

Pray in the Spirit!

The Book Of Ephesians

Psalm 4 Ephesians 6:18-20 Luke 11:9-13

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Pray at all times in the Spirit! Eph 6:18

St. Paul wraps up the book of Ephesians by encouraging them (*and us!*) to **pray**. We are to offer our **supplications** to God; we are to pray and **keep alert**; we are to pray with **perseverance**; we are to pray for **other believers**; and Paul even asked the Ephesians to pray for **him** and his work as an **Apostle**!

Pray at all times in the Spirit!

The “Spirit” here is not *your* spirit, but the **Holy Spirit**. Prayer is in the realm of the Holy Spirit; it is part of His work of *sanctification* in your life. The Holy Spirit *prompts* you to pray. In the book of Ephesians, St. Paul has taught us a lot about the **Holy Spirit**.

- † In your Baptism, the Holy Spirit “**sealed**” you; you were marked as one **belonging** to God the Father in Heaven. Eph. 1:13, 4:30
- † The Holy Spirit at work in you now is a “**down payment**” – a **deposit** -- guaranteeing that you will rise from the dead on the Last Day. Eph. 1:14, 4:30
- † The Holy Spirit has been given to you so that you can “**know God better**”. Eph. 1:17
- † The Holy Spirit gives you **unlimited access** to God the Father through faith in Christ the Savior. Eph. 2:18
- † The Holy Spirit has given you faith and brought you into the **One, Holy, Christian, and Apostolic Church** Eph. 2:22
- † The Holy Spirit has revealed to you the “**mystery**” of Christ: that *Gentiles are even included* in God's good gift of salvation in the Lord Jesus! Eph. 3:5

- † The Holy Spirit **lives within you**; He dwells in your inner being since the day of your Baptism so you can know how *wide and long and high and deep* is the love of Christ for you. Eph. 3:16
- † The Holy Spirit works **unity** in the Holy Christian Church; so that you can treasure and hold fast to the bond of **peace** Eph. 4:3
- † Your Christian life is described as being “**filled** with the Holy Spirit” – so much so that you are influenced by Him at all times in what you think, say and do. Eph. 5:18
- † The Holy Spirit is the power behind **the Word of God**, which is described as a powerful sword that defends you from Satan’s attacks. Eph. 6:17

And now, this same Holy Spirit helps you pray!

The Holy Spirit has taught you in the Word of God that **God the Father** invites you to pray and promises that He cares, He will listen, and He will answer. You believe that God the Father has the power to change things and He promises to help.

The Holy Spirit has also given you faith in the **Lord Jesus Christ**, your Great High Priest, who has given you access to the Father through His work as your Mediator. His death on the cross created peace between you and God; His death on the cross has opened the way into the presence of the Father. You believe that your sins are forgiven, and that you can now boldly approach God’s throne of grace to receive mercy and find help in times of trouble.

The **Holy Spirit** moves you and prompts you to pray for yourself -- and for others -- according to their needs. He urges you to pray and look to God for all good things and to turn to Him in times of trouble.

Prayer is one of your godly vocations. It’s a calling you have as an Elect and Baptized disciple. Prayer is an important part of our Christian faith and life. Ephesians teaches us that you have a **Spirit-driven** vocation – a “calling” -- to pray!

Praying in the Spirit
at all times
means that you are
always aware of your
access to God
through Christ and
that you take
advantage of it when
a need arises.

Pray 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

“Pray at all times” does not mean that you have to be on your knees 24/7. **That is not what it means.** Rather it means that you realize that you have a *vocation* to pray; a *calling* to pray; *prayer* it is what Christians do; *prayer* is a regular part of our Christian faith and life.

*Prayer is a dependency on God for all things;
you rely on His grace, mercy and help as you live your life.*

In prayer, you are always aware of your access to God and that you take advantage of it when a need arises. Prayer continues throughout your day; whether your hands are folded and head bowed or not. The Bible teaches us that we have a *calling* to pray; a **Spirit-driven** “*vocation*” to regularly pray for yourself and for others.

One of the interesting things is that St. Paul asked the Ephesians to pray for him as an Apostle; so that whenever he opened his mouth to teach or preach the Gospel that words would be given to him and he would have boldness in his proclamation.

... [pray] also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, so that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. EPHESIANS 6:19-20

A form of this prayer occurs elsewhere in the New Testament, as St. Paul realizes that it is God's power at work even in his weakness. **The lead Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ asks the Ephesians to pray for him!**

**I'd like to ask you to pray the same prayer
for the church workers and teachers here at Trinity.**

Pray for us.

Pray that words will be given to us.

Pray that we may declare it boldly as we ought.

Pray for

- The church staff
- The preschool teachers

- The elementary day school teachers
- The Sunday school teachers, the Bible class teachers, and the Oasis teachers.

We are blessed in the congregation to have so many Bible class opportunities and so many teachers of God's Word. Like St. Paul asked the Ephesians, **so now we ask you:**

Pray for us! Pray that words will be given to us!

Pray that we may declare it boldly as we ought!

One of the things that we learn about prayer in the Book of Ephesians is that when you pray for others, you are actually participating in their mission and ministry.

- † The Ephesians joined Paul in his work as an Apostle when they prayed for **words and boldness** for him.
- † You might not be able to teach in our school, or in a bible class, but when you pray for our teachers, you are participating in their work and joining them in their ministry.
- † You might not see or know the many and varied ministry situations that the church staff are involved with; but when you pray for us, you are right there helping us and joining us in mission and ministry. Your prayers are important!
- † When you pray for our Mexico mission, or the seminary in South Sudan, or Bible translators around the world, or for the LCMS, you are a very real part of the mission team.

When you pray for church workers, it's like you are right there; and you are participating in mission and ministry! *Your prayers are important!*

Pray for us! Pray that words will be given to us!

Pray that we may declare it boldly as we ought!

The Book of Ephesians ends with an emphasis on prayer. The Apostle Paul teaches that the Holy Spirit is at work within you so that you can pray in the Spirit; and you can pray at all times!

Amen!