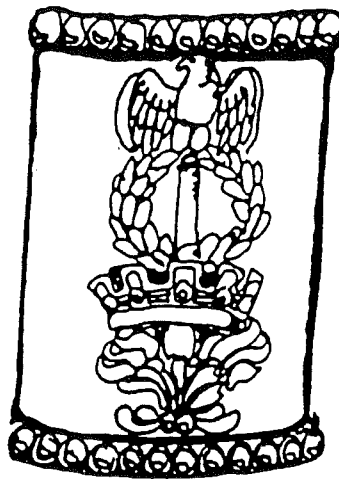


THE SHIELD OF FAITH

(How Trusting God Will Extinguish Satan's Fiery Darts)



Faith Is A Shield Of Protection

- When Feelings Break Down
- When Valleys Are Deep
- When Temptations Are Fierce

"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm 27:13)

Bill Kirk

“STANDING VICTORIOUSLY AGAINST THE ENEMY”

(Message #1)

Text: Ephesians 6:10-18
Subject: “The Power Of The Shield Of Faith”

(v.16) “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”

Introduction

- Fact:** God has given notice; that every believer is in a warfare.
Fact: God has made it clear; that no one is exempt from spiritual assault.
Fact: God has declared; there is an enemy to overcome in our journey as pilgrims and strangers.

Notice God’s Will

- #1. (v.10) “Be strong in the Lord”
- #2. (v. 11a) “Put on the whole armor of God”
- #3. (v. 11b) “Stand against the wiles (methods) of the devil”

Remember The Warning:

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat”. (Luke 22:31)

“Lest satan should get an advantage of us: For we are not ignorant of his devices”. (II Cor. 2:11)

Question: Pastor, what are the devices, wiles, schemes and methods of evil used against me?

Question: Pastor, how does satan defeat and sift so many in the battle today?

Some Prevalent Schemes At Work

- #1. Disenchantment when things go wrong.
- #2. Condemnation over past sin.
- #3. Worry over present circumstances.
- #4. Bitterness, unforgiveness and unresolved anger.
- #5. Stagnation in spiritual growth. (A dusty Bible)
- #6. Compromise, worldliness and covered sin.
- #7. Burnout, fatigue and exhaustion. (Prayerlessness)
- #8. Desire for position instead of servanthood.
- #9. Fear of the unknown.
- #10. Despising counsel and instruction.
- #11. Gossip, whispering and slander.
- #12. Credit misuse and financial bondage.
- #13. Rebellion against rightly ordained delegated authority.
- #14. Heresy and deception through counterfeits.
- #15. Enticement to live in the past.

- #16. Unbalanced and extremism with spiritual fads.
- #17. Self preoccupation, defensiveness and over sensitivity.
- #18. Lack of purpose and destiny in personal ministry.
- #19. Intimidation and the fear of man.
- #20. Pollution and contamination of the heart through the eye gate.
- #21. Jealousy and envy of what others have or do.
- #22. Feelings of poor self worth and low self-esteem.
- #23. Lack of accountability and submission.
- #24. Self pity and a martyrs complex (feeling cheated).
- #25. Personality worship of men in the ministry.

Question: Is there hope and joy in the midst of battle?

Answer: (v. 13) "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**".

The Good News Is:

- ◆ We've been given the armor to win the war.
- ◆ We've been given the armor to withstand every assault.
- ◆ We've been given the armor to overcome in every evil day. (The day of enemy assault within your soul)
- ◆ We've been given the armor to "take back" ground that's been given over for the enemy to work from.

Some Things Not To Be Afraid Of In The Weeks Ahead:

- #1. An increased awareness of sin
(God is simply revealing our weaknesses and ability to fall without His Grace)
- #2. A decreased sense of comfort
(Grace may be hard at work when you feel God's presence the least)
- #3. An increase in temptation
(No need to despair, God is strengthening your conscience and will towards absolute obedience)

As We Begin Our Series (4 Questions With Answers)

Question #1: What does it mean in (v. 10) "To be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might?"

Answer: It means:

- #1. To participate in the strength of Christ.
- #2. To receive strength from someone outside of ourselves.
- #3. To be endued with power from the hand of God.
- #4. To place ourselves in the place, where Christ can pour His strength into us.

Question #2: What does it mean to "stand" and "withstand" in the evil day?

Answer: The word "stand" is a military term (which means:)

- #1. To hold a critical position while under attack.
- #2. To stand firm when assaulted by the enemy.

Question #3: Since we do not wrestle with flesh and blood, what do we wrestle against (v.12)?

Answer:

God list 4 groups or rankings of demons that are under satan's authority:

- #1. **Principalities:** (or) rulers of a high order of demons linked with authorities.
- #2. **Powers:** (or) another rank of demons opposed to God.
- #3. **Rulers of the darkness of this world:** (or) demons in control of political systems.
- #4. **Spiritual wickedness in high places:** (or) demons involved in wretched wickedness such as the occult, satan worship, sexual perversion, etc.

