

The Simple Faith-Shield that Works Each Time We Use it

Ephesians 6:16 & Colossians 2:6

As we open to Colossians 2, we need to learn a practical lesson about how to apply spiritual truths from God's Word, to our lives. Pause and think of that word “spiritual”.

Spiritual Warfare.

Spiritual Armor.

Spiritual Life.

Spiritual; spiritual; spiritual.

Does “Spiritual” Sometimes Sound Distant & Hard to Grasp?

This morning we are pondering the shield of faith.

This shield can sound mysterious, mystical, and almost like something imaginary.

Many doctrines in God’s Word can sometimes get that way.

They seem almost unreal, out of reach, and maybe even impossible.

What we can find here in Colossians 2, is a lesson on how we:

Grab & Hold onto Big Doctrines

The challenge of grasping spiritual things is always there.

That may have been part of Paul’s motivation.

Paul wrote to a church that had never met him.

A church that only heard others talk about what Paul said about God.

They were needing help and Paul wrote a letter to them.

That letter is called Colossians.

The Colossians were a group of believers Paul had never met face to face.

In Col. 2:1-7 we have Paul explanation for how to apply some of these amazing doctrines we find in God’s Word that seem so deep, or so massive we just can’t figure out how to get our arms around them.

Paul said, remember how you were saved?

The Christian life is only an extension from that event.

Going Back to the Starting Point

The secret Paul shared is that we all need to go back to where we began with Christ.

Col. 2:1-7 (NKJV) For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and

those in Laodicea, **and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,** ² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and **attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding,** to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, ³ **in whom are hidden all the treasures** of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. ⁵ For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. ⁶ **As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,** ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

Pray

The Simple Pathway of Following Christ

As you received the Lord, so walk in Him.

Heard, believed, responded.

How did you & I get saved? I mean really?

We were born lost, alienated from God.

We had a sin-infected heart at birth.

We began to show signs of that terminal infection almost immediately.

We were variously selfish, self-centered, easily angered, jealous, and filled with rage.

We were all that back when we were only tiny people.

We each grew up into various forms of sinful behavior.

Then we heard the Gospel that: “Jesus came to seek and to save lost sinners”.

We were convicted that we sinned; and understood we were sinners.

We began to feel that lost-ness and separation from God.

By faith we called out to the Lord.

Then we were saved.

How? By believing simple truth from God's Word.

God loved the world.

God gave His only Son.

Jesus died for me.

I must ask Him to forgive me and save me.

Now think about that sequence.

That was Simple-Faith

We heard powerfully massive truths from Scripture; and simply believed them.
That is simple-faith.

We never saw God.
We never met Jesus personally in the flesh.
We couldn't pick any of the Gospel writers out of a line-up if we tried.
Our salvation was totally by faith.

We simply acted upon what Scripture says about God.
We believed written, propositional truth from the Scriptures.
God transformed us.

A simple formula would be:

Old person + faith in what God said = transformation into new person

That would be 2 Cor. 5:17 written as an equation

Now apply the same to our text,
We have spiritual armor.
We believe what God says.
We ask Him to get us dressed.
It works.

Now back up from Colossians 2, back through Philipians, and open with me to Ephesians 6:16. As we read verse 16 note the repetition in this sequence of six pieces of spiritual armor

Ephesians 6:11-17 (NKJV) **Put on** the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore **take up** the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, **having girded your** waist with truth, **having put on** the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and **having shod your** feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, **taking the shield** of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And **take the helmet** of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

See the Repeated Pattern?

Fiery Dart Shot>Take Shield of Faith>Dart Extinguished

Each piece of this spiritual armor must be responded to.
Just like we had to call on the Name of the Lord to be saved.

So we must respond to God’s call to take & wear each piece.

Body Armor	That must be used	“put on”; “take up”
Belt of Truth	That must be buckled	“having girded”
Vest of Righteousness	That must be strapped on	“having put on”
Boots of Peace	That must be tied	“having shod”
Shield of Faith	That must be held	“above all taking”
Helmet of Salvation	That must be worn	“take”
Sword of the Spirit	That must be used	“take”

Believers are to:

Facing the Spiritual Terrorists Daily

Each day we walk through life Satan’s dark realm has well placed archers, arrows ignited and ready to shoot.

Impure thoughts are a flaming arrow that the shield of faith can extinguish.

So are the flaming darts of anger, pride, fear, despair, covetousness, jealousy, and every other well aimed fleshly temptation.

