

Ephesians 6:10-14- The Shield of faith

The Roman shield known as the scutum is valuable because it doubled as a full-body cover and an active weapon in close-quarters combat. It had both a defensive and offensive use. It could deflect incoming swords, spears and arrows and its center metal bump acted like a heavy punch or knuckle darter to bash opponents in the face or chest. It could be used to thrust the shield forward to knock enemies off balance before striking with their short sword.

Throughout history wars have been fought between various nations with their armies. One common thread has been that the army with the latest technological advances in weapons typically would win and dominate their opponents. It wasn't necessarily the largest army or even the army with the most skilled fighters. What usually gave a particular army the distinct advantage was having the latest in military technology that allowed certain armies or nations to dominate on the battlefield. It is just that simple even up to today where militaries are always studying to come up with weapons that can enable them to surprise the enemy with something so advanced they quite simply cannot match.

The most primitive weapon was the spear that was thrown at the opposing army, and I would imagine from the spear you had the development of the composite bow that you could shoot at the enemy and from that came bronze swords that were replaced by Iron swords. What about the use of horses and even elephants in battle. You had the development of firearms, and it goes on and on. The Byzantine Empire had what they called the Greek Fire which was flaming liquid that helped them to dominate opposing armies. Or what about the Egyptian Chariots that took the world by surprise. Imagine you are marching toward an enemy on foot and there are these metal chariots being pulled by horses headed toward you. When you study empires just about all of them were able to conquer the world because they had some new advanced weapon that gave them an advantage.

Paul is harping on this reality when he is emphasizing to them that the key to winning in spiritual warfare is not your size or numbers it is in your superior set of weapons. It is the fact you are better equipped than the enemy. You have an advantage in spiritual warfare because God has supplied you with a set of weaponry that allows you to conquer the forces of evil. Don't be

intimidated by all that you might see in terms of what this world may pit against you.

That group of Ephesian Christians could easily feel overwhelmed and overmatched by the sheer size of those who opposed them and their faith. But Paul wants them to know it is an illusion that you are inferior or overmatched by this evil, wicked environment. Just put on your stuff because the armor God has supplied you with is more than enough for you to dominate all those who oppose you.

The shield of faith of something you take up. It is on activation. It is an actual execution of a military maneuver. Faith is an offensive act intended to deliver a decisive blow to the forces of evil. Whenever you take up the shield of faith, you are in an attack mode. You are aggressively going after the opposition with force and power. The shield of faith is not about keeping your position or holding on for dear life. Faith is about possession, invasion and conquering. Faith is the ultimate weapon in spiritual warfare. We are exercising faith to seize control of our lives. Think of faith like it is when you are charging forward and you are taking the enemies' position. You are literally

running him over. You are marching forward and sending a message that I am coming and you either retreat, abandon your position, surrender or die.

I am coming for you and whatever position you have is officially about to change hands. I am taking it from you in the name of Jesus. There is no if's and's or buts. This is an all-out assault, and it is all or nothing.

Typically, in ancient warfare there would be a standoff. A time in which each army would assess each other. The invading army would gather itself. Usually, they had marched a considerable distance. They would organize themselves and get into battle formation.

The other army would also organize and based on their reconnaissance, they would determine how they would defend themselves. But when the defending army saw the invading army take up their shields, they knew it meant they were going to attack. When they saw all those shields up and advancing without any breaks or spaces in between, they knew the battle was about to be fought. I love that Paul called it the shield of faith to describe the most potent and valuable resource in battle.

Spiritual warfare is seizing property, territory and land that the enemy illegally held in possession. It is our responsibility to take back where the enemy has taken possession of. The enemy is a usurper, he is a trespasser, he is a scatterer.

He knows he is not supposed to be there, but he dares you to do anything about it. He has no business in your mind, in your heart, affecting your family, messing with your finances, on your physical body, in your job situation. He needs to be driven from every place he has tried to abide in or live in. Our mission is to drive him out. Put him out of every place where he has taken up residence. We do not tolerate him. We don't accommodate him. We don't allow him. We are to exercise faith wherever we see his presence. As believers we are an invading force. We are conducting operations to eradicate the enemy.

We move him from every area where he might try to establish as his preference. We target any place where he might have established operations. We are not with it. We are hostile toward any attempt of the enemy to be comfortable or have control over any place. We challenge him. We oppose him. We resist him. We are out to drive him out of any place that he may try to

occupy. Any place where he is comfortable or has set up shop is a place we go in to assert our authority. Notice the shield of faith quenches the fiery darts of the enemy. As we are advancing on his kingdom, we are being a threat to the enemy. He is trying to stop our advance. He wants to prevent us from driving him out.

There may be a lot of things Jesus gave us faith to do but the main thing He gave us faith for was to use our delegated authority to drive him out.

