

Title: "The Importance of Prayer"

Scripture: Ephesians 6:18-19

Speaker: Josh Maness

Event: Sunday Evening Service

Date: November 30, 2014

Ephesians 6:18-19 *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,"*

"Most of our failures are prayer failures." –John R. Rice.

We can go through the Bible and look at the lives of men and women in it. We can see how prayer had a tremendous impact on their lives. Elijah's life can be summed up in two words: he prayed. Elijah's whole life was consumed in prayer. Can the same be said about us? Do others know that we pray? More importantly, does *God* know that you pray?

Three Things to See in These Two Verses:

- 1. Pray Always:** Earlier in chapter 6 "The Armor of God" is mentioned. Prayer is mentioned last. In the Scofield edition Bible it has headings over certain sections of scripture. Verse 10 begins the passage about the armor of God. Over verse 10 it says "The Warrior's Power". Verse 11 has a heading of "The Warrior's Armor". Verses 12-17 are titled "The Warrior's Foes." Verses 18-24 are summed up with "The Warrior's Resource". Many think of the weapons as being resources, but God says otherwise. Prayer should be our ultimate resource as Christians. I Thessalonians 5:17 says *"Pray without ceasing."* Why should we always be praying? Because prayer is foundational. It is the basis for all other things in our Christian lives. If we don't pray, we don't have a relationship with God. Relationships are based on the amount of communication involved. Salvation gives us a relationship with God. How often do we spend during our day talking to God? If you were to evaluate your communication with God could you put it on the same level as the communication you have with your spouse? Your friends? Compared to your other relationships in life, where does your relationship with God lie? The Bible calls for a lifestyle of prayer. Why have we heard that overseas in Europe and Asia that revivals are going on, yet no revivals are going on in America? We don't want it bad enough. We don't pray like we want one. When is the last time that we really wept for God to move us and move our nation? Prayer is the reason that the sea divided. Prayer is reason that fire came down from Heaven. Prayer is the reason that we are saved. We need prayer ALL of the time.
- 2. Pray in the Spirit:** A recent survey was done that said that 90% of all Americans pray. Romans 8:26-27 says *"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."* What these verses say is that prayers that occur in the Spirit can be heard and answered. When we pray to God what our words say don't mean much. It's what our heart says. There has to be that seed that is planted inside of us. That's why a sinner's prayers don't get answered (until they pray the prayer of salvation). That seed of the Spirit isn't in us until we accept Christ as our Savior. We need that Savior in order for our prayers to mean anything. This is the indwelling of the Spirit. There's also an infilling of the Spirit. The infilling allows the Spirit of God to completely fill your life. Christians are to live a life under the influence of God – not anything else or anyone else. Galatians 5:18 says *"And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."* We are to make room for the Spirit in our lives and allow him to move.
- 3. Pray for the Saints:** Our church has enough money to pay the bills, but money doesn't keep the church going. Prayers keep the church going. Churches don't split because they ran out of money. Large churches with tons of excess money in the bank have went under. This doesn't happen because they ran out of money. It's because

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people stopped praying for the church and the people stop praying for one another. Do you pray for those around you in the church? Do you pray for the pastors/preachers/teachers/deacons? In verse 19 Paul says "and for me, that utterance may be given unto me". Paul asked people to pray for him. He wanted to be sure that others were praying for him as he tried to spread the Gospel. Knowing that a saint is there praying for you means more than anything else we could do for one another. We are to bear one another's burdens; pray for each other; encourage one another. Satan would love nothing more than to keep us from praying for those who have to get up and speak in churches each week. If we fail to pray for those who speak and teach, churches begin to fall apart. That's Satan's goal – to see the church fail. Problems in our churches won't be handled any other way other than prayer.