

Full Protection

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the necessity of spiritual armor, particularly the shield of faith, to protect believers from the enemy's attacks.

Duration: 39:29

Scripture: Numbers 6:25, Matthew 6:33, Luke 17:5, Ephesians 6:10-12, Ephesians 6:16, Hebrews 11:1

Topics: "Protection"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having an open heart to hear from God. They use the analogy of a TV dish receiving signals to illustrate how an open heart allows God to speak and deposit things in our lives. The speaker then shifts to discussing spiritual warfare and the need to be strong in the Lord's might, not our own strength. They explain the significance of putting on the full armor of God to stand against the attacks of the enemy. The sermon concludes with a reminder to watch and pray, being vigilant and aware of what is happening around us and within us.

Transcript

Let's turn in our Bibles to the book of Ephesians, okay? And we're going to look at Ephesians chapter 6. In the New Testament, go to the book of, if you get to Corinthians, go first and second Corinthians, then comes Galatians, then comes Ephesians. And in the sixth chapter, starting in the 10th verse, we read this, Ephesians 6. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

For our struggle, notice Paul was in it too, the writer of Apostle Paul who wrote it, he says our, first person plural, for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. He's talking about a nasty, dark network of invisible forces that are arrayed against the Christian believer. Therefore, verse 13, put on the full armor of God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground and after you have done everything to stand.

Stand firm then with the belt of truth buckled around your waist. That means sincerity there, truth as in sincerity, being real. Can't be a hypocrite and face the devil.

With the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace, in addition to all this, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the

flaming arrows of the evil one. Paul, this is one of the prison epistles, Paul's in prison and it's thought that he's looking at a Roman soldier who's one of the guards and as he's looking at the way they are armored, he then begins to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and he begins to talk about not physical warfare but the warfare choir that we're all involved in, which is spiritual warfare. We don't talk about it that much.

Sometimes for some people it's hard to talk about because we feel like we're vulnerable or we feel like we're not good Christians. But Paul says, the greatest Christian we know of, he says that all Christians have a struggle, a warfare. The word that's used there is hand-to-hand grappling in a wrestling match.

That's how close contact we come with these forces of darkness. So even though we're believers, Satan has not given up and he arrays his demonic spirits and all the subtlety and strategy that he has, he puts it against us so that he can trip us up, pull us down, dishonor Christ and try to destroy us. The devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

So Paul's talking about that and now he wants to discuss the fact of how you can defend yourself. He says, we're in it so don't get excited by like, wow, the devil's attacking me. Where did I go wrong? A lot of people have that in their minds.

It's totally wrong. Let me spare you a lot of frustration. To be in the center of God's will and to love Jesus means you're going to be attacked by the enemy.

How many have been attacked by the enemy since you've been a Christian? Lift your hand. There's no hyper-faith triumphalism. Christians have no problems.

Christians never just, they just quote the word and the devil flees and all of that. It's taking more than conquerors to a place that the Bible doesn't give it. We are more than conquerors, but we're in a fight and we feel that fight.

I didn't notice how many people really raised their hands. How many have felt that fight since you've been a Christian? Lift your hand up. Okay, all right.

So this is good and then it humbles us because we're all in it together and we can encourage each other. Using that setting, Paul says, no, now you got to be strong in the Lord. Weakness and feeling sorry for yourself does no good whatsoever in spiritual warfare.

The command is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of whose might? His might, not in our strength. We got to be strong in the Lord. Find out how to grasp his strength.

Use his strength. Then he says, you got to put on the full armor of God so that when the attacks come, you can stand. You won't go down.

And you need the full armor of God. And he tells us the different parts of this armor. I just want to focus on one.

It's this one, verse 16, which says, in addition to all this, King James mistranslates that and puts above all else, I believe, as if it's the most important. No, the word there in the Greek means addition to all this, the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness and all that. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith.

Notice it's a verb. Take it up. Use it now.