Above all, taking the shield of faith, above meaning more important than any of the other pieces of armor, faith is most important. Faith gives you the best chance and gives you a distinct advantage in spiritual warfare. It is your most potent weapon, and the enemy has nothing that he can do when you use it. It is the last thing that he wants you to become proficient in because if you know how to navigate through life with faith, nothing is impossible for you. Faith is literally an all-encompassing faculty that works in any situation. It can be in all circumstances. All battles can be won if you use faith. There is nothing complicated about faith. There is nothing mysterious about faith. There is no excuse or reason why anyone who is a believer cannot walk in faith. When you study the gospels and examine the teachings of Jesus, faith

must be at the top of the list of things He emphasized. He talked about faith like it is the user-all and solution to all life situations. That is why I need you to listen to me carefully because when you understand how to use faith, you are equipped for spiritual warfare. But like I have been teaching, the key to using faith is understanding you live in a body or physical shell, you have a soul which is your mind will and emotions and you are a spirit.

This explains why faith is your go to source. First, your human flesh is weak and utterly incapable of believing. Unbelief as I have taught you is not sin, it is a symptom of your lower nature. Unbelief is the result of your human imperfection causing the dysfunction of your soul somehow not getting the proper guidance from your heart. The only faculty that can believe is your heart. You cannot believe with your mind. You cannot believe with your desires or willpower. You cannot believe with your emotions.

Attaining knowledge and being full of information does not in any way enable you to believe. As a matter of fact, knowledge puffs up.

Knowledge and intellect can be a hindrance to believing. Spiritual things especially faith cannot be fully grasped by your human mind. It's sad but some of the smartest people go to hell because they want to understand or

want human proof of God and His word and that is simply not humanly possible. Because spiritual things as well as God cannot be understood in human or physical terms. At the same time, you cannot activate faith by willpower and the exercise of your will.

The most common way that Jesus provoked faith in those He ministered to was to tell them something to help them change the way their heart was thinking, feeling, or desiring so that they could believe. In some cases, it seemed like Jesus was asking people questions or telling them to do things that didn't make sense on the surface. But in each case, Jesus was strategically getting them to think appropriately, desire the right things and manage their emotions all so that they could believe. Three problems with the capacity to believe that is for your heart to generate belief. Thinking lies and having false assumptions-- number one. Wanting or motivated by the flesh or wrong purposes-- two. And emotional or mental responses that make it impossible for you to believe. It might seem as if Jesus didn't like the religious leaders and that he was intent on putting them down. But really, he was trying to make them aware that with their self-righteousness and arrogant and prideful ways, their hearts were such that they could not ever align

themselves to God and have faith in their lives. Time and time again, Jesus' approach was to trigger the belief in the heart of the person so they could receive. Believing in your heart means to believe correctly in your heart to believe truthfully, and appropriately in your heart. Believe from your heart that which could enable you to have faith.

This is why He asked questions. Jesus was all knowing but when He asked questions he was not trying to get information, He was just trying to get them to be aware and trigger their heart to believe.

Spiritual power is not against physical forces, human being, or natural things. It is against the real source of things. The things that Jesus said illustrated how He healed and delivered people without talking directly to the person.

Jesus told the woman who could not lift herself up, "woman thou art loosed"! He was speaking to the spirit. Satan who had her bound. He told the man with the palsy "Thy sins be forgiven thee." He did not say anything to the man about his condition, He simply released the spirit of guilt causing his condition.

When Jesus ministered to the demoniac, He asked him what was your name.

Jesus didn't deal with him, He dealt with the spirit that was legion. They that are with us, are more than they that are in the world. What about when Jesus ministered to the man by the pool. He spoke to the part of him that made it possible for him to be made whole. His desire, your heart thinks, feels and has desires. The man did not think or feel as if he could be made whole. But he still had a desire to be made whole. Wilt thou be made whole?

Jesus ministered to his heart. **As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.** When Jesus ministered to Jarius he ministered to his desire. Believe only is will. It's despite how you feel and what your intellect says. What about when He ministered to Bartimaeus. He asked him what it is you would have me to do. He had to exercise his will. Jesus ministered to people's heart. Ministering to your heart is what you think, what you want, and what you desire. So many instances Jesus spoke to spirits and rebuked forces. When Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves it was something spiritual because he rebuked the wind and the waves.

The key is what you believe. Just as believing in truth can help you believe in something false can hurt you. The enemy tries to get you to believe something that is false so he can continue to afflict you and keep you in bondage.

Paul in 1 Thessalonians states ...your spirit, soul and body which assigns them as three different areas. Hebrews 4 says ...dividing asunder of soul and spirit...

