



Go for God!

## **“SPIRITUAL WARFARE!!!” (Part 5)**

**EPHESIANS 6:10-17**

### **“Above All, Taking the Shield of FAITH!”**

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.**

- The Roman soldier, the *Hastati* (*Hastatus*) were the first line of melee infantry used in Roman manipular formations. Members of the *Hastati* typically ranged in age from their early to mid-twenties. The *Hastati* were also wealthier than the *Velites* and were therefore able to procure superior weapons and armor which were designed for close-quarters engagements. The *Hastati* defended themselves with a curved-rectangular shield called a *scutum*. The *scutum* was about four feet tall by two and a half feet wide and was manufactured by gluing two large pieces of wood together. The wood was then covered in layers of canvas and hide while the edges of the *scutum* were then lined with iron to help deflect incoming enemy sword blows. A large piece of iron called an *umbo* was then fitted to the front of the shield to help defend from missile attacks from enemy archers and slingers. When the Roman army would go to war with this shield, they would soak it in water to help extinguish fiery arrows or darts from the enemy.



- The words “*fiery darts*” in Greek is *belos*. This fiery dart is an arrow with its tip wrapped with fabric soaked in flammable fluids so it would burn the enemy, tents, fort, village, or home. The famous Greek writer Thucydides used this Greek word *belos* to depict specially made, long, slender arrows that outwardly looked harmless; however, the hollow interior of the arrow was filled with flammable fluids that, upon impact, exploded into a raging fire. Whereas the SHIELD stops the arrow, and the WORD OF GOD is the water that extinguishes the flame!

- One author writes, “Often when the devil strikes, his attack looks inconsequential at first, like harmless little arrows that can do little damage. But when those arrows strike into the heart or emotions, they often explode and set human passions aflame, causing a minor issue to develop into a fierce, flaming situation. The damage done in such a moment is profoundly serious — and all of it could have been avoided if the shield of faith had been held high and regularly doused in the water of the Word!”

- In the Ephesians 6:16 we read, *taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.* The words “you shall be able,” in the Greek is *dunamai*, which is having the spiritual strength, agility, and ability to protect oneself and douse the flames of the “wicked one!”



- There was a special formation soldiers would adapt to whenever arrows, darts, rocks, or spears would rain down on them, this was known as the “Testudo Formation” or “Tortoise Formation,” let’s see this in action from the movie "Risen."

> We are using a SHIELD OF FAITH, FAITH IS OUR SHIELD, so what is true FAITH?

- FAITH (*pistos*) - A belief in or confident attitude toward God, involving commitment to His will for one's life. Faith is part of the Christian life from beginning to end. As the instrument by which the gift of salvation is received (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.*), faith is thus distinct from the basis of salvation, which is grace, and from the outworking of salvation, which is

good works. Saving faith involves personally depending on the finished work of Christ's sacrifice as the only basis for forgiveness of sin and entrance into heaven. But saving faith is also a personal commitment of one's life to following Christ in obedience to His commands. Finally, in the New Testament, faith can refer to the teachings of the Bible, the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). In modern times, faith has been weakened in meaning so that some people use it to mean self-confidence. But in the Bible, true faith is confidence in God or Christ, not in oneself. (From Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

- *Paul and other men of God declared, "The just shall live by faith!"* This declaration of the Christian's principle of life is found four times in the Bible: Hab. 2:1-5; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:10-11; Heb. 10:38. In Habakkuk 2:4 - "*Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.*"

- Jesus said something interesting in Luke 18:8 - "*Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"*

Williams Evans writes in his book, Great Doctrines of the Bible, about the difference between belief and faith – “Belief is mental; faith adds the volitional; we may have belief without will, but not faith. Belief is a realm of thought; faith is a sphere of actions. Belief lives in the study’ faith comes out into the marketplaces and streets. Faith substantiates belief – gives substance, life, reality, activity to it. Faith puts belief into ACTIVE SERVICE and connects possibilities with appropriation. Faith counts every promise valid, and guilt edged; no trial can shake it; it is so absolute that it survives the loss of anything.”

> *Let us use our SHIELDS of FAITH to VICTORY!*

- *Let us block and quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, observe:*

#1 – Through FAITH in JESUS CHRIST you have EVERLASTING LIFE!

John 3:36 - *He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*

#2 - You are JUSTIFIED by FAITH and not by works!

Galatians 2:16 - *knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

#3 – You are made RIGHTEOUS by FAITH!

Romans 10:1-4 - *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

**#4 - You have PEACE with God through FAITH!**

*Romans 5:1-3 - Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God*

**#5 – CHRIST dwells in your heart by FAITH!**

*Ephesians 3:17-19 - that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

**#6 – The HOLY SPIRIT is received by FAITH!**

*Galatians 3:2-4 - This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain?*

**#7 – You are to LIVE by FAITH!**

*Galatians 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

**#8 – You SEEK GOD through FAITH!**

*Hebrews 11:6- “But without faith it is impossible to please God, because those who come to Him must believe that He exists, and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”*

**#9 – Whatever is not from FAITH is SIN!**

*Romans 14:23 - But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.*

*In Hebrews 12:1-2 we are told, Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses (Hebrews Ch. 11), let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 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.*

**#10 – PRAY with FAITH!**

*James 1:6-7 - 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.*

> Evangelist and Bible teacher Porter Barrington writes, *“Faith defies reason; it moves mountains (Matt. 17:14-21). Faith does not always face facts; it never gives up (Heb. 11:32-39). Faith says, “God is working out His perfect will in my life, and I can wait, endure, and suffer.” Faith does not make anything easy, but it does make all things possible.” AMEN!*

### **#11 – Keep STRENGTHENING your SHIELD OF FAITH!**

Romans 10:17 - *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

- G. Campbell Morgan said, *“Life is to be mastered by faith, and not by doubt; it is to be forevermore illuminated by hope, and not darkened by despair, and in its activity love is to be practiced in fellowship.”*

### **#12 – Your SHIELD OF FAITH brings JOY!**

1 Peter 1:6 - *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith -- the salvation of your souls.*

- One commentator wrote, *“The supreme test of all is the moment of agony when we know that God could deliver us if He would, and He does not; when the scourge lashes, the prison locks, the saw tears the tender flesh—and God allows it. Fair weather faith soon vanishes before the onslaught of such soul shaking tempests. If faith is relevant only to being happy and prosperous in this world, it is a feeble and worthless crutch of selfish earthliness. True Christian faith, by contrast, finds its greatest triumph, not in the visible exploits, but in a quiet confidence and poise when there are no encouraging circumstances.”*

### **#13 – Engage in the battle, CONTEND earnestly for the FAITH!**

Jude 3 - *Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*

- Warren Wiersbe writes, *“How could false brethren get into true assemblies of the saints? **The soldiers had gone to sleep at the post!** The spiritual leaders in the churches had grown complacent and careless. This explains why Jude had to “blow the trumpet” to wake them up. Our Lord and His Apostles all warned that false teachers would arise, yet the churches did not heed the warnings. Sad to say, some churches are not heeding the warnings today.”*

**#14 – Let us be VICTORIOUS through FAITH!**

**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.***

**1 Timothy 6:12- *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.***

**2 Timothy 4:7-8 - *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.***