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|  | By **Martha Rodman** on July 31, 2025 |

*18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.* *Ephesians 6:18* NLTWe finished the book of Ephesians with our small group. After exploring our warfare gear (i.e. the armor of God), he finishes with exhorting us to pray. The Bible Expository Commentary opens this section with the following statement. *Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword*. (By Warren Wiersbe.) How and or why? I think this statement comes from Wiersbe's own prayer life. Oh my friends, do not let the enemy rob you of the blessing of prayer.When I think about PRAYER. yes with capitals. I get intimidated. I feel like a failure and that I don't do it correctly. One day, as I was struggling to feel like I was doing it "right", the Lord spoke to me. *"He said, how do you and Darryl communicate in your marriage?*That really took me back. As I took a moment, I realized that sometimes we chat up a storm, other times much quieter. Sometimes it is my actions, facial expressions, or even notes that communicate my thoughts. Then He reminded me we were in a "relationship" and that it was O.K. for things to ebb and flow. Prayer became a much freer and more relatable time.Along my prayer journey, I discovered Psalm 5:3. *Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.* Rising in the morning, I greet the Lord, just like I used to greet my husband. It sets and settles the tone for my day. I know He is with me. It is my habit to have "coffee with Jesus" and His Word each morning. Some days I eagerly look forward to this time, other days, I confess it is a habit. The blessing of the habit is they sustain you during some dry times. Just like in my marriage when things seemed a bit dry, we would take the time to reconnect.In Matthew 6:9, Jesus answers His disciples' request to teach them how to pray. He begins with "Our Father." There is a part where the marriage analogy breaks down. We must remember who we are praying too. It is the God who created the universe we are talking to. This is the God who lovingly, graciously, and sacrificially laid down His life for us. We must be respectful and honoring in our honesty. *Our Father, hallowed be your name*, is a way of keeping Him in His rightful place.Just like in a marriage, if all I did was ask for things, the relationship wouldn't develop. When we only petition God for things, our relationship is limited. God becomes a "fix it up chappy" for us and we wonder why we lose our joy. 1 Timothy 2:1-2 informs us of many different types of prayers we are to pray. *First of all then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.*Which type do you find yourself using the most? I have intentionally added more thanksgiving to my prayer life. Just like in my marriage, when I thanked and praised my husband more than criticized him, things went smoother. For me, thanksgiving has helped me grow in trust and faith. Releasing my faith becomes easier when I thank Him. I am grateful for what He has already done. Praise, worship and thanksgiving gets us out of our own limitations and brings God in. My flesh often just wants to "get to the point", but thanksgiving actually gets me there sooner!My friends, effective prayer begins with acknowledging who we are talking to. It begins with understanding we are in a relationship and that He has proven He wants to talk with us. He has proven His love already. If you struggle in an area of unbelief, take the time to be in His Word first. Build a scriptural foundation for what you are asking. Accept that sometimes God's wisdom says "no" to our requests, just like a parent would say no. James 4:2-3 offers a humbling reminder. It shows what happens when we walk in the flesh instead of the Spirit. Yet, we still expect the fruit of the Spirit. *You desire but you do not have so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:2-3 NIV.*Ouch, so true.Ephesians 6:18 emphasizes the importance of prayer. Warren Wiersbe, a respected Bible teacher, made this statement. *Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword.* My friends, keep on praying or as Paul says: *and pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Ephesians 6:18. NIV.**Father, keep on teaching us how to pray. I thank you for the privilege we have been given to talk with You, the creator of the universe. You have given us the ability to partner with you, and that is amazing, in Jesus' Name, amen.* |

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