

Using the Whole Armor of God

Part 3 – The Shield of Faith

Ephesians 6:16

Introduction:

A. The Roman shield

1. Measured 2 ½ feet by _____ feet (big enough to hide behind)
2. Would ex_____ all flaming arrows that struck it and stuck.

B. Paul's observation

1. The guard was without his s_____ giving no thought to a possible attack.
2. Christians ought to always have the shield because Satan is always looking to a_____ us.
 - a. The arrows are f_____
 - b. The arrows are from the e_____ or wicked one (common term for Satan - Matt 13:19,38; Jn 17:15; 2Thess 3:3; 1Jn 2:13,14; 3:12; 5:18,19).

C. The metaphor of the shield is f_____

1. There are two kinds of faith
 - a. S_____ faith (Eph 2:8,9)
 - 1) There is no degree in this kind of faith
 - 2) Paul was writing to those who had this faith (Eph 1:1)
 - b. G_____ faith (Matt 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Lk 12:28).
 - 1) Jesus often told His apostles that they had l_____ faith.
 - 2) Jesus wants us to grow in this kind of faith, which is simply growing in our d_____ upon Him.
2. Today's lesson focuses on the accounts of little faith to teach us how to take up the shield of faith.

The flaming arrow of worrying about our needs (Matt 6:25-34)

A. Summary of the account

1. Jesus told them that if God takes care of the birds and flowers, how much more would He take care of them but called them men of l_____ faith.
 - a. The common Jew had only a few changes of c_____
 - b. The common Jew had just enough income to cover their basic n_____
2. Jesus promised that if they would seek God's kingdom f_____ and His righteousness, then God would provide for their n_____.

B. Satan's strategy against American Christians

1. To plant the belief that the pursuit of happiness is the acquisition of 1 _____
 - a. To make luxuries so much a priority that one is willing to sacrifice n _____ in order to keep them.
 - b. To make luxuries so much a priority that it becomes an i _____ (more important than God's kingdom)
2. To get Christians to worry about their n _____ when hard times hit (rent, mortgage payment, utilities, food, clothing, medical needs).

C. Our priority – lifting up the shield of faith

1. We are not to acquire nice stuff just for ourselves but must be generous with it and ready to s _____ it with others (1Tim 6:17,18)
2. We are not to sacrifice for nice stuff but for God's kingdom and His righteousness which involves reaching the l _____ and growing the saved out of l _____ for God and for people (Matt 28:18-20; 22:7-40)
3. We are not to worry about our needs because God always keeps His promise – if you seek His kingdom first, He will take care of _____ your needs.

The flaming arrow of having unhealthy fear (Matt 8:23-26)

A. Summary of the account

1. Jesus and His apostles were taking a boat trip across the Sea of Galilee when a violent s _____ suddenly came upon them.
 - a. Jesus was n _____
 - b. The disciples thought they were going to d _____ and wake up Jesus asking Him to save them
 - c. Jesus calmed the storm calling them men of l _____ faith because of their fearfulness.
2. Jesus questioned them about their fear – did they think that God was not in control?.

B. The strategy of Satan against Christians

1. To doubt that God is in control so that fear rather runs our lives.
 - a. Bad things happen to us and those we l _____
 - b. E _____ people get away with their sin
2. To get us to define how God should control things.

C. God controls the boundaries in which evil can o _____

1. In the case of Satan, he had to seek p _____
 - a. To do bad things to J _____ (Job 1:12; 2:6)
 - b. To tempt Peter to d _____ Jesus three times (Lk 22:31-34)

2. God promises to give us a way to e_____ all temptations and trials so that we do not fall to sin (1Cor 10:13)
3. We lift up the shield of faith by t_____ that God is in control

The flaming arrow of doubting God's Word (Matt 14:22-31)

A. Summary of the account

1. Jesus w_____ on the water in the dead of night to catch up with the apostles on the boat.
2. The apostles thought they were seeing a g_____
3. Jesus identified Himself and Peter asked Jesus to command him to get out of the boat and come to Him on the w_____
4. Peter started s_____ after he saw the waves come up and cried out for Jesus.
5. Jesus grabbed Peter and told him that he had l_____ faith.

B. Satan's strategy against Christians

1. Work situations into our lives that put God's word to the t_____.
2. Lures us to live by s_____ rather than by faith.

C. Example – usefulness to God

1. Satan wants us to feel insignificant but God says that we will be useful if we c_____ ourselves from sin (2Tim 2:21).
2. We have been r_____ in Christ to do good works (Eph 2:10) – no good work is insignificant.

The flaming arrow of misunderstanding God's Word (Matt 16:5-12)

A. Summary of the account

1. Jesus instructs His apostle to beware of the l_____ of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
2. They discuss among themselves instead of going to Jesus for understanding and so m_____
3. Jesus rebuked them for having l_____ faith.

B. Application

1. Misunderstanding God's word often happens because
 - a. We fail to go to God f_____
 - b. We go to study n_____, a pastor, or other Christians
2. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate t_____ (1Jn 2:27; Jn 14:26).
 - a. First, come to God's word p_____.
 - b. Second, consult trusted sources to give information you may not know simply by reading the passage.
 - c. Third, repeat the first step.
3. Lifting up the shield of faith requires us to
 - a. C_____ God's word like a newborn baby does with milk (1Pet 2:2)
 - b. D_____ upon God's word by living by it (Matt 4:4)