

PRAY

“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 saints. Pray for me also (Paul) that whenever I open my mouth words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly as I should”

Ephesians 6:18-20

This call to prayer comes at the end of the book of Ephesians and at the end of a call from Paul to take up arms against the devil's schemes. I have been in a lot more prayer lately and have seen that the more I pray the more I can see God and His divine strategies for victory. I have also seen that the prayers of righteous men and women are powerful and effective (James 5:16). Prayer pushes back the advances of satanic opposition and there is absolutely nothing he can do to overcome a people who seek God!

As you look at the call to prayer above there are three things to take note of. First, prayer must be a constant flow from our lives. These phrases jump out at me, “pray in the Spirit on all occasions” and “always keep on praying.” I will definitely pray when there is a crisis of some sort, but the Lord is looking for those who will learn the way of walking in prayer. If the enemy is on the prowl, looking for whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8), then by prayer intervention we can thwart his intentions. I have had many occasions where I felt the urge to pray in the Spirit. I do it. I do not always have knowledge of what I am praying for but I do know that the Holy Spirit intercedes through us to bring requests to the Lord on our behalf (see Romans 8:26-27).

Second, prayer helps us to see trouble coming and then we can pray boldly for the Lord to come and destroy the destroyer. Paul says, “with this in mind, be alert...” Peter says the same thing:

“Be self controlled and alert, your enemy prowls around...” (I Peter 5:8). The mind that has a bent toward constant prayer is an alert mind. I have focused on a lot of things in life, but the more I train my mind to be alert in prayer the more I see the hand of the Lion of Judah blocking the path of the loin of deceit. To be alert is not about being fearful; quite the opposite. Paul prays that his mouth might be opened and that words might be given him so that he can proclaim the truth fearlessly! Alert and bold, that is how the Lord wants us to come to him. The author of Hebrews says, “Therefore since we have confidence (actually boldness) to enter the Most Holy place by the blood of Jesus... let us draw near with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith...” (Heb 10:19 and 22).

Lastly, prayer must be focused on others. Yes, we all have needs but look at your prayer life. How much is focused on you and your needs and how much is focused on others? Paul says, “always keep on praying for all the saints and pray for me also.” Prayer for others is what we call intercession. It is a wonderful thing when someone comes to me and says, “I've been praying for you, pastor.” Isn't it good to know that people are praying for you? They are! Let's join with the army of God by lifting one another up before the Lord. Our army does not fight with the weapons of this world but we use this weapon of prayer to demolish strongholds, destroy lies that come against the knowledge of God and take captive thoughts that are opposed to the Kingdom of God (II Corinthians 10:4-5). And to this we all say... “Amen!”