

Devotional Guide
Prayer: The Ultimate Weapon

Ephesians 6:18-22

Monday

Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:6 - 7

After enumerating the various aspects of the “armor of God” in Ephesians 6:13 – 17, Paul adds the imperative of prayer, beginning with the admonition to “pray at all times”.

Think About It: How would others assess my “theology of prayer” based on an analysis of my actual practice of prayer? Do I “pray at all times” – do I carry prayer into every aspect of my life? How is it possible to “pray at all times” when there are so many things I have to do just to survive?

Prayer: Praise the Lord for His invitation to be constantly in contact with Him.

Tuesday

Ephesians 6:18; James 4:3; 1 Corinthians 14:15 – 16; Genesis 28:20 – 22

The imperative in Ephesians 6:18 to pray at all times continues with the phrase “in the Spirit”. Praying in the Spirit might be defined by contrast to praying in the flesh, or praying in the mind, or praying with the will.

Think About It: What characterizes praying in the flesh (James 4:3)? In contrast to fleshly prayer, the involvement of the mind in prayer is actually commended in Scripture (1 Corinthians 14:15 – 16). Why is an active intellect important in prayer according to 1 Corinthians 14:15 – 16? Why does prayer need to include more than an active intellect (and hence the imperative to pray “in the Spirit”)? Why must prayer be more than just an expression of what I want from God (e.g. Genesis 28:20 – 22)?

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for selfishness and willfulness.

Wednesday

Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:15, 26; Galatians 4:6; Luke 11:11 - 13

Praying in the Spirit involves recognizing our position as adopted children of God. Praying in the Spirit also involves recognition of both our sinfulness and weakness, which result in great difficulty in understanding God’s eternal perspective. We “see through a glass, darkly” and do not understand what we should pray for. Two biblical examples of this struggle in prayer are Deuteronomy 3:23 – 26 and 2 Corinthians 12:1 – 10.

Think About It: What are the implications regarding prayer of my status as a beloved child of the heavenly Father? What is the impact on my prayer life of failure to repent from sin (Psalm 66:18)?

Prayer: Praise God for the privilege of calling Him “Father.”

Thursday

Ephesians 6:8; Romans 8:26; Galatians 2:20; Romans 8:13

Praying in the Spirit is not only to recognize our weakness, it is also being helped by the Spirit in our perplexity. The Spirit intercedes; He comes to our aid and rescue; the Spirit puts into words before God the right request, with the perfect knowledge God has of our character, our needs, and His own will.

Praying in the Spirit also means putting to death the flesh and its desires (Romans 8:13; Galatians 2:20); with the goal that Christ live His life in us and that we live to do His will, not our own.

Think About It: One biblical term for the Holy Spirit is *Paraclete*, which is translated as “Comforter”, “Helper”, or “Advocate”. How does this description of the Holy Spirit relate to the concept of “praying in the Spirit”?

Prayer: Praise God the Father and God the Son for sending the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter, Helper, and Advocate.

Friday

Ephesians 6:18; Mark 10:36, 51; 13:33; Matthew 26:41; Luke 21:36

Paul implores to prayer with “all prayer and supplication”. The Greek word for prayer includes the idea of earnestness. A supplication is an entreaty arising from a need. Therefore prayer must be entered into with

a whole heart in full recognition of our need. The supplication aspect of prayer is our answer to Jesus' question: "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mark 10:36, 51).

Think About It: The warning to "be on the alert" in prayer is given in the context of the spiritual conflict described earlier in Ephesians 6. Jesus several times warned His disciples to "watch and pray." Based on the Scripture references that contain Jesus' warnings, for what should I be watching? How would I answer Jesus right now, if He asked me "What do you want Me to do for you?"

Prayer: Lord, help me to watch and pray.

Saturday

Ephesians 6:18; Luke 11:5 – 10; Luke 18:1 – 8

Paul continues his advice on prayer with the encouragement to keep on,

"With all perseverance..." Prayer does not give up. Luke records two parables of Jesus which illustrate the importance of perseverance: Luke 11: 5 – 10 the midnight request for bread; Luke 18:1 – 8, the widow and the unjust judge.

Think About It: What did I learn about prayer from reading Jesus' parables in Luke 11 and Luke 18?

Prayer: Lord, help me to persevere in prayer.

Sunday

Ephesians 6:18 – 22; 1 Timothy 2:1

Paul concludes his admonition on prayer with the imperative that we pray for other Christians; and then he adds a personal request for himself. Generalizing from Paul's specific request we can say that prayer should include intercession for those who are preaching the Gospel and witnessing for Christ, that God would give them the words to say, and the boldness to say it, whatever their circumstances. Paul's reference to Tychicus in Ephesians 6:21 -22 reminds us that when we ask people to pray for us, we should remember to let them know how we are doing!

Think About It: For whom am I interceding? Do I regularly pray for the saints? Am I regularly praying for those who proclaim the Gospel?

Prayer: Lord, help me to be a faithful—and informed—intercessor.