

The Soldier's Prayer – Part 2

**Sermon Delivered on July 30th, 2017
AM Service**

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Text: [Ephesians 6:10-20](#)

Introduction

Last Sunday, we saw that there is a close connection between the armour of God and prayer. After giving us the six pieces of the Christian armour, Paul then focuses on prayer. We are at war, not only are we to put on the whole armour of God, we must also pray. If we are to stand in the evil day we must put on the armour of God and the way to put it on and to utilize it is by prayer. No soldier of the cross can put on the armour of God and use it effectively without prayer. We must fight this spiritual battle on our knees.

During World War II, an officer was briefing his men on how to advance safely. He demonstrated them to stay below enemy fire by falling to the ground and hugging the ground. He said in conclusion, *“If you advance on your knees, you will always be safe.”*

The safe way and the only way to advance Christ's church is on our knees. A good soldier of the cross ready for the battle is one who has put the armour of God on and also one who knows how to take hold of God in prayer.

Last Sunday we talked about:

I – The Importance of Soldier's Prayer

1. Appropriation the Armour
2. Communication with the Commander-in-Chief

This morning consider with me:

II – The Qualities of Soldier's Prayer

1. Consistent Prayer
2. Comprehensive Prayer
3. Spirit-filled Prayer
4. Watchful Prayer
5. Persevering Prayer

But let me just say this before I move on to preach on prayer, I don't want you to think that I have arrived in the area of prayer. I am a fellow soldier and I struggle with you in this battle. I am preaching this message to myself first of all. The more I study and prepare this message the more I am convinced and convicted of my deficiency and my shortcomings in this area of prayer.

So I invite you to join me in praying, Lord, teach us to pray. Lord, would You teach to take hold of You in prayer.

What kind of prayer does a soldier of the cross pray? How does a good soldier of the cross pray? What does his prayer look like?

1. Consistent Prayer

This is Paul's constant exhortation to Christians:

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Colossians 4:2 **Continue in prayer**, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

Romans 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; **continuing instant in prayer**;

1 Thessalonians 5:17 **Pray without ceasing**.

Then in our text:

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

Paul uses the very words Jesus spoke in ...

Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and **pray always**, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that **men ought always to pray, and not to faint**;

In the teaching of Jesus, He emphasizes the fact that prayer is something we must do at all times, consistently and continually, instead of being discouraged in it.

Now the question is what does "praying always" mean?

Does it mean that we are to pray non-stop, twenty four hours a day and that is the only thing that we do. Of course not, we also have other things to do and other responsibilities in life. We are not called to retreat from society and be like monks and live in caves and spend all day praying.

What we are called is to "pray always" – pray in "in every season"; implying every **opportunity** and every **necessity**. Be in communion with the Lord in **every occasion and for every need**. What Paul is saying is clear; we must be consistently and continually communing with the Father. We must pray regularly, repeatedly, constantly, and consistently. But how can we engage in that kind of prayer?

But how do you develop a consistent and continual prayer?

It is very important to understand that prayer is **more than just a duty** that we perform. Prayer is much **more than a discipline or an activity**. It is **more than just a checklist of religious obligations** that we need to perform before the day is over. No, true prayer is a disposition of the heart. **True prayer is an attitude of the heart**. True prayer is a reliance and dependence which is expressed in words. Consistent and a continual prayer is an outcome of our deep sense of dependence upon God for provision and protection.

Acts 17:28 **For in him we live, and move, and have our being**; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: **for without me ye can do nothing**.

Jonathan Edwards a preacher and theologian in the 1700's and who is well-known for his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" wrote the following:

"The spirit of a true convert is a spirit of faith and reliance on the power, wisdom, and mercy of God, and such a spirit is naturally expressed in prayer. True prayer is nothing else but faith expressed. True Christian prayer is the faith and reliance of the soul breathed forth in words. But a hypocrite is without the spirit of faith. He hath no true reliance or dependence on God, but is really self-dependent."

What Jonathan Edwards is saying is that a reliance and dependence upon God expresses itself in prayer. To develop this kind of consistent and continual prayer, there must be a conscious awareness of our dependence upon God. **The reason why so many of us struggle so much with prayer** is because most of us have a sense of **self-sufficiency** and **independence**. Our prayerlessness is an indication of our **false sense security in self and our own ability**. People who are self-sufficient, self-made will not pray. Strong people do not see the need to pray. But people who have a deep sense of their **need**, a deep sense of their **weakness**, and a deep sense of their **danger**, a deep sense of their **dependence** upon God will always pray.

