

# Christian Combat: Equipment Check – War Shield! Ephesians 6:16

*Pastor Jason Dennett's Notes*

A 2009 study suggested that optimists live longer than pessimists do. The study of almost 100,000 women found that optimists—people who expected that good things would happen—were 30 percent less likely to die of heart disease while the study was taking place than pessimists. In addition, trusting women were 23 percent less like to die of cancer than the “cynically hostile.”

The Lord calls us as Christians to **WALK** and **LIVE** by **FAITH** in Him!

**NKJV** - *"..above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."*

**NVI** - *"Además de todo esto, tomen el escudo de la fe, con el cual pueden apagar todas las flechas encendidas del maligno. "*

**NLT** - *"In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil."*

**I. The War Shield - HISTORICALLY!**

**II. The War Shield - BIBLICALLY!**

**III. The War Shield - PRACTICALLY!**

**I. The War Shield - HISTORICALLY!**

- On the battlefield of the ancient world, one of the most vital pieces of equipment was the **WAR SHIELD**. It protected the soldier from the enemies weapons such as axes, swords, spears, and arrows. The form of the **WAR SHIELD** differed greatly from nation to nations, every army carried them to one degree or another.
- The Roman **WAR SHIELDS** were some of the most effective and well designed in military history. They had 2 basic varieties, the first of which was a personal combat shield. These was called the "parma" shield, and was about 2 feet in diameter. It was a round shield for single person combat. They were effective in defending soldiers against close range weapons, like a sword or an axe. However, due to their small size, they were often of little use in protecting you against spears, arrows, and couldn't be locked together to protect a group of soldiers.
- In contrast to this, there was a second **WAR SHIELD** the Romans developed,

and this model was in use by the Roman Legions in the days of Paul. It was called the "scutum" and measured 4.5 feet tall by 2.5 feet wide. It was an excellent defense against all close combat weapons, but also against spears, javelins, and arrows. This **WAR SHIELD** was so large, that the Roman legionnaire could completely conceal himself behind it if necessary, and be safe from attack. In addition to this, when placed next to each other, these large **WAR SHIELD** formed an impenetrable barrier, protecting the entire formation of Roman troops. They even practiced maneuvers, such as the "**TESTUDO**" or tortoise maneuver, in which every soldier would raise their **WAR SHIELDS** to cover the front, sides, and top of the formation, allowing it to safely advance against any enemy, even though it was barraged with rock, arrows, or spears!

- Even today 2,000 years later in **MODERN COMBAT** the **WAR SHIELD** continues to be present on the battlefield. Urban swat teams and tactical assault units commonly use bulletproof ballistic shields to protect themselves from enemy gunfire. These are commonly used when a terrorist or criminal is barricaded and must be approached and overcome. The modern **WAR SHIELD** is a valuable tool for accomplishing this.

## II. The War Shield - **BIBLICALLY!**

### • **"FAITH"** is a Major Topic in the Bible.

- "**Faith**" is the Greek word "**πίστις**" or "**pistis**" and appears **244x** New Testament.
- "**Believe**" is the Greek verb "**πιστεύω**" or "**pisteuō**" in the New Testament and appears **248x** in the New Testament.  
Heb 11:6 - "**But without faith it is impossible to please Him..**"  
Rom 10:17 - "**So then faith comes by hearing..the Word of God.**"

### • Christians have **3 KINDS** of Faith:

- #1 - Christians have **SAVING** Faith...  
Eph 2:8,9 - "**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**"
- #2 - Christians have **SUPERNATURAL** Faith...  
1 Cor 12:7,9 NLT - "**A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other... The same Spirit gives great faith to another**"

### #3 - Christians have **\*\*SANCTIFYING\*\*** Faith...

▪ 2 Cor 5:7 - "For we **walk by faith**, not by sight."

▪ Heb 10:38 - "Now the just shall **live by faith**.."

○ **"Above all"** - In Eph 6:13-14 Paul tells us about the armor that we **already have**. Some of the armor we must wear all the time and have as a standing foundation. Having this armor comes first. As Christians, we already have on the **WAR BELT** of truth, the **BODY ARMOR** of righteousness, and the **COMBAT BOOTS** of the gospel. However, now Paul explains the armor that we must **to take up** at the necessary moment, when we engage in spiritual combat in our daily lives. The word used here is the Greek word **"ἀναλαμβάνω"** or **"analambanō"** which literally means to "take up, or to raise up over one's head".

