

“Praying The Armor Of God”

I hope that many of you have been attempting to memorize our “hammer verses” in the bulletin and on the homepage each week. Jeremiah 23:29 reads: “Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and *like a hammer that breaks the rock* in pieces?” (emphasis added) God’s Word works in us to shatter our hard hearts and to change us. That is why we encourage Scripture memory. When you can take God’s Word with you in your mind and think about it through the day, God’s Spirit can bring much fruit from that in you.

Earlier this year three straight weeks of hammer verses took us through Ephesians 6:10-18. Though I had memorized this passage years ago, the review of it led to a tremendous blessing. I have been using this passage as a guide for how to pray for myself, my family, and our congregation. Part of the reason I have done this is that verse 18 calls us to do that very thing: “To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.”

With this in mind, I am encouraging each of you to commit this passage to memory and then to use it as a guide for prayer in behalf of yourself, friends, family, those in your Bible Fellowship, neighbors, and co-workers.

To help us all do this I will walk us through Ephesians 6:10-18 in the next few newsletter articles and show us how to use it as an intercessory compass.

To start with, Paul tells us to “be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might” (Ephesians 6:10). In the first three chapters of this letter Paul shares with us all the blessings we have in Jesus Christ. Twenty-seven times in the first three chapters alone Paul mentions the reality we are united to Christ or “in” Christ. Since we are united to Him we: have faith, are adopted into God’s family, have been given new life, are purchased back from our sin and destruction, are forgiven of our sins, have an inheritance of future glory from God, have God’s seal of ownership upon us (the Holy Spirit), have the earnest payment from God (transformation by the Holy Spirit) showing how certain the completion of His work is in us, have great power from God since we have been reconciled to Him, have Christ and His power dwelling in us, and have the immeasurable love of God!

What we must pray for ourselves and others, then, is that we will come to learn and understand from God’s Spirit working in us through the New Testament just how we can: (1) Trust that Jesus Christ is in us and applying His saving work to us continually. (2) Look to Him in faith through prayer that we can gain from Him strength to do the hard things we face such as loving someone who is hard to love, remaining patient when it feels like God is detained from addressing our trials, or looking to Him for help out of a temptation.