

TENACITY

Preparing for War [Part 2] [Ephesians 6:16-17]

As we put on piece by piece of the armor provided for us, we may wisely say to ourselves, "This warns me of danger; this prepares me for warfare; this prophesies opposition.

- Spurgeon [Spurgeon's Sermons, Vol. 37]

[1] The Shield of Faith [16]

Repelling the Fiery Darts of the evil one

[2] The Helmet of Salvation [17a]

Wearing Our Assurance in God's Promise With Confidence

[3] The Sword of the Spirit - the Word of God [17b]

Not just about reading God's Word but being able to use God's Word in the spiritual battle through the power of the Spirit.

Discussion Questions/Prayer

1. Read Ephesians 6:16-17 and I Thessalonians 3:1-3. Swindoll writes that the barrage of "flaming arrows of the evil one" we experience in the Christian life can take many forms. Let me name a few: temptation, doubt, anger, frustration, pride, despair, fear, guilt, shame, confusion, deception, discouragement, depression, hopelessness, greed, lust, presumption, stubbornness, laziness, suspicion, jealousy, hate, wrath, discord, conflict . . . the list continues on and on. When you read this list which ones do you struggle with the most? Why?
2. Read Matthew 4:1-11. What do we learn from Jesus in this passage that shows us the difference between knowing and applying God's word?
3. How can the teachings of the armor of God inspire us to live out our faith more fearlessly? [biblehub.com]
4. Pray for wisdom when we are tempted, the confidence to rest in the assurance of our salvation when we get shaken, and a commitment to apply God's word daily.

Ephesians 6:13-17 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 firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, . .

I Thessalonians 5:8 . . . since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

I John 5:4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

II Thessalonians 3:1-3 Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.

For not all have faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one."

John 10:27-30 *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.*

2 Timothy 1:12b-14 . . . for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. ¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

I John 5:11-13 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

Matthew 4:1-11 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you,' and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'"

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Ephesians 6:16-17 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

HOW DO WE PUT ON SPIRITUAL ARMOR? We put on the armor of God (v. 13) by daily absorbing Scriptural truth, living in obedience, sharing the gospel and trusting Christ. This spiritual armor will protect us from spiritual attack. Only when we overcome temptation in the spiritual realm can we play out that victory in the physical world. [Quest]

Ephesians 6:16a In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, . . .

1722 [e]	3956 [e]	353 [e]	3588 [e]	2375 [e]	3588 [e]	4102 [e]	
en	pasin	analabontes	ton	thyreon	tēs	pisteōs	
16	ἐν	πᾶσιν	, ἀναλαβόντες	τὸν	θυρεὸν	τῆς πίστεως	,
	besides	all	having taken up	the	shield	-	of faith

shield of faith The typical Roman soldier carried a large rectangular wooden shield, four feet (about a meter) high. Its front consisted of leather, which would be wetted before any battle in which the enemy might use flaming arrows, in order to extinguish them. After Roman legionaries closed ranks, the front row holding shields forward and those behind them holding shields above them, they were deemed virtually invulnerable to any attack from flaming arrows. [CBSB]

“faith,” that is, trust in God’s power and his assurances about our new identity in Christ. He conveys this with the image of a shield, which works well with the metaphor of Satan shooting fiery arrows—a representation of the power of his many and varied forms of attack on believers.” [ECNT]

Faith here for Paul is defines as resting steadfastly in God’s resources (1:19–20; 3:17), and holding firm to the community’s common set of beliefs (4:5, 13). See 1 Pet 5:8–9. [BTSB]

II Thessalonians 3:1-3 Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, 2 and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. 3 But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.”

I John 5:4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

[Faith is the Victory- 2nd Verse] His banner over us is love, Our sword the Word of God; We tread the road the saints above With shouts of triumph trod. By faith they, like a whirlwind's breath, Swept on o'er ev'ry field; The faith by which they conquered death Is still our shining shield.

[Chorus] Faith is the victory! Faith is the victory! Oh, glorious victory That overcomes the world.

In Batavia, New York, John Yates (1837-1900) was a shoe salesman, and then the manager of the local hardware store. His parents had emigrated from England.

Shortly after he left the hardware store to become the editor of a local newspaper, he wrote this hymn, “Faith Is The Victory”. The key phrase is taken from the King James Version of 1 John 5:4, which says, “And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” But John uses Scripture all throughout the song, primarily as he describes the use of the armor of God in Ephesians 6.

John was ordained as a Methodist minister in 1886, and later became pastor of the West Bethany Free Will Baptist Church. It wasn’t until 1891 that John sent “Faith Is The Victory” to Ira Sankey (1840-1908), who composed the music for it.

