

The Shield of Faith

The Protection and reaffirming of Our Faith

Introduction

1. **Before we get into the meat of our lesson, we need to first ensure that we know what Bible Faith is:**

Hebrews 11:1 **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**

- A. **We can also learn that:**

Hebrews 11:6

- 1) **We gain our faith by hearing the word of God.**

Romans 10:17

- B. **Let us also notice the following:**

2 Tim 3:14-15: But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and **that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

Gal 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God,** who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Heb 12:1-2: Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and **let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,** looking unto Jesus, **the author and finisher of our faith,** who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- (1) I am convinced that many are not able to put on the whole armor of God, to include the shield of faith, because many have not been truly “pricked” in their heart!**

- 2. One of the clearest teachings in all of scripture is the fact that not all who hear the gospel being preached will respond to it’s message.**
Acts 2:38-40
 - A. Another clear teaching is that not all who do respond to the gospel message, will continue to remain faithful to the Lord. Paul said:**
Colossians 1:21-23

- 3. This is why this lesson is so important to us. We need to put on the “Whole Armor of God” and be willing, ready, and able to fight for the faith that we have in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!**
 - A. Can it truly be said of us that we have our shield before us, ready to defend and fight for the cause of Christ?**

Nehemiah Rallies the People of God

1. In Nehemiah, chapter 4, we can read where Nehemiah rallied the children of God around the wall that they were building around Jerusalem.
 - A. The Wall needed to be built, yet at the same time, they needed to defend themselves against the enemy of God, the army of Samaria.
 - B. They listened to mockery and threats time and time again from the enemy, that the walls would be destroyed soon.
 - 1) But they had something very dear and that was a **genuine faith in God**. It was this faith that helped them overcome the enemy and to complete their work. Notice:
Nehemiah 4:6-9, 15-18
2. Here we can read where they were ready to fight and at the same time ready to defend!
 - A. Before they could be ready to do such a thing for Nehemiah and for God, **they had to have a true and abiding faith in God**.
1 Corinthians 15:58

The Whole Armor of God

1. From the Old Testament story of Nehemiah and God's people, we can now gain a better appreciation of what the apostle Paul was talking about in his letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 6:10-20

2. Here is a general exhortation to constancy in our Christian course, and to encourage us in our Christian warfare.
 - A. Life is warfare - we struggle with the common calamities of human life.
 - B. Religion is warfare - we struggle with the opposition of the powers of darkness, and other enemies that try to keep us from God and heaven.
3. The different parts of the Armor that the Christian is to put on are:
 - A. **The Belt of Truth** (6:14):
 - 1) The truth must be taken into our hearts. It is only useful when we read, study, understand, and believe it. It is also only useful when it is sincerely received and applied in our life!
 - 2) Character is not developed by hypocrisy, guilt, deceit - but rather by candor, openness, and faithfulness.

B. The Breastplate of Righteousness (6:14):

- 1) Moral uprightness should be the mark of a Christian as they approach their daily battle with the enemy. The Christian's obligation is to stand and fight. Armor is not needed for the backside of a dedicated Christian!

C. The Shoes (6:15):

- 1) Always ready to go to battle.

D. The Helmet Of Salvation (6:17):

- 1) This is the result of God's great grace toward us and although we can throw it aside voluntarily, the enemy can never strip it from us against our will.
 - It is only given up if we decide to give it up!

E. The Sword (6:17):

- 1) The Word of God.

F. The Shield of Faith (6:16):

- 1) This describes the unshakable trust in undeniable fact. True faith comes from hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). Following Christ requires faith! Sincere Christianity is a system of faith. When we take up the "shield of faith" - then we are ready for battle!

