

## The Key to Strength

Ephesians 6:18-20\*

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil," (Eph 6:13). This is a tremendously practical section describing how Jesus Christ (who is himself the armor that is provided for us) can meet our moral and spiritual need. We learned here what to do when doubts assail us, fears dismay us, false teaching deludes us, or coldness prevails in our lives.

Now we must go a step further and explore the second thing the apostle says the Christian should do when he is facing conflict with the wiles, the stratagems, the diabolical schemes of the devil. The first defense, he says, is to put on the armor of God. We have looked at that ( Eph 6:14-17). The second defense is to pray. Two steps: put on the armor of God, and pray. That brings us to verses 18-20 of chapter 6:

Prayer that is expansive (18)

Prayer for clarity and courageousness (19-20)

It is strange that in our praying  
we seldom ask for a change of character,  
but always a change in circumstances.

"Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance ... it is laying hold of his highest willingness."

—Archbishop Richard Trench

### Strength for the week:

- ❖ keep a prayer diary for each day listing item by item what you are praying.
- ❖ remove all cliches from your prayers; pray conversationally.
- ❖ at the end of the week compare your petitions with Paul's instructions for prayer in this passage.
- ❖ Are your prayers doctrinally correct, prayed in the Spirit, without ceasing, for spiritual things?

### Andrew Murray on prayer:

The unconverted man says, "Conversion is easy tomorrow, but hard today. I'll put it off." Even so, prayer that now is difficult appears easy in the future. Alas, you will find it just as hard in the future as now.

Reading a book about prayer, listening to lectures and talking about it is very good, but it won't teach you to pray. You get nothing without exercise, without practice. I might listen for a year to a professor of music playing the most beautiful music, but that won't teach me to play an instrument.

\* These notes are prayerfully provided to aid, not replace, your personal study of God's Word.