

“THE ARMOR OF GOD” (Part 8)
“... praying at all times ...” Eph. 6:18-20

INTRO: Mark Bubeck . . . We conclude series on the armor of God today. We are not only sons and daughters of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, we are also soldiers in His army against Satan and his forces of evil. We have studied Paul’s advice for the battle: Depend on His power, not ours (v. 10) and Dress in His full armor (vv. 11, 13). Both are essential to enable us to “stand” (4xs) in these evil days. What if Paul wrote? . . .

REVIEW: *Having on* (fixed) the *belt* of truth, the *breastplate* of righteousness, the *shoes* of peace. *Taking up* in the heat of battle, the *shield* of faith, the *helmet* of salvation, and the *sword* of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Two offensive weapons – God’s Word specifically applied and . . .

TODAY: vv. 18-20. . . “praying at all times . . .” Prayer is not actually a piece of armor, but how we appropriate the armor. It’s how we get dressed for battle. Prayer is the ultimate weapon to adorn for war (I gave you a prayer to guide). The armor is not mechanical or magical- it needs God. Prayer isn’t added to the armor; it is woven through each piece. Notice “all” occurs four times in v. 18! They introduce four ideas about prayer – persistence, power, petition, and purposes.

I. THE PERSISTENCE OF PRAYER (v. 18 “at all times”)

- A. “When” should we pray? “Answer?” at all times. How is that practical? Prayer is both an *act* and an *attitude*. A time and place should be regularly set aside to pray (Jesus did). Plus, it’s a constant attitude of dependence and God-consciousness, where we seek to live in His presence (Holy Spirit indwells) every waking moment (Heb. 13:5). We strive to see *everything* through the eyes of God and respond accordingly. All places and times are prayer times. I find myself . . .
- B. Examples of persistence / “with all Perseverance”
 - 1. Jesus gave us the model prayer (Lord’s Prayer) and He modeled prayer as an act and attitude (Mk. 1:35; Lk. 11:1-10; 18:1-8; 21:36). Two options: worry or pray! E. M Bounds (My book p. 10) declared . . . If the Son of God saw His need for prayer, what does it say to us? Roughly 30⁺ specific instances recorded over 3 years.
 - 2. Disciples saw His example. The only skill they asked Jesus to teach was (NOT teaching, miracles) but “how to pray.” Possible to know how and not do it! So, pray at all times – persevere – nothing is too small or too large.
 - 3. Early church (Acts 1:14; 2:1, 42; 3:1; 4:31; 6:4)
 - 4. Apostle Paul (Rom. 12:12; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17)

II. THE POWER OF PRAYER (“in the Spirit” vv. 10, 18; Jude 20)

- A. God’s Spirit *indwells* (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20) – ever present!
- B. God’s Spirit *empowers* (Eph. 5:18; Rom. 8:9, 11)

C. God’s Spirit *guides* (Jn. 16:13-14)

Note: “praying in the Spirit” has nothing to do with tongues. The phrase carries the same meaning as praying in Jesus’ name – both are asking for His will to be done (1 Jn. 5:14-15). There is much power in prayer (Jam. 5:16). Prayer can change things, people, circumstances, US!

III. THE PETITION OF PRAYER (“with all prayer and supplication”)

- A. “Prayer” – general term for requests
 - B. “Supplication” – specific and definite requests. Pray retail not wholesale.
 - C. Commanded to ask (Matt. 7:7-11; Jam. 4:2)
- ILLUS: In heaven, filing cabinets . . .

IV. THE PURPOSES OF PRAYER (vv. 18b-20)

- A. *For others / intercession* (v. 18b “for all the saints”). Paul set example (Phil. 1:4; Col. 1:3-4; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; etc.). What is Jesus doing since He ascended and awaits His return? He is interceding for us (Mk. 4:35-41; Matt. 14:23ff; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). Ex? Peter (Lk. 22:32).).
- B. *For the Lost* (vv. 19-20) – Clarity, courage, boldness, wisdom, etc. (Col. 4:2-6; 1 Pet. 3:15)

CONC: Prayer is vital to putting on God’s armor. Putting it all together, we have a picture of the Christian soldier ready for battle. Plain and simple putting on the armor means living: truthfully, righteously, peacefully, dependently, confidently, biblically, and prayerfully. J. Taylor writes, “Our life will never rise above our prayer life.” We need to make prayer our first choice not last chance. Pray more out of conviction – it’s the spiritual air we breathe. It has one requirement – CHOICE! Soldiers put the armor on through prayer. Putting on the whole armor of God means living . . . My book on Prayer (Amazon)