



# The Church That Thrives in Crisis

## Part 4 of 5

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April 2020

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*“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*

**PRINCIPLE 1:** Churches that thrive in crisis see things other people don't see—they see the reality of heavenly places and discern the hidden causes behind the visible effects.

**PRINCIPLE 2:** Churches that thrive in crisis have a battle ready mindset.

**PRINCIPLE 3:** Churches that thrive in crisis walk in Christ's authority and function out of His ability.

**PRINCIPLE #4 Churches that thrive in crisis pray prayers that only God can answer; they shift from self-reliance to Holy Spirit-reliance.**

### BACKGROUND

The Apostle Paul spent three years living in Ephesus, more than any other location. Next to Rome, Ephesus was the most influential city in the Roman Empire and aptly called the “Mother City.” It was big in politics and the Head Roman Proconsul was located there. It was big in business with the highest priced real-estate on earth. It was big in religion, home of the goddess Diana, also known as Artemis. The enormous temple in honor of Diana located in Ephesus was known as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, four times larger than the Parthenon in Greece. Individual columns stood 60 feet tall. Twice a week her idols were paraded out of the temple, through the streets of the city, and then back to her temple. Her image was on their coins and her face was the face of the Olympic games. She was seen as the protector of the city and of their way of life. She was also called Lord, Savior, and Queen of Heaven. She loomed so large that everyone was afraid of her. They carried her little statues everywhere. In addition to Diana, Ephesus had more than 50 other lesser gods who were also worshiped. The city was thick in sorcery, witchcraft, fetishes, idols, superstitions, divination, amulets, fortune tellers, crystal balls, witches, witch doctors, curses, zodiac, astrology, and hallucinogenic drugs.

A well-known high priest, Sceva, had seven sons who tried to emulate the same power over evil spirits that the Apostle Paul had. One demonized person overpowered the young men, beat them up, stripped them, and left them running into the streets naked (see Acts 19).

The Apostle Paul had such a dramatic impact on the city that the people burned all their fetishes, emulates, and hallucinogenic drugs, the value of which was equivalent to 50,000 drachmas, or 50,000 day's wages. In today's U.S. economy, that would be equivalent to close to \$20 million dollars!

This background helps us understand the force of Paul's exhortations in Ephesians 6:10-20.

The Ephesian Christians were well aware of supernatural activity.

They could easily grasp Principle #1, seeing things others could not see, specifically the hidden causes behind the visible effects.

They could easily accept Principle #2, having a battle-ready mind, understanding the spiritual battle behind everyday effects.

They could understand Principle #3 and walk in Christ's authority.

They could easily transition to Principle #4, praying prayers that only God could answer, and shifting from soulish ministry, to Spirit ministry, and from natural ability to supernatural.

*"Praying at all [Greek: Pas] times in the Spirit, with all [Greek: Pas] prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all [Greek: Pas] perseverance, making supplication for all [Greek: Pas] the saints." Ephesians 6:18*

"All" Greek PAS is used 4x.

1. What? "all prayer"
2. When? "all times"
3. For whom? "all saints"
4. How? "all perseverance" (proskarteresis)

Proskarteresis means to lock on and refuse to let go until it takes full possession (Acts 1:14, 2:42, Colossians 4:2).

The reason prayer is strategic to all of God's work is because prayer is the venue that every pastor and kingdom leader moves from soulish ministry to kingdom ministry, from their own natural ability to flowing in Christ's supernatural ability. It often requires a crisis to make this transition, because it always requires desperation.

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