

Ephesians, Chapter Six, Lesson Four

THE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE - Part 9 Ephesians 6:19-24

STIMULATE

** From our study together last week, what term can be used to describe the Christian's lifestyle?

It is a **warfare**! Although not a popular term, for the individual who truly desires to live for Christ it proves to be an accurate description of what they will encounter while attempting to honor their Lord on a moment-by-moment basis.

** What was **the Christian's warfare**?

It is a spiritual battle against satan's domain.

** Do you recall how Paul identified **our weapons**?

The full armor of God. 1) The "belt" of Truth, 2) The Breastplate of Righteousness, 3) The gospel of peace, 4) The shield of faith, 5) The helmet of salvation and 6) The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

** Being so prepared, what was the manifestation of **our wisdom** pointed out to us by Paul last week?

We cannot do it ourselves, we are dependent upon His strength through prayer.

MOTIVATE

** Today's time in the Word is one of those that will stand out in my memory for a long time, as we draw to a close our six month of study together in this marvelous epistle. As we do, I would like to ask you two questions. How important is prayer to your daily walk with Christ and what is the measure of your concern for others in the body? The apostle Paul will address both of these questions as he ends his letter and shows us the vital role they play in "The Spirit Filled Life" -let's read it together.

Read passage (V.19-21) (V.22-24)

Opening Prayer

The Spirit Filled Life

INVESTIGATE

V.19 ** Is Paul being selfish as he closes his letter to the Ephesians?

No - in fact he is being humble. He began this important statement on prayer last week in verse 18 when he asked us to be in all prayer, at all times, with all perseverance for all the saints. Here he is merely reminding his readers that he too is just one of "the saints".

** What is at the heart of his prayerful request?

Paul wants to be strengthened by God to speak in such a way to make known the mystery of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**** Why do you think that Paul makes a specific reference to "the opening of [his] mouth"?**

The Greek word for "utterance" used here in this verse is *logos*. It literally means "word" (as embodying an idea - a statement or a speech). cf. Romans 10:17, Matthew 12:35-37

The apostle wants to open his mouth for the cause of Christ, and is asking all of the saints throughout Asia Minor to prayerfully support his fight against Satan's lie, using God's truth.

**** How do we fit into that portrait?**

We are not the ones praying for Paul's mouth, but like Paul should be asking our brothers and sisters to be praying for us and our faithful witness.

**** What kind of attitude should accompany the use of our mouth for the cause of Christ?**

Boldness! It is amazing **where** scripture tells us that we can have confidence.
cf. Hebrews 4:16 (before the throne of grace)

It is little wonder that we should be bold before mere men when speaking of our beloved Savior.
cf. Acts 9:27-28, 13:46, 14:3, and 19:8

**** Why does Paul refer to his message as "the mystery" of the gospel?**

It was now being revealed, after being hidden by God Himself from the hearts of men.
cf. Colossians 1:25-27, Romans 16:25-26

V.20 ** What impact, apart from gaining eternal life, has the gospel had on the apostle Paul?

He is an ambassador "in chains". Remember that Paul was under house arrest at the time of this writing. (Acts 28:16)

**** What does the word "ambassador" conjure up in your thinking?**

It is someone who represents the one who sent him. He has power and authority (given him by the sender). He is protected by the sender and is to behave like his sender.

**** What's wrong with the statement "ambassador in chains"?**

Ambassadors of and for this world would never be arrested or imprisoned. They have diplomatic immunity and to do so would be a declaration of war.

**** What was Paul's main job as the ambassador for Jesus Christ?**

"...proclaiming..." the gospel. He was to make the truth known to all. cf. 2Corinthians 5:18-20

**** Why do you suppose Paul repeats his thought about speaking boldly in this verse, where he also mentions his imprisonment?**

Our boldness is not to be dampened by our circumstances - no matter how severe.

