrow prayers.

*The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven... (Nehemiah 2:4 NIV)*

*They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. (Nehemiah 4:8-9 NIV)*

*They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed." But I prayed, "Now strengthen my hands." (Nehemiah 6:9 NIV)*

When life happened, the first thing Nehemiah did was pray—even if it was on the run. This internal communion with God is a characteristic of a fully-devoted follower of Jesus. “OK, God, here I go with this meeting.” “Whoa, God, that conversation didn’t go very well.” “God, I need an idea for this paper.” “Lord, what do I do now?” “Wow, God, that song really touched my heart. Thanks.” These are examples of praying continually.

So, when life happens to you this week, turn to God first. Shoot an arrow prayer to him. This is a lifestyle that pleases him and reveals a heart that puts him first. Be a praying teacher, a praying fireman, a praying mom, always seeking the Lord in everything you do.

1. Read Psalm 34:1-7. Notice the continual communion with God illustrated in these verses. Ask God to instill this type of inner prayer in your life.
2. Read 1 Chronicles 16:8-13. Notice the lifestyle of prayer in this psalm. What can you do to rise to the challenge of the psalm writer?