Ephesians 6:16b . . . with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; [refers to the temptations of the great adversary]

1722 [e]	3739 [e]	1410 [e]	3956 [e]	3588 [e]	956 [e]	3588 [e]	4190 [e]	3588 [e]	4448 [e]	4570 [e]
en	hō	dynēsesthe	panta	ta	belē	tou	ponērou	ta	pepyrōmena	sbesai
ἐν	ᾧ	δυνήσεσθε	πάντα	τὰ	βέλη	τοῦ	πονηροῦ	τὰ	πεπυρωμένα	σβέσαι
with	which	you will be able	all	the	arrows	of the	evil one	-	flaming	to quench

In ancient warfare cane darts were sometimes tipped with tow, dipped in pitch, and then ignited. The Christian's shield effectively counteracts such diabolical missiles not merely by arresting or deflecting them, but by actually quenching the flames to prevent them from spreading. [EBC]

What is faith? It's acting like God's telling the truth—being obedient to God's view on a matter. Whatever temptations the devil fires at you, you can overcome him by believing God's Word and acting on it. Acting in faith is like activating a divine fire extinguisher. [TESB]

flaming arrows. Examples include demonic attacks, temptations, and rage (4:26–27) that confront individuals, and false teachings and divisions that threaten the community's unity. [BTSB]

“The barrage of “flaming arrows of the evil one” we experience in the Christian life can take many forms. Let me name a few: temptation, doubt, anger, frustration, pride, despair, fear, guilt, shame, confusion, deception, discouragement, depression, hopelessness, greed, lust, presumption, stubbornness, laziness, suspicion, jealousy, hate, wrath, discord, conflict . . . the list continues on and on.” [Swindoll, Ephesians]

In regard to he [fiery darts] , we may observe:

- (1) they come suddenly, like arrows sped from a bow;
- (2) they come from unexpected places, like arrows shot suddenly from an enemy in ambush;
- (3) they pierce, and penetrate, and torment the soul, as arrows would that are on fire;
- (4) they set the soul on fire, and ignite the worst passions, as fiery darts do a ship or camp against which they are sent.

The only way to meet them is by the "shield of faith;" by confidence in God, and by relying on his gracious promises and aid. It is not by our own strength; and, if we have not faith in God, we are wholly defenseless. We should have a shield that we can turn in any direction, on which we may receive the arrow, and by which it may be put out. [Barnes' notes]

Ephesians 3:14-18 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 6:17a . . . and take the helmet of salvation, . . . [Taken directly from Isaiah 59:17]

2532 [e]	3588 [e]	4030 [e]	3588 [e]	4992 [e]	1209 [e]	
kai	tēn	perikephalaian	tou	sōtēriou	dexasthe	
17	καὶ	τὴν	περικεφαλαίαν	τοῦ	σωτηρίου	δέξασθε ,
	And	the	helmet	-	of salvation	take

- In this verse Paul start by telling the Ephesians to “take the helmet of salvation,” he’s referring to one of the last actions of a soldier about to engage in battle—slipping on his helmet and grabbing his sword.
- But this doesn’t imply that the believer’s salvation comes last. That is, we don’t earn salvation only after putting on truth, righteousness, peace, and faith.
- Rather, all of these things come to us the instant we are saved by grace through faith.
- What Paul is saying is that we must constantly remind ourselves of our salvation.
- We need to have assurance of our position with Christ.
- Why? Because Satan would like nothing “better than to aim his arrows at our minds, convincing us that we don’t really belong to Christ, that we aren’t eternally saved.
- He would love to rob us of the hope of our resurrection, our glorification, and our eternal home in heaven. [Swindoll]

The assurance of your salvation is one of the most strategic parts of your equipment. Take it! You are saved. You came to Christ. You will never be unsaved. You never need to lack assurance. The assurance that came when you were born again is still yours to claim today. One of Satan’s favorite and most disturbing tactics is to weaken your confidence in your eternal security. You have the helmet of salvation. Paul says, “Wear it!” [Swindoll]

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John 11:25-26 [Jesus speaking to Martha before raising Lazarus form the dead] Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

2 Timothy 1:12b-14 . . . for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. 13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

kai tēn machairan tou Pneumatos ho estin rhēma Theou
καὶ τὴν μάχαιραν τοῦ Πνεύματος, ὃ ἐστὶν ῥῆμα Θεοῦ,
and the sword of the Spirit which is [the] word of God

Paul's emphasis here is not simply reading Scripture but actually using God's revealed Word against Satan and his insidious spirits of darkness. That's what Jesus did when He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness of Judea. After Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, the devil tempted Him to turn some stones into bread to eat. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, saying, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word [rhēma] that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

It's no wonder, then, that Paul likens the spoken Word of God to a sharp sword. Just like an earthly sword—or any deadly weapon, for that matter—the sword of the Spirit is not something we can pick up as novices and immediately wield like pros. Rather, it takes many years to grow in the Word of God, sharpening our skills, enhancing our knowledge, and applying it to our lives. Then, with God's Word in our heads through memorization, in our hearts through meditation, and in our hands through application, we have the power to effect change by speaking, sharing, and living out that Word." [Swindoll]

It is noteworthy that there is only one weapon of offense provided, although there are several pieces of armor. . . . Notice, first, the sword you are to take is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. . . . We are ordered to take the sword of the Spirit, and so make it our own sword. [Spurgeon]

- I. First, the Word of God which is to be our one weapon is of noble origin; for IT IS "THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT." It has the properties of a sword, and those were given it by the Spirit of God.
 - A. It is "the sword of the Spirit" because he alone can instruct us in the use of it.
- II. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit; but IT IS ALSO TO BE OUR SWORD.
 - A. The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is what you are bidden to take; and if you in wilfulness resolve to exchange it for another, you commit an act of rebellion, and you make the change at your own risk and peril. Come, then, let us each one take the Word of God, and carry it nearer our hearts than ever; for such is the word of command, "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." [Spurgeon]

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