**Ephesians 6:18-20**

***The Priorities of a Soldier***

Introduction

1. What should be our priorities as soldiers?

2. Ephesians 6:18-20 Paul gives us three of the most important priorities of a Christian soldier.

What should be our priorities as soldiers?

**I. AN ACCESS TO HEAVEN 6:18**

Notice the four all inclusive words. The access is open because of Jesus.

1. ***The When of This Access*** *Praying always…praying at all times*
2. The Jews used to pray at certain times, and in the book of Acts the early church met at set times for prayer. It was a holdover from their old Judaism.
3. We are not praying at set times any more. We are to pray at all times and on every occasion.
4. What does this mean to us? It is a life of dependency. I can’t live without Him. Live your life in God-consciousness.
5. We must be so God-conscious that we see everything in reference to Him!
6. ***The What of This Access*** *With all prayer and supplication*
7. *Prayer* represents a general approach to God.
8. *Supplication* is more specific. It is the desire to fulfill a definite and specific request.
9. *All* is with all kinds of prayers.
10. We are to pray all this time with all kinds of prayers.
11. You can pray in public, in private, verbally silent, with loud cries, with quiet whispers, deliberate and planned, spontaneous, requests, with thanksgiving, with confession and humiliation, with praise…kneeling, standing, with hands lifted or lying prostrate.
12. Prayer at all times, in all ways, and in all circumstances. Don’t ever think for a moment, that because of all the infinite resources that are yours in Christ, that you’re not dependent every moment on God! **Because we are!**
13. ***The Where of This Access*** *In the Spirit*
14. It is impossible or out of context to introduce *tongues* into this verse.
15. It is with His help or in harmony with His will. Praying and the Word of God go together*. We don’t know how to pray as we ought. The Holy Spirit prays on our behalf with groaning that cannot be uttered. The Holy Spirit prays the mind and will of the Father. (Romans 8:26, 27)*
16. It is praying in consistency with who He is and what is His will. This is done as we *walk after the Spirit* and as we are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). As you walk close to the Lord, we commune with Him. It is as natural as breathing!
17. ***The Wherewith of This Access*** *watching there unto with all perseverance*
18. This is sticking to it, staying at it, hanging in there…don’t quit praying!
19. *Watching* means *alert, attentive…*we need to be alert to the issues…alert to what is happening around us. **You can’t pray properly unless you know what is going on (v. 21).** Pray specifically.
20. *Watch “look out’* rather than *“in”.* Keep your eyes and ears open to other people, watching, seeing their needs and hurts, bringing these before God.
21. ***The Who of This Access*** *for all the saints*
22. I don’t think it is wrong to pray for our needs and hurts, but that is not the emphasis is v. 18. *Our Father who art in heaven…give us this day our daily bread…*
23. We pray for ourselves in the confession of sin and self, and when we are sinking. Here is a commitment which will change your life: **pray for others and not yourself.** My needs are met as others pray for me. **This is the way the body of Christ grows in love, and develops a heart that cares. It is the way we become one!** Stop worrying about yourself!

What should be our priorities as soldiers?

**II. AN ASSIGNMENT FROM HEAVEN 6:19**

1. ***The Employment of the Assignment***
2. Paul is in prison (Acts 26:16-18)
3. Where do you find yourself at this time? That is your area of assignment.
4. ***The Energy of the Assignment*** *Pray for me*
5. Paul says, *Do you want something to pray for specifically: Pray for me.*
6. Paul recognized his own dependence. Only God can provide that which we need to accomplish our task.
7. Do you ever get past the surface? We should be concerning ourselves with spiritual issues: winning the battle, seeing a Christlikeness in their lives, desiring to see a death to self, God doing His work, advancing the kingdom of God, souls to be won for Jesus.
8. Do you really know the spiritual needs of the people around you? Do you know the spiritual needs of your mate, children or friends? Do you pray for them?
9. ***The Engagement of the Assignment*** He is awaiting his upcoming trial, but he wants his time to count for Jesus. He doesn’t pray: *Get me out of here!* It’s easy to grip and complain when life seems difficult and unfair.
10. *That utterance may be given unto me…*that I might open my mouth.
11. *That I might make known…*that I might say the right things.
12. *That I might make known with boldness…*that I might stand unashamed for Jesus Christ.
13. *That I might make known the mystery of the Gospel…*that I might make the Gospel clear.

*Pray for me…*not for my physical needs, but that God will allow me to be bold, courageous, straight forward with the Gospel. That’s the desire of a soldier!!

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**III. AN AMBASSADOR FOR HEAVEN 6:20**

This is a heavenly perspective. Paul is a representative for Jesus. It is because of his

 faithfulness that he is under house arrest. What a paradox: He is an ambassador on

 behalf of Christ, yet he is in chains. Ambassadors normally enjoyed diplomatic

 immunity, but Paul would be compelled to appear in imperial court as a prisoner.

1. ***The Confirmation***
2. **Personal** *“I”* Could you say that: *I am an ambassador of Jesus Christ* wherever I go and whatever I do. If you are saved you can!! I am representing the King. What kind of representative are you?
3. **Practical** *In bonds* Even in jail, Paul was a representative of Jesus. So it is with us you represent Jesus Christ: ‘in the shop’, ‘in my car’, ‘in the hospital’, ‘at the sink’, ‘in the home’, **whatever my circumstances…I represent Jesus Christ.** What kind of representative are you?
4. ***The Communication*** *I can’t keep quiet*
5. **Confidently** *speak boldly*…that I won’t back down as I stand before a guard, a magistrate or the emperor. As an ambassador of Jesus Christ, I must speak!
6. **Correctly** *speak as I ought* There is a right way and a wrong way to speak for Jesus. There is an *ought…*there is a necessity. After all He has done for me as a representative, I cannot keep silent!

Are you a soldier of Jesus Christ?

What are your priorities?