

Spiritual Warfare part 3

Ephesians 6:10–18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor 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 armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 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 of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

The Shield of Faith

The Roman Shield covered the entire body. And when they joined with other soldiers, they became a walking fortress.

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

There are a few things to note as we move into the shield of faith:

- Above all. This really means “in addition to.” There is a division between the previous pieces of armor.
- In fact, the wording changes.
 - **Ephesians 6:14-15** 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;
 - These are past tense. You already have these things.

- Now listen - **Ephesians 6:16** above all, **taking** the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
- At salvation you have peace with God. You have been made righteous. The truth of who God is and who you now are never changes.
- **Take up faith** – believe.
 - This is an action word.
 - The others are implied as standing in them because they are already done.
 - But here, we are to take up faith. The word actually means to receive up into.
 - That's because our faith even comes from Jesus. We don't have to muster more faith. We receive it from Him.
 - **Romans 12:3** For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.
 - **Hebrews 12:2** 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.
- Believe in God's truth. Believe you are righteous. Believe you and God are at peace.
- **John 6:29** Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

Listen to what is said here about faith

- **Matthew 6:30** Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?
 - Faith in God as our provider

- **Matthew 8:26** But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.
 - Faith in God as our protector
- **Matthew 15:28** Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great *is* your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.
 - Faith in God as our Healer
- **Matthew 21:21** So Jesus answered and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it will be done.
 - Faith in God as the One that accomplishes the impossible
- **Romans 3:27-28** Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.
 - Faith that God is our justifier
- **2 Corinthians 5:7** For we walk by faith, not by sight.
 - Faith is how we live our lives in the everyday
- **James 5:15** And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.
 - Faith that God heals us not just physically, but in all ways
- **1 John 5:4** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.
 - Faith that God is our victory

How do we take up the shield of faith?

Identify areas where you have difficulties believing God.

- This may involve self-reflection.
- **Psalm 13:1** How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?
 - David struggled with believing some of God's promises.
 - This struggle is not a sign of weakness, but a pathway to a deeper trust in God.
 - **Psalm 13:5-6** But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. ⁶ I will sing to the LORD, Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

Once you have identified areas you struggle in your faith with

Get in the Word of God

- **Romans 10:17** So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
- The word for word here is Rhema. When we are reading the word of God, we should also be listening to the voice of God.

Get around other believers that do have faith in those areas

- Ask them specifically for testimonies or how they got to where they do believe.
- Pray together
- **1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Spend less time in the world and more time in the presence of Jesus

- **1 John 5:19** We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one.

The Helmet of Salvation

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Salvation – not Sozo. Soterion – Rescue or deliverance. Specifically looking at Christ as our deliverance.

If Christ is our salvation, our deliverance, then we have hope that nothing can defeat us.

Paul expounds on this later on in Thessalonians:

- **1 Thessalonians 5:8** But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation.

Or in other words, our hope is in Christ. He is our strength. He is our deliverer. He is our victory.

But specifically, this is a helmet which is over our heads. This is because the enemy attacks are mostly centered on our minds.

- **2 Corinthians 10:4-5** For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
- “Bringing every thought into captivity.” What do we really think this means?
 - It is exercising authority over the mind.
 - It is having an active thought life
- Strongholds: a fortification of the soul where incorrect beliefs and thoughts of who God is and who you are in Christ reside.
 - Thoughts on God the Father as unapproachable or angry; anything contrary to who He is.
 - Belief systems we have that have misshapen our identity, such as worthlessness, insignificance, superiority, etc.
- Arguments (Speculations): reasoning and distorted habitual thought patterns that guard those incorrect beliefs and thoughts from attack

- We do things in our own strength instead of relying on God.
- Applying logic to spiritual matters.
- Bargaining with God.
- Habits of thinking — i.e., “I always get the long line,” or “Things always break when I have extra money.”
- Every high thing against the knowledge of God: the culmination of those habitual thought patterns, which result in distorted beliefs systems that demand your allegiance above God (i.e., pride, idols in our lives, not trusting God, etc.).

The helmet of salvation is to counter all these attacks from the enemy.

This is accomplished by allowing Christ to change the way we think.

- **Romans 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Put on the Helmet:

Be intentional with your thought life

- **Colossians 3:1-2** If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.
 - What will we allow ourselves to dwell on.
 - Just because you think it, does not mean you have to believe it.
 - Satan is the Father of lies.
- **Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Learn to recognize thoughts for what they are — harmful, helpful or neither.

- Meditate on God's Word and His promises as they relate to specific thoughts.
- Recognize thought patterns and exercise authority over them.
- Think above the line. See (ask Jesus to show you) what is really happening.
- Don't ask God to remove those thoughts. Instead take authority, and meditate on Scriptures that speak to it.

Just because you think it, does not make it true.

- You can deal with a thought or a lie *before* it takes root in your soul.
- RECOGNIZE the origin of any thought: Is it attacking your character or is it encouraging?
- Is it accusing and condemning you or is it healing and releasing freedom?
- Is it confusing you or clarifying things for you?
- Will it lead to your destruction or will it lead you to a closer relationship with the Lord?
- Does it cause you to doubt God's character and motives, or does it increase your faith?

ALLOW OR DENY that thought further entrance into your mind. Should it be allowed to come in and be considered further?

CONFRONT the thought if you have determined that the thought should be denied entrance.