If Satan’s team lands an arrow (as we saw in his attack on Eve in the Garden) the impact and splatter of his fiercely burning pitch can ignite within our minds **doubts** about God’s goodness, **distrust** about God’s plan, and **disobedience** to God’s Word.

Doubts, distrust, disobedience. That’s Satan’s simple goal.

Only the shield of faith, (holding onto the truth of God and acting upon it even when it is unseen), can extinguish these flaming arrows.

Here is a simple set of the big seven flaming dart temptations we will face all through life, that only the shield of faith can extinguish

We Can See God Extinguish Satan’s Darts

When Faced with...	By Believing God's Word:
1. Besetting sins & bad habits	Romans 6:11-13; 12:1-2; Colossians 3:5; Titus 2:12
2. Fear & Depression	Joshua 1:9; Psalm 71:14; 2 Cor. 10:4-5 ; Ph. 4:6-8
3. Words that don’t edify	Ps. 141:3; James 1:19; Col. 3
4. Lusts of the Flesh	Job 31:1; Gen 39:9b; Ephesians 4; Col. 3; Rom. 6
5. Pride of Life	Jer. 9:23-24; Col. 3; James 4
6. Wasting Time	Ps 119:37; James 3; Psalm 90
7. Materialism/Lust of Eyes	Mt 6:19-20; 1 Cor. 3:14-15; 2 Cor. 5:10

When Faced with...Besetting Sins & Bad Habits

Believe God's Word:

Romans 6:11-13 Likewise you also, **reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Therefore **do not let sin reign** in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And **do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness** to sin, but **present yourselves to God** as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.;

Colossians 3:5 Therefore **put to death** your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.;

Titus 2:12 teaching us that, **denying ungodliness and worldly lusts**, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

When Faced with...Fear & Depression

Believe God's Word:

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; **do not be afraid, nor be dismayed**, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go.”; *The Shield worked for Joshua almost 3,500 years ago.*

Psalms 71:14 (NIV) As for me, **I will always have hope**; I will praise you more and more. *The Shield worked for David 3,000 years ago.*

When Faced with...Words that don't edify

Believe God's Word:

Ps. 141:3 (NKJV) **Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth**; Keep watch over the door of my lips;

Col. 4:6 **Let your speech always be with grace**, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.;

James 1:19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be **swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**;

When Faced with...the Lusts of the Flesh/cravings

Believe God's Word:

Job 31:1 (NIV) “I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman;

Gen 39:9b How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” *The Shield worked for Joseph almost 4,000 years ago!*

When Faced with...the Pride of Life

Believe God's Word:

Jer. 9:23-24 (NKJV) Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty *man* glory in his might, Nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches; ²⁴ **But let him who glories glory in this**, That he understands and knows Me, That I *am* the Lord,

exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the Lord. *Col. 3 “clothe self with humility”*

When Faced with...Wasting Time

Believe God's Word:

Ps 119:37 (NKJV) Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, *And* revive me in Your way. *Look at all Ezra's pointed shield of faith prayers from 2,500 years ago!*

When Faced with...the Lusts of the eyes/Materialism

Believe God's Word:

Mt 6:19-20 (NKJV) **Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ **but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.;

1 Cor. 3:14-15 If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward.¹⁵ **If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss**; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire;

2 Cor. 5:10 (NKJV) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, **that each one may receive the things done in the body**, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Doesn't that Change How You Look at Daily Time in the Word?

How do we resist the Devil?

Paul said the shield of faith extinguishes all the fiery darts.

Paul had experienced those flaming arrows extinguished.

Ephesians 6:16 (NKJV) above all, taking the shield of faith with which **you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one**

Jesus saw him flee.

Matthew 4:11 (NKJV) **Then the devil left Him**, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

James assures us he will flee.

James 4:7 (NKJV) Therefore submit to God. **Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

John the final Scripture writer affirms even more of the same when he said we are overcomers in Christ.

1 John 4:4 (NKJV) You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because **He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.**

When God Says Extinguish ALL, He means All

The Shield of Faith always works.

God's Word is the key.

Jesus saw the devil flee (Mt. 4).

James saw the devil flee (Js. 4).

Paul saw his fiery attacks extinguished (Eph. 6).

Peter affirms we can resist the Devil (1 Pet 5).

John attests that God is greater than anything the Devil shoots at us (1 Jn. 4).

It always works, just try it is God's promise.