

USE THE SHIELD OF FAITH

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We need to be alert and be aware of satan the devil and the strategies that he uses against us.

1 Peter 5:6-9 (NKJV)

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; (be watchful, be alert) because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 **Resist him, steadfast in the faith,** knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

The devil is going about looking for people to devour ... and ... he finds some! Much of the time ... maybe all of the time ... we are oblivious to the spiritual world ... to our enemy. Perhaps we do give a foothold to the devil. Remember: satan's ministers look like "ministers of light".

Ephesians 6:10-17 (NKJV)

10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.*

11 **Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13 **Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

(So when the battle is over ... we are still standing)

14 **Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,**

15 **and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;**

16 **above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts** *(flaming spears ... flaming arrows ... flaming missiles ... designed to take you out of the battle)* **of the wicked one.**

17 **And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;**

Here are various characteristics described as armour. Today we will take a closer look at the "shield of faith".

What are these fiery darts? Doubt? Despondency? Self-pity? Fear? Anxiety? Envy? Jealousy? Pride? They may all come our way ... but faith is our protective shield. If we are assured of God's loving kindness ... if we continue to believe God ... we will put those fiery darts out. Doubt and belief are two very different choices. We make the choice. We can live by faith or by sight. We have to choose!

Deuteronomy 30:11-20 (NKJV)

11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off.

12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'

13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'

14 **But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.** *(The message ... the truth ... is with you*

... in your mouth ... in your heart. You should know it and believe it!)

15 "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil,

16 in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.

17 But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them,

18 I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess.

19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; (YOU CHOOSE! CHOOSE LIFE!)

20 that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

It's very plain ... choose ... choose life ... CHOOSE FAITH ... CHOOSE BELIEF RATHER THAN DOUBT ... CHOOSE FAITH RATHER THAN OUR PHYSICAL SENSES.

Romans 10:5-10 (NKJV)

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."

6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above)

7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The Word of Faith must be in two places ... in our heart and in our mouths. Heart and mouth connection.

Romans 10:13-17 (NKJV)

13 For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,

Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (*Faith comes. How does it come? By fasting? Lengthy times in front of the tv set? NO! By hearing and hearing and hearing ... the Word of God ... The belt of truth. It doesn't come by "having heard" the Word of God*)

We don't so much have a faith problem ... we have a Word problem. If we want a shield of faith ... it comes by hearing and hearing and hearing ... The Word of God.

2 Corinthians 4:8-18 (NKJV)

8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—

10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death is working in us, but life in you.

13 And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, (remember: faith is in two places ... in our heart and in our mouth)

14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, (subject to change) but the things which are not seen are eternal. (He's not dwelling on his physical senses ... he's using his "eye of faith". Paul chose to walk by faith)

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. (He was conscious of all of the physical problems ... what did he choose to look at? All of the bad things that were happening to him? NO! He chose to focus on the good things ... the blessings ... the reward. He chose

to not look at the things which you can see but look at the things he couldn't see)

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 (AMPLIFIED)

1 NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].

Hebrews 11:1 (NASB)

1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith is the conviction ... the title deed. (Greek: Hupostasis ... Title deed)

John 20:19-20 (NKJV)

19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

John 20:24-29 (NKJV)

24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of

the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (*Thomas was publicly reprimanded here by Jesus*)

Luke 24:13-27 (NKJV)

13 Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

16 But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

17 And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

18 Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

19 And He said to them, "What things?"

So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

20 and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.

21 But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

22 Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.

23 When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

24 And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."
(*They didn't believe!*)

25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! (*God isn't impressed with slowness of heart to believe*)

26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

We will come into situations where we have to choose ... to walk by faith ... or by sight. "I'll believe it when I see it" is not the place to be.

Romans 4:16-22 (NKJV)

16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."

19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the

deadness of Sarah's womb. (He could have considered his situation ... but he didn't)

20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." (He was strong in faith and he believed)

James 1:5-8 (NKJV)

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. (Doubt and go without. Believe and receive)

7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (We have to be fixed ... single-minded)

1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV)

14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (We find God's will in the Word of God. We can go to God's Word and see what it says!!)

15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NKJV)

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:17 (AMP)

17 Therefore do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but **understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is.**

1 John 5:1-5 (NKJV)

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

2 **By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.**

3 **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.**

4 **For whatever is begotten of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.** (*Faith assists us to overcome the world. We are supposed to be "overcomers of the world" by our faith. If we don't have the faith ... we know where to find it ... faith comes by hearing and hearing and hearing*)

5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Mark 6:1-6 (NKJV)

1 Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him.

2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!

3 **Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him.** (*This guy is nothing special ... we know him ... and they were offended*)

4 But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."

5 Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.

6 And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching. (*He could do no mighty work ... because their doubt and unbelief stopped Him*)

Mark 11:20-24 (NKJV)

20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away." (*Jesus cursed the tree by speaking to it. He devoted it to destruction*)

22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.

23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

(*"Whoever" is you and me. We must SPEAK if we want to change a situation. We must "SAY". When do you believe? When you pray! ... Before we receive!*)

Mark 11:24 (NASB)

24 Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.

Hebrews 10:35-39 (NKJV)

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 yet a little while,

And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

38 **Now the just shall live by faith;** (*not something we switch on and then switch off*)

But if anyone draws back,

My soul has no pleasure in him."

39 **But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.** (*We are people of faith. Believers believe and doubters doubt*)

Our motto should not be, "seeing is believing". Above all .. use the shield of faith. Spend quality time in the Word of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing ... the Word of God.

Make sure we choose The Word of Life. Surely we can all find time to at least read the Bible?!! Get started!!