

Ephesians 6:18-20, Prayer as Spiritual Warfare

A senior demon gives advice to a new demon about how to torment a human being, and he says, “Once all [the human’s] thoughts and images have been flung aside and the man trusts himself to the completely real, external invisible Presence, there with him in the room and never knowable by him as he is known by it--why, then the incalculable may occur” (*The Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis).

1) Pray for the Armor of God

“Paul adds prayer, not because he thinks of prayer as another though unnamed weapon, but because it is to pervade all our spiritual warfare. Equipping ourselves with God’s armor is not a mechanical operation; it is itself an expression of our dependence on God, in other words of prayer” (John Stott).

“The Christian’s armor will rust out if not treated with the oil of prayer” (William Gurnall).

How to pray for the armor of God:

- 1) God girds us with the belt of truth on us as we pray: “Lord, keep us from half-heartedness and hypocrisy, and make us sincere in our faith.”
- 2) God places the breastplate of righteousness over our shoulders as we pray: “Father, keep us from the temptations of the flesh that could destroy us, and empower us to live rightly through ordinary acts of service.”
- 3) God fits us with the shoes of the gospel as we pray: “God, make us quick to go out as heralds proclaiming the good news of Your victory to a dying world.”
- 4) God hands us the shield of faith as we pray: “Defender, your enemies daily pour accusations down upon us, which discourages us. Help us to lean not on what we see in ourselves, but on what You have done for us in Jesus.”
- 5) God puts the helmet of our salvation on our head as we pray: “Father, persuade our hearts that everything You did for the salvation of sinners you did for us.”

- 6) God arms us with the sword of the Spirit and the Word as we pray: “Our king, help us to unleash Your all-conquering word to beat back the darkness in this world.”

II) Pray for Other Christians

- a) When to pray: “At all times.”

“Let prayer be the key of the morning, and the lock of the night” (William Gurnall).

- b) How to pray: “With all prayer and supplication” and “with all perseverance.”

- c) Who to pray for: “All the saints.”

III) Pray for Christian Ministers

Our prayer priority for Christian ministers is the continued bold proclamation of the gospel, not a change in material circumstances.

“Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief. It is not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comforts in the den. God has given prayer as a wartime walkie-talkie so that we can call headquarters for everything we need as the kingdom of Christ advances in the world” (John Piper).

Turn to the person next to you and pray for these things:

1. Pray for the community of Christians, especially Grace BFC.
2. Pray for the proclamation of the gospel through the leaders of this church, through the missionaries we support, and through other pastors in Reading.
3. Pray for one another, that each one of us would take up the whole armor of God so that we may stand against the evil one.