

Praying Always and Fainting Not

“And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).

In a day of electrical privileges, many forget that a few years ago we did not have electrical lights to illuminate a house at night. There were no thermostats on the walls to control the temperature of an electric furnace or heat pump. There were no electric water heaters to warm the water. There were no electric stoves on which to cook the food. There were no electric refrigerators or freezers to keep the food cool or frozen.

The lighting in days gone by was from a simple oil lamp. Burning coal or wood in the stove was the means of keeping the house, or at least one room of the house, warm. If there was warm water, it had to be heated on the stove. And the food was cooked on the same stove, or in a cook stove in the kitchen. The spring or the creek would keep some items cool and a block of ice in a box was the only way of refrigeration.

It only takes one winter ice storm to cut us off from the many blessings of electricity. While we now have gas-powered generators that can alleviate some of the problems, having no electricity means we experience a slow down and sometimes a shut down of modern conveniences. This must be what Jesus was teaching about prayer. When we fail to pray, there is a spiritual slow down, and sometimes a shut down. But where prayer prevails, we don't even faint.

In the words of our text, Jesus delivered a call to prayer! The phrase “men ought to pray” indicates the necessity of prayer. The word “ought” is often translated “must” and sometimes rendered “must needs” and thus underlines that prayer is not an option. We should pray! We must pray! We have to pray! Jesus calls us to prayer! Isn't that precious? The God Who hears and answers prayer calls us to prayer.

In the words of our text, Jesus demanded a consistency in prayer! Any way you look at the term “always,” it means “always.” Synonymous with “ever” and “at all times,” the word requires more than a casual petition. Like the friend in the parable that follows our text, we are to evidence consistency in the matter of prayer. As Jesus taught on another occasion, we are to ask and keep on asking; seek and keep on seeking; knock and keep on knocking (see Matthew 7:7, 8).

In the words of our text, Jesus declared a channel through prayer! We know prayer is not the Savior. Jesus is the Savior! Prayer doesn't change things. Jesus changes things! As we receive mercy from the Savior, the channel of prayer is opened and divine strength flows into our feeble lives. Oh, in spite of our past failures, may we draw upon God's mercy and pray. For sure, it is then that we will not faint.