

Spiritual Warfare and Witnessing

Wielding the Weapon of Prayer

Arthur Matthews in his book, Born for Battle, writes: “The concept that treats prayer as if it were merely a supplemental booster in getting some project off the ground makes the project primary and the prayer secondary. Prayer was never meant to be incidental to the work of God. It is *the* work.” (page 42)

Through prayer, we work together with God. Through prayer, we demonstrate our reliance upon God. Through prayer, God releases His Spirit and power upon us enabling us to speak His truth/Good News clearly and powerfully to our hearers.

Simple guidelines for praying “warfare prayers”:

1) Preparations for prayer:

- Do not rush out to share the Gospel without first preparing your heart and mind in the presence of God:
- Confess every known sin, asking God also to forgive you from “hidden faults” (Psalm 19:12).
- Acknowledge before God your sense of weakness and your fears – trust Him to take control of your mind, emotions and will.
- Give yourself wholeheartedly to Jesus, submitting to His Lordship, trusting in Him to use you as His humble and unworthy servant.
- Rejoice and be thankful in your heart before God for all He will do through you.

2) Pray biblically:

- Pray with childlike simplicity to your heavenly Father. He is waiting to welcome you into His Throne-room at all times, in all situations of life.
- Pray with authority in the name of Jesus.
- Pray with dependency upon the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Pray with faith, expectancy and boldness. Remember our Father’s ear is open to hear and answer the prayers of His beloved children.

3) Pray diligently:

- Pray while taking part in a conversation about the Gospel with an unbeliever. (Obviously your prayer will be a direct communication from your spirit to God’s Spirit.) Ask God to give you clarity in your sharing Gospel truths, boldness in your spirit and wisdom to know what to say when.
- Pray throughout difficult encounters, eg asking God to help you with His wisdom to answer difficult questions or objections to the faith. Ask God to give you His Spirit of wisdom and discernment. Remember how the same Spirit helped Jesus in the face of the tough questions He faced from the religious leaders of His day.
- Pray whether the person is interested, indifferent or antagonistic. Ask God to cause His love, patience, kindness and courage to flow through you.

- Pray on after you have finished your conversation, or have left a video/literature for them to view/read etc. Pray in particular that God's Spirit will stir up a deep hunger and longing to know the *real* Jesus, and that He will open their spiritual eyes to see His truth and His beauty. Pray also that God will protect the seeds of truth you have sown in their hearts, standing firm in prayer against Satan's desire to snatch God's Word away.

4) Pray authoritatively and aggressively:

- Pray aggressively against the enemy applying the truths of 2 Cor.10:3-5.
- Pray aggressively against the devil's tricks, eg to use distractions and interruptions to frustrate God's work.
- Pray aggressively against the devil's lies – in your own mind (eg thoughts like "I just never know how to answer their difficult questions"), and in mind of the unbeliever (eg for a Muslim – "Hopefully I'll get into Paradise by keeping the Five Pillars faithfully"). Ask God to open their minds to see and understand that only by putting their trust in Jesus will they find the true Way in God's eternal home.
- Pray aggressively against Satan's weapon of discouragement. Keep your eyes on Jesus, and His peace and joy will fill your mind and your heart.

A suggested prayer for the salvation of an unbeliever based on Ephesians 1:17-19:

"Holy Father, I ask You in Jesus' precious and holy name to open the spiritual eyes of _____ (person's name), through Your Spirit of wisdom, revelation and truth. Please show _____ that You alone are the Truth. I pray that You will shine the light of the knowledge of the Gospel in the face of Jesus into _____'s mind and heart, so that he/she may know and experience the wonderful hope that he/she may have by trusting in You. I pray earnestly that You will give _____ the unspeakable joy of inheriting all the spiritual and eternal riches that Jesus won for him/her through His death and resurrection. I pray that You will reveal Your awesome power through saving _____ from Your wrath and from his/her sin and all its consequences. May You receive all the glory and the honour through _____'s salvation. I offer up this prayer before Your holy Throne in the all-powerful Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

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