

PRAY, DO NOT FAINT!

Text: Luke 18:1

Bro. Jeremiah Emakpor

Dwelling on the subject of prayer every now and then cannot be helped because, apart from being the means by which we make our request known to God, and also thank Him for favors already granted, it is one of the weapons a Christian uses to counter the evil forces of darkness (**Phil. 4:6, Eph. 6:17-18**). Therefore, the importance of prayer cannot be over emphasized. Indeed, it has been said, and it is true, that a prayerful Christian is a powerful Christian.

However, more often than not, we buckle and groan under the pains and sorrows of our problems and troubles and forget to pray for God's intervention and rescue. We equally bottle up our heart desires without talking to God about them (**Phil. 4:6**)

Jesus Christ, having observed the weakness in man when it comes to the matter of prayer, encouraged mankind to "pray and not faint". "Faint" in the sense of not being active and persistent in prayer. He provided example of active prayer life in the form of a parable in Luke 18:1-8. Christ also lived his advice later by not allowing fear, few moments to his impending death, overwhelm and prevent him from praying to His Father above for a possible way out of it- **Matt. 26:36-44**. Besides, Jesus Christ exhibited a prayer life that continual, steadfast and fervent- **Mk. 1:35, 6:46, Mtt. 14:23**. The statement of Christ in verse 41, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" suggests that prayer helps to nip problems in the bud. The denial of Christ by Peter not too long after this incident is traceable to his failure to watch and pray when he was asked to do so by Christ.

Apostle Paul equally lent his voice to the issue of a prayer life in his own way by advocating ceaseless prayer- **I Thess. 5:17**.

The apostles and early Christians also exemplified a prayer life that was continual and steadfast (**Acts 6:4, Acts 2:42, Acts 10:1-2, I Tim. 5:5, Luke 2:37, Acts 12:5, Acts 16:25**).

So when is prayer said to be regularly or ceaseless? Is it when one prays may be once, twice, or thrice daily? Could it be when prayer is made a routine affair that it becomes ceaseless or regular. The fact is, ceaseless prayer as advised in the Bible goes beyond being legalistic about it. There is that occasional urge or instinct for one to pray. One

should respond to such instincts. These instincts could happen when you are on the road, in the office, at leisure, in the midnight, or not too long after the last prayer you said.

Now, how often do you pray? Is it only when you want to eat? Or perhaps only when you wake up in the morning or want to go to bed. Is it when you are sick or about to write an examination that you deem it necessary to pray? Maybe, it is only when you want to embark on a journey or going for a job interview that you remember to pray.

Wives always pray for your husband's safety, security and protection as they go out to look for what the family would eat and drink. Pray for God's favor and blessing upon their means of livelihood. Pray for them to be wise, faithful and loving husbands so that peace, growth and understanding can thrive in the family.

Also, husbands should always pray for their wives to be submissive, for them to be prudent managers of the home. For them not to be stubborn, quarrelsome or swollen headed.

Mothers and fathers should pray for their children for God's protection; for them to be cool headed; to be God fearing, to be obedient, respectful and responsible children; to take their studies seriously; for wisdom and intelligence; to shun evil vices.

Children pray for your parents; for God to bless their endeavors; for God's protection over them.

Ceaseless praying is a challenge to all of us.