

Stand firm then . . . 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. – Eph. 6:13, 18

Verse 18 is not a command, but two participles, **pray** and **be alert**, which are dependent on the imperative "stand" at the beginning of verse 14. So the idea is, "Stand firm by praying and by staying alert."

Fighting to Win – We fight by . . .

I. Praying all _____

Cp. Philippians 4:6; Matthew 6:9-13

II. Praying at _____

The phrase is literally, "*at every opportunity.*" It's the same idea as 1 Thess. 5:17, "*Pray without ceasing.*" The Greek word translated **without ceasing** was used of a hacking cough and of repeated military assaults. Someone with a hacking cough does not cough every second, but rather he coughs repeatedly and often.

John Bunyan states "*Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.*"

III. Praying _____

(1) I cannot pray in the Spirit if I have _____ in my life.
Cp. Psalm 66:18; 1 Peter 3:7

(2) Praying in the Spirit is to pray according to _____ as revealed in His Word.
Cp. 1 Thess. 4:3; Ephesians 1:9-10

(3) Praying in the Spirit is to pray in _____ on the Spirit, under His direction and power.

IV. Being _____ and being _____ in our praying

- Be Alert . . . Matthew 26:41; 1 Peter 5:8-9
- With Perseverance – Luke 18:1; (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 6:4; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2).

V. Praying for _____

Truth for Life

For the week of December 6, 2015
(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Take a few moments to evaluate your faithfulness (very or not so much?) to pray. You may ask God to help you in this evaluation. Is there some hindrance that you can identify? If so, what can you do to improve your evaluation?
2. Nehemiah was a man whose prayer life went far beyond just asking God for what he wanted. The quality of communication in any relationship is directly related to the quality and depth of the relationship. The same is true in our relationship with God. Read **Nehemiah 1:1-10** and jot down anything you find that gives you insight into Nehemiah's relationship and communication with God. What can we learn from him that might impact or help you grow in your own prayer life?
3. Is praying "in the Spirit" opposed to having an organized, systematic approach to prayer (a list)? Why/why not? Review the notes from Sunday. Can you determine when you are "praying in the Spirit?" If so, what are the factors that assist us in determining?
4. How can we know whether to keep on praying or to conclude that God's answer is "no"?

Memory Verse

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. – Ephesians 3:16-19

Stand firm then . . . 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. – Eph. 6:13, 18

Verse 18 is not a command, but two participles, **pray** and **be alert**, which are dependent on the imperative stand at the beginning of verse 14. So the idea is, "Stand firm by praying and by staying alert."

Fighting to Win – We fight by . . .

I. Praying all kinds of prayers

Cp. Philippians 4:6; Matthew 6:9-13

II. Praying at all times

The phrase is literally, "at every opportunity." It's the same idea as 1 Thess. 5:17, "Pray without ceasing." The Greek word translated **without ceasing** was used of a hacking cough and of repeated military assaults. Someone with a hacking cough does not cough every second, but rather he coughs repeatedly and often.

John Bunyan states "Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan."

III. Praying in the Spirit

(1) I cannot pray in the Spirit if I have **unconfessed sin** in my life.
Cp. Psalm 66:18; 1 Peter 3:7

(2) Praying in the Spirit is to pray according to **God's will** as revealed in His Word.
Cp. 1 Thess. 4:3; Ephesians 1:9-10

(3) Praying in the Spirit is to pray in **dependence** on the Spirit, under His direction and power.

IV. Being alert and being persistent in our praying

- Be Alert . . . Matthew 26:41; 1 Peter 5:8-9
- With Perseverance – Luke 18:1; (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 6:4; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2).

V. Praying for each other

Truth for Life

For the week of December 6, 2015
(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Take a few moments to evaluate your faithfulness (very or not so much?) to pray. You may ask God to help you in this evaluation. Is there some hindrance that you can identify? If so, what can you do to improve your evaluation?
2. Nehemiah was a man whose prayer life went far beyond just asking God for what he wanted. **The quality of communication in any relationship is directly related to the quality and depth of the relationship. The same is true in our relationship with God.** Read **Nehemiah 1:1-10** and jot down anything you find that gives you insight into Nehemiah's relationship and communication with God.
3. What can we learn from him that might impact or help you grow in your own prayer life?
4. Is praying "in the Spirit" opposed to having an organized, systematic approach to prayer (a list)? Why/why not? Review the notes from Sunday. Can you determine when you are "praying in the Spirit?" If so, what are the factors that assist us in determining?
5. How can we know whether to keep on praying or to conclude that God's answer is "no"?

Memory Verse

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. – Ephesians 3:16-19