

Brandon Phillips

Preparing for Battle! / Eph 6:10–24

After encouraging the Ephesians saints to put on the armor of God to stand firm, Paul further encourages the church encouraging them to pray. In doing so, he gives them seven indispensable characteristics of the believer's prayers. Your prayers must be:

Conscientious (diligent) – with every prayer and petition (v. 18)

Constant – praying at all times (v. 18)

Controlled by the Spirit – in the Spirit (v. 18)

Cognizant – be on alert (v. 18)

Continuing – with all perseverance and petition (v. 18)

Comprehensive – for all the saints (v. 18)

Caring – and pray on my behalf (vv. 19-20)

Pre-sermon Comments

Ephesians 2:1–3 NASB95

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Romans 1:21 NASB95

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Ephesians 2:4 NASB95

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Ephesians 5:20 NASB95

always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

Psalm 145:15–16 NASB95

The eyes of all look to You,

And You give them their food in due time.

You open Your hand

And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Christians are thankful for all God's gifts, especially his eternal gifts, and especially the surpassing value of knowing his Son (Philippians 3:8), the Spirit-become-physical ~ David Mathis

Sermon Text

Introduction to our Text

Luke 2:29–32 NASB95

“Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace,

According to Your word;

For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES,

And the glory of Your people Israel.”

Luke 2:36–38 NASB95

And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with *her* husband seven years after her marriage,

and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple,

serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

At that very moment she came up and *began* giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

“Every movement for the advancement of the Gospel must be created by and inspired by prayer. In all these movements of God, prayer precedes and attends as an invariable and necessary condition. In this relation, God makes prayer identical in force and power with Himself and says to those on earth who pray: “You are on the earth to carry on My cause. I am in heaven, the Lord of all, the Maker of all, the Holy One of all. Now whatever you need for My cause, ask Me and I will do it. Shape the future by your prayers, and all that you need for present supplies, command Me. I made heaven and earth, and all things in them. Ask largely. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. It is My work which you are doing. It concerns My cause. Be prompt and full in praying. Do not abate your asking, and I will not wince nor abate in My giving.”

‘No one will ever understand my husband until they realize that he is first of all a man of prayer and then an evangelist’ ~ Bethany Lloyd-Jones

“Prayer is beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul. Man is at his greatest and highest when upon his knees he comes face to face with God.”

— **Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

He that knows how to overcome the Lord in prayer, has heaven and earth at his disposal ~ Charles Spurgeon

"Prayer is the vital breath of the Christian; not the thing that makes him alive, but the evidence that he is alive." ~ Oswald Chambers

Review

Romans 1:9–10 NASB95

For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the *preaching of the* gospel of His Son, is my witness *as to* how unceasingly I make mention of you,

always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of

God I may succeed in coming to you.

Colossians 1:3 NASB95

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

1 Thessalonians 1:2 NASB95

We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers;

Philemon 4 NASB95

I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers,

Ephesians 1:15–23 NASB95

For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and your love for all the saints,

do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers;

that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,

far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 3:14–21 NASB95

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,

that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,

so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 6:10 NASB95

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

Ephesians 6:11 NASB95

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Ephesians 6:13 NASB95

Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Proposition and Outline

After encouraging the Ephesians saints to put on the armor of God to stand firm, Paul further encourages the church at Ephesus to pray.

In doing so, he gives them seven indispensable characteristics spirit

filled of the believer's prayers. Your prayers must be:

- 1. Conscientious (diligent) – with every prayer and petition (v. 18)**
- 2. Constant – praying at all times (v. 18)**
- 3. Controlled by the Spirit – in the Spirit (v. 18)**
- 4. Cognizant – be on alert (v. 18)**
- 5. Continuing – with all perseverance and petition (v. 18)**
- 6. Comprehensive – for all the saints (v. 18)**
- 7. Caring – and pray on my behalf (vv. 19-20)**

The content of Paul's Prayer Request

- Pray that God would give me the appropriate words**
- Pray that I would speak with appropriate boldness**

Your prayers must be Conscientious (diligent)

With every prayer and petition (v. 18)

| Ephesians 6:18 (NASB95)

| With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

| **I think the NET Bible translation does a good job of translating the first part of this verse.**

| Ephesians 6:18 (NET)

| With every prayer and petition, pray at all times in the Spirit, and to this end be alert, with all perseverance and requests for all the saints.

Ephesians 3:12 NASB95

in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

Matthew 6:5 NASB95

“When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

| **We should go into His presence as a child goes to his father. We do it with reverence and godly fear, of course, but we should go with a childlike confidence and simplicity ~ Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Your prayers must be Constant

Praying at all times (v. 18)

| Ephesians 6:18 (NASB95)

| With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 NASB95

Rejoice always;

pray without ceasing;

in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Luke 18:1–5 NASB95

Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,

saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man.

“There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’

“For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man,

yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’ ”

Luke 18:6–7 NASB95

And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said;

now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

Matthew 6:7 NASB95

"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

"In prayer, it is better to have heart without words, than words without heart. Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin entice a man to cease from prayer. The spirit of prayer is more precious than treasures of gold and silver. Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan." ~ John Bunyan

It is living in continual God-consciousness, where everything you see and experience becomes a kind of prayer, lived in deep awareness of and surrender to Him. It should be instant and intimate communication-not unlike that which we enjoy with our best friend ~ John MacArthur

Always respond to every impulse to pray. The impulse to pray may come when you are reading or when you are battling with a text. I would make an absolute law of this: always obey such an impulse ~ Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Your prayers must be Controlled by the Spirit –

In the Spirit (v. 18)

Ephesians 6:18 (NASB95)

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

Ephesians 5:18 NASB95

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

Ephesians 5:20 NASB95

always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

Matthew 6:5 NASB95

"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Luke 18:10–12 NASB95

"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

"The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'

Matthew 6:7 NASB95

"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

Sometimes, we subtly trust in having perfectly composed, doctrinally correct prayers that rely upon the right diction, cadence, language, emotion, or volume.

The Spirit is a Spirit of life as well as truth, and the first thing that he always does is to make everything living and vital. And, of course, there is all the difference in the world between the life and liveliness produced by the Spirit and the kind of artifact, the bright and breezy imitation, produced by people ~ Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Luke 18:13 NASB95

"But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'

Luke 18:14 NASB95

"I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Romans 8:23–25 NASB95

And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees?

But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Romans 8:26–27 NASB95

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words;

and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

Conclusion:

"The prayer of the feeblest saint who lives in the Spirit and keeps right with God is a terror to Satan. The very powers of darkness are paralyzed by prayer; no spiritualistic seance can succeed in the presence of a humble praying saint. No wonder Satan tries to keep our minds fussy in active work till we cannot think in prayer." ~ Oswald Chambers

The Gospel

John 14:6 NASB95

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

John 1:29 NASB95

The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

If the Holy Spirit has laid anything on your heart regarding this sermon, or if you want to know the way of salvation, we ask that you get with Wy, Phil, or me. You can also simply pull aside any of the congregation who you know to be mature in Christ.

I can be contacted at Brandon.Phillips@gracegainesville.org with any further questions regarding this sermon.