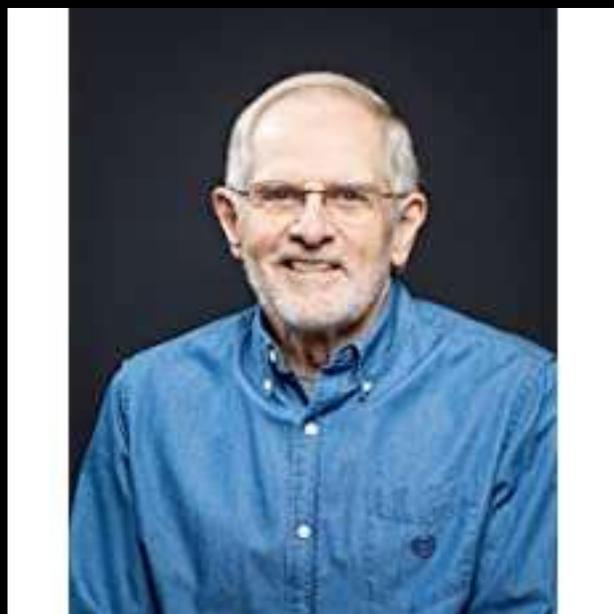


# THE CHRISTIAN'S VIGIL

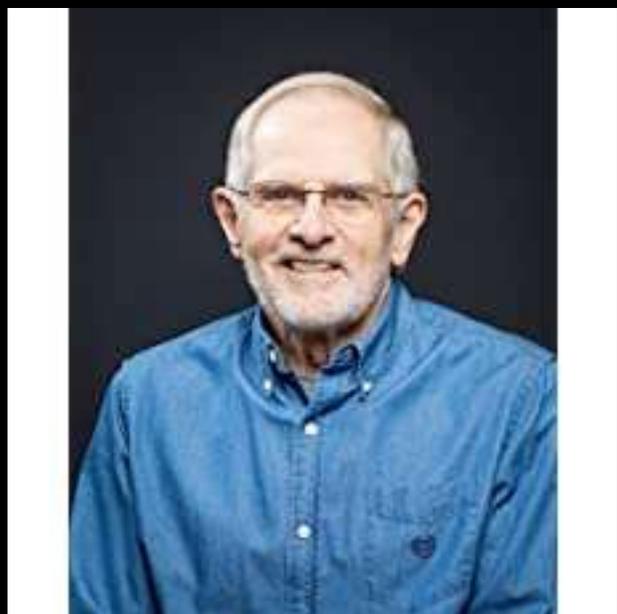
## PART SEVEN

EKKLESIA EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP

C. STEPHEN DAVID



I confess that prayer is one of the most difficult topics for me to preach about because it is a difficult subject for me to understand and practice. On the one hand, I know that the only reason God has enabled me to persevere as a pastor for almost 32 years now is His grace that has come to me through the prayers of His people and through my own desperate cries to Him for help.



Not a week goes by without my feeling overwhelmingly inadequate for this ministry. I could not endure without prayer. Yet on the other hand, the longer I am a Christian, the more acutely I am aware of my own shortcomings in prayer. I share this because I don't want you to think as I preach on prayer that I've got it all together. I'm a fellow struggler with you in this battle. So I'm preaching this message to myself first of all.

1. **BELT OF TRUTH (Eph. 6:14)**—Put on the belt of truth (*aletheia*) to stand against the schemes of the devil
2. **BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Eph. 6:14)**—Put on the breastplate of righteousness to stand against the schemes of the devil
3. **SHOES FOR YOUR FEET, HAVING PUT ON THE READINESS GIVEN BY THE GOSPEL OF PEACE (Eph. 6:15)**—Put on the gospel of peace to stand against the schemes of the devil
4. **THE SHIELD OF FAITH (Eph. 6:16)**—“In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one”—Put on the shield of faith to stand against the schemes of the devil
5. **THE HELMET OF SALVATION, AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD (Eph. 6:17)**—Put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God to stand against the schemes of the devil