The shield of faith, with which, that shield, you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Let's repeat that verse out loud. Ready? In addition to all this, come on, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

So Paul is saying every Roman soldier would go into battle and they knew the necessity of having a shield. You have to have a shield. So there's such a thing as the shield of faith that can be used that extinguishes every single fiery dart and arrow of the enemy.

In fact, the Roman soldiers had two shields, and there's two different Greek words to signify those shields. One was a shield that was strapped to your arm, which was smaller, that you could use just to cover an area, especially in closer combat, against a weapon or something. That was a smaller shield.

Then there was a shield that was as tall as the soldier, which went like this. And when the enemies would fire those arrows, you see in those movies when they do that, like a thousand soldiers fire an arrow at once, the soldier would just crouch down and stand behind the shield, and the arrows would go against the shield, and he would be protected. Now that's the word he uses for the shield of faith.

And that's why he says it's able to extinguish all the fiery arrows or darts of the enemy. There's a shield, he said, that the Christian has to use. And it is so strong, this shield, that all the fiery darts of the enemy can be extinguished.

We got the picture, right? You got it. Now, notice that he likens these fiery arrows to the way Satan attacks us. In Roman soldiery and warfare, they were faced with a couple things.

First of all, people would throw the javelin at you. They would throw a spear at you, okay? But the most sophisticated, once you dodged that or blocked it, then the guy no longer had his spear. But the most sophisticated weaponry that Paul knew of in that day were things that were shot at you, and then they would treat the tips of those arrows, those darts, they would treat it on the end to do maximum damage.

They hadn't got to the place where they regularly used poison, which would go in and then, you know, infect the body, like germ warfare. But what they were doing in those days, and Paul had in mind, is that they would set the tip with some incendiary stuff and set it on fire, so that when you fired it and it struck the person and went in any part of them, it would set the body, the clothes, the person on fire. Now, who's living today, we have weapons that are unthinkable now in their destructive power.

But back in those days, this was a huge advance. We're not only sending arrows that might or might not hit, we're sending arrows that are lit on the tip with incendiary stuff and on fire, and these fiery darts, if they hit, now you got a real problem. Or if they hit a house, or if they hit straw, or if they hit something that can be set on fire, now the whole house is going up just from one arrow.

So Paul now is saying, this is one of the devices that the devil uses. He has fiery darts, and when these fiery darts come, they set a bigger body on fire. They set things ablaze.

Two things about that that we have to keep in mind. Number one, what is that? Well, we all know what that is, don't we? The Bible says, let's say the tongue is set on fire by hell itself. That the whole nature can be set on fire by an arrow that Satan sends into your head as a thought.

Let's talk about that for a second. You can be walking down the street, not thinking about anything, not alert against anything, and suddenly an arrow goes in your head, one of these fiery darts, meant to not

only hurt us, but to set the whole thing blazing, like those fire-tipped arrows that were used back in warfare in that day. The thought that comes most to us when it comes to that probably, but we should be careful not to just limit it to that, is when our lusts, sexual desires, or something are set on fire by a thought, a word, an arrow, something someone says, something we see, or with no contact with anything, just a thought coming in our head from using some past experience, some past sin, some past anything.

And an arrow is set on fire. And it's sent into our minds to set the whole body ablaze, and stirs up those desires, in this case, sexual desires. And the next thing you know, a person is tempted to lose control and go do something against God's word that will hurt them.

And it all comes like those arrows did back then with no warning. That's the whole thing that he wants us to realize, is that when you were a soldier and you were in a war, you didn't know where it was going to be fired and when it could hit you. They didn't send you an email and say, I'm going to fire at you in about 10 minutes.

It could come anytime, anywhere. And people lost their life because they weren't careful and a missile would come. The missile being an arrow with fire on the tip.

And that's the way Satan works with all of us. He doesn't say, oh, today I'm going to really attack you. The attack comes out of nowhere.

That's why the Bible says, watch. Watch and pray. Always watch.

Watch what? Watch what's going down. Watch what's happening around you and in you and in your cabeza, in your head. And what thoughts you have.

Because this is the way Satan works. He obviously has access to our minds. He can send missiles in there with thoughts.

