

Sermon: **“Wartime Prayer” (Psalm 20)**

Date: **May 28, 2017**

We live in a world that has been wrecked by sin. We don't have to look very far to see evil at work. As Christians, we are called to push back the gates of hell and the powers of darkness. We are in a spiritual war, not against flesh and blood but against the spiritual forces of evil. In this spiritual war in which we find ourselves, there is no greater weapon at our disposal than prayer. We have the resources of heaven at our disposal and we have the opportunity to tap into them every time we pray. In this week's text, we will see what wartime prayer looks like. Before David and the Israelites headed off into battle, they spent time in prayer asking the LORD for protection, help, and deliverance from their enemies. They prayed with expectant faith, believing that God would be faithful to his promises toward them. As we look at their prayer to God, we will see and study four characteristics of a prayer warrior. In this spiritual war, we desperately need God's help, and so we must be a people of fervent prayer.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

Individual Bible Study

1. Please read Psalm 20 and ensure that you have listened to the sermon.
 - a) Psalm 20 is a royal psalm. What are some characteristics of royal psalms? It also has a liturgical structure. What does this mean?
 - b) What is the context in which this psalm was written? What are some clues in the psalm that help us better understand the context?
 - c) In verses 1-5, the congregation intercedes on behalf of their king. What do they pray for? How should this inform how we pray, especially in times of trouble?
 - d) What does it mean to intercede for someone else? According to 1 Timothy 2:1, who should we be praying and interceding for?
 - e) How can we be intentional about praying for one another?
 - f) In verse 6, King David prays expecting God to answer his prayer. What does it mean to pray expectantly? What is the relationship between expectant prayer and the promises of God?

- g) If we are praying expectantly for a good gift from the LORD and he chooses not to grant our request, how can we stay content?
- h) The name of the LORD is referred to three times in this Psalm (v. 1, 5, 7). Why is this significant?
- i) Will said, “Your prayer life is a good gauge for your trust in the LORD.” What does this mean? Please explain.
- j) Why is it important that we persevere in prayer? What might God be wanting teach us as we persist in prayer and wait on him for an answer?
- k) How does this psalm point to Jesus Christ and his kingdom?

Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. Why is praying for someone else a powerful way of ministering to them? What can we do to foster a culture of prayer and intercession in our small group? In our church?
3. What does it mean to pray expectantly to God and how can we do it? How can we both pray expectantly and yet be content if he chooses not to answer our prayer?
4. How is our prayer life a good gauge for our trust in the LORD? What can you do to grow your prayer life?
5. Why is it important to persevere in prayer? Can you think of a time in which you persevered for something in prayer and then God answered your prayer? Explain. What did God teach you as you waited on him?

Accountability Question

Evaluate your prayer life over the past week and discuss how you would like to apply this study on prayer in the week ahead.