

**PRAYING  
THROUGH  
GRACE**



**EPHESIANS  
6:18-20**

## Conflicting Experiences

- In **Matthew 17** we have two events happening between the disciples at the same time
  - Jesus had taken Peter, James, and John up on the Mount of Transfiguration
  - They saw Jesus' true glory
  - They saw Jesus talking to Moses and Elijah
  - They heard the Father's voice speaking of His Son

## Conflicting Experiences

- The other nine were down in the valley trying to heal a demon filled boy, crowd aggression, and being unable to heal him
  - What do you think was going through their minds during this?

## Conflicting Experiences

- **Matthew 17:14-15 NIV**, 14 When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. 16 I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

## Conflicting Experiences

- **Matthew 17:17-18 NIV**, 17 “You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” 18 Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.
  - **MSG**, “Jesus said, “What a generation! No sense of God! No focus to your lives! How many times do I have to go over these things?”

## Conflicting Experiences

- **Matthew 17:19-20 NIV**, 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” 20 He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

## Conflicting Experiences

- Where was their faith lacking?
  - In their ability to heal this boy, No
  - In their understanding of what Jesus would have done, No
- It was their lack of faith in the provision Jesus has already given them
- Their lack of faith affected their ability to appropriate (*distribute, allocate*) God's power to do God's work

## Conflicting Experiences

- Biblical faith assumes not only a belief in God's power, but also a heart after God's own heart, which desire and ask for the things of God – not personal “wants.”
- **James 5:16b NIV**, “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”
  - **MSG**, “The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.”

## Conflicting Experiences

- The disciples needed to pray through and believe through the provision (*authority*) Jesus had already given them
- We also must pray through and believe through the provisions God has already given every born-again child of God today
- If not, there will be little if any faith that pushes God's provisions into actions

## Scripture

**Ephesians 6:18-20 NIV**, “18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”

## **Just look at the provisions already appropriated to us**

- Belt of Truth
- Breastplate of Righteousness
- Boots of Peace
- Shield of Faith
- Helmet of Salvation
- Sword of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God

## **Just look at the provisions already appropriated to us**

- What ties these all together so that we can do battle in God's strength, doing God's work and not trying to use our own?
  - Prayer

## You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us

- The gospel of Mark adds a little more detail to the event with the disciples unable to cast out the demon
- **Mark 9:20-24 NIV**, “20 So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. 21 Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?” “From childhood,” he answered.

## You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us

- The gospel of Mark adds a little more detail to the event with the disciples unable to cast out the demon
- **Mark 9:20-24 NIV**, 22 “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” 23 ““If you can’?”” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.” 24 Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

## **You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us**

- The only thing this father had to hold onto was the hearing of miracles Jesus had done in other areas
  - “Take pity on us.”
  - “If you can.”
  - Is this our mindset when we approach God in prayer?

## **You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us**

- “Everything is possible for one who believes” – believes what?
  - That Jesus will obey on command? No
  - That if my faith was just large enough, I would have the power? No
  - A charismatic teacher telling us what we want to hear? No
  - The disciples of Jesus? No

## **You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us**

- “Everything is possible for one who believes” – believes what?
  - The person of Jesus Christ and His authority and wisdom
- We are here, our lives are to be lived entirely for the glory of God and only God knows what will bring the greatest glory

## **You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us**

- “If God is not glorified, then salvation cannot be seen clearly by those wandering in the darkness of unforgiven sin
- We must pray through faith in the provisions God has given us
  - Salvation, Righteousness, Peace, Scripture

## You must pray through or have faith in the grace God has already given us

- Jesus is our example in the Garden of Gethsemane
- **Matthew 26:38-39 NIV**, “38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” 39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

## **Paul tells us to allow the Holy Spirit to govern (*control, command*) our prayers**

- “And pray in the Spirit”
  - The word “And” means a continuation of thought from above
  - It means to pray by the power of the Holy Spirit, according to His abilities, not ours, and in accordance with His will, not ours

## **Paul tells us to allow the Holy Spirit to govern (*control, command*) our prayers**

- The purpose of the Armor of God is not to allow me to focus on me, but on the one who provided it – Jesus Christ
  - Can you imagine praying without knowing we are saved, declared righteous, at peace with God...
  - “I can come before you God only because of what Jesus has provided and the Holy Spirit delivered.”

