

PARANORMAL

Spiritual Warfare

RECALL

Icebreaker:

What is the main learning God has given you through this sermon series? How will this change your faith walk moving forward?

Discuss Your Experience:

On Sunday we focused our attention on the Armor of God. Can you name all of the pieces of God's Armor? Is it possible to only put on part of God's Armor? Is the Armor of God intended to be "put on" (*enduo*) only as needed?

Introduction:

We are in a war. Each of us is facing a constant battle in our hearts and minds, the outcome of which has grave consequences. This is the reality of spiritual warfare. Fortunately, we have no reason to fear. God has provided for us His strength in order to resist the forces of evil and stand firm in our faith. God's resources (Armor of God) for us are not stand-alone mechanical devices for spiritual warfare. In order for them to be effective they must be empowered by God through prayer. For this reason Paul concludes his teaching on spiritual warfare with a call to prayer.

REVEAL

Pray For Guidance:

Take a few moments and ask God to help you discern, understand and apply the spiritual truth(s) of this week's lesson.

Ephesians 6:18 (HCSB)

"Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert in this with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints."

REFLECT

Understanding the Context:

Before diving into this week's lesson, take a moment to re-familiarize yourself with the Armor of God.

Ephesians 6:13-17 (HCSB)

Belt of Truth – The Truth of God

Breastplate of Righteousness – The Holiness of God

Shoes of Peace – The Peace of God

Macarthur, John Jr, *Praying At All Times*, www.gty.org/resources.

Shield of Faith – The Promises of God

Helmet of Salvation – The Assurance of God

Sword of the Spirit – The Word of God

- 1) How is each piece of Armor manifested in your life?
- 2) With which piece of the Armor do you feel the least competent?
- 3) How can you gain confidence in utilizing God's Armor?

RECOGNIZE

Know the Truth(s):

Keeping in mind the context of the selected passage, read the Scripture as a group and carefully take note of the truth(s) and/or promises God provides.

In Ephesians 6:18 Paul reminds us that just because, as a Christian, God has provided us with the resources of His Armor we must not simply seek the Lord on an as needed basis. For the Armor to be effective it must be infused with the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. We must put on each piece supported by the power of prayer. Verse 18 outlines four “alls” of prayer.

- 1) “Pray at all times in the Spirit...” We are to pray always. We are to pray without ceasing. We are not bound only to pray at certain times, or in certain situations, but to maintain a consistent communion or conversation with God.
 - a. What are some typical practices, methods, or denominational / religious traditions of prayer that may be limiting our thinking regarding constant prayer?
- 2) “...with every prayer and request,” The NIV translation says, “with all kinds of prayers and requests,” The ESV translation says, “with all prayer and supplication,” Simply stated, Paul is telling us to pray all kinds of prayers. Some may be general, some specific, some prayed in one way, some in another. The key is not to hold back, but bring all of your prayers to God.
 - a. What areas of your life do you most often fail to bring to God in prayer?
- 3) “and stay alert in this with all perseverance...” While we pray for many issues on a daily basis, Paul reminds us that we are in a battle and praying for victory against the enemy for the glory of God. We must be watchful and aware in order to recognize specifically where our prayers are needed. Spiritual warfare is where we must always persevere with prayer.
 - a. Where is the enemy currently at work in your life creating the need for perseverance in prayer?
- 4) “and intercession for all the saints.” Paul’s teaching is that our priority in prayer should not be ourselves, but others. Conceptually, you pray for someone else, someone else prays for you, and all are eventually covered in prayer. In order to strengthen the Church for the battle we must pray for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - a. How does placing priority on praying for others improve the quality of your spiritual life?

RESPOND

Take Action:

You’ve now prayed asking God to Reveal Himself and help you understand the selected passage; you’ve Reflected on the context in which the passage was written; you’ve Recognized God’s timeless truths; and now you must Respond. To help determine your response, as a group, discuss the following questions:

-
- 1) Our lives are filled with so many things it may seem impossible to pray without ceasing. The key is not to think about prayer as a specific process or action, but rather as an ongoing conversation with God. Everything you see and experience in life should be something you share with God in prayer. How should we approach the following situations prayerfully: temptation, evil, joy, labor (work), contagion (evangelism), and spiritual warfare?
 - 2) Regardless of your faith background, your biblical understanding, or your personal actions, why would evaluating the health of your prayer life be the true gauge of your relationship with the Lord? If you grade low in this area what actions must you take to improve your prayer habits?
 - 3) In our society we are inundated with information. We could spend every moment of every day praying for the concerns of our world. Rather than simply trying to pray generally for these issues, God wants us to pray specifically, so that He can answer specifically, putting His power on display. How do we stay alert and determine the spiritual matters that need our specific prayers?
 - 4) Paul prayed tearfully for others night and day. Have you ever prayed for anyone with this type of passion? What would it take for us to eliminate all self-absorption in our lives to such an extent that we prayed with all perseverance for the spiritual battles of others?
 - 5) When we pray “in the Spirit” we are attempting to pray in alignment with God’s will. We are praying in the name of Christ. In what ways can we ensure our prayers are in concert with the Spirit of God?