How he does that, we're not exactly clear. But we know this. That's where temptation comes.

Because if the thought doesn't come, the temptation can't be there. But there's other arrows he fires. Just like an arrow of temptation sexually can set the whole body on fire.

Just take an arrow of anger. People can be driving down, especially in California. But it can happen anywhere.

But there's records of hundreds, thousands of these guys driving down. Somebody cuts them off. Just one person cuts them off.

Suddenly some arrow comes in, takes out a gun. He shoots at the guy. He doesn't even know.

Because he cut him off. It's called road rage. Where do you think road rage comes from? Jesus? No.

It's an arrow. It's a fiery dart. And you can find yourself just be calm and everything.

And the next thing you know, one arrow hits. You start thinking. One thing leads to another.

And you're mad at the world. And you don't even know how it started. Resentment, bitterness.

I've watched people with no outside source. And I know what it is to battle with it myself. You can just get one thing that stirs up some memory of what somebody did.

And the next thing you know, the day is ruined. Your meal is ruined. Everything's ruined.

Why? Some arrow took and it lit the whole thing on fire. And now you're really brooding. Now you're really resentful.

Now you're really, you can't even sleep. All from some crazy arrow. You don't think Jesus did that? It's not your personality? Come on, go by the Bible.

These arrows are fired at us. We could go on and on. But you know, we don't have to do that.

We can use our Christian imagination and our own experience. We know these arrows are fired. We know where they lead to.

Laziness. Got a plan for the whole day. Lazy arrow.

It's got lazy fire on the end of it. And the next thing you know is I'm not going nowhere. I'm not doing nothing today.

Come on, I'm not going anywhere. I'm not going anywhere. That's it.

I'm not going. No, I'm not coming. Why not? Hey, I'm chilling.

That's all. It's lazy. Where'd that thought come from? Where'd that arrow come from? Come on.

Takes us away from the will of God. Proverbs is full of verses about the lazy person ends up suffering lack, but the person who works hard gets ahead in life and prospers. All kinds of people are living in the sin of laziness.

They're deadbeats, male and female. They're going to try to scam the government and live off the system. That's the truth.

Come on, we all know that. Where does that arrow come not to work? If the Bible says if a man doesn't work, he shouldn't what? He shouldn't even eat. So the Bible says be industrious.

But those arrows are saying do nothing. The world owes you something. World owes you something.

You've been not treated good or your race hasn't been treated good or whatever. And these are all arrows from Satan race, racist arrows. Oh, my goodness.

They're flying all over the place. If we could just see it, you go out on full street, probably in here too, but all over if you just had eyes to see, they're flying all over the place. Anger, resentment, bitterness, white racism, black racism.

People all up in everyone's grill about everything and all shot, all starting by just some arrows coming in their head. It's only going to do is destroy. But there's a shield that Bible says.

Now, look, how many want to be changed today and really learn something? Lift your hand up. How many have already been edified by just the description that the Bible gives us? Come on, lift your hand up. All

right.

Now, look, this is now I want you to concentrate and open your heart now and ask the Holy Spirit to make you sensitive so you can learn. Because I believe God has opened up something to me here that will really help all of us. There's a shield called the shield of faith, which will block every arrow of the enemy.

It'll extinguish it. Extinguish speaks of that fire that sets something bigger on fire, right? You got it so far. This shield is so big, so strong that every arrow that's fired against you, it'll I don't care.

Lust, laziness, anger, resentment, unforgiveness, whatever. It's all going to go off because we're behind that shield. Here comes the problem that we got to define our terms.

God said to Abraham, I am your reward and your shield. God said, I am your shield. A number of times in the Psalms, David says, you are my rock, my fortress and my shield.

God is his shield. Proverbs quotes the Psalms in one place, which it usually doesn't do. And says, quotes that verse and says, God is our shield.

Well, wait a minute. Is God our shield or is faith our shield? What happened to the Old Testament shield of God in comparison to this? Specifying by Paul about faith being our shield. Well, here's the part you got to understand.

