

## Prayer is a Weapon

Technically, prayer itself is never listed as a spiritual weapon in the New Testament. However, as an expression of faith,<sup>1</sup> prayer ranks high on the list of obedience and comes naturally into play in crisis. If prayer is a tool, then it must certainly be a weapon, as a tool used in crisis situations. “I cry to God most High . . .” is the natural instinct of one who trusts in God.

Alertness is a fundamental aspect of warfare, which might be broadly defined as anytime one’s life is in danger, whatever the size of the battle, on whatever scale. War is fought on different levels, from small-scale Special Forces activity to large battles. Alertness is required for success at any level. So we are commanded to “be on the alert”<sup>2</sup> and to “devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it . . .”<sup>3</sup>. Ephesians six draws this connection of alertness and prayer again, in verse 18, and connects prayer, grammatically, to the sword of the Spirit in verse 17. Both the word of God, the sword, and prayer, which wields the sword, must be actions of the Spirit, if we take verses 17 and 18 together resulting in alertness for others, including the spread of the word in verse 19. 1 Peter 5:8 commands alertness in our struggle with a very real adversary, “the devil.”

Promises, such as John 14:13, “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” also invite us to do battle with our adversary through prayer. Led and empowered by the Spirit, we can realize the “destruction of fortresses”<sup>4</sup> in our own lives and others. The enemy of our souls, our emotions and psyche, really has no defense against a prayer offered in faith and dependence on the Almighty. Prayer may be often defensive, it seems, in keeping with the imagery of the shield of faith, but “fighting the good fight of faith” also includes the positive, intentional pursuit of love, righteousness and character.<sup>5</sup> The quality of life we have been called to requires the experience of struggle, the “fight of faith,” the use of promises in prayer as the one above in John 14 and the commitment to die. Prayer is a good place to die “so that the life of Jesus, also, may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”<sup>6</sup> Prayer is a weapon for good.

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<sup>1</sup> “the shield of”, Ephesians 6:16

<sup>2</sup> Matt 24:42, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Colossians 4:2.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Corinthians 10:4.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Timothy 6:11-12.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. 4:10-11.