

Series: Standing Firm
“The Shield of Faith”
Ephesians 6:16

Big Idea – Faith is the consistent application of what we believe about God to the issues of life.

Ephesians 6:14 Stand strong, with the belt of truth tied around your waist and the protection of right living on your chest.

15 On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong.

16 And also use the shield of faith with which you can stop all the burning arrows of the Evil One.

1. Description of the Roman shield

2 types the Roman soldiers used. A small round one for hand-to-hand combat.

A big rectangular one (the greek word used here is “*thureon*” – this is the one used here. It was 2.5 ft. by 4.5 ft wood plank covered with metal and often thick leather specially treated to put out flames. Designed for total protection – a wall, often put up over their heads as a shield when attacking a city wall where fiery arrows were shot down on the invaders. They would line up side by side and march forward with shields raised over their heads

2. Distinction in the armor – “above all”

Ephesians 6:16 “above all, taking the shield of faith”

“Above all” doesn’t refer to importance, but means “in addition to”. In other words, besides your belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, and shoes of peace – in addition to that.

Another way to say it is the first three were always kept on – Paul used word “having” meaning it was always on. Here he uses word “taking, or take up” which they would do in the heat of the battle. So they had “double protection”

So, with commitment (belt of truth), right living (the breastplate) and confidence in God’s power (the shoes), these are basics to protect every day. But when the arrows and fiery darts start flying, you need to grab and put on the shield of faith,

helmet of salvation and sword of the Spirit, Word of God. The first three might have been enough but God is in the business of doubly protecting his soldiers.

Illustration of Double Protection in John 5:28, 29 – vs. 28 says secure in Christ's hand, and vs. 29 secure in the Father's hand. Both the Father and the Son are holding on to us giving us double protection, double security.

3. Duty of the shield of faith

Ephesians 6:16 "...the shield of faith" with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

"quench" – means to put out or extinguish ALL the fiery darts

"of the wicked" - literally means the wicked one, refers to Satan.

"the fiery darts"

Historically, in battles, soldiers on the walls dipped their arrows in pitch which burned slowly and hotly, and lit them before firing them. When it hit its target it would splatter the flaming pitch and set the soldier's clothes on fire.

Spiritually, Paul used this as symbols of seducing temptations of impurity, lust, selfishness, fear, disappointment, betrayal, greed, envy, jealousy, covetousness and so on...

Summed up in 1 John 2:16 "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life".

Every temptation coming your way falls under one of these 3 areas. Satan does this to elicit and evoke ungodly, non-Christlike responses from us.

Our only defense Paul says at this point is "the shield of faith".

Why is faith a shield against temptation?

How does faith secure the victory?

4. Definition of the shield of faith

What is faith?

the biblical term “faith” means simply believing God – the bottom line of the Christian faith – everything we believe in, hold to, have confidence in.

All of Christianity is an act of believing.

Believing “that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6. It is believing that God wrote the Bible, that Jesus Christ is God, that Jesus died, rose and is coming again; by believing we can enter into His kingdom.

The Bible says, “the just shall live by faith” (Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:39). Faith is our life – it’s a matter of constantly, completely, and totally believing God.

It is NOT the faith that you use when you get in a car, that it will start, or get on a plane that it won’t crash. You have faith you’ll land safely, faith the water you drink is not poisonous, but this is NOT the faith Paul talks of here.

You need to make sure that your faith is in the right place, the right Person, Almighty God.

ILLUSTRATION – the great missionary John Paton was trying to translate Scriptures for the South Sea islanders. They had no word for “believe, trust, or have faith” in their language. He had no idea how to translate it since they had no word for it. One day, while he was working on it, a native came rushing up to his hut, hard and fast, dashed in the front door, and flopped himself into a chair in John Paton’s study.

Then he said, **“It’s so good to rest my whole weight in this chair.”** John finally had the word he needed for “faith” - the word which meant “resting one’s whole weight upon”. So Paton’s definition of faith was “resting your whole weight upon God”. This word went into their New Testament and a brought a whole civilization of nation to Christ.

Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith no one can please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that he is real and that he rewards those who truly want to find him.”

How does it work/shield us against temptation?

Garden of Eden – Genesis 3:1-6. Satan said to Eve, “has God really said” trying to get her to doubt God. Said God was lying because He didn’t want you to be like Him knowing good and evil, so got her to doubt God’s word and think He had

ulterior motives. Every temptation that comes to us wants us to believe Satan, not God.

Temptation of Christ – Satan twisted Scriptures to try to get Jesus to doubt God and believe Satan.

Believers today – Satan tries to get you to distrust God and His Word. He comes to you and says, “I know the Bible says you’re not supposed to have sex outside of marriage, but so what, it’s fun! Go ahead.” Every time you sin, you’ve bought Satan’s lie that God is just trying to rob you of fun and be a cosmic kill-joy!

God says don’t do it, and Satan says, do it, do it, do it.

Then the question is, who do you believe when you sin. God or the devil? You believe the devil! Who should you believe? God. Why? Because Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44), so when you believe him you are believing a lie.

God on the other hand, “cannot lie”, so with God you believe the truth when you obey Him.

If you want to be happy and blessed, obey God’s Word.

Proverbs 8:34 “Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the LORD;”

Jeremiah 15:16 “When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God of Heaven’s Armies.”

Revelation 1:3 “Happy is the one who reads the words of God’s message, and happy are the people who hear this message and do what is written in it.”

Psalm 1:1 “Happy are those who don’t listen to the wicked, who don’t go where sinners go, who don’t do what evil people do.

2 They love the LORD’S teachings, and they think about those teachings day and night.”

Every verse in Psalm 119 has a reference to the benefits of God’s Word, His promises.

Psalm 119:11 "I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Faith then in God's Word is a shield to quench sin's fiery darts.

Application:

Our shield of faith in God's Word helps us stand against the fiery darts, the temptations of Satan.

But if we believe Satan, our shield comes down and we get blasted.

Proverbs 30:5 "Every word of God *is* pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him."

The shield of Faith is the consistent application of what we believe about God to the issues of life.

If you don't trust Him, then you don't know Him well enough, because if you really knew Him, you'd trust Him.

It all goes back, like everything else does in the Christian life, to your relationship with God.

The better you know Him, the more you'll trust and believe Him.

Proverbs 18:10 "The LORD is like a strong tower; those who do right can run to him for safety."

Genesis 15:1 "...the word of the LORD came to Abram... "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

Hebrews 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

37 For in a very short time, "The One who is coming will come and will not be delayed.

38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if he turns back with fear, I will not be pleased with him."

39 But we are not those who turn back and are lost. We are people who have faith and are saved.

1 John 5:4b "...this is the victory that has overcome, that conquers the world--our faith."

