

Crossroads Church

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Series: Wholly Armed, Part 5

Ephesians 6:16

We come now to the fourth piece of armor. There is no hierarchy here, with one piece of the armor being more important than another. Our text verse begins with what sounds like a verbal highlighter. However, in the Greek language, *above all* means *in addition to*. That is, “in addition to the pieces of armor I’ve already mentioned, take the shield of faith”. A few scholars take that *above all* phrase to simply mean *in all circumstances and situations...*”

Martyn Lloyd-Jones makes the observation that with this fourth piece of armor, the language changes. In the first three pieces of armor, we were to *have*.

- *Having* your loins girt about with truth
- *Having* on the breastplate of righteousness
- *Having* your feet shoes with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones says that we move from *having* to *taking*:

- *Take* the shield of faith
- *Take* the helmet of salvation
- *Take* the sword of the spirit

Thus far, we have seen

1. Belt/girdle of truth(v.14)
2. Breastplate of righteousness(v.14)
3. Feet shod with the readiness to bear the good news of God's sending His son to the earth to die a substitutionary death, to satisfy the demands of a just God(the gospel).



Now, to the shield.

In verses 15 and 16, no OT passage is cited. These terms are used metaphorically. We don't carry an actual shield but when we live and walk in faith and trust in our God, it is *as if* we have a shield up. The concept of God as shield is seen in several places in the OT (Genesis 15:1; Psalm 3:3; 35:2)

Comment [1]:

Comment [2]:

Let's push the metaphor. Paul says that faith is the shield we hold up when we, the Church, go to war with the forces, the powers of darkness. The Roman soldier's shield was four feet tall and two and a half feet wide. Think of the shields police hold up when they are on riot patrol. In the first century, the shields would often be covered in animal hide(leather) and then soaked in water. The enemy would dip his arrow in tar set it on fire and shoot it. When the flaming arrow or dart hit the water-soaked shield the

shield would put out the fire. Perhaps Paul is thinking of the passage in Habakkuk 2:4-

The just shall live by his faith.

When we speak of spiritual warfare, we must be careful not to place the emphasis on human energy and agency. We don't win because we're clever or well-educated or have money or live in the preferred section of the city or go to the leading church. No, we win because we fully trust and believe in and have faith in God, who in Christ has defeated the powers of darkness.

Comment [3]:

It is impossible to overemphasize the role of faith in a believer's life. Earlier in this epistle, Paul would write:

For by grace you have been saved through

faith...(Ephesians 2:8)

Comment [4]:

Paul is writing not to individuals who go out to resist the evil one on their own. Paul is writing to the Church, that body of people who live and walk in faith. I remind you of a line from Timothy Gombis:

It is not our task to defeat the powers; God has already defeated them in the death and resurrection of Jesus (The Drama of Ephesians p. 160). Cf. Ephesians 1:19-23.

Comment [5]:

Two movements in the text. They are the direct results of acting and living in faith.

- **You'll be able-** This is a reminder of the enablement that becomes ours when we are in Christ and when we walk and operate in faith.
- **To quench...ALL-** This is not a suggestion that you're great or that you're awesome. You're not! No, this is a

reminder of what power belongs to the Church when the Church operates in faith and holds up faith like a water-soaked shield.

Because of this God-provided armor, we need not live in fear. We move from inability to ability; from victim to victor; from cowering to standing!!

The Church, properly dressed, can face any foe.

We hold up the shield called faith.

Without this basic piece of armor, faith, we cannot function as the body of Christ. Hebrews 11:6-

Without faith it is impossible to please Him(God).

Illus.

There is no situation I can get into that God cannot get me out. Some years ago when I was learning to fly, my instructor told me to put the plane into a steep and extended dive. I was totally unprepared for what was about to happen. After a brief time the engine stalled, and the plane began to plunge out-of-control. It soon became evident that the instructor was not going to help me at all. After a few seconds, which seemed like eternity, my mind began to function again. I quickly corrected the situation.

Immediately I turned to the instructor and began to vent my fearful frustrations on him. He very calmly said to me, "There is no position you can get this airplane into that I cannot get you out of. If you want to learn to fly, go up there and do it again." At that moment God seemed to be saying to me, "Remember this. As you serve Me, there is no situation you can get yourself into that I cannot get you out of. If you trust me, you will be all right." That lesson has been proven true in my ministry many times over the years.

[James Brown, Evangeline Baptist Church, Wildsville, LA, in *Discoveries*, Fall, 1991, Vol. 2, No. 4.](#)

The God we serve is trustworthy....worthy of our trust. Let us hold up faith and trust like a shield. It's trust in God which extinguishes the darts that Satan will hurl at us.

Illus,

Young Jake was walking along a beach one summer and he saw an older woman sitting under a beach umbrella on the sand. He walked up to her and asked, "Are you a Christian?" "Yes", she replied.

“Do you read your Bible every day?”

Again, she said, “yes”.

“Do you pray often?”, asked Jake.

Nodding her head, she said “yes”.

Jake’s final question: “Will you hold my dollar while I go swimming?”

Beloved, we can trust to hold our dollar while we go swimming. We can trust God to hold us up while we’re in the water. We can trust Him to bring us safely back to shore.

Amen