

Romans 1:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

Analysis

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

Paul invokes divine testimony: *martus gar mou estin ho theos* (μάρτυς γάρ μου ἔστιν ὁ θεός, 'for God is my witness'). Since Paul had not visited Rome, he needed to establish his genuine care for them. Calling God as witness is solemn (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:23; Philippians 1:8), underscoring Paul's sincerity. The relative clause *hō latreuō en tō pneumati mou en tō euangeliō tou huiou autou* (ὧ λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεύματι μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ νιοῦ αὐτοῦ, 'whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son') describes Paul's devotion.

Latreuō (λατρεύω) is worship/service, often used of priestly ministry in the Old Testament. Paul's apostolic labor is spiritual worship offered to God. *En tō pneumati mou* (in my spirit) indicates inward, heartfelt devotion, not mere external ritual. The sphere is *en tō euangeliō* (in the gospel)—Paul's service is gospel-centered proclamation. The phrase *hōs adialeiptōs mneian humōn poioumai* (ώς ἀδιαλείπτως μνείαν ὑμῶν ποιοῦμαι, 'how unceasingly I make mention of you') shows constant, specific intercession. *Adialeiptōs* (unceasingly) does not mean every moment but regularly, persistently. Paul's prayer life was robust and others-centered.

Historical Context

In an era without modern communication, Paul maintained spiritual connection with churches through persistent prayer. His prayers for churches he had not visited (like Rome and Colossae) demonstrate apostolic care extending beyond personal acquaintance. Prayer was the engine of apostolic ministry, not an afterthought. Early Christians often prayed at set times (Acts 3:1; 10:9) and devoted extended periods to intercession.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does viewing your work or ministry as 'worship' (λατρεύω) change your motivation and attitude toward daily tasks?
2. What would change in your life if you prayed 'unceasingly' (ἀδιαλείπτως) for specific people and churches as Paul did?
3. How can you cultivate Spirit-empowered prayer rather than perfunctory, distracted, or self-centered prayer?

Interlinear Text

μάρτυς	γάρ	μου	ἐστιν	ό	θεός	ῷ	λατρεύω	ἐν	τῷ
witness	For	my	is	G3588	God	whom	I serve	in	G3588
G3144	G1063	G3450	G2076		G2316	G3739	G3000	G1722	
πνεύματί	μου	ἐν	τῷ	εὐαγγελίῳ	τοῦ	νίοῦ	αὐτοῦ	ώς	
spirit	my	in	G3588	the gospel	G3588	Son	of his	that	
G4151	G3450	G1722		G2098		G5207	G846	G5613	
ἀδιαλείπτως	μνείαν	ὑμῶν	ποιοῦμαι	πάντοτε	ἐπὶ	τῷν			
without ceasing	mention	of you	I make		always	in			G3588
G89	G3417	G5216	G4160		G3842	G1909			
προσευχῶν	μου								
prayers	my								
G4335	G3450								

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 6:18 (Spirit): Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

2 Timothy 1:3 (Prayer): I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

Romans 9:1 (Spirit): I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

2 Corinthians 1:23 (References God): Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (Prayer): Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians 1:2 (Prayer): We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

1 Thessalonians 3:10 (Prayer): Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Acts 27:23 (References God): For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

Acts 19:21 (Spirit): After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

Philippians 3:3 (Spirit): For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

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