

LIFE Fellowship of Frederick / November 21st, 2021
Armor of God: Shield of Faith and the Flaming Arrows

Ephesians 6:16 (NIV) ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

- Take a few moments and consider this verse carefully.
 - o With regard to spiritual warfare itself, what is distinct about this verse as compared to any other found in Ephesians 6:14-17?
 - o What is the strategic value of arrows on a battlefield? In what circumstances are they effective? What about fiery arrows?
 - o How does a shield “extinguish” flaming arrows?

Paul uses the analogy of flaming arrows to communicate how “the enemy” attacks. As we seek to define the arrows that Satan has in his arsenal, we turn to this parable of the Sower and the Seed for answers. For each segment of verses try to identify the specific vulnerability mentioned and then define a broader context of how an attack would manifest in the lives of both the saved and unsaved.

Matthew 13:18–23 (NIV) ¹⁸ “Listen then to what the parable of the sower means:

- ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path.
 - o What is the specific area of vulnerability?
 - o How would Satan devise an attack to exploit this vulnerability?
- ²⁰ The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.
 - o What is the specific area of vulnerability?
 - o How would Satan devise an attack to exploit this vulnerability?
- ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful.
 - o What is the specific area of vulnerability?
 - o How would Satan devise an attack to exploit this vulnerability?
- ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”
 - o What do all the sections of verses above have in common?
 - o What is the key to success as revealed in vs.23? (See James 1:22)

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Hebrews 10:32–39 (NIV) ³² Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. ³⁴ You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, *because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.* ³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. ³⁷ For, “In just a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay.” ³⁸ And, “But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back.” ³⁹ But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.

- This passage reveals a number of ways that those in the early church were persecuted for their faith. Identify these hardships in the space below:

- What do you think are the “better and lasting possessions” the writer is referencing in verse 34?

- Looking at verses 35-36:
 - What are the attributes God is seeking in those who follow Him?

 - What does it mean to “throw away your confidence”? How does one avoid doing this very thing?

- Looking at verses 38-39:
 - The concept of “shrinking back” is one that seems to be very displeasing to God. What are the consequences for “shrinking back”? From a military perspective, what is the alternative to “shrinking back”.

 - In contrast to the way “shrinking back” seems to displease the Lord, demonstrating genuine faith seems to please Him. Read Hebrews 11:6 and then explain:
 - What it means to “have faith” (10:39)

 - What it means to “live by faith” (Hebrews 10:38)