Question #4: What are the divine resources available to overcome every scheme and plan of evil against you?

Answer:

- #1. The Girdle of Truthfulness.
- #2. The Breastplate of Righteousness.
- #3. The Feet Shod with the Gospel of Peace.
- #4. The Shield of Faith.
- #5. The Helmet of Salvation.
- #6. The Sword of The Spirit.
- #7. The Power of Pentecostal Prayer in the Spirit.

(This Morning: Divine Resource #1:)

The Shield Of Faith

(V. 16) "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked".

Question: What is the shield of faith?

Question: What is it for?

Question: Why is it so important?

Question: And what difference will it make in my life today?

I The Priority Of The Shield Of Faith

(v. 16) "Above all, taking the shield of faith".

Fact: In Paul's day, Roman soldiers used 2 common shields:

- ◆ The first shield was a small round shield:
 - #1. It was 2 feet in diameter.
 - #2. It was secured to the arm by 2 leather straps.
 - #3. It was lightweight, easy to handle and used to defend against the blow of a sword in hand to hand combat.
- ◆ The second shield was designed to protect the whole body:
 - #1. It was 4 1/2 feet high and 2 1/2 feet wide.
 - #2. It was designed to protect the entire body of the soldier.
 - #3. It was made of wood and covered over with metal or heavy oiled leather.

(Why The Shield?)

- #1. Soldiers who carried these shields were on the front lines of battle.
- #2. The archers stood behind this protective line and wall of shields to advance forward.
- #3. Anyone who stood behind these shields were protected from enemy spears and arrows.

(So Pastor, What's The Shield Of Faith?)

Fact: The shield "of Faith" is not saving faith (faith for salvation),

Fact: Paul is writing to the Ephesians who are already saved.

Fact: This "Shield of Faith" is for daily living:

- #1. It is trusting in what God has promised.
- #2. It is leaning on the Lord when tested.
- #3. It is believing in Jesus when faced with choices.
- #4. It is confidence in Christ for specific occasions.
- #5. It is trusting in the character of God's heart, when you do not understand God's hands.

Question: Why is this faith shield so important?

Answer: Because it will protect you and preserve you when confronted by satans most vicious attacks.

II. The Purpose Of The Shield Of Faith

Question: What's the big deal about this shield of faith?

Question: What's the big deal about believing and trusting in the ability of God?

Question: What's the big deal about seeing beyond the battle to the victory afterwards?

Question: Why is it so necessary to be men and women of faith?

(v. 16) "...Wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked".

Fact: Faith in the Lord will quench the fiery darts hurled your way.

Fact: Faith in the Lord will see beyond your personal battles to the victory to follow.

Remember The Fiery Darts In Paul's Day:

1. The tips of the arrows were wrapped in cloth and dipped in flammable pitch.
2. These flaming missiles would splatter on impact and spread burning bits of fire for several feet.
3. These destructive arrows and flames would destroy whatever they could latch to and ignite.

Question: Why must every fiery dart be quenched (or extinguished) in your life?

Answer: Because failure to quench them, will allow them to light fires within us, and fire spreads!

1. Little fires will become big fires.
2. Little weeds become bigger weeds.
3. Little worries become bigger worries.
4. Little depressions become bigger depressions
5. Little turmoils inside of you, become bigger turmoils inside of you.

Seasons of intense battle - yes!

Seasons of missile attack - yes!

(But Pastor, What's The Good News?)

(v.16) "Ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked".

- ◆ Faith will repel the devils arrows to sink you.
- ◆ Faith will overcome the missiles to sour you.
- ◆ Faith will extinguish the darts to stop you from enjoying your Christian life.

III. The Power Of The Shield Of Faith

(Pastor, on a practical daily basis)

Ask: How will faith act as a shield for my protection?

Ask: What will faith do to extinguish every fiery dart?

Ask: How will the power of faith in Jesus free me today of every enemy intrusion to doubt, despair and weaken me in battle?

(Remember)

◆ What a shield does for the soldier, faith does for the believer. (I repeat)

◆ How does faith act as a shield?

...To protect you in battle?

...To enable you to press on?

...To renew your joy for tomorrow?

...To lift you above what touches you?

...To overcome every stronghold to defeat you?

#1. Faith will enable you to embrace God, when you haven't got answers to your questions.

Illustration: (Job 1:21,22) (all read)

(Job Had No Answers As To Why)

1. He lost his transportation

2. He lost his finances

3. He lost his livelihood

4. He lost his health

5. He lost his friends

6. He lost his children

7. He lost his wife's support

(How Did Faith Protect Him?)

"Job said, naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord".

"In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly". (v.21,22)

◆ Faith knows that God makes no mistakes!

◆ Faith knows that God's ways are perfect!

◆ Faith knows that God brings good out of bad!

◆ Faith knows that God will make a way where there seems to be no way!

