

First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

March 17, 2019 - St Patrick's Day

Scripture: Ephesians 6:13-18 (NIV)

13 Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Congregational Prayer: "Our Father"

Our Father, Which Art In Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy Will Be Done, On Earth As It Is In Heaven. Give Us This Day, Our Daily Bread, And Forgive Us Our Trespases, As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us. And Lead Us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From Evil. For Thine Is The Kingdom, The Power And The Glory. Forever And Ever. Amen

Message: "Prayer 11: Praying in Faith: 1"

Introduction:

- Happy St Patrick's Day! Who was Saint Patrick? St. Patrick is the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland. March 17 is widely accepted as the date of St. Patrick's death in A.D. 461. St. Patrick was born in Britain as Maewyn Succat. At age 16 (around A.D. 400), he was kidnapped from his home on the west coast of Britain and carried off to Ireland to become a slave as a shepherd. After six years, he escaped; upon returning home, he received his call (in

a dream) to preach the Gospel. He spent the next 15 years in a monastery, preparing for his missionary work. When he became a priest, his name was changed to Patricius, and eventually, Patrick. Although some Christians lived in Ireland at the time, it was Patrick who spread Christianity throughout the land and brought an organized Church into existence. What is St Patrick's official colour? How about blue - usually sky blue! Does that surprise you? Let me ask one more question about surprises: Does it further surprise you that prayer with Faith is more powerful, and more directive? Let's talk about belief in prayer today.

Part 1: Belief in Prayer?????

- Belief as we come to God in prayer.... You do you believe when you pray? Do you have faith that God is going to answer your prayers? Is God going to work when you pray?
- Charles Haddon Spurgeon wrote: "If you believe in prayer at all, expect God to hear you. If you do not expect, you will not have. God will not hear you unless you believe He will hear you; but if you believe He will, He will be as good as your faith."

- Do you truly believe in prayer? Look at Ephesians 6, and see that the list of armour ends with putting on prayer as a blanket over it all. Do you believe in prayer? To the world we Christians look like we are talking to the walls, or the ceiling when we pray. To the world we are talking to each other or to ourselves. But to us believers in the Lord Jesus Christ we are lifting our voices in praise and petition to the Great I Am, to the creator of all, to the Giver of Life, to the One and only God, to the shepherd King, to the all powerful, all knowing, all glorious, ever present, undefeatable, indescribable, The Lord of all. He is The Incomparable God of Isaiah 40:12 (CEB): *“Who has measured the waters in the palm of a hand or gauged the heavens with a ruler or scooped the earth’s dust up in a measuring cup or weighed the mountains on a scale and the hills in a balance?”* It is our God who has formed the deepest cell in your body, to the skin that covers you. It is He who created your DNA to make you the one He wants you to be. It is He, and He alone who knows your thoughts before you say them, your words before you inhale to

speak them, your life track before you take one step out of your bed in the morning. He is your everything: your lifeblood, your guide, your sustainer, your friend, your crutch, your peace, your hope, your joy. He is there when you fail. He is there when you are collecting your tears in pails. He is there when life overwhelms you. He is there when you are on top of the world, guiding you back to reality. He is there when the armies of the world are surrounding you, sending in His chariots of fire. Nothing can stop our God. Nothing can defeat the power of the triune God. Nothing can compare to the incomparable Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the Priest of all Priests. He is the Lord, your Master, your Saviour, your God. And He listens and responds to your prayers. Do you believe in prayer to the Living God? Do you know the power of your prayers to the One and only Triune God? Do you know that your prayers can move mountains, and level hills of trouble and despair? Your prayers can overwhelm evil, and can make the blind see, the lame leap for joy, the deaf hear the voice of the living God! Your prayers are powerful and active - do you

have belief in prayer? Our mighty, Holy, powerful God wants you to lift your voice to Him in prayer, believing that nothing is impossible to God. Do you believe in prayer? It took prayer to march around the city of Jericho for 7 days, 7 days of awaiting upon God in prayer until God made the walls crumble like a house of cards. It took prayer for Moses to stand before Pharaoh as 10 plagues ravaged the land. It took prayer for Noah to take years to build an arc. It took prayer for Saul to see again after he was blinded on the road to Damascus, and prayer for a man named Ananias to help restore his sight. It took prayer for the Apostle Paul to survive a ship wreck and a snake bite. Do you believe in prayer?

