

1. Stand by Taking Hold of the Shield of Faith – “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (16).
  - a. Faith in God and His Word is the believer's shield from the evil one's attacks.
    - i. Faith is vitally important in the life of a believer – “But without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 1:6).
    - ii. The object of our faith is the critical component in moving mountains, not the size of our faith (Matthew 17:14-21).
    - iii. Our faith is often sporadic, inconsistent, and short-lived; It is prayer and fasting that can focus our faith for continual strengthening and renewal (Matthew 17:21).
  - b. The Shield of Faith is a critical piece of our armory.
    - i. Throughout the OT the shield was commonly used as a metaphor to describe God's power and protection of His people.
    - ii. Genesis 15:1 “After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”
    - iii. 2 Samuel 22:31 “As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.”
    - iv. When we trust in God He shields us from harm just as He shielded Israel from Pharaoh's army (Ex. 14).
    - v. Faith opens our eyes to spiritual realities (2 Kings 6:15-23).
  - c. As believers place their faith in God, they receive divine strengthening (Ephesians 3:16-17).
    - i. Faith is the way believers step into divine empowerment and experience a greater measure of Christ's victorious presence in their lives.
    - ii. In contrast to the demonic powers of the Ephesians day, God's power is personal, received by faith in a personal God, not by performing a ritual or conjuring spirits.
    - iii. Believers receive their strength from Christ's power (6:10).
  - d. Faith in God shields us from the flaming arrows of the evil one.
    - i. The fiery darts of the wicked one can be extinguished.
    - ii. Romans would cover their shields in leather and soak them in water before going into battle to extinguish any flaming arrow that stuck in their shield.
    - iii. The Ephesian god, Artemis, promised rain down fiery arrows upon his enemies; this passage of Scripture would have been a great comfort to Ephesian believers.
    - iv. We are to pray that God would deliver us from the evil one (Matthew 6:13).
    - v. Jesus has prayed for us that we would be protected from the evil one (John 17:5).
2. Stand by Taking the Helmet of Salvation – “And take the helmet of salvation” (17a).
  - a. The Helmet of Salvation is an assurance of eternal salvation (cf. 2:1-9).
    - i. All those who've placed their faith in Christ have been made alive eternally (1-5).
    - ii. All those who've placed their faith in Christ are already seated with Christ in heavenly places (6).
    - iii. All those who've placed their faith in Christ will dwell with Christ eternally (7).
    - iv. This eternal salvation is made available to us by grace, not works (5, 8-9).
    - v. This eternal salvation is accessed by faith in Christ's finished work (8).
    - vi. When believers doubt their salvation, they have no confidence to stand against the wicked one.
    - vii. When believers go into battle with full confidence of their eternal salvation, they are bold as lions.
  - b. The Helmet of Salvation is an assurance of present salvation (cf. 1:15-23).
    - i. Christ has given believers a vast inheritance that is so hard to fully grasp that the Holy Spirit must reveal it to us a little at a time (17-18).
    - ii. Christ connects believers with the supreme source of power for deliverance (19-23).
    - iii. Believers now share in Christ's power (“dunamis” Acts 1:8) and authority (“exousia” Matthew 28:18) over the devil and his domain.

- iv. All the evil powers are under Christ's feet, and believers are part of Christ's body (1:21-23).
3. Stand by Taking the Sword of the Spirit – "and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (17b).
  - a. Wield the Sword of the Spirit offensively by sharing the Gospel.
    - i. The word that Paul uses for sword was the most commonly used word for a sword; this was the sword worn by every Roman infantryman and often denoted a short sword, and could even refer to a knife; this sword should be distinguished from the large broadsword.
    - ii. The sword is supplied by the Holy Spirit.
      1. The Holy Spirit inspired the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
      2. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to convince sinners of their need for the Gospel (John 16:8).
    - iii. Believers must learn to make known the gospel of Jesus Christ which is the ultimate offensive attack against the kingdom of evil (Romans 10:13-17).
  - b. Wield the Sword of the Spirit defensively by using it to resist temptation.
    - i. We "sharpen the sword" by hiding God's Word in our hearts so the Spirit can call it to mind in the hour of need (Psalm 119:11).
    - ii. We wield off temptation by answering satan's lies with the Word of God (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).

Conclusion:

1. Are you prepared to share the Gospel to those who are still trapped by the wicked one?
2. Where are you placing your faith?
3. Are you taking the time to prepare your faith before the battle?
4. What lies of the devil have penetrated your armor? What Scriptures do you need to meditate upon to repel them in the future?
5. Are you sure of your soul's eternal salvation? Do you have complete assurance?
6. Are you growing in your understanding of God's power over the wicked one? How does that understanding changing the way you live?
7. Are sharing the gospel with others? Are you praying for the lost around? Are you praying about ways to reach them?
8. Are you hiding God's Word in your heart? Are you answering satan's lies with God's Word?