



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

## Examining the text & our hearts:

**17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the word of God. **18** Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints. **19** Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. **20** For this I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I might be bold enough to speak about it as I should.

### I. Two Views on Prayer Related to God's Armor

#### A) The seventh item of the armor

- “Paul seems to envision prayer as **the seventh and final piece of equipment** (in the Bible seven is a number that symbolizes completeness).” [Peter S. Williamson, *Ephesians*, p. 200]
- “Prayer is as much part of our armor and weaponry as truth, righteousness, faith and salvation.” [Christopher J. H. Wright, *Mission of God's People*, p. 260]

#### B) The ‘means’ to take the armor

- “Prayer is not mentioned as a part of the armor; but we would not be overrating its importance if we say that it is **the atmosphere in which the soldier must live and breathe.**” [William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, p. 1953]
- “Prayer is of vital importance in the mission of God's people...[It] is the **method by which believers...put on the armor of God**, i.e., receive God's empowerment.” [Mark A. Simon, *Living to the Praise of God's Glory*, p. 214]
- “Prayer...is the divinely authorized method that **activates your spiritual armor and makes it effective.**” [Priscilla Shirer, *The Armor of God*, p. 34]

## II. Prayer as the Means to Take the Armor (Eph. 6:17-18)

A) Verse 18 continues the thought of verse 17

- *“The punctuation at the end of verse 17 should be a **comma rather than period.**”* [H. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, p. 855]
- *“Praying’ and ‘watching’ [‘be alert’] at the beginning of the exhortation to pray (Eph. 6:18) depend grammatically on the imperative ‘receive’[or take]...the armor of God: ‘**Receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit...praying in the Spirit...and being alert...**’”* [Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, p.]

B) Salvation is realized through prayer (helmet)

C) How is the word implanted into you? Prayer!

## III. What is Praying in the Spirit? (Eph. 6:18a)

A) Not speaking or praying in tongues

- *“Praying in the Spirit does **not refer to speaking in tongues.**”* [K. Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, p. 344]

B) Being sensitive to the Spirit as you pray

- *Praying in the Spirit “actually refers to the Holy Spirit’s work of **guiding and directing us to pray for specific things...Prayer involves asking God how we should pray and then acting on the promptings and impressions the Spirit places on our mind.**”* (C. Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions*, p. 46).

## IV. Prayer in its Various Forms (Eph. 6:18-20)

A) Communicating with God personally

- *“So **how do I pray?** I listen. I talk. I weep. I am silent. I gaze with reverence. I wonder and adore. I share my needs. I have tea with God. I give thanks and say I’m sorry. I scream. I get angry. I show God all my life, including my very divided heart. I relax. I’m at home. Sometimes I read a poem or tell God a story. Sometimes I dance. Sometimes I get a bit dramatic with God.”* [Macrina Wiederkehr, *A Tree Full of Angels: Seeing the Holy in the Ordinary*, p. 39]
- *“Your prayer only needs to be **authentic and heartfelt.** No specific length. No need for [big] words and poetic prose. You’re not trying to impress anybody. Just **be raw, frank, and real** with God.”* [Priscilla Shirer, *The Armor of God*, p. 36]
- *“To pray is to **touch God and let God touch us.**”* [Macrina Wiederkehr, *A Tree Full of Angels: Seeing the Holy in the Ordinary*, p. 39]

B) Requests or Supplications – Hannah prayed for a son

- Gk. **deesis** – refers to **making known one’s specific needs**, even conveying a sense of an urgent request to meet that need.

- **Deesis** is used in the New Testament of prayer for particular benefits & gives prominence to **one's personal needs**.

C) Intercession – to ask or mediate on behalf of another person, sometimes with persistence – Jesus prayed for those who mocked & crucified him, Abraham prayed for the people of Sodom with much persistence

1. Paul asks them to pray for all the saints

2. Paul asks them to pray for him as he unveils the mystery of the gospel to others – I just want to join God's mission no matter what I am facing

a) For him to have the words to speak

b) For boldness to speak as he should

D) Spiritual warfare

- **“Victory in spiritual warfare is inseparable from prayer.”** [Priscilla Shirer, The Armor of God, p. 13]

## V. Application

A) Make your requests known to God (Phil 4:6-7)

B) Look to join God's mission no matter what you're going through

C) Pray to support others as they go through different situations

D) Pray for the gospel to be proclaimed through you and others

E) Pray for boldness that people would speak as they ought to speak about God

F) Pray for CIT as we transition to our hybrid model of in-person and Livestream