- When we look at Scripture, God wants us to pray in faith. Ephesians 3:12 says that we have confident access to God (NIV): *“In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.”* We are to pray in faith. Let me read Matthew 21:22 (NIV): *“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”* Now, take a look with me at James 1:6-7

(NIV) which says: *“But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.”*

- Let’s not be laid back, O Church of the Risen Saviour. Let’s not be quiet “Church mice” any longer. Let’s not restrict God to a nice story. Let’s step forward in faith as we hold the hand of the living, powerful, almighty God of the universe, and let us dare to believe that our prayers reach the very throne of God, who loves to hear our petitions, our praise, our confessions, our prayers of thanksgiving to Him.
- Let’s pray in belief. Let’s pray in faith. God has people out there that are ready to answer to the Holy Spirit’s promptings, and lift up holy prayers of belief - are you one of them?

Part 2: Ways to pray in faith (2 of 7):

- 1. Begin your prayers with Thanksgiving. If you want to grow in your belief in prayer, begin by giving thanks to God. Thanksgiving is powerful. Thanksgiving will change your life.

Giving thanks to the living, powerful, almighty God means that you acknowledge His presence, His walk with you, and your dependancy upon Him. Giving thanks is a great way to grow your faith in God. Philippians 4:6,7 is a favourite passage for most of us, because it says this (NIV): *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* We are called upon to come to God with our sorrows and griefs and pains, and fears, and to do so with a heart of thanksgiving.

- My 53 year old dad died quite suddenly back in 1991 when I was a young man of 27. I had a young family. We had moved home to Kitchener to be with them while I went to University and seminary. I was scared. I was overwhelmed. I was caught up in grief. But I learned again to praise the Lord. I learned again to give honour to God. I learned again to give thanksgiving to God. Lifting up thanksgiving is a great first step to having belief in

prayer.

- Look at Hebrews 4:16 (NIV): *“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”* Give thanks to God.
- 2. Remember that God is our loving Heavenly Father. To grow your belief in prayer, come to your Heavenly Daddy. Some of us had terrible earthly fathers. Some of us had earthly fathers that lead us directly to the Heavenly Father both in words and in walk. Regardless of your past, know this: the Heavenly Father is the greatest daddy ever. He is the ultimate dad. He is the papa of all. He is the father of all fathers. The Aramaic word for the Lord’s prayer from Matthew 6:9 is best translated as daddy. In Matthew 7:9-11 Jesus teaches that no earthly father would give to their children a terrible thing when they ask for something they need, and even more so our Heavenly daddy (Matthew 7:11 NIV): *“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”*

- Like a true dad, our God gives us His goodness. Even the best earthly father will pale in comparison to God, the Heavenly Father who is perfect and will answer all your needs.
- 10 Attributes of Our Heavenly Father:
 - 1. Loving— *“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!”* 1 John 3:1.
 - 2. Kind — *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”* Ephesians 2:8.
 - 3. Compassionate — *“The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.”* Psalm 103:8.
 - 4. Giving— *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* John 3:16.
 - 5. Faithful — *“.... his compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness..”* Lamentations 3:22-23.
 - 6. Merciful — *“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”* Ephesians

2:4-5.

- 7. Strong — *“Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.”* Psalm 24:8.
- 8. Forgiving— *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”* 1 John 1:9.
- 9. Good — *“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.”* Psalm 136:1.
- 10. Righteous— *“The LORD is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does.”* Psalm 145:17.
- You can believe in prayer because of our amazing Heavenly Father.

Conclusion:

- Abraham had belief in prayer, and he became the Father of Faith, and the Father of Nations. Esther had faith in prayer, and she saved all the Hebrew people by approaching an inapproachable king. Nehemiah had belief in the power of prayer as he asked his boss, the king of the mighty Persian Empire, if he could go and protect

his people in Jerusalem, and he saved them from invaders.

- The Bible is full of people who believed in prayer, including, and especially Jesus Christ our Lord. Do you believe in prayer? Put on the armour of God, and cover it all with prayer as you walk with God.