○ **"Taking the shield of faith"** - The thing that is to function as a shield in the life of a Christian is our **FAITH**. Your faith, your trust, your confidence, and your assurance in Who Jesus is and what Jesus has done, should function like a **WAR SHIELD in your walk with Christ!**

*Lizzie Velasquez is one of three people in the world who suffer from a rare genetic disorder that prevents a person from gaining weight. She has never weighed more than 62 pounds, and she was born blind in her right eye. To make matters worse, right before her junior year of high school, Velasquez discovered a video of herself online labeled "The World's Ugliest Woman." The video had four million hits, and even though Velasquez's parents tried to get it taken down, the anonymous person who had posted it refused. Rather than turn to misery and self-pity, Velasquez faced the matter head on. She had already talked to high school students about her condition, so she began to speak every time the opportunity arose. She quickly had a worldwide stage and even wrote three books, including one entitled Be Beautiful, Be You. Velasquez is now a graduate of Texas State University and says her faith has helped her endure during the difficult times. She said, "It's been my rock through everything, just having the time to be alone and pray and talk to God and know that He's there for me." She added, "Even when it seems like things will never get better in the darkest times, if you have faith and continue to push yourself, you can eventually get through anything."*

James 1:3 - "...the **testing of your faith** produces patience."

***Martyrdom is not just an ancient act. Many believers are still losing their lives for accepting Jesus Christ as Lord. Mansuur Mohammed, a Somali aid worker, received Jesus Christ as his savior in 2006. Militants from the al Shabab group captured him in 2008 and paraded him before villagers in Manyafulka, who had gathered at the insistence of the militant group. The militant leaders began to recite from the Quran, accusing Mohammed of apostasy. A witness said Mohammed remained composed, never uttering a word, as his captors yelled "Allahu akbar" ("God is great") and then beheaded him. Some say the video of his death is being circulated in an attempt to prevent Muslims from converting to Christianity. The enemy is still at work in the 21st century, adding to the countless numbers of men and women who have held steadfast to their faith while being put to death. "Jesus Christ is Lord" has been uttered now for 2,000 years, and the enemy is still trying to silence the voices of the faithful.***

- ***"..you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one"*** - Faith is represented as a **WARSHIELD**, protecting us from the fiery darts of the wicked one. In ancient warfare, these fiery darts were launched in great numbers at the beginning of an attack. The idea was not only to injure the enemy, but to shoot at him at all sides with a massive number of arrows, and thus to confuse and panic the enemy.
  - *"Even when such a missile was caught by the shield and did not penetrate to the body, says Livy, it caused panic, because it was thrown when well alight and its motion through the air made it blaze most fiercely, so that the soldier was tempted to get rid of his burning shield and expose himself to the enemy's spear-thrusts. But the shield of faith not only catches the incendiary devices but extinguishes them."* - **Bruce**
- These ***"fiery darts/arrows"*** are the persistent efforts of demonic foes to weaken us through fear and unbelief. Thoughts, feelings, imaginations, fears, and lies – all of these can be hurled at us by Satan as fiery darts. The **WARSHIELD** of Faith turns them back.

### **III. The War Shield - **PRACTICALLY!****

- ***GROW your Faith!***
  - **Romans 10:17 NKJV** - *"...faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."*

- **1 Peter 2:2 NKJV** - *"..as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow.."*
- **1 Peter 2:2 NLT** - *"Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment.."*

**GROW** your **FAITH** by getting (back) into **Bible reading** and **Bible study!**

*Devotions...car rides...church services...small groups...*

- **SHOW your Faith!**

**James 2:20 NKJV** - *"..faith without works is dead?" (Matt 7)*

**James 2:20-26 NLT** - *"Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?...faith and his actions worked together...24..we are shown to be right with God by what we do, not by faith alone...26 Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without good works."*

- **SHOW** your **FAITH** by how you **live daily**...and how you **serve sacrificially!**

*behavior at home...attitude at work...service at church...*