

Biblical Reflection 4: “Why Keep Praying?”

March 1, 2021

After so much violence, shooting, and killing, some of you may be wondering, what good does it do to pray? Will prayer stop beatings and bullets? Will prayer guarantee justice and deliverance from evil? If not, why should we keep praying?

C.S. Lewis’s character in *Shadowlands*, a Hollywood movie about his life, expressed so well what many Christians have experienced for themselves. He said, “I pray because I can't help myself. I pray because I'm helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn't change God. It changes me.”

Yes, that’s right. We need to pray for ourselves, to express our pain, our helplessness, our yearnings, and our needs. No matter what God may choose to do about our circumstances, we need to pray because it is in the praying that we experience God’s presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. And that’s what we need, more than anything else, to face the evil that’s confronting us and to carry on, day after day, week after week.

The Apostle Paul taught us that the true enemy we must face is not human beings but rather it’s the unseen powers of darkness. These evil forces drive ignorant people to do evil deeds, and even attempt to undermine the faith and faithfulness of followers of Christ. Against this kind of enemy, only prayer and the armor of God will lead us to victory.

Paul writes:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm... Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. (Ephesians 6:10-13, 18)

And what comprises the armor of God?

- the belt of truth
- the breastplate of righteousness
- the gospel of peace
- the shield of faith
- the helmet of salvation, and
- the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:14-17)

Will the armor of God save you when they’re firing live ammunition? No! For that you need to take cover, be wise, and safeguard yourselves. But God’s armor will protect you from the devil’s schemes and temptations. This kind of armor—which is just another way of saying, believing in Jesus Christ, relying on the Gospel that brings eternal peace, living righteously,

trusting in God’s grace to shield you from the devil’s accusations and attacks, and relying on Scripture to know what is true, good, and right, and to refute liars and deceivers—this kind of armor will guard your heart and mind in the midst of the battle. When you are filled with grief and rage, the armor of God will enable keep you from joining the dark side and becoming the evil you hate so intensely.

My dear Burmese brothers and sisters, and beloved sons and daughters, “be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power.” Put on the armor of God and keep praying. Pray for your own soul and pray for one another. And pray for your enemies, as Jesus taught us, that they may see the light, repent, and turn from their evil ways.

I’m praying with you.

With Christ’s love,
Dr. Tim ဦးထင်ကျော်

