

Great Britain, under Winston Churchill, developed the first military tank in history by engineering an armored car onto the chassis of a farm tractor. Almost like a ship on land. The combination of steel with off-road capability immediately turned the nature of ground fighting from an almost purely defensive operation to one of offensive mobility . . . and eventually turned the whole tide of the war. The prospect of being able to move actively and thunderously toward the enemy, while being protected during the ride, spelled the end of merely digging in and hoping for the best.

Prayer is our armored tank. And when put into action by God's people, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18 KJV). Prayer is our major assault weapon in battle.

The apostle Paul certainly used it in that manner. After listing the various pieces of equipment known as the "full armor of God" (Eph. 6:13), he mentioned prayer as being an equally essential element of spiritual warfare, just like the shield, sword, and helmet. "Pray at all times in the Spirit," he said (v. 18). Prayer, to him, was a forward moving force, a battering ram that powered him ahead in pursuit of God's will. "Pray also for me," he said in the next verse, "that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (v. 19 HCSB). Prayer was the battle strategy he needed to propel him on to victory.

He was actually writing this request from prison, as an "ambassador in chains" (v. 20). Think how many layers of stone-cold reality stood between him and anything resembling the continuation of his ministry. And yet from inside his confined situation, prayer was still blowing holes into every obstacle that stood between him and his next assignment. To be locked up hand and foot, yet be bold enough to consider yourself free and ready to engage in whatever God has in store . . . that's NOT how normal people think. Unless we're people of prayer.

Prayer can do anything. Because with God, "all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). It can reach out and address any issue that anyone is facing anywhere on the earth. It can be silently engaged without the enemy ever hearing the life changing conversation going on in our heads and hearts with our Commander in Chief.

So this is not just a harmless little church ritual we're talking about. Nor a pitiful beggar asking for a handout he's almost sure he won't receive. There's raw power here. There's access to God Almighty. There's a certainty of His sovereignty. There's a boldness that no amount of enemy resistance can steal from us unless we give it away. And that only happens when we don't pray.

"The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" (James 5:16). The prophet Elijah, as this same passage in James says, "prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit" (vv. 17-18). Prayer means that God's miracle-working power is always a possible solution to whatever challenge stands before us.

Prayer provides an unlimited spiritual data plan, meaning we never need to worry we've drifted out of range from the signal tower. We can "pray without ceasing," the Bible says (1 Thess. 5:17) and know we're being heard with crystal clear accuracy at all times. Prayer is privileged access to the God of the universe, bought and paid for by the blood of His Son on our account for all those who freely receive Him as Lord

*This is an excerpt from [The Battle Plan for Prayer: From Basic Training to Targeted Strategies](#) by Stephen Kendrick and Alex Kendrick (B&H Publishing Group). Used by permission.*