

CAS – Close Air Support

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome those online!!!
- B. Slide1 TGE: Don't miss our *Thanksgiving eve all church service*. Wed 26th. We will share a time of worship and short message. Then head outside where the kids will have an opportunity to *work on a Thanksgiving craft*, and we will have *pie and coffee and cocoa* for a time of fellowship.
- C. Slide2 Cafe: Our in-house coffee shop '*The Caffeine Collective*' is not only open on Sun's from 9-2:15pm and Wed's from 6-8:15pm. We serve **specialty drinks** such as *Caramel Frappuccino's, Pumpkin Spiced Lattes, or Nitro Cold Brew and Kombucha on tap!* Also carry other bottled beverages and snacks, *from chips and cup of noodles* to the all-time favorite **DeJong's Chocolate** milk. Come visit us in the courtyard and enjoy - we cant wait to serve you.
- D. Slide3 GriefShare: This Sun, 3rd service, our *"Surviving the Holidays"* special 2-hour event - is especially for people who are *grieving the death of a loved one*. Our GriefShare group want to offer you **help and hope** as you navigate the Holiday season. More info and to register, visit our website.
- E. Slide4 Prayer:

II. Slide5 Intro: CAS – Close Air Support

- A. **In military tactics**, *Close Air Support* (CAS) refers to **air strikes** by aircraft **against** hostile targets that are in close proximity **to friendly forces**.
 1. **Spiritual application**: It's like calling in "*air strikes*" **from above** against a hostile enemy close to us or our allies.
 2. *Prayer is our direct transmission to our General's headquarters.*
- B. **Did you know**: According to new data from Pew Research Center's Religious Landscape Study, *44% of U.S. adults say they pray at least once a day, and another 23% say they pray weekly or a few times a month. That means **two-thirds** of the country still turns to **prayer** with some regularity.*

C. But - prayer is **not** ...

1. A civilian device like a *home intercom system*. Or ...
A bell you ring when you want God to do something for you.

D. Prayer is *communication* used *in battle conditions*.

1. “***Armor and weapons*** are not sufficient to win a battle; there must be ***energy*** to do the job. Our ***energy*** comes from ***prayer***.” – Wiersbe

E. We use *the sword of the Spirit* and here *praying at all times in the Spirit* - the Holy Spirit **empowers** us to win the battle. - The Word and prayer are the 2 resources God gives the church to overcome the enemy and gain ground for God's glory.

1. **Example**: When Moses and Joshua fought Amalek (Ex.17), **Moses** prayed on the hill with the rod of God, *while* **Joshua** fought with the sword in the valley. It took both **prayer** and **action** to win.
a) **Prayer** is the power for victory - but not just *any kind* of prayer ...

F. Let's look at 6 aspects of *prayer's battle strategy*:

III. Slide6a 1. **PRAY AT ALL TIMES** (18a)

- 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,
- The command **to stand** (3 x's) *is now joined with* the command **to pray**.
1. Slide6b But we can't truly **stand** *until* we've learned to **kneel**.
- Praying at all times**/pray w/o ceasing - **doesn't** mean *always saying prayers*; it means ***staying in communion with God***. [How else say that? have an *ongoing* conversation].
- We must *pray at all times* because we are always under threat from temptation and attack. Prayer keeps us ready for surprise assaults. (Eg. Pete in Gethsemane) It should be our 1st line of strength, not our last resort. [1 hour? Watch and pray that *you* may not enter into temptation]

IV. Slide7a 2. **PRAY WITH ALL PRAYERS** (18b) *with all kinds of prayer*

- 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,

- B. Slide7b The military analogy continues - **We are at war!** Its seriousness is seen in the repeated “**alls**”: *all times, all prayers, all perseverance, for all the saints.*
- C. Slide7c *All prayer* = *all/each* kind of prayer includes: *adoration* (which means? *Ask*), *confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.* also *Intercession.*
1. Another tool: **Fasting** - it adds intensity and focus to prayer.
 2. “*The believer who prays only to ask for things is missing out on the blessings of **intercession** and **thanksgiving**.*” – Wiersbe
 - a) **Intercession** is a powerful weapon - Eg. Job 42:10, *The Lord restored Job’s fortunes when he **prayed** for his friends.* Interceding for others often brings victory in our own lives.
 - b) **Thanksgiving** is a powerful weapon - *praise changes things as much as prayer does.*