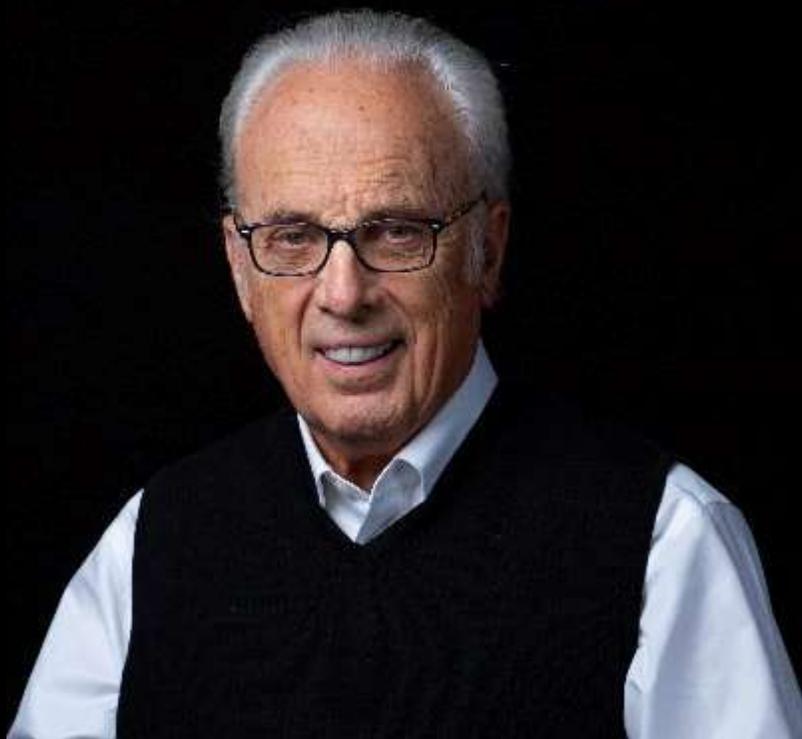
During World War Two, an officer was briefing his men on how to take a certain posture. He demonstrated to them the manner in which they needed to stay down on the ground so as to stay below enemy fire. He said in conclusion, “If you advance on your knees, you will always be safe.”

