

**OVERCOMING TEMPTATION**  
**PART 5f-THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOR AND ARSENAL**  
**"SHIELDED BY FAITH"**  
**EPHESIANS 6:16**

**INTRODUCTION**

I want to begin by giving you two illustrations of faith:

*There is a story of a certain organization offering a bounty of \$5,000 for wolves captured alive.*

*It turned two men, Sam and Jed, into fortune hunters. Day and night they scoured the mountains and forests looking for their valuable prey.*

*Exhausted one night, they fell asleep dreaming of their potential fortune. Suddenly, Sam awoke to see that they were surrounded by about fifty wolves with flaming eyes and bared teeth. He nudged his friend and said, 'Jed, Wake Up! We're rich!'"*

**Now that's faith!**

*Gladys Aylward, missionary to China more than fifty years ago, was forced to flee when the Japanese invaded Yangcheng. But she could not leave her work behind. With only one assistant, she led more than a hundred orphans over the mountains toward Free China.*

*During Gladys's harrowing journey out of war-torn Yangcheng ... she grappled with despair as never before. After a sleepless night, she faced the morning with no hope of reaching safety. A 13-year-old girl in the group reminded her of their much-loved story of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.*

*"'But I am not Moses,' Gladys cried in desperation. 'Of course you aren't,' the girl said, 'but Jehovah is still God!'" When Gladys and the orphans made it through, they proved once again that no matter how inadequate we feel, God is still God, and we can trust in him."*

**That's faith!**

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**We know that faith is an essential element in our lives!**

We each exercise a degree of faith every day!

**The Word of God tells us that faith is essential for eternal life!**

There is no person in this whole world that has ever or is ever going to Heaven without faith in Christ alone for salvation!

*Ephesians 2:8-10 - "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

**But listen, faith is also essential for living a victorious Christian life! That is why it is an essential part of the Christian's Armor!**

*Ephesians 6:16 - "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."*

As we have already seen, the purpose of the Christian's armor is to stand against the wiles, methods, or schemes of the Devil.

**We are to wear the belt of truth - The Word of God!**

**We are to wear the Breastplate of Righteousness** - realizing that we are crucified with Christ, and that Christ is alive in us, we should, by faith, allow Christ to live through us!

**We are also to stand with our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace!**

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, FOCUSED ON CHRIST, and having  
FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD that brings all problems to Him in prayer.

**Now I want us to see the importance of faith as a defensive weapon!**

We, as Christians, go through trying circumstances just like anybody else!  
*"I just don't know what people without the Lord do in situations like that."*

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Sometimes circumstances come which are much bigger than us, they are beyond our abilities, and all we can do is trust the Lord to get us through it!

What a blessing it is to be able to trust the Lord! Let's look at three things with regard to faith:

THE PRIORITY OF FAITH...PROCEDURE OF FAITH...PROFIT OF FAITH...

**I. THE PRIORITY OF FAITH.**

Faith is an essential for living a victorious Christian life!

You see the words "*above all*" here.

**In addition to the belt, the breastplate and the shoes, the Christian soldier is also to take the shield of faith.**

There were two types of shields used by soldiers:

One was a small shield used for hand to hand combat.

The other shield, which is referred to here was about 2 1/2 feet wide and 4 1/2 feet tall. **It was big enough to hide behind when the enemy started throwing things!**

This shield was covered with metal or heavily oiled leather.

On the front lines of battle, soldiers would stand side by side, one shield next to the other, so that a defensive wall would be formed.

Our shield is called the "*shield of faith*," and it needs to be a priority in our lives.

*Hebrews 11:6 - "But without faith it is impossible to please him."*

Another word for "*faith*" is "*trust*"!

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**Trust is an important part of a friendship!**

Friendships are sometimes ruined by a lack of trust!

**Trust is an important part of marriage!**

I have seen marriages that were ruined by a lack of trust!

When trust is violated, it takes a long time for a marriage to be restored, if it ever is restored.

**Trust is important between parents and children!**

When a child can't trust the parent, and/or the parent can't trust the child, the whole relationship can be strained!

**But what's really sad is when a trustworthy person is not trusted by the other person in the relationship!**

If a wife is trustworthy but not trusted by her husband, that's not good!

If a child is trustworthy but not trusted by the parents, that's not good!

If a friend is trustworthy and not trusted by his or her friend, that friendship is in trouble!

**OK now, let me ask this: Can God be trusted? Of course He can!**

Well, when we do not trust our trustworthy God, that's not a good thing either!