You can't have faith in faith. That's what's happening today in Christian circles. People are putting faith in faith.

Faith is only as good as the thing that you have faith in. Trust has no power except in what it's trusting in. You know the old pulpit they used to have up here? Remember on that one? And faith can be described as leaning on something and resting and totally depending on something.

Well, I could lean with all my body weight on that big pulpit. And man, I couldn't budge that thing and I was safe. And if you tied me to it, it'd be hard for to move me because you'd have to move the pulpit.

The thing was heavy. Now this one. No, that's a whole different thing here.

There's a whole lot of shaking going on up here on this pulpit. If I lean and you say, oh, there's power in leaning. Oh yeah? Yeah, just lean on this baby and see how far you go.

You don't have faith in faith. That's positive thinking. That's Christian science.

That's these hyper faith evangelists who are just saying you can live any way you want. Have no relationship with God. Just use faith.

Now that's not ever taught in the Bible. What you have to understand is the shield of faith is the same as God being our shield because when you and I demonstrate and have faith, God comes on the scene and becomes our shield. Faith isn't my shield.

It's called the shield of faith. Why? Because when you trust in God, when you lean on God, when you open your heart to God, now God comes for the Bible says we are kept by the power of God through faith. Peter tells us that.

We are kept by the power of God through what? Faith. Faith in God, trust in God, opening our heart to God brings the presence of God into our lives and the presence of God in my life is a shield that will extinguish every fiery arrow of the enemy. Can we all put our hands together and say amen? That's why the Bible says that just shall live by faith.

Without faith, it's impossible to please God. Faith doesn't have the power. It's what you believe in that brings the power and when you have faith in God, it brings God.

It brings his presence. It brings his grace. It brings his love.

The just shall live by what? Faith. Now we got it straight. The shield of faith is really the shield of faith that brings God's presence and when we're not walking in faith, even though God is real, God seems like a thousand miles away.

Even though we're Christians, when we're not walking by what the Bible calls faith is, we can forget real quick about God and say things we would never say if God were sitting beside us. We would never say that. We would never do that with a consciousness of God.

The shield of faith brings God's presence, his felt presence. We sense him. We know he's with us and that becomes our shield because God is with us and when God is with you, you're braver, you're stronger and when you have no sense of God with you, you can become little chicken little, right? And be afraid of a shadow and we see Christians in the Bible suffering with fear.

We see Timothy, a young minister. He's afraid, he's timid and Paul has to correct him and say, Timothy, come on. God has not given us a spirit of what? Fear.

This shield brings God and when God is experienced and felt and sensed and you know he's with you, that changes all the dynamics because when we feel alone in the world without God, even though God says, I'll never leave you nor forsake you. See, faith is what connects us to the power and presence of God. This explains so much in our lives, right? Haven't you, since you're a Christian, felt you were alone and that God was 100 miles away? Come on, haven't we felt that? And you're all alone and you're filled with anxiety and you just get attacked by the enemy and it's like, God, where are you? Well, where are you? He's right there.

But without faith, you don't sense that. You don't experience that. God's not moving back and forth like a yo-yo.

God's there. But it's eyes of faith. Now that brings us to the close, which is the hard part of the message for us to understand, which is faith.

See, faith is never described in the Bible. We basically get some definitions like faith is trusting in God, faith is relying on God. But then Hebrews 11 says, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

That's how faith works. That's not a definition of faith. This is what faith produces.

What does faith produce? And let's bring it back to our example about God's presence and how faith is the shield, which brings a sense of the divine, the invisible, the future to us. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. That's future tense.

Faith is the evidence of things not seen. That's invisible. When we believe, when we open our hearts to God, when we receive his word and faith is produced, all human beings who are Christians start getting convictions, strong convictions, proof, as it were, of two things that the senses can't prove.

When you're walking by faith, you're sure of certain future things, even though you can't prove it. You know he's a way maker. Prove it to me.

Faith tells me he is a way maker. He will make a way. People without faith won't give their monies to the things of God.