Take unto you the shield of faith. Faith is a shield. Notice he says take meaning apply or use. Faith is something you utilize. It is your responsibility to put faith in use in your life. Faith is the main weapon in spiritual warfare. There is nothing in the enemy's arsenal that can penetrate the shield of faith. Faith is the ultimate defense against anything the enemy brings against you. If you have faith there is no way the enemy can take you out. When you have faith, you are safe and secure. It is the main thing above all else that you must keep in place. I would dare say the main strategy of the enemy is to get you out of faith. Most of what the enemy does is aimed at trying to get you in some other reality than the reality of faith. He wants to get you to doubt or become uncertain. He wants to rattle your confidence and introduce fear in your spirit. The last thing he wants you to have is faith. When you are in faith, he is no match for you. When you are in faith, he has no answer for you. His only hope is for you to somehow be caught without faith. When you are in faith you are unstoppable, undeniable and not vulnerable in any way.

Faith is the ultimate defense, and it is the greatest offensive weapon in your repertory. Faith activates the spiritual realm in your favor.

Faith literally activates things in the spiritual realm to action. Faith causes things to happen. When you have faith angels get dispatched, power is released, bondages are broken. When you have faith, healing is manifested, yokes are broken, strongholds are pulled up, curses reversed, demonic spirits are cast out. Faith can eliminate familiar spirits in the family stop generational curses. Faith can lift burdens, calm anxiety. Faith can stop hemorrhaging, eliminate stress, give you a peace of mind. We are to challenge evil, resist the work of the enemy. We are to challenge the status quo and any infringement of the enemy. We are to stand against any attempt to take you down. Faith can move mountains, call those things that be not as though they were. Faith can open doors no man can close and close doors no man can open. Faith can make your enemies

your footstool. Faith can give you power to prevail, peace that passes all understanding, joy unspeakable and life more abundantly. When you have faith, you know things no one told you. You can see things that are not visible. You anticipate things that have not manifested yet.

You have a basis to hope for and an assurance of that which cannot be verified with your senses. Faith causes your prayers to be answered. Faith can cause your praise to invoke change. Faith can reach people thousands of miles away from you.

Take unto you the shield of faith. In other words, faith must be your source for spiritual engagement. Your means of power comes from the exercising of faith. Faith is something you take. You apply, you use and most of all, you operate in faith. Without faith you are at the mercy of your situation, you can only be a victim. Without faith you are reacting to what is going on around you and accepting whatever it is you are dealing with. It is almost an acceptance of your situation and seeking to make whatever accommodations you need to live.

As I have been sharing about the heart, unbelief is the failure to manage your heart so that you can believe. Misbelief is to believe in the wrong things.

Disbelief is to not belief in the truth but rather to believe in something that is not truth. Think of it this way, disbelieving is the willful determination to believe something that is not true and it is typically the result of the flesh. This comes from the part of your soul that we would characterize as your will. Somehow the enemy deceives you into wanting something evil and motivates you to act in your own self-interest and not according to what God calls you to do. Misbelief is to believe something other than the truth. You literally are misled into believing something that is not according to truth. When you believe in this untruth, it makes it impossible to believe in the truth. This typically comes from misinformation or even lies the enemy plants in your mind. Misbelief is from the demonic deception more so than the other two because he is the father of lies. Disbelief is the result of the enemy working in conjunction with the flesh. Disbelief is when you are deceived into believing that instead of relying on God or doing as God commands, you think you need to believe in what you think or want. This is a product of your own will that causes you to literally do something that you know is not according to God's will. Unbelief is the overall category of having some heart problem that inhibits your ability to believe.

These are the three opposing beliefs to the formation of faith. Disbelief is a willful action and choice to do and believe something other than God's word.

Misbelief is caused by a false reality and misinformation that you believe.

Unbelief is lower nature exerting its influence to impact your heart so that you cannot believe. You need to identify which of these has caused you to lack faith. These are the three causes of you not having faith. Misbelief is falsehoods. Disbelief is evil motivations based on evil desires. Unbelief is always the result of some evil, negative infiltration that makes it impossible to believe in your heart.

Jesus was a prolific provoker of faith. Jesus could get people to believe on what God could do for them. He had a way about him where he knew how to get people in a believing mode. It's like he knew how to minister to people in a way where people were able to believe and have faith. When you look closely at the miracles of Jesus in almost all cases, Jesus got the person to believe and gave credit to them for their faith. Instead of merely healing them by his power he triggered in them the ability to believe and have faith on their own. You can always tell a false prophet or minister because they emphasize how they are healing you instead of teaching you how to access God and get

healed by your faith. It was a lot simpler if Jesus just went up to people and healed them because He had that kind of power. But instead, Jesus taught people how to believe on their own and receive because of their faith and not what Jesus did for them. There are so many instances in the bible of this.

Jesus told the woman with the issue of blood, woman thy faith hath healed thee. In other words, it was your exercise of faith that led to you being healed of this hemorrhaging you have experienced over these many years.