

Jude 1:20 NLT - 20 But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit,

Philippians 1:12 NLT - 12 And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News.

As is stated in Jude 1:20, we wield the power of the Holy Spirit when we pray for one another. The circumstances of his imprisonment did not deter Paul. God's purpose for Paul was enormous as was the resistance he faced. But the supremacy of prayer empowered by the Holy Spirit exceeds any other power by far.

Before you leave, pray that each member of your group would receive what they need from God to accomplish His purpose for their lives.

WRAP-UP

After telling the Ephesians to “armor up” and be holy, Paul says to pray. As regular as a heartbeat and as constant as our breath, prayer connects us to God through His Spirit. Prayer is not an optional or occasional task, it is our lifeline to God. Paul says to pray always, on every occasion, persistently for all believers everywhere. Even when we have no words to pray, the Spirit helps us pray so that we are aligned with God's purposes. And as we engage in the enormous spiritual battle to accomplish God's great purposes we need to engage the power of the Spirit in our prayers.

MEMORY VERSE.

Ephesians 6:10-12 NLT - 10 A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life _____

Challenge.- Continue to memorize Ephesians 6:10-12

“Relentless Prayer”

Every Day Holy- #3

INTRODUCTION

When you think of prayer what comes to mind- Something formal like the Lord's Prayer? -Something scheduled like a blessing before meals? Something desperate like intercession for someone who is sick, or perhaps confession of your sins? While all of these are prayers, Paul writes to the Ephesians about prayer with a very different expectation. If we follow Jesus, then prayer is our constant communication with God. If prayer to you means bow your head, close your eyes, and fold your hands, that makes praying at all times pretty challenging? But what if we viewed prayer like Paul? How would that change us, and how would it prepare for everyday battles?

Ice Breaker

What was the last occasion or type of prayer you prayed?

Key Passage

Ephesians 6:18-20 NLT - 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. 19 And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. 20 I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God's ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Never Stop Praying

As we began this sermon series Pastor David reminded us to “armor up” using the Spiritual armor of Ephesians 6:13-17. Read our key passage Ephesians 6:18-20. This is where Paul refers to prayer. It

doesn't identify prayer as a piece of armor, but prayer does keep us prepared for battle.

In verse 18 what ways do you see Paul present prayer as pervasive, inclusive, and relentless?

Paul's depiction of prayer is far from optional or occasional, it is constant. If you have any doubt about that just look at 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 NLT - 17 Never stop praying. 18 Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

If our prayers have dwindled to reciting a list of needs, then it would be impossible to never stop praying. So, praying "at all times" must refer to more than petitioning God for his help.

Ephesians 6:18 says pray on every occasion. List as many occasions or types of prayers as you can think of.

The list you produced should run the spectrum of our situations and emotions from celebratory to lament, from thanksgiving to confession. There is no situation, emotion or feeling we cannot include in our prayers. But we need to remind ourselves that God wants to be involved in every moment of everyone's lives. So, Paul tells us to be persistent and alert and pray, not only for ourselves, but for all believers.

1 Timothy 2:1 NLT - 1 I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them.

This would be a good time to pause to pray for other individuals, groups, or countries. Intercede for them and give thanks for them.

2. In the Spirit

In last week's sermon we considered what it meant to be holy. It means we are set apart from ungodly things for the purposes of God. We are called to be holy because God is holy, and we are being shaped into His holy image. One way that shaping takes place is when we

depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance in our everyday lives, including our prayer lives.

Galatians 5:16 NLT - 16 So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves.

Romans 8:26-27 NLT - 26 And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. 27 And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

When Paul tells the Ephesians to "pray in the Spirit" he is encouraging them to remain connected to God's Spirit and be in step with God's purpose as they pray. In 1 Corinthians chapter 14 Paul refers to prayer in the Spirit involving an "unknown language", and in Romans 8:26 the Spirit "groans" without words on our behalf. No matter the method, the end goal is the same; ultimately, we want to align our prayers with God's purposes and the Holy Spirit will guide us in doing just that.

When you find that you just don't have the words to pray, what do you do? Here are some things we know we can pray for in agreement with God in: bringing the Kingdom of God to Earth, revealing the Gospel or Good News of Jesus, Unity in the Body of believers. What are some other things you can always confidently pray for?

3. An Enormous Battle, Purpose, and Power

Ephesians 6:19-20 NLT -19 And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike

Paul wanted his words to be in step with the Spirit and so he asked the Ephesians to pray for him to receive the right words to declare the Gospel.

Even though he was in chains, Paul didn't ask the Ephesians to pray for his release, he prayed to be given the words to align with God's purpose for his life. What kind of resistance do you think Paul was facing from Jews and Gentiles as he pursued that purpose?