

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

14 July 2024

The Pattern for Prevailing Prayer

Text: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." *Eph. 6:18*

Ephesians 6:10-17 is where Paul explains to us how we can resist the Devil as he tries to undo us.

Paul has explained the relationship between husband and wife, parents and children and now he wants to give us what we need to stand firm against our enemy.

We know this as the "Armor of God".

He begins with: "Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

Then he tells us that we are not fighting against flesh and blood, other people, but the powers of this dark world.

Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

We need this armor of God so that when the day of evil comes we can stand our ground and after we have done everything we are to stand, stand firm!

So what is this armor of God we need to be able to stand firm against the enemy?

Truth like a belt holding everything in place.

The covering of righteousness to protect our front.

Our feet fitted with readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

Then the shield of faith with which we can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Then the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

That is why we have to spend time reading the Bible so the Word of God is in us and ready to be used when needed.

Then we need one more thing to be ready to face our enemy.

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.

Is praying in the Spirit troubling for you?

Does it take you to churches where they operate in the Spirit and it seems strange and out of control?

This praying in the Spirit is just allowing God, through the Holy Spirit, to intercede for you.

You can have a prayer language but it is not necessary.

It is realizing that God, through His Spirit, can intercede for you in your times of prayer.

It is just saying, Holy Spirit help me, and releasing Him to help you to know what to pray for.

It is just part of our surrendering all to Him.

E. M. Bounds wrote a book entitled "Weapons of Prayer", which is based on this scripture.

He takes certain key words from the passage to emphasize what is being said here.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, Stand therefore, Praying always.

Paul unites prayer with the armor of God and demonstrates that prayer is an essential aspect of the believer's preparation for spiritual warfare.

So we see here a pattern for prevailing prayer.

Let's look at some of these.

Perceptive prayer.

Prevailing prayer is perceptive.

Part of this is praying in the Spirit.

Praying in the Spirit gives us more power.

We must be filled with the Spirit to have effective prayer.

James says: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous person availed much".

He is speaking of prayer by a person whose heart is controlled by the Holy Spirit.

To pray with perception means not only praying in the energy of the Holy Spirit but praying in line with the Spirit's mind.

It is praying in harmony with the divine will of God.

The Spirit helps us to do this.

For the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with the will of God. *Romans 8: 26-27.*

We must make our prayers perceptive and discerning, and for that we have the ministry of the Spirit of God.

Perseverant prayer.

Paul teaches that we must be persevering in our praying.

He does this by using the word always and the words "watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication."

Praying always.

Some translations render this "at all times" or "On all occasions" or "at every opportunity" or simply "unceasingly."

Prevailing prayer is to be maintained and sustained.

We should be in prayer all the time and at every opportunity.

This requires that we have a constant sense of the conflict in which we are engaged.

We are not to pray only when the pressure is great upon us but always.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication."

We are to have a constant awareness of the conflict; and more than that, we are to lay hold of every opportunity of engaging in prevailing prayer.

Passionate prayer.

Prevailing prayer is perceptive and persevering but it is also to be passionate.

We need passion, fervor and zeal on behalf of our fellow person.

Prevailing prayer is kindled by fire from the altar of the Lord.

We must feel strongly about our ministry of prayer.

We must desire with all our heart the object for which we pray.

I have been impressed how many times we find. "With all my heart" in the Psalms.

I guess God wants all, maybe that is single-mindedness.

We are called to be like a child.

A child asks with great feeling and fervor.

As God's children, if we desire God's power and victory to be manifested on our behalf, we will pray passionately and enthusiastically.

Let us deal then with our desires.

Out of the abundance of our hearts we pray.

Particular prayer.

Prevailing prayer is perceptive, persevering, and passionate.

Prayer also needs to be particular, specific.

Praying for all the saints.

We are all part of the family of God, his body of believers.

We have a responsibility for members of that body.

All saints, all places, all circumstances.

Every Christian needs a prayer list that lists specific people for whom we are praying.

We should know the needs of these people and we should bring their needs to the Lord daily.

Prayer is to be both general and specific.

Prevailing prayer must concentrate on the needs of those who are preaching and spreading the gospel throughout the world.

Let us engage in prayer that is perceptive, persevering, passionate, and particular.

Put on the gospel armor, each piece put on with prayer.

Believe, trust and act!