

Title: "All" In on Prayer
Text: Ephesians 6:18
Date: January 4, 2026

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Big Idea

Four times in this single verse Paul uses the word "all" with reference to prayer. He calls us to pray "with all prayer" "at all times" "with all perseverance" "for all the saints." So let's go "all" in!

1. All Prayer

In our verse, Paul says that we should pray "with all prayer and supplication." The Greek word translated "prayer" can refer to prayer in a general sense, encompassing all its various forms. But this word translated "supplication" here narrows the scope a bit and focuses us in on that form of prayer that arises especially out of a great sense of need. The word means "to plead" or "to beg" (L&N). The first word is prayer in standard garb. The second word is prayer dressed in a beggar's rags. Paul is saying, spiritually, we are beggars—more needy than we could ever know. As Jesus puts it in the first beatitude: we are "poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3). Do you feel that? Do you want to know what you would do if you did? Pray . . . "with all prayer and supplication."

2. All Times

Reason #1: Because We Are Engulfed in a Spiritual War

This is not a battle we can win in our own strength. If it were against flesh and blood, maybe we could fashion a weapon that might prevail. But, seeing as it is spiritual forces that we are up against, we must instead, as Paul instructs us, "[p]ut on" (v. 11) or "take up" (v. 13) "the whole armor of God . . ." And how do you do that? In and through prayer! Prayer isn't likened to merely one part of this armor because it is prayer, according to Paul, that actually activates and animates the whole of it!

Reason #2: Because We Are Created for an Intimate Relationship

We should be praying at all times, not just because we need help in the battle, but because we were created for communion with Christ, and we enter into that relationship through prayer. So far as I can tell, in the Scriptures, the Christian life is really conceived of as one long prayer to God through Christ. That's why we pray at all times. Because we want to be with him at all times.

3. All Perseverance

So often we don't persevere in prayer because we don't truly think of God as our only real option for guidance and help and salvation. He's just one good option among many. Maybe he's the first place we go. But if we tap on his door a couple times and nothing seems to be opening in the way we want it to, well, we just move on to option B or C or D.

4. All Saints

Sometimes we can get so consumed with our own issues, with our own suffering, with our own needs and requests and all this, that, though we may pray quite a bit, we come to find we're really only praying for ourselves. Prayer becomes the backdoor to a sort of sanctified self-centeredness, a baptized form of naval-gazing. We see ourselves and no one else. But Paul here says we ought to be "making supplication for all the saints . . ." This is what we're doing this week, right? Praying with one another for one another!

Reflection Questions

- If you had to identify the form of prayer you are most prone to (e.g. adoration, thanksgiving, surrender, petition, confession, etc.), what would it be and why?
- Do you have people in your life that you are praying for regularly? Are there people regularly praying for you? Why is this so important do you think?
- What's one way you hope today's sermon might influence and shape your engagement in this upcoming Week of Prayer?

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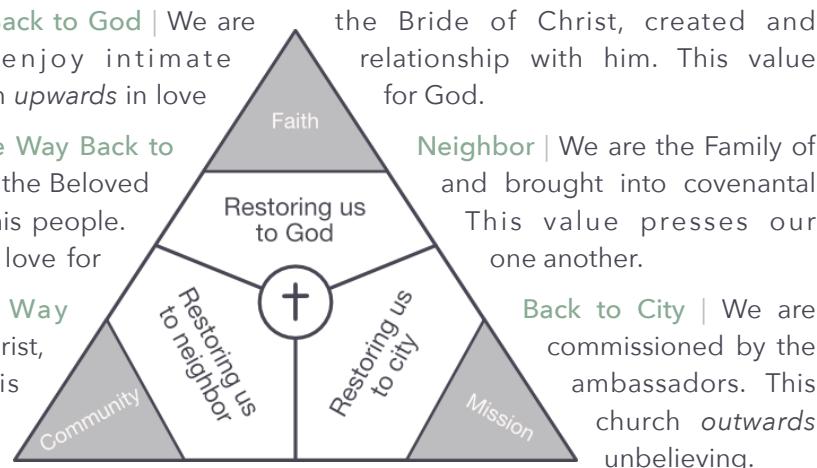
Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with God. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for God.

MISSION: The Way of the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his ambassadors. This value presses our church *outwards* in love for the world.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Week of Prayer - January 4-11

The church is always called to be praying and seeking God together, but sometimes it is good to set aside special time to do so. That's what we have made a habit of doing during the first week of every new year. This year the first Sunday in January is the 4th, so our Week of Prayer will span from January 4th to the 11th. Here are just a few things to look forward to:

- On the front end of this week (1/4), we will have a special sermon delivered in an effort to help our community see the importance of prayer in the life of the church. On the back end of this week (1/11), we will actually devote the entire service to an extended time of musical worship and prayer!
- On the first Sunday of this week (1/4), we encourage you to prioritize joining us for our All Church Prayer meeting in the evening later that day.
- We will provide a Prayer Guide to give you ideas of what to pray for as well as space to record your prayers and thoughts as God leads. The start of a new year naturally gets us reflecting on things—where we've been and where we hope to go. This guide has been designed to help you in this and offer a framework for your evaluation and planning.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

All Church Prayer - Tonight!

The Prayer Room (online) - This Thursday!

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