

A Call to Bible Memory

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²²he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard...—Colossians 1:21-23

In Philippians, Paul describes Epaphroditus as his “*brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier*” (Philippians 2:25). Along with Paul, Epaphroditus, as a believer in Jesus, was a child of God (John 1:12) and therefore the two were brothers. And as he partnered with Paul in advancing the Gospel, Epaphroditus became a “fellow worker” with Paul.

But “fellow soldier”? Why did Paul call Epaphroditus a fellow soldier?

Because they were “*engaged in the same conflict*” (Philippians 1:30), fighting not “*against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places*” (Ephesians 6:12), “*keeping alert with all perseverance*” (Ephesians 6:18), as they put on “*the whole armor of God*” in order that they might “*be able to stand against the schemes of the devil*” (Ephesians 6:11). They were true soldiers, battling spiritual battles as they “*work[ed] out [their] salvation with fear and trembling*” (Philippians 2:12).

Those of us who believe in and receive Jesus as Savior are, along with Epaphroditus, brothers and sisters in the family of God, fellow workers in God’s kingdom spreading His glory and the message of salvation from generation to generation to the ends of the earth, and fellow soldiers fighting the fight of faith as we also work out our “*own salvation with fear and trembling*” (Philippians 2:12).

Engaged in the ongoing battle of “*continuing in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel*” (Colossians 1:23), every Christian must “speak” truth to his soul, fighting not only the temptations of the flesh but also battling for faith. The assaults of the enemy come in the form of lies which threaten to diminish the joy of our salvation and our love for the gospel, belief in the promises of God, a hunger for God, single-minded devotion to Christ, and our appetites for the spiritual rather than the temporal.

This collection of verses is called “Fighter Verses” in recognition of the spiritual battle every follower of Jesus is called to fight, and reflects the following four convictions:

- ***Since the life of faith is a fight of faith***, we and our children must be well-armed for this fight.
- ***The Word of God is an indispensable weapon*** for those engaged in this battle.
- ***The battle is becoming increasingly fierce*** while many Christians are unskilled in using this weapon effectively.
- ***Committing the Word of God to memory*** makes this powerful weapon readily available and provides us with an ever-present counselor and protector from the enemy of our souls.

The Fighter Verses have been carefully selected—52 passages per year for five years (260 total)—to arm us for the fight for faith and love, and against unbelief and sin. Although it could be said that every verse in the Bible is beneficial in the fight of faith, we call this selection of passages “Fighter Verses” because we believe they are especially useful in this battle and, therefore, important for us to commit to memory. Certainly many more verses could be added, which is one reason why we encourage you to personalize this set with portions of scripture which you have found helpful.

Not only is *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”* (2 Timothy 3:16), but the only way the Scriptures make us *“wise for salvation”* and for fighting the fight of faith, is *“through faith in Christ Jesus”* (2 Timothy 3:15). The Fighter Verse Scripture memory plan is built on and powered by the belief that Jesus and His Gospel are *“the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes”* (Romans 1:16)—not only the power for the initial faith of conversion, but the power for the everyday Christian walk of faith.

This is why Paul points us to the good news that *“it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure”* (Philippians 2:13) after instructing us to work out our salvation *“with fear and trembling.”* Indeed, it is why he starts his explanation of the armor of God by telling Christians to *“be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might”* (Ephesians 6:10). The good news is that God is at work in us and for us so that we might say with Paul, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”* (2 Timothy 4:7).

The resolve to memorize the Bible is a work of God. By sheer determination we may be motivated to memorize, but only God can provide the will and deep conviction necessary to sustain a life-long habit of committing the Word of God to memory. You will discover great spiritual benefit from this discipline, and, as with many spiritual disciplines, it is likely you will encounter spiritual opposition from the enemy of our souls. This eternal foe hates well-armed saints. Rest assured however that *“He who is in you is mightier than he who”* *“prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour”* (1 John 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8). Therefore, we encourage you to seek the Lord and His favor through prayer as you begin and as you continue to memorize His Word.

May God richly bless you as you employ the mighty weapon of the memorized Word to fight for faith in Jesus and against unbelief. 🛡️

—Sally Michael