

In 6:10-13, Paul gave us the **explanation for the fight**: we must be strong in the Lord because we are engaged in a spiritual battle

In 6:14-17, Paul told us the **equipment for the fight**: the full armor of God, which enables us to stand firm against this powerful enemy.

Now (6:18-20), Paul describes the **effecting of the fight**, that is, *how to fight the enemy, namely,*

*With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

**Ephesians 6:18 - 20**

**We fight for God against the enemy through prayer.**

I confess that prayer is one of the most difficult topics for me to preach about because it is a difficult subject for me to understand and practice.

On the one hand, I know that the only reason God has enabled me to persevere as a pastor for almost 25 years now is His grace that has come to me through the prayers of His people and through my own desperate cries to Him for help.

Yet on the other hand, the longer I am a Christian, the more acutely I am aware of my own shortcomings in prayer.

But I honestly find prayer to be increasingly difficult and somewhat frustrating. I seem to receive more negative answers to my prayers than positive ones.

Paul uses the word *all* four times in verse 18. In addition, he tells us that we are to pray “in the Spirit.” These five points will be our outline.

The final *all* is that we should pray “for all the saints.” Verses 19-20 specifically apply this, as Paul asks for prayer for himself, that he would be bold and faithful in proclaiming the gospel.

## **1. Fight for God by praying with all kinds of prayer.**

Verse 18 is strictly speaking not a command,

So the idea is, “Stand firm by praying and by staying alert.”

The Lord’s Prayer gives us a helpful outline of different kinds of prayer.

“*Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name*”  
points us toward worship as we pray for God’s glory.

“*Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*”  
points to prayer for missions, evangelism, and discipleship.

“*Give us this day our daily bread*”  
is prayer for our personal needs.

“*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*”  
is confession of sins and prayer for our relationships

“*Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil*”  
is prayer for holiness, both for others and for ourselves.

Paul’s point is that we fight for God against the enemy as we use all types of prayer.

## **2. Fight for God by praying at all times.**

You may be thinking, “Come on, Paul, be realistic! I have to make a living! I have to go to school! How can I pray *at all times*?”

The phrase is literally, “at every opportunity.”

It’s the same idea as 1 Thessalonians 5:17, “*Pray without ceasing.*”

The Greek word translated *without ceasing* was used of a hacking cough and of repeated military assaults. Someone with a hacking cough does not cough every second, but rather he coughs repeatedly and often. He never goes very long without coughing. In the case of repeated military assaults, the army makes an assault then regroups and attacks again and again until it conquers the city. In the same way, we should pray often and repeatedly until we gain the thing for which we are praying.

### **3. Fight for God by praying in the Spirit.**

What does it mean to “pray in the Spirit” (see also, [Jude 20](#))? First, we need to clarify what it does *not* mean:

- A.** Praying in the Spirit does not refer to praying in tongues or to praying emotionally.
- B.** Praying in the Spirit is to pray in dependence on the Spirit, in accordance with God’s Word.

Three comments on praying in the Spirit:

- (1)** I cannot pray in the Spirit if I have unconfessed sin in my life.
- (2)** Praying in the Spirit is to pray according to God’s will as revealed in His Word.
- (3)** Praying in the Spirit is to pray in dependence on the Spirit, under His direction and power.

So, fight for God by praying with all kinds of prayer, at all times, and in the Spirit.

### **4. Fight for God by praying alertly with all perseverance.**

- A.** Pray alertly!

This word, *be alert*, ties in with the military analogy. You’re a sentry on duty. You must watch for any signs of infiltration by the enemy and go immediately to prayer.

- B.** Pray perseveringly.

The verb form of this Greek word translated *perseverance* is often linked with prayer. It means to devote yourself constantly to it. You don’t give up when you don’t see immediate results. You wait on the Lord.

So, we fight for God by praying with all kinds of prayer, at all times, in the Spirit, and by praying alertly with perseverance. Lastly,

## **5. Fight for God by praying for all the saints.**

**A.** Pray for all the saints because they are your fellow soldiers.

If you're on the battlefield and your fellow soldiers get shot, you're in big trouble! The point is, we're not Christians in isolation, but in fellowship with the entire church.

**B.** Pray especially for those on the front lines of ministry.

Paul asks for prayer for himself, that he will "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel".

**C.** Pray for yourself, that you would be bold and clear in your witness for Christ.

So make Paul's passion your passion, to pray that you will be used to proclaim the gospel to the lost with clarity and boldness.

## **Conclusion**

"Ephesians begins by lifting us up to the heavenlies, and ends by pulling us down to our knees."

Remember, the Christian life is not about making yourself happy and comfortable.

It's a battle with the unseen forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. To fight for God against this evil enemy, we must be people of prayer! We will only advance safely on our knees!