Our weakness and the danger that surrounds us should make us desperate for help, desperate to have the armour on, desperate to be constant communication with the only One who can help us in the midst of the battle and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

So if you want to be a person who prays at all times, develop a deep sense of your dependence upon God. We should be like a little child who is constantly looking to his father for everything he needs.

2. Comprehensive Prayer

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

A good soldier's prayer must be comprehensive. Praying with all prayer and supplication, means all kinds of prayers. **There is more than one kind of praying** - prayer, supplication, intercession, petition, thanksgiving. We must be careful that our prayers do not become like a **grocery list** that we turn in to God. Many times that happens to us doesn't it? If we are not careful, our prayer life simply turns into **a way of getting things from God**. In our prayers if we only ask for things for ourselves we are going to miss out on blessings that come with intercessions and giving of thanks.

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Colossians 4:2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

1 Timothy 2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

Real prayer is a prayer that is filled **not only with petitions but it's filled with praise**. Real prayer is filled with thanksgiving and adoration and confession and worship.

The Lord's Prayer gives us a helpful outline of different kinds of prayer.

After this manner therefore pray ye:

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" points us toward worship as we pray for God's glory.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" points to prayer for missions, evangelism, and discipleship.

"Give us this day our daily bread" is prayer for our personal needs.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" is confession of sins and prayer for our relationships.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" is prayer for holiness, both for others and for ourselves.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever" is an acknowledgment of God's power and authority.

The prayers in the Psalms and in other Scriptures may give us other types of prayer. But Paul's point is that we **fight a good fight of faith by using all types of prayer**.

In fact, **thanksgiving is a great prayer weapon for defeating Satan**. Intercession for others can **bring victory** to our own lives.

[Job 42:10](#) And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

So pray always with all prayer and supplication. Be careful that your prayer be not reduced to mere requests. There are different kinds of prayer that we are to use in the battle.

Albert Barnes put it this way ...

“It would be well for the soldier who goes forth to battle to pray--to pray for victory; or to pray that he may be prepared for death, should he fall. But soldiers do not often feel the necessity of this. To the Christian soldier, however, it is indispensable. Prayer crowns all lawful efforts with success, and gives a victory when nothing else would. No matter how complete the armour; no matter how skilled we maybe in the science of war; no matter how courageous we may be, we may be certain that without prayer we shall be defeated. God alone can give the victory; and when the Christian soldier goes forth armed completely for the spiritual conflict, if he looks to God by prayer, he may be sure of a triumph. This prayer is not to be intermitted (irregular). It is to be always. In every temptation and spiritual conflict we are to pray.”

Closing Exhortations

There are times we don't feel like praying but those times that we least desire to pray, are the times we must really pray. Pray and keep praying until you are really praying. Guard yourself from prayerless praying. Guard yourself from lifeless praying.

Listen to what Andrew Murray wrote ...

*“Christians often complain that private prayer is not what it should be. They feel weak and sinful, the heart is cold and dark; it is as if they have so little to pray, and in that little no faith or joy. They are discouraged and kept from prayer by the thought that they cannot come to the Father as they ought or as they wish. Child of God! listen to your Teacher. He tells you that when you go to private prayer your first thought must be: The Father is in secret, the Father waits me there. Just because your heart is cold and prayerless, get you into the presence of the loving Father. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth you. **Do not be thinking of how little you have to bring God, but of how much He wants to give you.** Just place yourself before, and look up into, His face; think of His love, His wonderful, tender, pitying love. Just tell Him how sinful and cold and dark all is: it is the Father's loving heart will give light and warmth to yours. O do what Jesus says: Just shut the door, and pray to thy Father, which is in secret. Is it not wonderful? to be able to go alone with God, the infinite God. And then to look up and say: My Father!”*

Pray, O God, help me to pray. Help me to read my Bible. Help me to be committed to Your church. Help me to be a good husband, a good wife, a good father, a good mother, a good child. Help me to love you. Help me to love people. Help me to forgive. Help me to be kind. Help to delight to do Thy will.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, come and give your whole heart and life to prayer, and you will know its blessedness and its power. Pray! Pray! Pray! May God help you to do it for Christ's sake. Amen.

AMEN!