... PRAYING AT ALL TIMES IN THE SPIRIT,

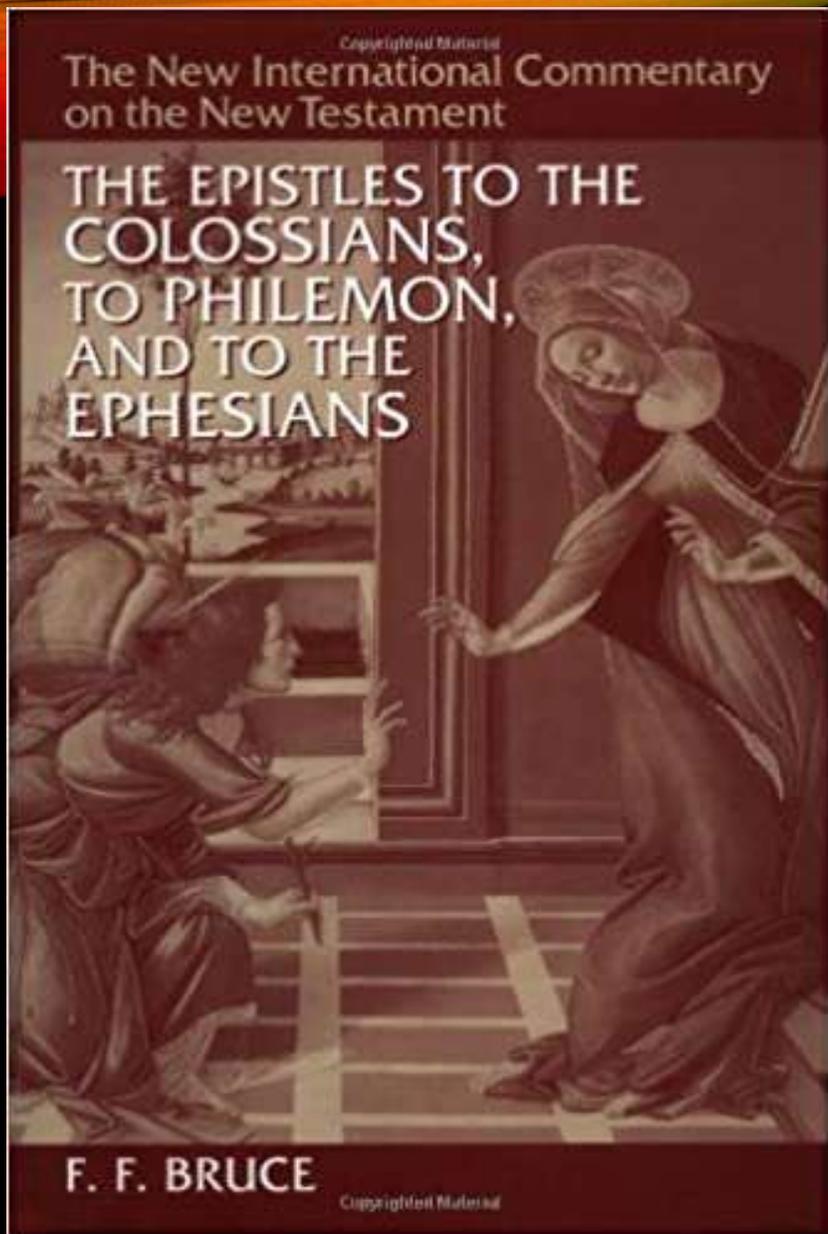


WITH ALL PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION.  
TO THAT END KEEP ALERT WITH ALL PERSEVERANCE,  
MAKING SUPPLICATION FOR ALL THE SAINTS ...

EPHESIANS 6:18



John MacArthur  
observes, “Ephesians  
begins by lifting us up  
to the heavenlies, and  
ends by pulling us  
down to our knees.”



Verse 18 is strictly speaking not a command, but two participles, praying and staying alert, which are dependent on the imperative stand at the beginning of verse 14 (*F. F. Bruce, The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians [Eerdmans], p. 411*).

**Warren Wiersbe:** Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword. We cannot fight the battle in our own power, no matter how strong or talented we may think we are. When Amalek attacked Israel, Moses went to the mountaintop to pray, while Joshua used the sword down in the valley (Ex. 17:8–16). It took both to defeat Amalek—Moses' intercession on the mountain and Joshua's use of the sword in the valley. Prayer is the power for victory.