People with faith make sacrifices. Elsie goes to Haiti. Why? Because she's looking for a better kingdom.

She's not looking for the cheap stuff here on earth. But without faith, all you know is the stuff on earth. Who's who? What's what? Money.

Now. Am I successful? But once you have faith, you're like, this is chump change. This ain't nothing.

I got a, I got a, come on, how many have a home waiting for them in heaven? But that's what faith takes. And people without faith only live for now because the senses take over. Senses don't know anything about the future.

Only faith knows about the future. The senses know I'm in this church. There's this monitor.

There's these flowers. There's this carpet there. That's all the senses know.

But faith, faith says, no, he'll welcome me. He'll welcome me. Faith knows what a day that will be when my Jesus I shall see.

And unbelief says, how do you know you'll see him? I can't prove it. But faith tells me I'm going to see Jesus one day. I know it.

That's how faith works. Listen, that's how faith works. So the shield of faith that, that brings in a power on our lives that extinguish those arrows because we know, no, I'm not forfeiting my reward.

I'm not going to forfeit that for this presence thing. See, sin is always present. There's no future sin.

There's present sin. It's always present. And that extinguishes that because you know, no, no, I got something better.

That's why the Bible says Moses, he gave up the pleasures of sin that he could have had in Egypt because he knew something else is going to happen in the future. And I want to be tied into that. I don't want to be tied into this present day stuff.

It'll be over in a second. You know, lifetime is so fleeting. You know, I was noticing it the other day.

Some people were in the, in the airport where I was and everyone was trying to look cool in today's styles. You know, guy had his hat all sideways and up and over and everybody was just, everybody, you know. And I was thinking about when you look at pictures from the 60s, 70s, 80s and you look at people, including yourself sometimes, 70s, 80s and you go, look at them big afros that people were wearing back there and platform shoes and all of that.

Did people dress like that back then? And guess what? If the Lord tarries, they'll be laughing at how you dress right now. People be saying, look, 2012. That's so funny, man.

Because it's all just fleeting. Are you in style today? It'll be out of style within five years. People be laughing at how you dress today.

But faith goes past all that. Faith looks eternity. I'm going to be with Jesus.

How many plan to be with Jesus? Say amen. Amen. But faith knows that.

And then the evidence of things not seen. See, faith brings the presence of God. And when you sense God near you, you're not going to talk bad about another person.

Jesus is right there listening. You're not going to say a word. No, you'll say, I'd rather not say anything about that.

But if you don't sense God there, even though he's there, you're going to jabber. I'm going to jabber. We're going to talk.

We're going to do all nasty things. We're going to do that. Why? Because faith is an operation.

Faith brings. It's the substance evidence of things not seen. We know Jesus is with us.

Show me Jesus with you. I can't show you. But faith tells me he walks with me.

And he talks with me. And he tells me that I am his own. So faith brings the future as more real than the present.

And it makes invisible things more real than visible things. And that's why people live from money and fame and material things. They're not walking by faith because they're all going to disappear.

Jesus said, don't put your, beware of the cares of this life. It'll tear your soul up. What would it profit a man if he gained the whole, what? Material world and lost his own.

Show me a soul. Nobody can show anyone a soul. You can't see a soul.

Only faith understands a soul. Because it takes invisible things and makes them more real. People have given up pleasure and a home and comfort.

I've gone to some mission field back in the 1700s, 1800s. Did you know people left Moravia? The Moravian colony in Czechoslovakia. Those Christians back in the 1700s.

Did you know they went to the West Indies and to bring the gospel? And did you know they met leper colonies? And they realized you can't get in to tell them. Did you know that they contracted leprosy on purpose? So they could go and share the gospel with lepers? What do you think? They were walking by faith or walking by sight? They're walking by faith. When you walk by sight, all you think about me, myself and I. Paul says we don't walk by sight.

We walk by faith. We live by invisible things and future things. That's what grabs our soul.

That word needs to be heard by a bunch of us today. The shield of faith extinguishes every fiery dart because I hide behind it. And the future things are so real.