How can we tell we are not trusting God!?

When we worry!

When we fear!

When we rely on our flesh instead of relying on God and in doing so we allow temptation to conquer us!

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It is obvious in these situations that we are simply not trusting Him...  
not using the shield of faith!

Have you ever stopped to think why we trust people?  
We might trust them because they are family!  
We might trust them because they are friends!  
We might trust them because we know they care!  
We might trust them because in our hearts we believe they have  
what's needed to help us!  
We might trust them because they have proven themselves  
trustworthy!

Well, why should we trust God?  
We should trust Him because He is family - Our loving  
Heavenly Father!  
We should trust Him because He is our friend!  
We should trust Him because we know He cares!  
We should trust Him because He has the power and ability to  
help us!  
We should trust Him because He has proven Himself  
trustworthy!

Bottom line: We CAN trust the one who sent His son to die for us!  
*Romans 8:32 - "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up  
for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"*

How many times have we personally disappointed our wonderful  
Heavenly Father and our wonderful Lord with our lack of faith?  
How many times have we grieved the Holy Spirit of God:  
With our worrying and fretting?  
With our doubts and fears?

When we are not trusting, we are not pleasing our God!  
Because without faith it is impossible to please God!

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*THE PRIORITY OF FAITH*  
II. **THE PROCEDURE OF FAITH.**  
There is a rather explicit command here.  
**We are to "take" the shield of faith!**  
In other words, we are to make use of it!

*I found out my mom carries an umbrella in her pocketbook.  
Imagine that it starts raining.  
Will the small umbrella in her pocketbook keep her dry?  
The umbrella will not keep her dry if it stays in her pocketbook!  
She has to take it out and use it!*

It's the same way with faith! It's no good, unless we use it!  
Actually it doesn't even exist, if we don't use it!

How do we "take" the shield of faith?

*Hebrews 11:6 - "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he  
that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of  
them that diligently seek him."*

Notice there are two things mentioned in that verse which we must do  
to use the shield of faith:

**First we must believe that God is!**  
And you might be thinking, "*Why pastor we all believe in the existence  
of God.*"

I think we all **believe in our heads**, but we don't always **practice  
belief in our hearts** because sometimes **we don't act like we believe  
in God!**

We say we believe in God, but do we trust Him in tight jams?  
We say we believe in God, but do we care about His opinion of our  
behavior?

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We say we believe in God, but are we ever concerned about hurting Him?

We say we believe in God, but do we worry as if He didn't exist?  
We can say we believe in God, but if we don't act like there's a God, we don't really believe in Him!

By taking the shield of faith, we believe in God's existence as part of our every day life!

But there's more. **Not only are we to believe in God's existence, but we are to believe that He rewards those that diligently seek Him!**

**How can we tell if we believe that He rewards those who diligently seek Him? We believe that He rewards those who diligently seek Him, if we diligently seek Him!**

Millions of people say they believe that God answers prayer!  
The ones who truly believe that God answers prayer, pray diligently!

And after they have prayed, they simply believe that God will answer!  
That's faith!

*Psalm 37:5 - "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."*

*Psalm 91:2 - "I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."*

*Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."*

So take the shield of faith! Whatever you do, believe that God exists!  
Believe that He rewards those who diligently seek Him and trust Him!

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*THE PRIORITY OF FAITH...THE PROCEDURE OF FAITH...*  
**III. THE PROFIT OF FAITH.**

Just as a bullet proof vest protects a police officer, the shield of faith protects the Christian. When the Roman soldier faced fiery darts hurled by the enemy, his shield with its leather lining would catch and then quench them.

When we put up the shield of faith, Satan's fiery darts are also quenched!

His fiery darts are temptations!

We are tempted to be immoral.

We are tempted to lie or steal.

We are tempted to think evil thoughts.

We are tempted to worry or fret.

We are tempted towards unrighteous anger.

We are tempted to fear.

As we hold up the shield of faith, those fiery darts are put out and don't hurt us!

But listen, there's more profit that goes with our trust!

In Proverbs 3:5-6, we are promised that as we trust, God will direct our paths!

In Hebrews 11:6 we are told that God rewards those who do what is right - diligently seeking Him.

And Psalm 91:1 promises protection for those who trust Him!  
*"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."*

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*Psalm 46:1-2 - God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;*

THE PRIORITY OF FAITH  
THE PROCEDURE OF FAITH  
THE PROFIT OF FAITH

**Conclusion**

Are you availing yourself of the shield of faith?