

Watch and Pray

(Ephesians 6:18)

Introduction

Ask: When a spaceship leaves the launch pad, do the astronauts stop talking to the people that work at ground control? Of course not!

Even though the astronauts have been specially trained and wear a special suit of protection, like a soldier, it is vital that they stay in contact with mission control throughout the entire mission. If something goes wrong, the astronauts must follow the commands they get from their flight director at mission control.

The astronauts and the people that work in mission control back on earth use radios to work together as a team. If communications break down, everyone gets very nervous.

Today we're going to learn how very important it is for us to stay in communication with our Commander in Chief. Does anybody know Who I'm talking about? (God!)

Opening Prayer

Lord, it's a wonderful thing that we can come right into Your throne room and talk to You at any time. Even though You are the King of the universe, You always have time for us. It's such a shame that we don't always take time for You, O Lord. This morning, help us discover how critical it is for us to not only *talk* to You, but to *listen* to You as well. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation.
(Mark 14:38a NLT)*

*"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.
(Ephesians 6:18 NLT)*

Lesson

Let's begin by reading Ephesians 6:10-17

The past few weeks we've been studying the pieces of a Roman soldier's armor and how they relate to our spiritual walk with Jesus.

Let's do some review. Let's talk about the pieces of the soldier's armor that he can put on.

Verse	Piece of Armor	How You Put It On
14	Belt of Truth	By knowing The Truth (Jesus) and believing everything He says, the Word of God.
14	Breastplate of Righteousness	By confessing your sins and asking God to forgive you. He declared you righteous the moment you put your faith in what Jesus did on the cross.
15	Gospel of Peace Shoes	By receiving God's forgiveness, you made peace with God. When we have the peace that comes from knowing we are forgiven of our sins, we are ready, or "fully prepared" to tell how they can also have peace with God.
16	Shield of Faith	By believing and trusting in God's promises.
17a	Helmet of Salvation	By asking God to be your Lord and savior. Nothing can take your salvation away from you.

Verse	Piece of Armor	How You Put It On
Offensive Weapons		
17	Sword of the Spirit	By knowing the Word of God and allowing the Spirit to use it in our lives to extinguish the lies of the enemy.

First, we learned that **Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Faith,** and **Salvation** are our “defensive” weapons that protect us from the fiery darts of the enemy.

Then, last week we learned that the **Word of God** is an “offensive” weapon we can use to attack the enemy. With our sword of the spirit, we can cut through the lies of the enemy and get to the truth.

The Christian soldier, dressed and ready for battle in his spiritual armor, has a Commander who gives us commands we must follow. So, we must give him one more offensive weapon.

Ephesians 6:18

“...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

Prayer is something that should come naturally to us. Prayer is what gives power to the armor of God as we put it on and use it.

A good soldier is always in touch with his commander. He doesn't act on his own. As good soldiers in God's army, you and I need to be in constant communication with our Commander so we can ask for His direction and follow His orders.

We are soldiers in God's army. God has given us everything we need to be victorious. But we must put on each piece of our armor every day so that we are not caught with a weak place exposed for Satan to

wound us. Then, if you watch and pray, you will be so closely connected to the power of God that you will never lose your strength.

Mark 14:38a (Today's Verse)

Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation.

Let's talk about the what, why, when, how, where, and who of prayer.

What is Prayer

Prayer is simply talking to God. But it's a two-way conversation.

If you and your best friend never talked to each other, you would not have a very good friendship, would you? Don't forget that a very important part of conversation is when you listen to your friend speak.

God wants you to come to Him and tell Him everything that's on your heart, but God also wants to speak to you. He wants to tell you how to avoid danger, just like a flight director wants to help the astronauts avoid trouble on their mission into space. So, you need to learn how to hear his voice.

Why We Pray

No battle is ever won by a single soldier fighting alone. The thing that makes an army powerful is that all soldiers work together. They fight as a unit, each following the commands they are given by the commanding officer. If the commander shouts, "Attention!" all the soldiers stop marching and stand straight and tall. If he says, "March!" all the soldiers march in step.

When to Pray

Verse 18 tells us to pray “at all times.”

Prayer is to be a constant part of our daily lives. We are to never stop praying (1 Thes 5:17).

We should stay in close communication with our Commander God so He can relay important information to us at any moment.

How to Pray

In the Spirit

Verse 18 tells us to “*pray in the Spirit.*”

Ask the Holy Spirit what He wants you to pray for, then pray for the things He puts on your heart.

Romans 8:26

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

The Holy Spirit will give you the words to pray.

Not only does the Holy Spirit pray for you, He also gives your prayers power.

James 5:16

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

Stay Alert

Verse 18 tells us that we need to “*stay alert*” as we pray.

An army commander knows the importance of watching out for dangers so he puts a guard on duty. The guard's job is to watch while others sleep. A guard on duty is alert, ready to meet whatever challenge he faces, and sounds the alarm if there is a real and present danger. He never leaves his post as long as he is on duty. He just keeps on watching and waiting. That's his job. Others depend on him.

In the same way, the Christian soldier must stay alert — watching for an attack by the enemy, so he can avoid the dangers himself and sound an alarm to warn other Christian soldiers about the danger of falling for Satan's lies.

Be Persistent

Verse 18 tells us to “*be persistent in our prayers.*”

Don't give up even if the Lord doesn't answer you right away. Our almighty God is listening.

Pray with purpose. Don't just pray in general terms, like “*Lord, just be with my friend.*” Be specific, “*Lord, today when my friend takes that test he is so worried about, help him remember everything he has been learning.*”

Where to Pray

We can pray anywhere and at any time. You should get in the habit of talking to the Lord all through your day.

- When you first wake up, praise God for another day. Ask Him to make you a blessing to someone this day.
- When you shower or bathe, as you are cleaning the outside of your body, ask God to cleanse the inside, too. Ask Him to give you a good attitude this day and to help you be kind and tenderhearted and forgiving (Ephesians 4:32).
- When you eat, give thanks not only for the food, but for your family and home.

Who to Pray For

Verse 18 also tells us to pray “*for all believers everywhere.*”

Remember you are on guard duty; you are to sound an alarm if you see someone in danger of being attacked by the enemy of our souls.

- When you go to school, pray for your teachers and the other kids in your classroom.
- When you go to bed take time to think over your day, thanking God for leading and guiding and protecting you this day, but also pray for other people that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind as you are still and begin to rest.

Summary

Remember the astronaut cannot have a successful mission into space without the support of all the people in ground control down on earth. They must work together as a team.

In the same way, we need to hook our shields together with other believers so we can help one another as we fight the enemy together.

Closing Prayer

Lord, we don't want to be caught unaware of the sneaky ways of Satan. He's always trying to make us stumble and fall. He wants us to get our eyes off of You and to do things that displease You. I pray that You will help us to always have an eye peeled so that we see when Satan is putting temptations to sin into our thoughts. And, help us to remember to always keep the communication lines open to You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Game Center

Armor Crossword

Let the children work on the *Armor Crossword*, or send it home as a "take home" paper.

Prayer Time

Spend some time praying with your students.

[For more lessons for children, visit
<https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com>]