

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

“And without faith, it is impossible to please Him, because he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6

As a follower of Christ, we are in a daily, ongoing spiritual battle. Think for a moment: Do you actually believe this to be true? If so, then do your actions speak louder than words? When His mercies are new every morning, do you prepare your heart and mind for the day by being in His presence, sitting at His feet, and then rising up and putting on the armor He supplies you? If not, you have already lost the battle; you are a defeated foe. Purpose in your heart to get up and go with God today and every day.

When we abide in Him in this manner, we are instructed to take up the full armor of God: His truth, His righteousness, His gospel of peace, His salvation, and His Holy Spirit. Also mentioned in the sixth chapter of Ephesians is the “shield of faith”. This armor is supplied by God Himself. Think for a moment: Isn’t it such an interesting concept that God supplies our faith? We think we need to conjure it up on our own, to be mighty in faith in our own abilities and our own strength, but that is pride speaking. Instead, He supplies everything we need pertaining to godliness, including our very own faith. If you have unbelief hidden in your heart, confess that to Him and ask Him to turn your unbelief to belief.

This shield of faith is a reference to a shield that was the size of a door. Roman infantry would line up side by side with these heavy shields in front of them and then, when the opponent would attack by launching fiery arrows or darts, they would kneel down shoulder to shoulder, with these shields in front of them. Their bodies would be fully protected, and a wall would be created that the enemy could not penetrate. What a beautiful picture of faith working together in unity with other believers. Think for a moment: Who would you go into battle with when either you or another brother or sister in Christ is under attack? If you cannot name someone, pray that the Lord would connect you to other believers that would sound the battle cry with you in your hour of need and stand by your side, shoulder to shoulder.

These Roman shields were also wrapped in leather which could extinguish flaming arrows or stop a poisonous dart from penetrating the exposed skin. Many times we only take notice of the enemy when his attack is ferocious, like a roaring lion, but many a day it is the smaller skirmishes which are fired repeatedly and rapidly our way that defeat us: fear, doubt, anxiety, worry, unbelief. Think for a moment: what wounds you, derails you, which makes

you ineffective to hold your ground spiritually? After we are dressed in our armor pieces, we are called to *“pray at all times in the Spirit”* (Ephesians 6:18). Think for a moment: Do you take every thought captive to Christ? Go throughout the day praying continuously, bringing all your concerns to Him, because He cares for you.

This shield of faith also protects the other parts of God’s armor that we are called to put on. *“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”* (Hebrews 11:1). God gives us the armor, but we must strap it on. Only then can we pursue His truth so we will not succumb to the lies of the enemy, study His Word so that we can be obedient to His calling, and empower His Spirit to defeat the enemy. Faith is the only way that we come to believe that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, who desires relationship with us above all else. *“I am the door; If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”* (John 10:9) Have you found your hope to be in Christ and Christ alone? If not, then bend your knee behind the shield of faith and ask Him to enter your heart. If you have, are you abiding in His goodness and mercy as you walk out your faith, following in His footsteps on a daily basis?

All throughout scripture we are called to be active in our faith: to establish it, enlarge it, continue in it, and to love and serve with it. Think for a moment: How active is your faith today? Can this be said of you: *“We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers, constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father.”* (I Thessalonians 1:2-3).

If you have doubt, ask Him to reveal Himself to you more fully and deeply. Trust Him by faith. The unseen will become seen, and your heart will become brave to stand in the battle and win the fight.

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