

Greetings Athelstonians!

We are in Week 7, the final week of slowly reading through Paul's letter to the churches in Ephesus (July 11- August 28).

In this resource you will find brief daily readings and space to journal, using the SOAP method. You might choose to engage with the readings daily or a few times a week. Feel free to adapt this resource as much as you like.

Blessings,
Rev Linda Driver

"At the time this letter was written, soldiers wearing armour were a familiar sight. For those hearing this passage, shields and swords were part of everyday life. We sometimes read this as a military call to war, to defend ourselves against the wily ways of the devil in a battle of good versus evil. However, it can also be heard as a call to live in God's presence and love, to abide in prayer and live wisely as we walk in God's ways, each and every day. We find strength as we trust God to guide and empower us to live in faith. The armour can be seen as a metaphor: in putting on God's truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation, in the strength of God's Spirit, and immersing our whole lives in prayer, we are ready to face whatever might come our way. We stand firm in prayer and love, in God's strength."
(Cheryl Wilson, from Worship at Home, Sunday August 22nd, 2021)

Reading Your Bible with SOAP!

SOAP is a helpful way to read and reflect on a Bible passage

S

S for SCRIPTURE: (TELL ME)

Take your time reading today's scripture in the 3 translations provided. Allow God to speak to you. Next, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you. Write it down. Feel free to make it a work of art.

O

O for OBSERVATION: (SHOW ME)

What is God saying to you in this scripture? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Be curious!

If you want to go deeper, research the passage further. Look up meanings in the original Greek or Hebrew. Consider who the author is addressing and the cultural context at the time it was written.

Bible Hub has some helpful tools for this: <https://biblehub.com/>

Write the scripture in your own words.

A

A for APPLICATION: (HELP ME)

How does the scripture apply to your life right now? Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, revelation, or correction. Write down how it applies to you today.

P

P for PRAYER: (LET ME)

This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or it may be a greater insight on what God may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say! Spend some time in silent contemplation. Write down the words that come.

Week 7 – Day 1



Ephesians 6:10-12

New International Version

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

The Message

¹⁰⁻¹² And that about wraps it up. God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no weekend war that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels.

The Inclusive Bible

¹⁰ Finally, draw your strength from Christ and from the strength of that mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armour of God so that you can stand firm against the tactics of the Devil. ¹² Our battle ultimately is not against human forces, but against the sovereignties and powers, the rulers of the world of darkness, and the evil spirits of the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:10-12

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 2



Ephesians 6:13-17

New International Version

¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The Message

¹³⁻¹⁷ Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long.

The Inclusive Bible

¹³ You must put on the armour of God if you are to resist on the evil day and, having done everything you can, to hold your ground. ¹⁴ Stand fast then, with truth as the belt around your waist, justice as your breastplate, ¹⁵ and zeal to spread the Good News of peace as your footgear. ¹⁶ In all circumstances, hold faith up before you as your shield; it will help you extinguish the darts of the Evil One. ¹⁷ Put on the helmet of salvation, and carry the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Ephesians 6:13-17

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Ephesians 6:18-20

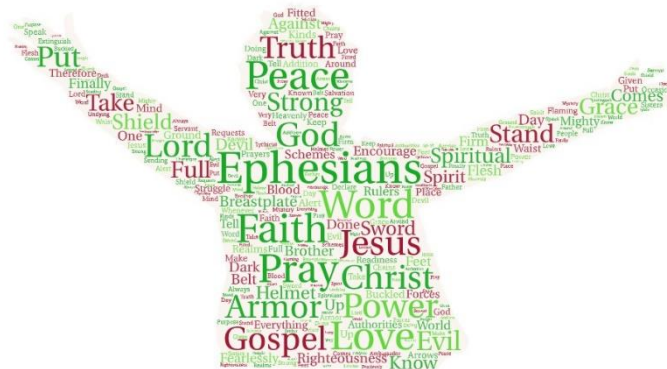
Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 4



Ephesians 6:21-22

New International Version

²¹ Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. ²² I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.

The Message

²¹⁻²² Tychicus, my good friend here, will tell you what I'm doing and how things are going with me. He is certainly a dependable servant of the Master! I've sent him not only to tell you about us but to cheer you on in your faith.

The Inclusive Bible

²¹ I would like you to have news of me and of what I am doing. My dear coworker, Tychicus, a loyal minister in Christ, will tell you everything. ²² I am sending him to you precisely for this purpose – to reassure you and give you news of us.

Ephesians 6:21-22

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Ephesians 6:23-24

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 6



Looking Back

I invite you to go back through your SOAP journal notes and see if there are any nuggets of wisdom that stand out for you. Jot them down on the next page.

The focus for the morning service on August 29, 2021 will be a look back over Ephesians, drawing together some of the major themes under the title, “It’s All About Love”.

Are there any nuggets of wisdom that you’d be willing to share as part of this service?

If so, you could either send me a few words to read on your behalf in the service, or send me a short video clip, or come up the front of church and speak for a minute or two.

Please let me know ASAP if you have something you’d like to share.

Blessings,

Rev Linda Driver

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My Nuggets of Wisdom

