
SERMON NOTES January 22, 2023

Today's notes also available at CCPL.life/Connect

**Ephesians 6:18-20
Empowered by Prayer
Pastor Mike**

I. An accurate _____ of our circumstances

a. We are in a _____

b. A _____ war can only be won with _____

II. The power to _____ the war comes through _____

Prayer is a practical expression of _____

III. Praying with _____ prayer

The Holy Spirit tells us what _____

Prayer isn't _____ *God's* _____,

it's allowing God to _____ *our* _____

IV. The importance of prayer in _____

a. Our confidence in the _____ and the _____

b. Knowing _____ role and _____ role in the process

V. A _____ and _____ challenge

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. After introducing the idea of Spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6, Paul calls us to advance into the battle by praying. The Bible teaches that prayer is the most active and transformative thing we can do, but for most of us it feels like the most passive and insignificant of activities.
 - a. While we may know the 'right' answers about prayer, in practice do you generally *feel* that prayer is active warfare, or a passive activity that makes little difference?
 - b. Why is there so often this gap between what the Bible teaches (and what we claim to know) about prayer and what we feel to be true and what we actually do in practice?
2. In theory, prayer seems as if it should be the simplest and easiest of activities, but in practice, do you find prayer an easy or a hard thing to do?
 - a. How often do you pray? Is there a gap between how often you think you should pray, how often you want to pray, and how often you actually pray? If so, what contributes to that gap?
 - b. What is the longest period that you have ever prayed at one time? When you try to pray for a longer period, at what point do you find that it becomes difficult?
 - c. To what degree is prayer how we fight the spiritual war we face, and to what degree it prayer actually part of the war? How does this help explain why prayer is difficult?
3. Many Christ-followers struggle with a persistent gap between their knowledge about the importance of prayer, their desire to pray, and previous commitments to pray, all which are in contrast to the amount of time they actually spend praying.
 - a. To what degree has this been true in your life?
 - b. It is often said that insanity is doing the same things over and over and expecting different results. If past efforts to increase your prayer life haven't made a difference, what can you try this year as a new strategy to increase your prayer life?
4. After calling us to engage in the spiritual battle through prayer in Ephesians 6, Paul specifically calls us to especially focus our prayers on the challenge of evangelism. Why is prayer so important in sharing our faith with others?
 - a. How does prayer work in evangelism? How does it change us? How does it give us greater courage? How does it open doors?
 - b. Pastor Mike shared how telling unbelieving friends we are praying for them, and asking how we can pray for them can be an effective method of sharing our faith. Do you agree? Have you ever done this with friends/family? Are you willing to try this? Why or why not?
5. If you prayed for unsaved friends regularly, what do you think would be the result?
 - a. If you prayed regularly that God would use you to share the gospel and then looked for opportunities, what do you think would happen?
 - b. Do you believe that God could use you to help lead one person to Christ in the next 2 years? Are you willing to pray for this? Why or why not?
 - c. If we had several hundred people from our church make and keep this type of commitment, what do you think would be the result?
 - d. What is keeping you from doing this? How can you make it happen in your life, and encourage it in our church's life?