



Prayer as part of Spiritual Warfare: A Consideration of Ephesians 6:10-20

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Introductory Matters: the Book of Ephesians is for You, Me, Us

- The goal of the church is true body life – to be like Christ together.
- Ephesians was written to urge believers on the basis of their union or position in Christ to live life worthy of God’s calling.
- Paul helps us understand who we are in Christ (Ephesians 1-3) and how we should live like a believer in Christ (Ephesians 4-6).
- Since Ephesians 4:1, Paul has systematically reminded us of the daily necessity to live like a believer in Christ (4:11-6:9).
- In this section, Paul concludes his instruction to us as believers. This discussion of spiritual warfare is highly emphatic both in tone and position in Paul’s exhortation to us. We want to listen well!

Believers, Stand (6:10-20):

1. Be strong (v. 10)

- Be strengthened: this is a strength we receive.
- Our strength comes from Jesus Christ and our position in Christ.

2. Put on the whole armor of God (vv. 11-12)

- The complete armor of God indicates the full armor God provides.
- What is the goal of putting on the armor? (v. 11b)
So that we may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil



- Why do believers need God’s armor? (v. 12)
Because of the nature of the battle being waged

3. For this reason, take up the whole armor of God (v. 13)

- This is essential business for the believer.
- So that you are strengthened to withstand on the evil day
- And having prepared everything, stand!

4. Stand! (vv. 14-17)

- We have been exhorted to put on the armor and be prepared.
Now, the exhortation to do what we’ve been told to do: stand.
 - This relates to defense, not offense.
 - Hold the ground; do not retreat.
 - We stand using the armor God provides.

The Pieces of Armor which enable us to stand:

- Truth - having strapped truth around your waist (v. 14)
- Righteousness - having put on the breastplate of righteousness (v. 14)
- The Gospel of Peace - having put on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace (v. 15)
- Faith - having taken up the shield of faith (v. 16)
- Salvation - take the helmet of salvation... (v. 17)
- The Word of God - ...and the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (v. 17)



5. Prayer: A life of dependence on God (vv. 18-20)

- Prayer is emphasized as a key part of your spiritual warfare.

- Pray as a means of strength for the battle (v. 18).
 - Prayer understood:
 - Defined: the means by which believers depend on the Lord and request from him empowerment for themselves and others in the body of Christ.
 - Praying: general word for prayer of any variety
 - Supplication: specific requests before God

 - Pray at all times.
 - Pray at every opportunity
 - This is in recognition of the greater spiritual battle

 - In the Spirit
 - We walk in the Spirit; therefore, we are to pray in the Spirit.
 - The Spirit empowers us to pray.
 - The Spirit helps us to pray.

- Stay alert, so you can continually pray (v. 18).
 - Be aware of the world around you (and inside you!)
 - “Watch” implies a constant awareness.
 - Why do you watch? So you can pray!
 - This should be at all times, the same as prayer.

 - The discipline of prayer: perseverance and petition
 - This is a relentless pursuit.
 - We bring our concerns to God in the Spirit.



- Prayer’s focus: for all the saints
 - This is bigger than just you.
 - There is a corporate focus that we can’t miss!
 - The corporate focus is typical to the book of Ephesians.

- **Paul’s example request (vv. 19-20)**
 - Paul requests for boldness two times.
 - Paul takes the issue of spiritual warfare seriously.
 - The focus is primarily on the inner man.
 - The focus is ambassadorial.
 - The focus is the Gospel.

Special Notes to Counselors, Counselees, and the Counseling Process

1. We cannot afford to be less than diligent! This is for real.
 - Your enemy: the devil and demons
 - Your context: the present evil age
 - Your flesh: your desires, your eyes, your pride

2. What is God’s goal?
 - God not only makes it possible for believers to stand, but expects us to stand by depending upon the divine resources He provides.
 - God does not want us to get knocked down or severely wounded.
The devil and his minions desire to rob from you the joy of the blessings that you have received in Christ.
 - This all relates to our position in Christ!
 - We are responsible to use what God has provided.



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3. We are totally dependent upon God’s power. God’s power is truly available always to His people.
 - We can’t depend upon our own fortitude and effort.
 - The spiritual power comes to you through relationship and not through techniques.
 - God’s armor
 - Christ’s strength
 - The Spirit’s prayer and strengthening

4. There is no greater way to communicate our dependency upon Christ than through prayer. We are desperately dependent.

5. Balance is the key to your perspective on growth. Many believers vacillate between total self-effort and passive dependence.

6. The sin of self-sufficiency is an attitude of independence from God. The discipline of prayer helps keep this attitude in check as it communicates our dependence upon Christ’s power.

7. Furthermore, self-sufficiency minimizes the fact that we are part of the body of Christ and must depend upon each other.

8. Pray - for yourself and those around you!
 - Your focus: the inner man
 - Your frequency: all the time
 - Your requests:
 - For awareness of the power of Christ



- For spiritual discernment to see one’s heart and pressure
- For places of possible temptation
(fear, doubt, discouragement, hopelessness, a hard heart toward God, lack of joy)
- For awareness of the armor of God
(consider the separate pieces specific to this person in this situation)
- For discernment related to our culture and environment
(The devil schemes through deception.)

9. Suggestions for the discipline or practice of prayer:

- Establish a regular time of prayer.
- Recognize that all of life can include prayer.
- Keep a prayer list / journal.
- Make a “Things For Which I Am Thankful” List.
- Memorize key passages and / or write out cards to read during your prayer time.
- Write out a prayer. Then, pay special attention to the focus of your prayer.
- Pay attention to those items / places / friends in your life where praying becomes more difficult or less desirous.
- Use prayer as an opportunity to serve others – not a focus on self but on God and others.
- Don’t forget, prayer is a conversation with God. Enjoy talking!