

October 10th and 11th
DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER

“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

Come along with me on trip to the 1980's. The colors are vivid. The hair brings mullets. The music is all about the big hair bands. The photography was a process. It wasn't until the early 1990s that film could be developed in an hour. The 80s bring us back to a simpler time when photos were developed in a studio. The photographic film is brought into a darkroom that controls what light is brought onto the film. Natural sunlight destroys the undeveloped film, while the controlled light in a darkroom helps develop the film. The photo is exposed to the light to project the image on the paper.

In his “Disciplines of a Godly Man”, Kent Hughes compares this process of photo exposure to prayer. He writes, “The more we expose our lives to the white-hot sun of His righteous life, the more His image will be burned into our character.” Hughes wisely points out two purposes for being men of prayer: developing our Christian character and bending our wills to God's will. Our problem for us as men is that what I've told you isn't new information. Instead, it's something that we've all heard before. Prayer is helpful. Prayer is important. Well, here we stand at a juncture. The problem isn't our knowledge; the problem is our practice. What does God say to us in the Scriptures?

This final call to God's people in Ephesians 6 defies logic. While the enemy attacks, the saint is called to...pray. The last piece of armor is often listed as the only offensive weapon. However, if you look again, you'll see that closely following the sword of the spirit is another offensive weapon. Of course, it's not a piece of armor that must be put on, but it's a weapon, nonetheless. This weapon is the prayers of God's people. While we stand in the strength of the Lord and in the strength of His might, we must pray at all times, being alert with all perseverance to pray for our brothers and sisters in the world. This is God's call to us, men! We want to protect our families. We want to have courageous hearts, but often struggle to know how to pursue integrity before our King. The answer lies in having hearts of prayerful dependence. We all know that it's an essential strategy against the schemes of the enemy; it's time that we deploy this weapon!

Hughes makes a strong statement about prayer: “Candidly, prayer is work, not a sport. It is not something you do if you like it, or devote your spare time to, or do only if you are good at it...we must never wait until we feel like praying—otherwise we may never pray...work and war, war and work—these are the words we must keep before us if we are to become men of prayer.” May I suggest something to you, men? Find someone that you can pray with on a weekly basis. Call each other on the phone and spend a few minutes praying together. We need each other to stoke the fire of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, our souls can be cold and damp. We need to challenge each other to pray. Not for hours; start with minutes. Be intentional with each other. If not now, when? Will you be God's man that commits to being on the front lines as His warrior?

Spend some time asking God to help you be purposeful to pray. Think about someone that you can ask to commit together to pray.

For Further Reading: Matthew 6:1-13

