

THE SHIELD OF FAITH # 7

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

Eph 6:10-18

¹⁰ A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. ¹² For we^[a] are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor...and lift up the shield of faith to stop the arrows from the Devil. ¹⁸ Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.

Efesios 6:10-20

*10 Por último, fortalézcanse con el gran poder del Señor. 11 Pónganse toda la armadura de Dios para que puedan hacer frente a las artimañas del diablo. 12 Porque nuestra lucha no es contra *seres humanos, sino contra poderes, contra autoridades, contra potestades que dominan este mundo de tinieblas, contra fuerzas espirituales malignas en las regiones celestiales. 13 Por lo tanto, pónganse toda la armadura de Dios... tomen el escudo de la fe.*

Paul says we must lift up the shield of faith because: 1, WE ARE IN A SPIRITUAL WAR! 2, WE CANNOT STAND ON OUR OWN! And 3, GOD HAS PROVIDED PROTECTIVE ARMOR!

The Shield of Faith

1. I believe God is who he says he is and will do what he says he will do!
2. I believe I am who God says I am and I can do whatever he asks me to do!
3. The Word of God is true, alive and powerful!
- 4. Prayer changes things!**
5. The Church is the Body of Christ and together we can accomplish Jesus mission!

Today we tackle point number four in the Shield of Faith: Prayer changes Things.

That is a great bumper sticker, makes for a good song, it a something good to tell people when they are going through the fire or in need of a miracle. It is why we have a Wed. prayer meeting.

But just what does that mean? How is it connected to our faith and how does it work.

Illustration of a first date-starting a relationship

- # Both are trying to decide if this is a good thing so you are nervous
- # Both have little tests to see if this person is a keeper
- # I had a list of boxes that I would have to check off in order for a girl to be a keeper
- # I have heard of some giving the cassette test. Ask her to pick out a cassette to listen to. If she couldn't make up her mind or get the cassette out of the case and into the player, she was history
- # I have heard that if the girl ate all her food and didn't offer the guy the rest, she was history.

The point of this is that at some point they would begin to talk. A relationship involves communication; say it with me men, communication. How do you feel about this or that. What is your opinion. What they said indicated who they are, what was in their heart. Do you remember the first conversations with someone that you didn't connect with? It was painful. Do you remember the conversations with a person that you did connect with? It was wonderful. You understood each other, were on the same wave length. Communication happened and as a result a relationship grew.

The same is true in our relationship with God, we have to communicate or we don't have a relationship. Today we are talking about prayer, communicating with God, it is the 4th point in our shield of faith.

Read with me some significant scriptures that relate to prayer. Look for a pattern or cycle. Read responsively with me. Instead of me reading and then you reading. Us English speakers are going to read together and the Spanish speakers are going to read it in Spanish.

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the **word of Christ**.

Así que la fe viene como resultado de oír el mensaje, y el mensaje que se oye es la palabra de Cristo.

I have hidden your **word** in my heart, so that I will not sin against you!

En mi corazón atesoro tus dichos para no pecar contra ti.

Let the **words of Christ**, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his **words** to teach and counsel each other. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

Que habite en ustedes la palabra de Cristo con toda su riqueza: instrúyanse y aconséjense unos a otros con toda sabiduría; canten salmos, himnos y canciones espirituales a Dios, con gratitud de corazón.17 Y todo lo que hagan, de palabra o de obra, háganlo en el nombre del Señor Jesús, dando gracias a Dios el Padre por medio de él.

Do not let this **Book of the Law** depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Recita siempre el libro de la ley y medita en él de día y de noche; cumple con cuidado todo lo que en él está escrito. Así prosperarás y tendrás éxito.

¹³ It is **written**: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.

13 Escrito está: «Creí, y por eso hablé.»[b] Con ese mismo espíritu de fe también nosotros creemos, y por eso hablamos.

If you remain in me and **my words** remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

Si permanecen en mí y mis palabras permanecen en ustedes, pidan lo que quieran, y se les concederá.

(Romans 10:17; Psalm 119:11; Colossians 3:16-17; Joshua 1:8; 2 Corinthians 4:7-13; John 15:7)

Follow along with me as we go through the connection of these passages to our prayer life.

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the **word of Christ**.

Así que la fe viene como resultado de oír el mensaje, y el mensaje que se oye es la palabra de Cristo.