## **Paul tells us to allow the Holy Spirit to govern (*control, command*) our prayers**

- The purpose of the Armor of God is not to allow us to focus on us, but on the one who provided it – Jesus Christ
  - “I come before you through faith in that and that alone.”
  - “I pray that You lead me to the desires in God’s heart and that I will have strength and courage to accept and allow His desires without complaint.”

## **Paul tells us to allow the Holy Spirit to govern (*control, command*) our prayers**

- The purpose of the Armor of God is not to allow us to focus on us, but on the one who provided it – Jesus Christ
  - “When I don’t know your desires, I will humbly lift up mine and pray you make my desires yours.”
  - God honors prayers like this with wisdom, strength, and power

## Paul tells us to allow the Holy Spirit to govern (*control, command*) our prayers

- Remember **James 5:16b NIV**, “The (*godly*) prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”
  - **MSG**, “The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.”

## Paul tells us as Christians to *“live a life of prayer”*

- **Vs. 18**, “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.”
- Prayer should be close to our minds, hearts, and lips throughout the day because God is close
- Prayers of praise for who God is and who you are
- Prayers of peace as your day goes crazy
- Prayers of strength, wisdom, God’s intercession
- Prayers for faith to stand in the unknown

## Paul tells us as Christians to *“live a life of prayer”*

- **1st Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV**, “16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
  - **MSG**, “16-18 Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.”

## Paul tells us as Christians to *“live a life of prayer”*

- **Rejoice Always**

- Paul meant this literally, Christian joy is not bound by circumstances or hindered by difficulties
- This is a deliberate choice to focus on the grace and goodness of God

## Paul tells us as Christians to *“live a life of prayer”*

- **Pray continually**

- This is an attitude of prayer and reverence before God
- The Christian’s life of righteousness and his approach to relationships and responsibilities should be such that he maintains a constant attitude of being in God’s presence
- This will result in praying often about many things

## Paul tells us as Christians to “*live a life of prayer*”

- **Give thanks in all circumstances**
  - This command trusts in the sovereignty of Christ
  - It recognizes God’s eminence (*above others*) in all events
  - This is a learned trait and does not come naturally
  - It is only possible with God’s grace

## Paul tells us as Christians to *“live a life of prayer”*

- We agree with God when He promises us in **Romans 8:28 NIV**, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

## Paul reminds us to be spiritually alert and remember we are part of an army of believers going through similar struggles

- **Vs. 18b-19a**, “With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. 19 Pray also for me”
  - Satan loves to attack your confidence in God
  - He will attack you in the grace areas of your life
  - Not usually in direct, overt, in-your-face attack, but more hidden

## **Paul reminds us to be spiritually alert and remember we are part of an army of believers going through similar struggles**

- We must be alert to this and identify it correctly to pray correctly
- Always keep praying for others in this battle with you
- Paul always encourages us to get outside of me and my circumstances
- Even Paul earnestly desired the prayers of “*common, ordinary*” believers.

## The Last Prayer of John Knox

- While very ill, John Knox, the founder of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, called to his wife and said, “Read me that Scripture where I first cast my anchor.” After he listened to the beautiful prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17, he seemed to forget his weakness. He began to pray, interceding earnestly for his fellow men.

## The Last Prayer of John Knox

- He prayed for the ungodly who had rejected the gospel. He pleaded in behalf of people who had been recently converted. And he requested protection for the Lord's servants, many of whom were facing persecution. As Knox prayed, his spirit went home to be with the Lord. The man of whom Queen Mary had said, "I fear his prayers more than I do the armies of my enemies," ministered through prayer until the moment of his death.

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