

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRAY IN THE SPIRIT?

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.
Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)*

Praying “in the Spirit” means praying under the influence, the guidance, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The charge to “pray in the Spirit” comes at the end of the description of God’s armor (Ephesians 6:10-17), which gives us some indication about how we are enabled to pray in the Spirit. In short, we pray in the Spirit when we wear God's armor.

For example, to pray in the Spirit means wearing the “belt of truth.” Whether it is confessing our sin or confessing our hopes and dreams, praying in the Spirit means telling the truth.

Praying in the Spirit also means wearing the “breastplate of righteousness.” This will involve celebrating the righteousness of God provided to us through faith in Christ (Romans 3:21-26).

To pray in the Spirit, we must also have our feet “fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace,” which means praying for God to send laborers into the harvest field (Luke 10:2), embolden our witness (Acts 4:29) and to save lost people (John 1:13). This means the first step in sharing our faith is not actually sharing our faith but rather praying.

To pray in the Spirit, we must raise the “shield of faith,” which means standing on God’s good character and purposes. This will involve quoting Scripture about God’s goodness and his good purposes during prayer. This strengthens our faith, and it is faith that moves mountains (Mark 11:23).

To pray in the Spirit, we must wear the “helmet of salvation,” which involves recounting God’s work of salvation. Remembering involves retelling God’s victory over the enemy in days past. At a most practical level, this will include recounting God’s feats of deliverance for the Israelites and his provision for the Church.

To pray in the Spirit, we must wield the “sword of the Spirit.” Specifically, this will involve addressing lies. The devil is the father of lies (John 8:44), and renouncing lies believed and announcing the truth of God’s Word is critical to victory.

Finally, to pray in the Spirit is to appeal to the Spirit’s power. To pray in the Spirit is to acknowledge our powerlessness and to wait upon God’s deliverance (John 15:5). The Spirit is ultimately and only means by which we are effective in prayer (Zechariah 4:6).