

Ephesians Chapter 6  
Week 11, v.18-20

Eph 6:18-20 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, and [pray] on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in [proclaiming] it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Look at verse 18 first.

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**

How many times do we see the words all? How often are we to bring our petitions and concerns to God? In all seasons, at every opportunity, in all occasions. Who are we specifically to pray for? Are we to pray for just those who are close to us or just those we know?

Prayer <proseuche> worship  
Petition <deesis> request, supplication

Think of your prayer time. Is it full of worship to God or just full of requests for yourself and others? How do we worship God through prayer?

What are we to pray for each other? Read through Ephesians Chapters 4 and 5 thru 6:17.

The verses below give us some direction on how to pray:

Luke 18:1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to **pray and not to lose heart,**

Ro 12:12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, **devoted to prayer,**

1 Thes 5:17 **pray without ceasing;**

1 Tim 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties [and] prayers, petitions [and] thanksgivings, be made **on behalf of all men,**

We are to pray *at all times*

at all times (KJV – always) -- "in every season"; implying *opportunity* and *exigency*  
(Jamieson Fausset-Brown Commentary)

opportunity – every time there is a chance, every circumstance, every situation

exigency – urgent need; something that a situation demands or makes urgently necessary; something needing immediate action

What does it look like in our lives to pray at all times? Is prayer something we do just when things are unraveling? In every situation of life – joy, sadness, fear, uncertainty, success, failure – we should be drawn to prayer. Prayer is not delegated to just certain situations or to certain times of the day. We should have a mindset of prayer throughout the day and sometimes even in the middle of the night.

We are to pray *in the Spirit*.

Ro 8:26 And 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;

We are to pray continuously, the doors of communion open to God as we bring everything before Him. In this attitude of continuous prayer, we recognize our need of God. This brings Him honor and glory.

If we are not in constant prayer, being Spiritually filled, how can we use the weapons of warfare to God's glory? It is not about our victory, it is about His victory and about honoring Him.

Paul just talked about the importance of being fully equipped as a spiritual soldier. We can't just stop there – prayer is absolutely necessary to be victorious against sin. Only God can give us victory in spiritual battle. We can wear all the armor but if we are not enveloped in a mindset of prayer knowing that it is God's armor and God's battle, knowing that He goes before us and is beside us, we will be weak and vulnerable at our best.

And as it was the custom of the Grecian armies, before they engaged, to offer prayers to the gods for their success, the apostle shows that these spiritual warriors must depend on the Captain of their salvation, and pray with all prayer, i.e.

incessantly, being always in the spirit of prayer, so that they should be ever ready for public, private, mental, or ejaculatory prayer, always depending on HIM who can alone save, and who alone can destroy... With all prayer] Refers to the different kinds of prayer that is performed in public, in the family, in the closet, in business, on the way, in the heart without a voice, and with the voice from the heart. Adam Clarke's Commentary

**What does it mean to be on the alert?** <agrupneo> to be sleepless, i.e. keep awake:--watch.

**What are some times when you might be on the alert? Why?**

Matt 26:41 "Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Luke 21:34 "Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap;

1 Thess 5:6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

1 Pet 5:8 Be of sober [spirit,] be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

To be alert means to be watchful and ready to deal with whatever happens; to be mentally clear-headed and responsive; to be attentive, to be prepared, to be vigilant and ready to act.

We are not only to be on the alert but to be on the alert *with all perseverance*. **What do you think of when you hear the word perseverance?**

Perseverance <proskarteresis> persistency – meaning being determined even through long periods of time despite difficulties or setbacks

We are also to be on the alert with *petition for all the saints*. We need to be ready and mindful of praying for one another.

We need the intercession of our brothers and sisters in Christ just as they need us to pray for them. The battle we are in is hard, it is tiring, it can be overwhelming. We need to pray and we need the prayers of others.

Eph 3:14b-19 ...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 fulness of God.

How is your prayer life? Do you understand the necessity of it – for yourself, for others? Do you exercise the direct access you have to God the Father? Do you look for opportunities to pray? Do you continue in prayer even when it gets difficult?

In Eph 6:19-20, Paul requests specific intercession from the brethren for himself.

Eph 6:19-20 and [pray] on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in [proclaiming] it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Notice what Paul asks the Ephesians to pray for. Not his imprisonment, not his comfort but that he might use his circumstance to share the gospel with others. What does this tell us about the understanding Paul had of his purpose and hope?

What do you pray for? Do you pray for opportunities to share with others what God has done for you? Does your life show that you are an ambassador for the gospel?

An ambassador is a representative. In what ways can you represent Christ in your daily life?

What kinds of things can you speak with confidence about? We all have some extra information that we are comfortable sharing with others. Perhaps it is about cooking or where to get the best education or how to organize your time. Through experience and individual interests, we become more confident in sharing our ideas, sometimes with great passion. Paul desires that he speak boldly – with confidence – about the gospel. It is clear that is where his greatest interest and passions are placed. Sometimes we just can't wait to share what we know with others. May God give us Paul's heart to have this same passion and confidence about the gospel that we can hardly be silenced when speaking His truth.

Acts 4:29-30 "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence, while Thou dost extend Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Thy holy servant Jesus."

2 Thess 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, just as [it did] also with you;

2 Cor 3:12 Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in [our] speech,

Notice in verse 19 that Paul prayed that utterance may be given to him in opening his mouth. Paul did not depend on himself but rather on the power of God to work through him. Revealing the truth of the gospel is God's work in the hearts of others. We are simply (and amazingly) His chosen vessels.

Jer 1:7 But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak.

Phil1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but [that] with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Remember, Paul is in prison at this time. He did not pray for his release from this trouble but rather that he would bring honor to God by executing the duty he had been given as God's child to proclaim the gospel in all circumstances.

Just a thought - When we are in trouble, how many of us go to prayer immediately for the release of that circumstance first rather than that God would be glorified through it?

### Application

Review Eph 6:18-20. This section of scripture follows the repetition of the need to put on the full armor of God in order to stand against the temptations of sin.

Read Eph 6:10. Where does our strength come from?

In Eph 6:11 where does it say our armor comes from?

What does it mean to pray?

Why is prayer necessary?

What word is repeated several times in verse 18?

Why is this important?

What does it mean?

Read through Ephesians chapters 4 thru 6:17. Make a list of how we can pray for each other.

Look up Luke 18:1 and 1 Thess 5:17. What do these verses say about prayer?

Take the time to honestly evaluate your personal prayer life?

How often –

Who is it focused on –

What is it focused on –

Reflect on the format of A.C.T.S. that we use. Why is this a good example of how we might pray?

Do you pray at every opportunity?  
Give an example –

Do you initiate prayer with others?  
Give an example –

What does it mean to be an ambassador of the gospel?

Paul was concerned about being an accurate representation of the gospel. How do you show that you are a Christian in your daily life?

How is God speaking to you through this section of scripture?

What changes would He have you make?

How have you been encouraged?