THE PILLAR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

# THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

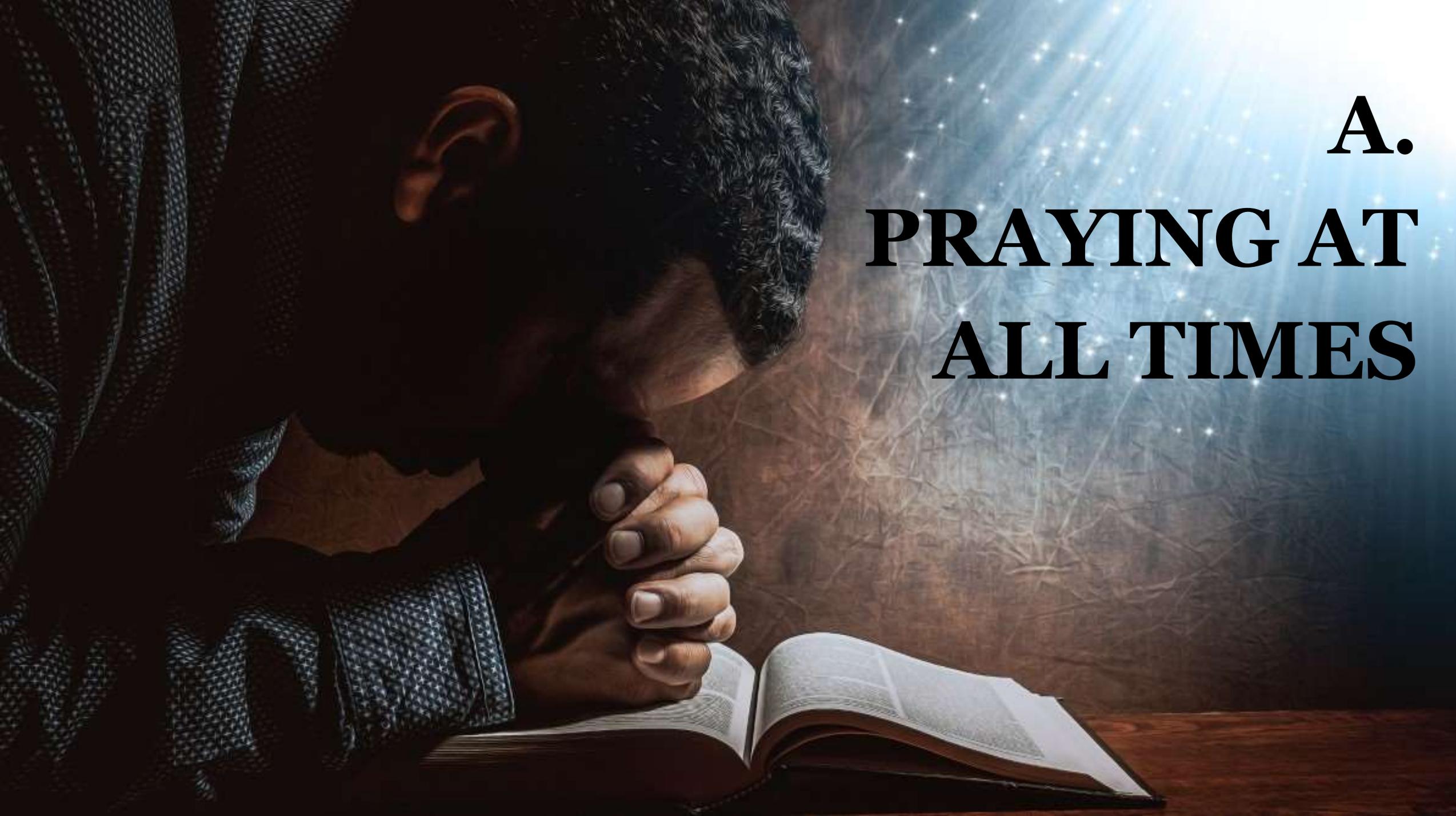
PETER T.  
O'BRIEN

Paul wants his readers to understand that prayer is 'foundational for the deployment of all the other weapons', and is therefore crucial if they are to stand firm in their spiritual struggle. The apostle wants them to realize that a life of dependence on God in prayer is essential if they are to engage successfully in their warfare with the powers of darkness.

- You stand against the schemes of the devil **by praying.**
- You fasten the belt of truth **by praying.**
- You put on the breastplate of righteousness **by praying.**
- You put on the shoes, the gospel of peace, **by praying.**
- You take up the shield of faith **by praying.**
- You take the helmet of salvation **by praying.**
- You take the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, **by praying.**

## THE FOURFOLD ALL:

**Ephesians 6:18**, “praying at **ALL** times in the Spirit, with **ALL** prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with **ALL** perseverance, making supplication for **ALL** the saints...”

