

"THE WORLD" TRIES TO STOP US FROM PRAYING UNCEASINGLY

Session Eight



"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

We've learned that "praying without ceasing" really means always sending the message to the world that we are children of God, living our lives for His glory. But do you ever feel that no matter how much you may want to SEND that message, the world doesn't want to RECEIVE it, or that somehow the message gets "blocked" or lost, like a dropped conversation on a cell phone. The truth is that "the world" **doesn't** always want to receive this message, so it does try to block it.

→ What or who is this "world" that's causing us these problems?

We know that our world is God's Creation; He made it and everything in it, to be perfect and holy. But when Man chose to bring sin into this perfect Creation, Satan saw his chance to gain power over it by gaining power over us. Often, in the Bible and Church writings, "the world" is used to describe this difference between the life God intended for us and what we have chosen instead.



But God never stopped loving his Creation. John 3:16-17 tells us exactly how God feels:

"For God so loved _____ that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever _____ in Him shall not perish but have _____. For God did not send _____ into the world to _____ the world, but that the world through Him might be _____."

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came into this world to show us how to live so that one day we can be with Him in the Kingdom of God. Jesus understood that we would not have an easy time following Him; even Jesus was tormented by Satan and made to suffer because the world had fallen so far away from God.

Read Matthew 4:1-11 and talk about it.

→ What does this tell us about Satan?

→ What are some other ways that Jesus suffered in this world

Knowing how difficult it is to follow Christ while we are in this world, St. Paul often tells us that we have to be like soldiers: training, keeping in shape, and never giving up no matter how tough things look. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. List some of the things St. Paul tells us we can use as soldiers facing battle:

Shield of
Helmet of
Sword of
The whole

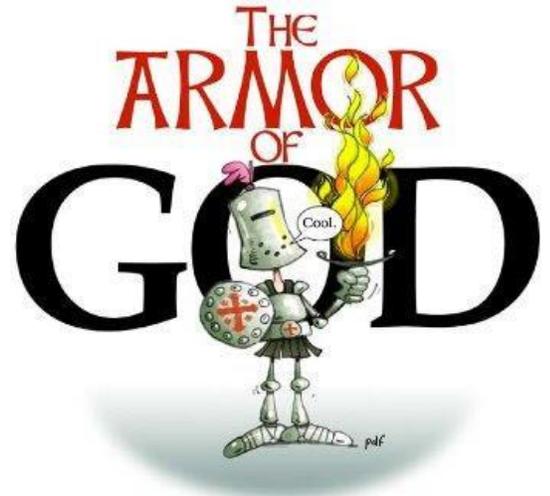
Prayer is one of the best weapons we have in our war against the Evil One, and a good soldier always makes sure his weapon is always working!

→ What are some of the tricks that Satan tries to use on us?

Read 1Kings 19:11-12 Now think about your day...Make a list of everything you hear from the time you wake up.

Do you think that you would ever be able to hear “the still, small voice” if it speaks to you? There's probably nothing on your list...music, TV, crowds of people, even video games... that 's all “bad.” But, when we get lost in these noisy distractions, we aren't giving ourselves the time we need to listen for God, and to think about the people around us.

The world also uses those same noisy distractions to tell us how to live, how to think about ourselves, and about other people. Think of some messages that the world sends to you:



When we hear these messages again and again, they start to fill our heads and our lives until we believe them and start putting God further and further down on the list of things that are important to us. St. John, in his first epistle, tells us “Do not love the world, or the things in the world...” because these things don't last like the love of God does.

Sometimes we can just walk away from things that we know are wrong, but we can't live in a cave, hiding from the world and the things that it tempts us with. Prayer without ceasing, with our words, our minds and our actions, will let us keep the things of the world where they belong and leave room for God in our lives.

Silent Contemplation Time: Scripture Reading on Goodness - Psalm 33(34)

The Breastplate Prayer of St. Patrick

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I arise today through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, through belief in the Threeness, through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.

I arise today through the strength of Christ with His Baptism, through the strength of His Crucifixion with His Burial through the strength of His Resurrection with His Ascension, through the strength of His descent for the Judgment of Doom.

I arise today through the strength of the love of Cherubim in obedience of Angels, in the service of the Archangels, in hope of resurrection to meet with reward, in prayers of Patriarchs, in predictions of Prophets, in preachings of Apostles, in faiths of Confessors, in innocence of Holy Virgins, in deeds of righteous men.

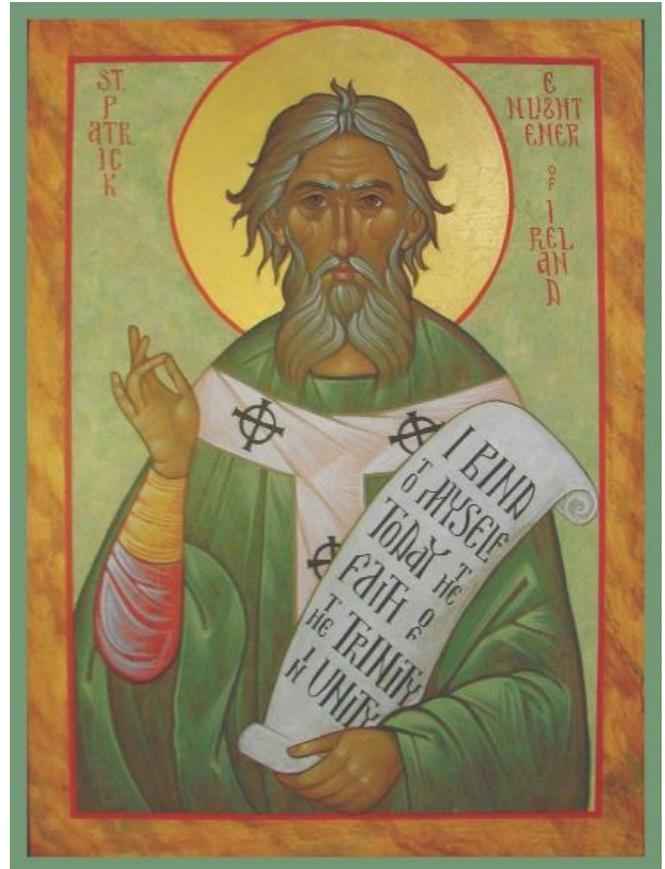
I arise today, through the strength of Heaven: light of Sun, brilliance of Moon, splendour of Fire, speed of Lightning, swiftness of Wind, depth of Sea, stability of Earth, firmness of Rock.

I arise today, through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me, God's shield to protect me,
God's host to secure me:
against snares of devils, against temptations of vices,
against inclinations of nature, against everyone who shall wish me ill, afar and anear, alone and in a crowd.

I summon today all these powers between me (and these evils):
against every cruel and merciless power that may oppose my body and my soul,
against incantations of false prophets,
against black laws of heathenry,
against false laws of heretics, against craft of idolatry,
against spells of women [any witch] and smiths and wizards,
against every knowledge that endangers man's body and soul.
Christ to protect me today
against poison, against burning, against drowning,
against wounding, so that there may come abundance of reward.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right,
Christ on my left, Christ in breadth, Christ in length,
Christ in height, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, through belief in the Threeness, through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.



Salvation is of the Lord. Salvation is of the Lord.
Salvation is of Christ. May Thy Salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.