

## The Soldier's Prayer – Part 5

Sermon Delivered on August 27th, 2017  
AM Service

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text: [Ephesians 6:10-20](#)

### Introduction

This morning we come to the **substance** and **subjects** of a true good soldier's prayer. We have considered the **importance** of a soldier's prayer and the **quality** of a soldier's prayer. But today consider with me the **subjects** of soldier's prayer. **For whom** are we to pray for and **what** are we to pray for? In our text it says – supplication for all the saints.

[Ephesians 6:18](#) Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

### I - Clarification

Here clarification needs to be made. The word “saints” here does not mean dead saints. Nowhere in the Bible are we commanded to pray for the dead saints or for any dead people. Praying for the dead will not do any good because one's destination is already sealed once he passed on from this life. That is why the Bible says,

[2 Corinthians 6:2](#) (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, **now is the day of salvation.**)

[Hebrews 9:27](#) And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: [28](#): So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

So, to whom was Paul referring to when he said, “for all the saints”? Paul was referring to living saints on earth. They are Christians who are still alive. They are believers who are still living and breathing. We are to pray, **not for the dead saints**, but for the living saints. We are to be praying for **all the saints who are on earth** and are still able to benefit from our prayers.

We are not only to pray for ourselves, but for one another; for fellow believers. As believers we are all members of one big army fighting against a common enemy. No soldier entering battle prays for himself alone, but for all his fellow-soldiers also, for a good soldier knows that the success of one is the success of all.

### II - Explanation

Why should we pray for one another? What are the reasons for praying for all the saints?

## 1. It is Commanded

God commands us to pray for fellow believers. We are to pray not only for family members, not only for close friends, but also for other believers in this congregation and outside this congregation. This must be a regular part of our Christian lives because God commands it.

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

I believe this one verse is enough reason for us to be involved in praying for one another. But there are other verses which show that praying for one another must be a regular part of Christian life.

We see this clearly in the letters of Paul. When you read his letters to various churches you read again and again **Paul offering up prayer on behalf of other believers** and then lets them now that he regularly prays for them.

There are so many examples, but for the sake of time let me give one ...

Romans 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. 8: First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. 9: For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

D. A. Carson in his book “A Call to Spiritual Reformation” writes out every single passage in which Paul makes any reference at all about praying for other believers and those verses when written out, **take up 8 pages** in Carson’s book.

That’s the importance that Paul attached to praying for others. We are to pray for other believers because God commanded us to do.

## 2. It is Crucial

We are to pray for one another because we all need it. **No one is so strong; no one is so perfect that he does not need to be prayed for** by his fellow believers. We are all weak and needy people. Regardless of where we are in our spiritual development and growth, we all need to be prayed for.

We all face the attack and assault of the enemy on a daily basis. Temptations and snares of the world often look so attractive. There are discouragements and doubts and deceptions that we have to resist. And by the way, you are not the only one who experiences these things.

1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but **such as is common to man**: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

We are all tempted and tried. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Who is able to stand and withstand in the evil day? Who is able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked? We all often say ...

Psalm 124:1 If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; 2: If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: 3: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: 4: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: 5: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. 6: Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. 7: Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. 8: Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

That is the situation that every one of us are in. We are all weak in and of ourselves, we are **utterly dependent upon the grace and power of the Lord Jesus**. That is true not only of you but also of the person sitting right next to you and around you. Look around you. **You are surrounded by weak men and women, boys and girls**, who need the power of God's grace and ever abundant ways in their lives. **How do you respond to that need?** Prayer. You can pray. That's how you can love them. That's how you show your love and care and concern for the brethren. In the midst of their helplessness and weaknesses take those concerns to the one that matters the most. You can pray for them.

We are to pray for one another not only because it is commanded but also it is crucial. Then, thirdly...

### **3. It is a Channel**

We are to pray for other believers because prayer is a channel. It is a means. God works through prayer. God promises to bless through prayer. God promises to provide through prayer.

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

We all need **God's power and grace** in our lives. We all need **God to work in our lives**. We need **God to mold us and to shape us**. And one of the primary means He uses to accomplish just that is **through the prayer of other people**.

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

God works through the prayer of His people. Do you believe that? I am afraid that the reason why so many of us struggle so much with prayer is we are unbelieving of that very fact. If we

actually believe that God works through the prayers of His people we will constantly and consistently go to the throne of God on behalf of other believers.

O, how we need to cultivate in our own hearts that type of utter dependence upon the supernatural grace of God continually. O, how we need to be able to say, if any good is to come it is going to come from God alone.

If your friends and relatives are going to come to faith God is the One who must draw him or her, if this Christian is to be held up through this trial God is the One who must uphold him; if this family is going to become a godly family, God is the One who has to sanctify them.

These are the reasons why we are to pray for other believers - because it is commanded, it is crucial and it is a channel.

### III - Admonition

One of the greatest acts of love we can do for other believers is to pray for them. One of the greatest acts of love another believer can do for us, is to pray for us.

That is the way the church of Jesus Christ grows spiritually. That is the way you and I in the body of Christ grow in love. If you want to grow spiritually and in love, you must learn how to pray for others.

*“He who prays exclusively for himself never prays at all. His prayers are but the breath of selfishness.”*

**Preoccupation with self is the root of many of our worries and fears.** It is not only the cause of, but also the hindrance to the solutions of, our own problems. **When we are consumed with our own problems we tend to isolate ourselves from other believers, and as a result neglect to pray for them.** But when we forget ourselves and start to pray for others, things change, attitude change, countenance change and spiritual growth takes place.

Selfishness can be cured by praying for one another. Let me share this story, a true story:

*“Before the outbreak of the Spanish civil war, Spain was experiencing such an epidemic of neuroses (a mental disorder marked by anxiety and fear; an emotional illness in which a person experiences strong feelings of fear or worry) that psychiatrists could hardly handle them all. But the war, terrible and destructive as it was in most respects, had the unexpected effect of “curing” many of Spain’s thousands of neurotics. When they became concerned about the welfare of their families, friends, and country instead of their own, their neuroses disappeared and hospitals and clinics were almost emptied of such cases. “These neurotic people were suddenly cured by a greater anxiety,” an anxiety that reached beyond their own selfish welfare.”* (The Christian Soldier [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977], pp. 357–58.)

I believe that many of our fears and anxiety will go away if we stop being consumed with our ourselves and own problems and start caring and praying for others. Praying for others with sincerity and perseverance is, in God's immeasurable grace, a great blessing and strength to our own souls.

May God help us to fervently and passionately pray for others for Christ's sake.

**AMEN!**