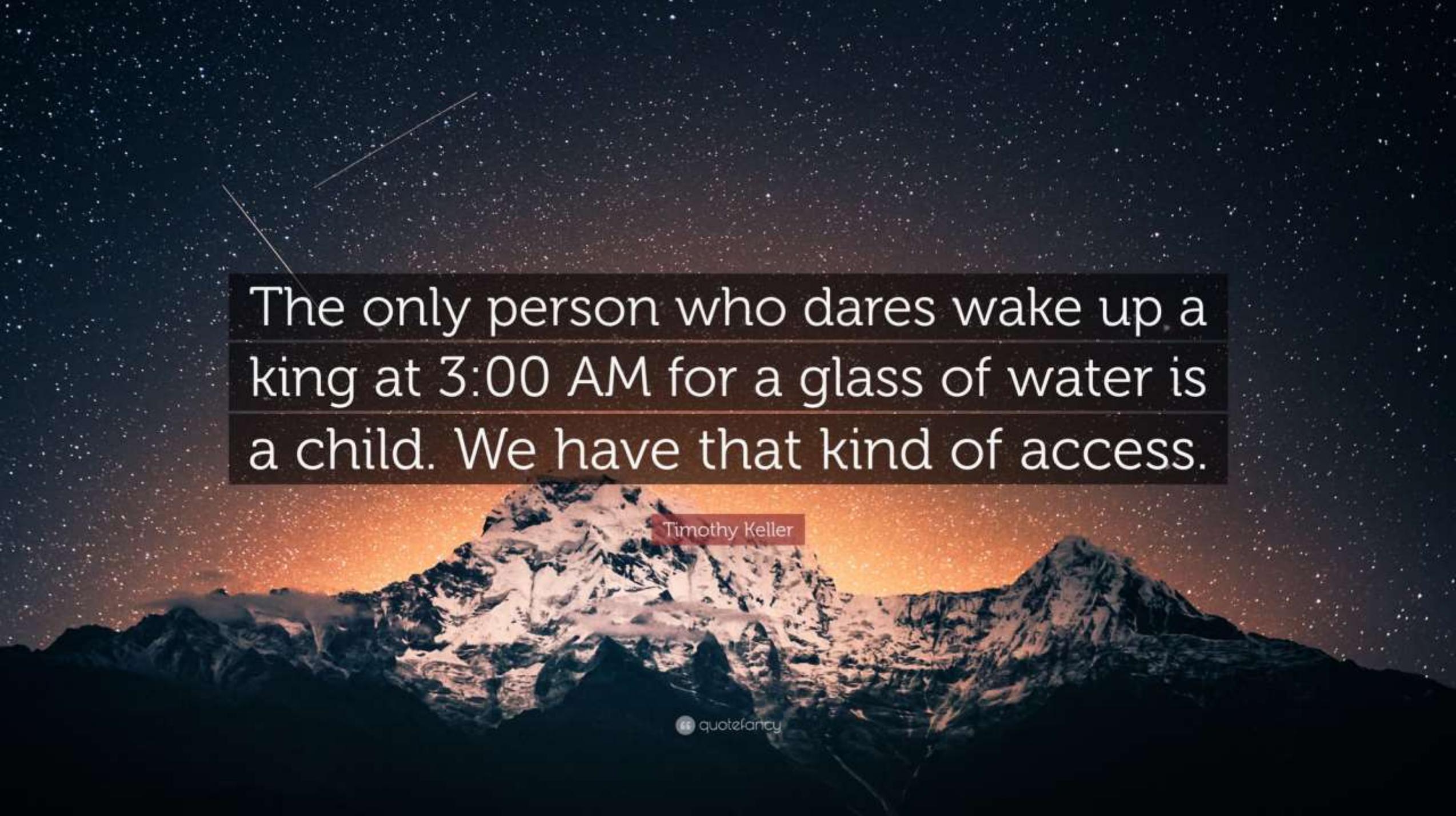


**A.**  
**PRAYING AT**  
**ALL TIMES**

## THE GRAND BENEFIT OF THE GOSPEL:

Hebrews 2:17, “Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”

Hebrews 4:16, “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”



The only person who dares wake up a king at 3:00 AM for a glass of water is a child. We have that kind of access.

Timothy Keller

# A. PRAY AT ALL TIMES

- ❖ Ephesians 6:18, “praying at **ALL** times”
- ❖ Colossians 4:2, “**Continue steadfastly** in prayer.”
- ❖ I Thessalonians 5:17, “Pray **without ceasing.**”
- ❖ Romans 12:12, “**Be constant** in prayer”  
(pray continually)

## **REMEMBER:**

These words were written to all kinds of believers: fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children, grandparents, businesspeople, employees, housewives, and shepherds/elders.

# WHY MUST WE PRAY AT ALL TIMES?



Because we are engaged in spiritual warfare at all times.



**Is Paul realistic?** We have to sleep. We have house chores to do. We have jobs to work. We need some rest and leisure. We must talk to people. **How can we pray at all times?**

## STEVEN COLE:

The phrase is literally, “at every opportunity.” It’s the same idea as 1 Thessalonians 5:17, “Pray without ceasing.” The Greek word translated without ceasing was used of a hacking cough. Someone with a hacking cough does not cough every second, but rather he coughs repeatedly and often. He never goes very long without coughing. In the same way, we should pray often and repeatedly.