V. Slide8a **3. PRAY IN THE SPIRIT (18c)**

- A. 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,
- B. Slide8b You can’t just **decide** to be a warrior; you must be **prepared** to do so.
- C. We pray **to** the Father, **through** the Son, and **in** the Spirit. (biblical formula)
- D. **In the Spirit** - doesn’t necessarily mean *praying in tongues*. It means praying with the **energy** and **alignment** of the Holy Spirit - praying **in harmony** with *God’s will*.
1. I’m not excluding *praying in tongues*, **but** if it meant only that, then only those w/the gift could pray this.
- E. **In Scripture, incense** represents prayer - we know it had to be made *exactly* as God prescribed. The fire on the altar symbolizes the Holy Spirit, who ignites our prayers/incense according to God’s will.
1. Slide8c It’s possible to **pray fervently** in the flesh and never reach God, **but** It’s possible to **pray quietly** in the Spirit & **see Him do great things.**

VI. Slide9 **4. PRAY WITH YOUR EYES OPEN (18d)** *keep alert* (tarsier monkey - P.I.)

- A. 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,
- B. Christian soldiers pray with eyes open. Keep alert/watch and pray - is God's formula for overcoming *the world, the flesh, and the devil*.
1. Eg. Nehemiah 4:9 (nlt), *But we **prayed** to our God and **guarded** the city day and night to protect ourselves.*
 2. **Illustration:** Sleeping birds have a built-in **grip**. They lock their claws when their legs are bent. Their claws release only when their **knees** straighten. ***Our bent knees in prayer give us a firm grip** on the values that make life worth living. - When we hold firmly to **God** in prayer, *rest assured* **He** is and has been holding firmly to us.

VII.Slide10a 5. PRAY WITH PERSISTENCE (18e)

- A. 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,
- B. Perseverance means sticking to it, continuing, not quitting. It's *an ongoing, unbroken action* in prayer.
- C. Persistence in prayer *isn't* twisting God's arm; it's being burdened enough not to rest until we hear **His** answer.
1. Slide10b "Prayer is **not** getting man's will done in heaven; it's getting God's will done on earth." – Robert Law

VIII.Slide11 6. PRAY FOR ALL BELIEVERS (18f-20) *making supplication*

- A. 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**,
19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.
- B. Notice in the Lord's Prayer: Our Father, **not** my Father. *We pray as part of a great family, all speaking with God together.*

1. So Paul asks for *prayer support* from his Ephesian family.

C. Christian, soldiers don't go it alone.

1. Eg. *Moses didn't fight alone*. While **Joshua** battled Amalek, **Moses** went up the hill with *Aaron and Hur* to hold up his hands (Ex. 17:9-10).
2. We live in an individualistic culture, *but* the Christian life isn't meant to be isolated. We need others to *lift our arms, share our burdens, and pray beside us*.
3. There are no isolated believers in the NT. *Like sheep*: we need to *Flock together. Stand together. Fight together. Pray together, and Worship together*.

D. *Slide12 Irina Ratu-shin-skaya*, a Russian poet and believer, was only 28 when she was arrested for her faith and sentenced to 7 years of hard labor in the Soviet gulag at *Baryshevo*. She endured freezing temperatures, starvation, brutal interrogations, and months in solitary confinement.

1. Yet **her faith never broke**. In that icy cell, she had no Bible, no pen, no paper - only her memory and her faith. She began to compose poetry in her mind - verses about God's presence, about hope, about unseen strength. (match stick - soap)
2. *When she was finally released*, Irina said that what sustained her through those dark nights was not only her **faith** - *but the prayers of believers around the world*. She said she could **feel** them. In one of her poems, later published in her memoir *Grey Is the Colour of Hope*, she wrote:
 "Believe me, it was often thus: In solitary cells, on winter nights
 A sudden sense of joy and warmth, And a resounding note of love.
 And then, unsleeping, I would know, A-huddle by an icy wall:
Someone is thinking of me now, Petitioning the Lord for me."
 a) She felt the warmth of **intercession** in the coldest place on earth.

E. Paul asked prayer for: *What to say, the boldness to say it, and the wisdom to say it at the right time*.

- F. *Comfortable saints* don't fight. *The gates of hell won't prevail against the church.*
Not a carefree crowd at Disneyland, *but* a disciplined army *on mission*.

IX. Slide 13 GRACIOUS GREETING (21-24)

- A. 21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, **Tychicus** the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts. 23 Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.
- B. **Tychicus** - A Gentile believer from Asia, companion of Paul, *and* courier for this letter (also **Colossians**, and *likely Philemon*).
1. Mail was carried by travelers, since Rome had no postal system for private use
- C. **God's covenant love** now extends to all who *love the Lord Jesus Christ*.
- D. **Conclusion**: Our spiritual armor is used in a war *that's already been won*.
- E. **Illustration**: **Napoleon** once pointed to the British Isles on a map and said,
"If it were not for that red spot, I could conquer the world."
 When **Satan** looks at the world, he says the same of **Calvary** ... *if it were not for that red hilltop where Christ's blood was spilled, I would rule the world*.
1. *That red spot* makes all the difference. The battle is won!
 2. *We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.* Rom. 8:37
- F. Keywords: prayer, persistence, supplication.