

Week Forty-five: "The Armor of God and Prayer"

Day One: Small Group Guide

Read: Psalm 27 (p. 608)

Read: Commentary (p. 609)

Reflect: Under what circumstances are you plagued with doubt about God's goodness or even his existence?

Dig: Notice the rhythm of this Psalm: statements of faith followed by calls upon the Lord. How many statements of faith and calls upon God do you count?

What does Romans 8:31-39 (p. 1290) contribute to your understanding of the security of your salvation?

What does John 10:27-29 (p. 1215) tell you about who can separate us from God's care?

How would you answer the question posed in verse 1 of Psalm 27?

Apply: Write out a sentence or two about the usual way that Satan brings doubt to your mind. Then find one of the verses of Psalm 27 and pray that verse back to God as a prayer asking for assurance.

Day Two: "The Sword of the Spirit"

Read: Psalm 119:89-112 (p. 673)

Read: Commentary (p. 673)

Reflect: Do you memorize scripture? Why or why not?

Dig: In Psalm 119:89-112 you find the many variations or words to describe the torah or "law of God." List those various words that are found here.

Look up Matthew 4:1-11 (p. 1079). How does Jesus use "the sword of the Spirit" (the Word of God) to defeat Satan?

Does it appear that Jesus had this scripture memorized?

What does Psalm 119:11 (p. 671) add to your understanding of spiritual warfare and the word of God memorized?

What does the commentary say about why we ought to speak aloud the Word of God?

Apply: turning to page 1513 in the back of your Freedom in Christ Bible, speak aloud the 7th statement of truth found on that page. And believe it!

Day Three: "Praying with Perseverance"

Read: Luke 18:1-8 (p. 1183)

Read: Commentary (p. 1184)

Reflect: Have you ever prayed for something for a very long time? What happened?

Dig: How do the first verse of this passage (verse 1) and the last verse of this passage (verse 8) fit together?

How does Luke 11:5-13 (p. 1172) add to your understanding of this concept of perseverance in your prayers?

How does the next parable (Luke 18:9-14) fit with the theme and lesson of this parable?

If Jesus were to come today, how would you answer his concluding question (verse 8) with regard to your own life and the life of Madison Church?

Apply: Determine what you have given up praying for and begin again to seek God's intervention and grace in that particular situation.

Day Four: "Praying with Authority"

Read: 1 Kings 18 (p. 390)

Read: Commentary (p. 390)

Reflect: Who do you know who prays with authority and confidence? What is it about them that makes their prayers so effective?

Dig: Read the "Freedom Point" on page 391 to better understand how Elijah actually stacked the deck in Baal's favor.

What does Elijah's prayer in verses 36-37 tell you about his own heart and his purpose as a leader?

What does James 5:13-18 help you understand about how each of us can pray with authority and yet how there are conditions to be met if we are to pray with power?

Apply: Pray some bold and specific prayers as you close this lesson. Ask God for something big and audacious which is also according to his will to expand his Kingdom.

Day Five: "Binding and Loosing"

Read: Matthew 16:13-23 (p. 1099)

Read: Commentary (p. 1100)

Reflect: Is there more power in prayer when more people pray? Why or why not?

Dig: What is the basis for Christ's blessing of Peter? (see verses 15-16) What does this tell you about the basis for spiritual power?

Look up this cross-reference: Matt. 18:18-19 (p. 1102). What does this add to your understanding of the passage in Matthew 16?

What does this tell you about parents agreeing in prayer for their children, for elders being of one mind in prayer, etc.?

What does Matthew 18:21-22 tell you about the kinds of concerns that God has about what needs to be loosed or bound in our prayers of agreement with two or three others?

Apply: If you have a family member or friend who can pray with you, make an effort today (call them and pray on the phone, call them aside during lunch hour) to pray a prayer of agreement according to God's will. Then watch the results.