## OTHER TRANSLATIONS:

“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion.”

“Pray in the Spirit in every situation.”



The Holy Bible doesn't command us to pray for some hours every day. It commands us to be in the spirit of prayer (pray continually) throughout the day. You know, it is much easier to pray at all times than pray for some hours at one time.

# HOW TO PRAY AT ALL TIMES?

- ▶ Pray in your personal devotions.
- ▶ Pray in your family devotions.
- ▶ Pray in your church intercession.
- ▶ Pray when you are anxious.
- ▶ Pray when you face a temptation.
- ▶ Pray when you sin.
- ▶ Pray before you leave your house and return home.
- ▶ Pray when you do shopping.
- ▶ Pray when you lie on the bed.

# HOW TO PRAY AT ALL TIMES?

- ▶ Pray when you do house chores (cleaning, washing, cooking, arranging).
- ▶ Pray when you are thinking and driving.
- ▶ Pray when your mind wanders (autopilot mode).
- ▶ Pray when you speak on phone with someone.
- ▶ Pray when you get a message on phone.
- ▶ Pray while you wait for something.
- ▶ Pray when you read/hear the news.
- ▶ Pray when you meet unbelievers (salvation).

## HOW TO PRAY AT ALL TIMES?

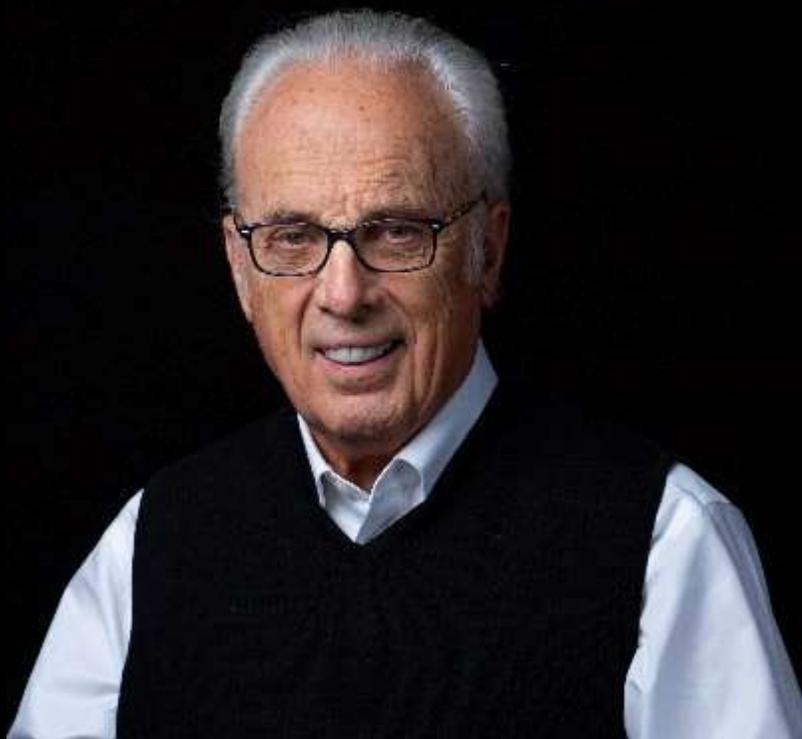
- ▶ Pray inwardly when you are in an important conversation (remember Nehemiah)
- ▶ Pray for fellow believers (inwardly) when you meet them.
- ▶ Pray with fellow believers when you meet them.
- ▶ Pray when you hear others' afflictions.
- ▶ Pray when you hear others' joys.
- ▶ When you get a moment, instead of constantly looking at phone—pray, pray, pray.
- ▶ Pray now and then while you are working.

# the practice of the presence OF GOD

by brother Lawrence



The medieval monk Brother Lawrence records his experience praying while working: “The time of business does not differ with me from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were on my knees.”



John MacArthur, “Our life is a continually ascending prayer, a perpetual communing with our heavenly Father.”