When you read or listen to the Word of God, the Spirit of God that spoke it, translated it and preserved for thousands of years will speak it fresh to your heart, faith will come and as you continue to read/listen faith will grow. Faith will enable you to face the challenges in your life. It is faith that acts as a shield to protect you from the flames arrows of Satan. Without the Word in your heart, you have no faith and will be defeated. This is why you must read the Word of God daily.

I have hidden your **word** in my heart, so that I will not sin against you!

En mi corazón atesoro tus dichos para no pecar contra ti.

Let the **words of Christ**, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his **words** to teach and counsel each other. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

Que habite en ustedes la palabra de Cristo con toda su riqueza: instrúyanse y aconséjense unos a otros con toda sabiduría; canten salmos, himnos y canciones espirituales a Dios, con gratitud de corazón.17 Y todo lo que hagan, de palabra o de obra, háganlo en el nombre del Señor Jesús, dando gracias a Dios el Padre por medio de él.

It is not enough to just read it, or listen to it. You must hid it in your heart. The word means to treasure them, store them away as a great gift passed down from generation to generation. The word means to have something lurking around inside. How would it change us if the Word was such a part of our lives that it was always lurking around about to get out?

Do not let this **Book of the Law** depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Recita siempre el libro de la ley y medita en él de día y de noche; cumple con cuidado todo lo que en él está escrito. Así prosperarás y tendrás éxito.

This process or cycle continues... You might paraphrase this passage always keep the word of God on the tip of your tongue. Meditate on it constantly so that you will obey it and be successful.

The Hebrew concept of meditation involves speaking, murmuring, making noise. It is at this point the Word of God that has been read and placed in our hearts affects our tongue. We speak it out loud in our devotion time as we communicate to God. It is reciting it, thinking about it and praying it.

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13 Escrito está: «Creí, y por eso hablé.»[b] Con ese mismo espíritu de fe también nosotros creemos, y por eso hablamos.

Paul makes a powerful connection between the Word of God in our hearts, faith and speaking or confessing it outloud.

If you remain in me and **my words** remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

Si permanecen en mí y mis palabras permanecen en ustedes, pidan lo que quieran, y se les concederá.

Studies show that Americans by a vast majority say they pray on a regular basis. Prayer is a hot topic. I don't doubt that most Americans do talk to God-pray. God is listening to us!

TnT wrote us postcards from camp this week. Trevor said he was having a good time and the food was great. Travis said the cabins stunk. I enjoyed hearing from both. God is our heavenly father and he wants to hear about our joys and our sorrows. God wants to hear our troubles, thoughts and feelings. He values these. I am glad he listens closely when I am frustrated, hurt, confused or angry, aren't you? Jesus said the very hairs of our head are numbered by God and that sparrows never die without God taking note. Add this to James words that God is not willing that any should be lost. God knows when people are talking to him, he is listening.

Not all prayer is the same! Talking to God and telling him we are angry and we want him to fix things and the kind of prayer that the Word of God says moves mountains and changes things are very different.

Prayer that changes thing flows out of God's Word! I don't mean it is memorized, I mean it agrees with what God has said about the subject. The kind of prayer that is essential to the shield of faith, that changes things flows out of a heart of faith, which springs from The Word of God living in our hearts, and agrees with what God has already said.

Prayer that is telling God we are afraid, scared, mad, hurt is good. Don't ever stop praying those prayers, because God loves you and wants you to talk to him. But prayer that changes things, must move from I feel _____ about this situation to a word from God about the situation. There is a connection between abiding in Christ, His Word abiding in us and then praying prayers that move mountains.

When the Word has gotten into our hearts and created faith, our prayers will speak what God says about the situation, it will ask God to do what we know he wants to do and those prayers change things.

God has spoken about life will you listen to him?

Let's go back to our passage in Eph. Paul says the real battle isn't with flesh and blood, but a battle that is raging in the heavenly realms. He says that Satan is hurling flaming arrows at us. What are those? Is the arrow or the battle the cancer, the loss of job, the fight with your family member? Satan may in fact be orchestrating these, but the most significant part of the battle is Satan's words. He is speaking words to you trying to get you to take his word into your heart and believe it. His words are the opposite of God's Word and his words destroy faith instead of give faith.

Cancer comes, but the deadliest arrow is Satan telling you God isn't listening, can't heal, and just give up. Who will you listen to?

The loss of job is bad, but what is worse is what Satan is telling you and trying to get you to believe about it. Who will you listen to? If you don't have the Word of God in you your faith shield will be pretty small and ineffective.

Pray out of a heart filled with God's word and faith. This kind of prayer will shut Satan up and put out his flaming arrows.