

The shield of faith

[Eph 6:16 ESV] 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

I. Intro

- A. Ephesians 4:24 mentions putting on the new self...
 - 1. This is the same word that's used in the putting on of the breastplate of righteousness
 - 2. We have a call to action, and a call to receive
 - 3. When we are called to act, we should act
 - 4. When we are called to receive, we should receive
- B. Belt of Truth: basic, but vital
- C. Breastplate of Righteousness: protects the vital organs
- D. Boots of the Gospel: Readiness matters
- E. Shield of Faith: LIFT IT UP CHURCH!
 - 1. When people say...faith is a crutch
 - 2. Remind them that faith is actually a shield!
- F. What is your favorite story from scripture showing the measure of faith from a follower of God?
 - 1. David meeting Goliath
 - 2. We see encounters all over scripture that demonstrate faith!

II. Text

- A. In all circumstances
 - 1. Please understand, this truth applies to all circumstances
 - 2. Just like the battle is not against flesh and blood, the shield of faith is always appropriate.
- B. TAKE UP:
 - 1. Raise up, lift up
 - 2. This is our preparedness, our POSTURE
- C. The shield of Faith
 - 1. It is the shield of faith, yet sometimes we put more trust in the shield of self reliance.
 - 2. Shield:
 - a) protective guard
 - b) [Psa 3:3-4 ESV] 3 But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head. 4 I cried aloud to the LORD, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah
 - 3. Faith:
 - a) [Heb 11:1 ESV] 1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
 - b) Being Certain in Christ is a Shield around us!
- D. With which you can extinguish ALL the flaming darts of the evil one

III. Points

- A. A Spiritual Shield
 - 1. We have a battle that will never be won in the flesh, because the battle is not in the flesh.
 - 2. We need a spiritual defense that will provide real protection/
 - 3. We have a Spiritual shield protecting our lives, that are strengthened when locked together with others who are fighting the battle alongside us.
 - 4. Our FELLOWSHIP is more than a potluck, it is who we lock shields with in order to navigate this world.
 - 5. We are reminded in this physical world of the spiritual battle:
 - a) There is a clash between the two worlds
 - b) We fight, but we don't always fight effectively.
 - c) The flaming darts are real and coming

- d) So, don't take your eyes off Jesus!
- B. A Pure Shield
 1. Faith in its purest form has no weakness.
 2. Faith is believing something with CONVICTION, though unseen.
 3. It seems that some of the fiery darts make their way through the shield...How can this be?
 - a) The integrity of the shield is based upon the amount of faith.
 - b) When we mix in our own power and strength, we weaken the integrity of our shield
 4. The shield of faith is weakened by:
 - a) Compromise
 - b) Self righteousness
 - c) Immorality
 - d) Disobedience
 - e) Pride
 - f) Neglect
 5. The weakened shield may look more like cardboard, or paper...and that'll not work. Against fiery darts.
- C. The Posture of the Shield:
 1. We lift the Shield of Faith in all circumstances
 - a) When things are so good! Lift it up
 - b) When things are challenging: Lift it up
 - c) When things are prosperous: Lift it up
 - d) When things are falling apart: Lift it up!
 2. We lift our shield individually, to join in together
 3. We lift up the shield for protection
 - a) The parts of the body hidden behind the shield are protected
 - b) Those parts not hidden behind the shield are not protected
 - c) So hide your entire self behind the shield of faith!
 4. We see the goodness of God in the Shield he provides us by faith.
- IV. Close
 - A. I unapologetically depend on the shield of Faith
 - B. I hide behind it
 - C. I prepare behind it
 - D. I launch into action holding the shield of faith before me.
 - E. There is no better place to be!