#2. Faith will enable you to embrace God, when your feelings and senses and reasonings breakdown (I repeat)

Illustration: II Chronicles 20:12 (all read)

(Jehoshaphat Was In Trouble)

1. Moab and Ammon came against him.

2. Jehoshaphat became afraid and went to prayer.

3. He called a fast for all of Judah.

4. He confessed that he was backed into a corner.

(v.12) "We have no might against this great company against us".

(But What Does Faith Say And Do?)

(v. 12) "Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee".

- Question:** Have your feelings broken down?
Question: Are you in between a rock and a hard place?
Question: Have you been jolted in recent days?
Question: Does faith really work today pastor?

(v.14) "...Then came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation".

(What Did The Spirit Have To Say?)

(v. 15) "Be not afraid nor dismayed, for the battle is not yours but Gods".

(Did You Hear That?)

God Is Saying To Jehoshaphat And To You:

- #1. "You don't need to understand all". #3. "You don't need those friends who left you".
 #2. "You don't need a perfect environment". #4. "You don't need the arm of flesh to win".

(Why Not?)

- ◆ Faith quenches the fiery darts of intimidation to your heart by saying:
"The battle is not yours, but Gods!"

#3. Faith will enable you to see beyond your present day of battle.

Illustration: I Peter 1:6-8 (all read)

1. The setting is a severe trial of your faith.
2. Yet God reveals what the shield of faith produces.

(v.8) "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory". **(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Instead of pouting and asking, "God why me?"
- ◆ Instead of surrendering to a pity party,
- ◆ Instead of wishing God would take you home,
- ◆ Instead of feeling guilty or blaming others,

(The Shield Of Faith Protects You - How?)

By Faith you look beyond your present trial, and see the good that's coming afterward!

(Hebrews 12:11 Records) "No chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous; nevertheless **afterward** it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby"

(In Other Words - Now Get This)

- ◆ When you are hurt or feel pain, satan wants you to surrender your pain to those who hurt you,
- ◆ Instead of surrendering your pain to the One who was hurt for you (Jesus). (Repeat)

(Remember)

- ◆ The shield of faith doesn't deny or confess away the reality of pain:
 1. Maybe you've lost your job.
 2. Maybe your health is breaking down.
 3. Maybe a friend has betrayed you.
 4. Maybe your spouse walked out on you.
 5. Maybe a loved one has died unexpectedly.

(Faith Doesn't Deny Pain)

- ◆ It just looks beyond the pain to the redeeming power of God who rules and overrules the plans of man.

(Remember Joseph Here)

- ◆ He never said to his brothers: "Now fellows, I know you didn't really mean to hurt me".
- ◆ Joseph had memories of his betrayal, slavery, imprisonment, 13 years "on hold",
- ◆ But faith protected Joseph from allowing past memories to rob him of his future.

(Be Aware)

- ◆ Satan uses 2 memories as a stronghold to work from, to torment people.
 - #1. Things you have done in your past (and)
 - #2. Things that have been done to you in your past.

(Get This Truth Of Victory Here)

- ◆ Any event in your past memory that presently robs you of peace and joy, announces that it's origin is from satan. (I Repeat)

(But Today That Fiery Dart Is Extinguished)

- ◆ Because faith will look beyond your day of battle and see the good that God has planned for you.

(Finally)

#4. **Faith will enable you to overcome the world.**

Illustration: I John 5:4

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith".

Question: What does the word "world" mean here?

Answer: I John 2:15,16 (The three avenues that all temptation travel down).

Question: How does the Shield of faith quench the fiery darts of the world?

#1. Faith sees behind the lust of the flesh:

- ◆ Faith sees the appeal to indulge our passions in ways forbidden by God.
- ◆ Faith discerns temptation to yield to temporary pleasure. (And forfeit a clear conscious)
- ◆ Faith sees Jesus when enticed and the fiery darts fizzle out to the ground.

#2. Faith sees behind the lust of the eyes:

- ◆ Faith sees beyond the advertiser seeking to pollute the mind.
- ◆ Faith discerns the temptation that comes through the eye - gate.
- ◆ Faith knows that satan is out to introduce carnal, sensual and lustful images in the garden of the mind.

#3. Faith sees behind the pride of life:

- ◆ Faith can see the snare of arrogancy and conceit.
- ◆ Faith can see the vanity of being #1.
- ◆ Faith can see the motivation to compare and compete.
- ◆ Faith will protect us from trying to impress people.

(And Guess What?)

Faith in Jesus this morning.....

- ...Still breaks the power of lustful eyes.
- ...Still breaks the power of sinful flesh.
- ...Still breaks the power of pride and self-sufficiency.

- ◆ Faith in Jesus still delivers us from the sin that Jesus died to destroy in us.

Conclusion

(One Last Thing About The Shield In Paul's Day)

1. It had latches on the sides. (why?)
2. So that every single shield could be hooked together with the other shields. (why?)
3. So that the army could band together and march as one. (why?)
4. To defeat the enemy by the power of united effort.

Remember:

One snowflake isn't much, but it takes a bulldozer to move them when they cooperate!!!

AMEN!

Pastor Bill Kirk