

Warfare Prayer – Part 1

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Sunday, Aug. 28, 2022

2 Corinthians 10:3-4 “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.”

Some of you need to recognize the real enemy and come back to the right weapons!

See Ephesians 6:10-20

I. Do You Know that You’re in a War?

The Bible calls us as Christians to be conscious of and focused on a war that is far more sinister, deceptive, and deadly than any cultural, political or economic battle being fought around us today.

We need to refocus on the real battle and recognize one of our greatest weapons – prayer!

“We simply must seek for ourselves and for our people a wartime mentality. Otherwise, the biblical teaching about the urgency of prayer, and the vigilance of prayer, and the watching in prayer and the perseverance of prayer, and the danger of abandoning prayer will make no sense and find no resonance in our hearts. Until we feel the desperation of a bombing raid, or the thrill of a new strategic offensive for the gospel, we will not pray in the spirit of Jesus. The crying need of the hour is to put the churches on a wartime footing.”

~ John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad!*

Ephesians 6:11 “...that you may be able to **stand** against the schemes of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:13 “...take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand** firm.”

Ephesians 6:14 “**Stand** therefore, having girded your waist with truth...”

In verse 18, we see that Paul has prayer wrapped around this whole effort to stand. We’re to pray “at all times” and “with all perseverance.”

II. Do You Know That’s What Prayer is For?

“We cannot know what prayer is for until we know that life is war...Our weakness in prayer is owing largely to our neglect of this truth. Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief. It is not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comforts in the den. God has given us prayer as a wartime walkie-talkie so that we can call headquarters for everything we need as the kingdom of Christ advances in the world. Prayer gives us the significance of front-line forces, and gives God the glory of a limitless Provider.”

~ John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad!*

Some of you are so frustrated with prayer and you say, “Oh, it doesn’t work!” It doesn’t work when you don’t use it in the right way.

Most people only get excited about prayer when someone tells them it’s a tool they can use to get whatever they want for themselves.

III. So Why Get Serious about Prayer?

A. Some Things Only Come about through Prayer

Mark 9:28-29 “And when He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him privately, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’ ²⁹ And He said to them, ‘This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.’”

B. We’re Commanded to Pray!

Colossians 4:2, 12 “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving... ¹² Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”

Earnestly, vigilant, laboring fervently. Does that characterize the way you pray?

“Laboring fervently” is the Greek word “agonizomai,” from where we get our English word “agony” and “gymnasium.”

C. Prayer Shows You Haven’t Forgotten Who Really Has the Power

2 Chronicles 20:12 “O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”

~ King Jehoshaphat, when a huge combined army of Moabites and Ammonites were coming against him

[On praying for salvation for five of his friends] “I prayed every day without a single intermission, whether sick or in health, on the land, on the sea, and whatever the pressure of my engagements might be. 18 months elapsed before the first of the five was converted. I thanked God and prayed on for the others. 5 years elapsed, and then the second was converted. I thanked God for the second, and prayed on for the other three. Day by day, I continued to pray for them, and 6 years passed before the third was converted. I thanked God for the three, and went on praying for the other two. These two remained unconverted.”

[36 years later, those two friends were still not saved] “But I hope in God, I pray on, and I look for the answer.”

~ George Mueller

D. Prayer Shows You Know Where the Battle Begins

Your flesh and God’s Spirit are at War with Each Other.

Galatians 5:16-17 “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.”

Romans 7:18 “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.”

So, you better be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18-21 “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

You either go to war on your flesh or your flesh will go to war on everyone around you.

James 4:1-3 “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ²You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”

E. Prayer Cuts through the Fog and Gives You Discernment and Insight

James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

Proverbs 2:6-7 “For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; ⁷ He stores up sound wisdom for the upright...”

F. Prayer Breaks Through Strongholds

Never forget that repentance is a **gift** from God!

2 Timothy 2:24-26 “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, ²⁵ in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, ²⁶ and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”

Never forget that people in their own strength do not even have the **will** to change and please God!

Psalms 119:36 “Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness.”

2 Timothy 4:7 “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”