**** Does this verse seem to indicate that Paul's boldness under fire is something unusual for a Christian?**

Absolutely not! It is the norm, the only standard for which we "ought" to attain. Paul says, "as I ought to speak" - dei lit. "it is necessary"

** Do you think that Paul was bold during his imprisonment to speak out for the progress of the gospel?

Most certainly, as we shall see in a few weeks during our study of Philippians. cf. Philippians 1:12-14

V.21 ** Well we can certainly see that prayer was of the utmost importance to the apostle - but how does that relate to a common concern for each other within the body of Christ? How many concerned Christians can you find in verse 21?

The apostle Paul, Tychicus and the believer's who would receive this letter. Everyone is involved, there simply is no one on the sidelines.

** Why would Paul want his readers to "know about [his] circumstances" and about "how [he is] doing"?

He has just asked them to pray for his life! When he did that he asked for "petitions" (specific requests) to be made on his behalf. (V.18)

He wants them to know so they can pray more effectively. He also does not want them to worry! cf. Ephesians 6:22, Philippians 2:28

** Who is Tychicus and why would Paul use him?

Paul calls Tychicus "the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord". Wouldn't that be a wonderful way to be remembered by others?

** What else do we know about him?

Colossians 4:7 - "our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord."

2Timothy 4:11-12 and Titus 3:12 - He was always willing to be at Paul's dispatch.

Tychicus was not interested in fame, only service!

According to Acts 20:4, he accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey.

** In our passage for today, what was Tychicus to do?

He was to "make everything know to you". What a joyous time of fellowship this must have been. As Tychicus related the victories Paul was accomplishing for the kingdom (even while in prison) and the times of prayer that would follow his report.

V.22 ** So Paul sent Tychicus to inform his readers about his affairs, but what else is he doing according to this verse?

He was comforting their hearts! Here is compassion for others, even when Paul was under the heat of a fiery trial. cf. John 19:26-27

** What does that say about their love for Paul?

Paul knew of their love and devotion to him and the gospel of Christ. He knew that their love for him would be the cause of great concern and alarm regarding his circumstances.

**** Let's broaden our view of this statement. Besides comforting the readers with the details of how Paul was doing, what else did Tychicus do that greatly comforted the hearts of those in Asia Minor?**

He faithfully delivered this marvelous letter to them containing the instruction, comfort and care of God's inspired Word.

V.23 ** As Paul pens his closing salutation - to what three things does he refer in verse 23?

Peace, love and faith.

**** Why are these specific references fitting at the end of this amazing letter?**

Peace - Ephesians 1:2, 2:14-15 and 17, 4:3

Love - Ephesians 1:15, 4:2 and 15-16

Faith - Ephesians 1:15, 2:8, 3:12

**** Who is THE source of these gifts?**

God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The use of one preposition "from" preceding both titles indicates that they come from a single source!

V.24 ** What additional blessing does Paul offer before closing his letter?

Grace! Gods Riches At Christ's Expense!

**** Who is to receive this wonderful gift?**

"...all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ..."

This is the sustaining grace of God for the life of the believer only. cf. 2Corinthians 3:5

**** Is Paul calling for a superficial show of affection for Christ that occasionally manifests itself on Sundays, as long as our personal agendas aren't disrupted?**

God forbid - What Paul is calling for is a love that cannot be corrupted by a love for the world. This is a "Jesus First" kind of love! The same kind God showed toward us from before the foundation of the world. cf. Ephesians 1:3-6

EXTRICATE

**** It is my prayer that our time together over the past six months in this book has been of great value to your life as a Christian. What connection have we seen today between prayer and concern for others?**

As I am specifically aware of others' needs, my faithful prayer life builds a loving concern in my heart for them.

DELINEATE

**** Who did we meet today and what about his life could we emulate?**

Our beloved brother Tychicus - who was a faithful servant and willing to be dispatched by Paul for the glory of God. He was expendable for Christ!

EVALUATE

** How much time do I presently give to prayer and concern for others as it compares to the time spent for myself? What benefit can my fellow Christians derive if I am faithful in these two areas?

ACTIVATE

** Can we close our study of Ephesians with a commitment to be prayerfully concerned for others and to be faithful to share the mystery of the gospel? In doing that we will certainly be living "The Spirit Filled Life".

May our gracious God help us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling, doing the will of God from the heart!

Closing prayer