The Shield of Faith

1. **Satan is constantly throwing fiery darts at us and we must be able to protect ourselves and the glory of God.**
 - A. **But we can only do that when we have a solid shield of faith - not a flimsy one! It must be solid, and when it is, then we can truly resist Satan's darts.**

2. **We are demanded to resist the Devil.**

James 4:7: Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

1 Peter 5:8: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, **seeking whom he may devour.**

- A. **But how do we resist the Devil? Through our shield of faith! It will protect us by resisting the Devil in several different ways.**
 - 1) **By giving us the **WILL** to resist.**
 - a) **Some love the world and pleasures of sin and simply do not want to resist (John 8:44). These will not even try to resist but will give up, quickly, and easily!**
 - b) **God works successfully in man by getting him "to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). Nothing replaces a "Want to" spirit.**

- 2) **By giving us a **CONFIDENT SPIRIT** - a "can do" attitude.**
 - a) **We seldom rise higher than our own expectations of ourselves.**
 - b) **Remember Paul's "can do" attitude? "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).**

- 3) **By giving us the **SCRIPTURE** to resist.**
 - a) **The Bible is not some charm that scares the devil away, but its truth in man enables man to intimidate him.**
 - b) **Jesus met the Devil with "It is written" and the devil left Him (Matthew 4:1f).**
 - c) **We learn from verse 17 that it is our "sword" to fight the devil. Satan's strong delusion overcomes only those who "love not" and "believe not" the truth.**
2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

- 4) **By giving us PRAYER to resist.**
 - a) **The Lord told Peter to “watch and pray”, lest you enter into temptation. (Mark 14:38)**
 - b) **Paul asked brethren to pray for him that he might boldly preach as he “ought.” (Ephesians 6:18-20)**
 - c) **We need to ask God for help because He knows how to deliver. Peter wrote: “then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment” (2 Peter 2:9).**

- 5) **By giving us WISDOM to resist.**
 - a) **Good judgment is necessary if we are to defeat the cunning craftiness of the devil. Successful resistance demands that we be “not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11).**

- 6) **By giving us CHARACTER to resist.**
 - a) **This means that we must be “strong” in the Lord.**
 - b) **The weak are going to be devoured by Satan. Good character will reject sin and remain steadfast in the faith.**

1 Peter 5:9: Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

- 3. A Christian must be well armed, able to make use of all the proper defenses and weapons for repelling the temptations and strategies of the Devil.**
 - A. He has thousands of ways to lead unstable souls astray. Do we have the faith to truly resist him?**
 - B. Are we using all the armor of God to help us defend ourselves and the gospel of Jesus Christ?**
 - C. God has furnished the armor – it is up to us to put it on and to use it properly.**

Our Need to Reaffirm Our Faith

- 1. We need to take a bold stand and let our family and others know that we are sincere in our faith. We need more to be like Joshua as he said:**

Joshua 24:15: And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**

- A. It would be good for us to be reminded of our past and why we believed in God in the first place! The longer we drift from God the harder it is to return (Hebrews 6:4-6).**
- 2. Why is it that the Christian's faith weakens and they turn from their Savior?**
 - A. There is a myriad of excuses and reasons but the bottom line is this: "There is no true desire to let Christ be Lord of their life"!**
 - 1) Some fall away because of worldliness , Laziness, lack of interest, selfish pleasure, false teachings, family relationship pressures, etc.**
 - 2) But Jesus said:
Matthew 10:34-39**

3. **It is up to US where WE end up.**
- A. **I am convinced that people want to have a stronger faith. But people fail to realize that greater faith is not something that just happens to us.**
 - B. **It is the result of dutifully serving and doing what the Lord has given us to do.**
 - C. **To become more than what we are we must be dissatisfied with our present condition and **WANT to change**. Such was the admission of the apostle Paul:
Philippians 3:12-14**
4. **Firm Conviction Is A Must:**
- A. **Individually we must choose to keep serving the Lord.**
 - 1) **While it is true that we need the encouragement of our brethren along the way, there are still those times when we must walk alone.**
 - 2) **Jesus told Christians that the cost of discipleship would get high.
Revelation 2:10**
 - 3) **Faithfulness is firm conviction and being fully persuaded about God's revelation and truth. We **MUST** have **FIRM** convictions about God's Word!**
 - 4) **If we are not fully persuaded, we need to get fully persuaded!**

Won't you be determined this hour to take up the "shield of faith" and be **fully persuaded to serve your creator, the almighty God?**

