



Word on Wednesday Bible Study

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When Faith Takes the Hit – Ephesians 6:16

Series: *Suited for the Struggle: Standing Strong in Spiritual Warfare*

“In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.” – Ephesians 6:16

Introduction: In Ephesians 6, Paul describes the **armor of God**—the spiritual equipment believers must wear in order to stand in spiritual warfare. Up to verse 16, Paul has described armor that **stabilizes the believer**:

- The **BELT OF TRUTH** holds everything together.
- The **BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** protects the heart.
- The **SHOES OF PEACE** stabilize the believer’s steps.

But when Paul reaches verse 16, the imagery shifts slightly. Now he introduces the piece of armor designed for the moment **when the battle intensifies and the enemy begins to attack directly**. The Roman soldier carried a large shield called the **scutum**, a full-body shield that protected the soldier from neck to knee. Before battle, soldiers soaked the leather of the shield in water so that **when flaming arrows struck it, the fire would be immediately extinguished**. Paul uses this imagery to teach a profound spiritual truth: The Christian life is not free from attack. But **faith allows the believer to survive the attack**. Scripture repeatedly reminds believers that life with God is sustained **not by sight but by faith**.

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7
“The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17

The enemy launches “flaming darts”—attacks designed to ignite doubt, fear, discouragement, temptation, and despair. Yet Paul declares that **faith can extinguish them all**. The enemy does not need to remove God from the throne. He only needs to weaken our trust in God. But when faith takes the hit—the fire goes out. This raises the central question of the text: **What kind of faith can stand under fire?**

Paul’s teaching reveals three characteristics of faith that withstand spiritual attack.

I. FAITH THAT TRUSTS _____

- Biblical faith is not optimism or positive thinking. It is **confident trust in the character of God**. The Greek word for faith (*pistis*) refers to **trusting reliance upon God and His word**.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. 11:1

- The word **substance** (*hypostasis*) refers to something that **supports or stands underneath**. Faith is the **foundation beneath hope**.
- Faith does not depend on circumstances—it depends on **God’s character**.

“Those who know Your name will put their trust in You.” Psalm 9:10

Notice the order: Knowledge of God produces confidence in God.

*“You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.”
Isaiah 26:3*

- Peace is not produced by calm circumstances. Peace is produced by confidence in God's unchanging nature.
- Faith in Scripture is never an abstract belief. It is **relational trust in God Himself**.
- Faith says: God's Word is more reliable than visible reality.

II. FAITH THAT INTERCEPTS _____

Paul writes that the shield of faith extinguishes **“flaming darts.”**

Ancient armies dipped arrows in pitch, set them on fire, and launched them toward enemy formations. These arrows were designed not only to wound but to ignite destruction and chaos. Paul intentionally uses this imagery because Satan's attacks are often designed to ignite something inside the believer.

- Examples include: **Doubt**, _____, **Accusation, Discouragement**, _____, **Disappointment**

“Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

Paul does not say the shield prevents arrows from being fired. He says the shield quenches them when they hit. Faith does not remove attack. Faith neutralizes its effect.

“In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

- Faith answers the enemy's lies with God's truth.

“This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1 John 5:4

- Faith becomes the channel through which God's power protects the believer.
- Faith does not mean you will not feel the arrow strike.
Faith means the arrow cannot penetrate the soul.

III. FAITH THAT _____

- Roman shields were powerful individually—but unstoppable collectively.
- Soldiers sometimes formed a formation called the **testudo** (“tortoise”). Soldiers locked shields together on all sides and overhead, creating a nearly impenetrable barrier

Paul’s readers would have immediately understood this principle:

No soldier fought ALONE.

- The Christian life is not an isolated journey. It is a **shared battle within a covenant community**.

“Two are better than one... for if they fall, one will lift up his companion.” Eccl. 4:9–10

“Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.” Hebrews 10:24–25

- Faith grows stronger **when reinforced by others' faith**.

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” - Galatians 6:2

- One of the enemy’s most effective strategies is **isolation**.

When believers drift away from community:

- Faith _____
- Burdens Remain _____
- Spiritual Defense _____

But when believers stand together, faith becomes reinforced. Sometimes the reason we are still standing is not only our faith—but **the faith of someone standing beside us**.

Conclusion: In Ephesians 6:16, Paul reminds us that the shield of faith is the believer’s protection when the battle intensifies. Faith anchors us in the character of God, intercepts the enemy’s attacks, and is strengthened through the community of believers. The Christian life is not free from arrows, but faith ensures those arrows cannot destroy us. When we trust God’s promises and stand together in Him, the enemy’s weapons lose their power. The arrow may strike—but when faith takes the hit, the fire goes out.