And the presence of God with me is so real. I overcome fear because God is with me. Are you kidding? God is with me.

I'm not gonna be afraid of any man. God is with me. But when you're not walking by faith, right? We get afraid.

Is this not an experience for all of us? How many are with me? Say amen. And you that will one day listen to this message, however it's streamed or it's put into a CD, you got to understand God wants you to walk by faith. God wants you to walk by faith.

Otherwise you're gonna walk by just your senses. And that's easy for the devil to set on fire. Your whole body, your whole soul, the whole thing will go up.

Here's the hardest question. Pastor, I get that. I get it.

I got what the shield of faith is. Faith brings the presence of God and the things of eternity and makes them so real that the fiery tipped arrows of the enemy are extinguished because they lose their power. When I'm living in the future and I know God is with me.

So how do you take up the shield of faith? I got it. I know what faith does now, but how do you take it up? The Bible gives us a command. Paul says, take up the shield.

The shield is laying down. It won't help you laying down. Now, how do you take it up to put it in front of you? That's what it is.

Well, someone says, just trust God. But faith has more to do with the heart than it has to do with the head. Listen to me, everyone.

The faith that the Bible speaks of is not a head thing so much. It's a heart thing. If you believe with your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved.

Faith is mystical. It's not intellectual only because who had the most verses and believed the most about Bible doctrine in the time of Jesus? The people who plotted his murder. They had the word, but they didn't have faith.

It's possible to go to church every Sunday and have no faith. Even though you know verses. I know people could quote verses didn't have the faith of a two-year-old.

Living frightened, living afraid, living with God, no sense of God in their life, no reliance on the promises of future things, but quote the Bible. They could quote the Bible. There are theologians who know the original Hebrew and Greek who don't have faith, and yet the Bible says faith comes by hearing, and hearing by what? Okay, God help me to say it and help us to receive it.

Faith is very hard to define because it's like a many-splendored thing. It's multifaceted. We know it's the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

It brings the presence of God, but how do you get faith? You certainly don't get faith by trying to have faith. The disciples one day said to Jesus, I read it yesterday in my devotions, Lord, increase our faith. He said, you know, you don't have to increase it if you just had a mustard seed.

Faith is so powerful. When God drops that into your heart and you sense his presence and those promises become real, you are transformed. It's just... But listen, how does faith really start? Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

What kind of hearing is that? It's not this hearing. Otherwise, the Pharisees would have had faith. They heard the word.

It was read. They were doing the reading. They were doing the teaching sometimes.

They were rabbis, but they didn't have faith. So how does faith come? Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Hearing how? Not with these ears, but with these ears.

See, you're listening to me today and some people will be changed by the word of God because you will listen with your heart. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit says. You think Paul, Jesus was talking about these ears? We all have those ears.

He was talking about what the psalmist prayed. God, give me a hearing heart because once you open your heart to what God is saying and God is assuring you and God is promising you, once you open your heart to that, then faith starts to spring up in your life. But if you just listen with your mind, oh, that's an interesting fact.

Let me diagram that sentence and let me memorize that verse. But faith begins always in the heart where some, notice the people who had faith, like Noah, Abraham, Moses, they had no Bible to read. If faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word, what were they reading? They weren't reading anything because it hadn't been written yet and we're to read it because God has given us this as we meditate on it.

The Holy Spirit can make it alive and go in your heart, but unless it comes in your heart, you're never going to have faith. So I have come to the conclusion that how faith really begins is simply by opening your heart to God. Every day, every hour, oh God, help me to do it.

Every moment, every hour, keep my heart open to see what God will say to me, to see what he'll deposit in my heart. Because if my heart is open, not just my mind, but if my heart is open, God, show me, speak to me. That open heart, he's going to start sending in things.

You know, right now here in this room, we could put a TV up here, powerful, huge, big screen, and we could show images if we just had a dish on the roof. Because the dish on the roof takes the signals that are out there that we don't know about. We can't see those, but you get that dish and the next thing you know, you got 120 channels.

How do those channels come? Are they in the TV? No, the TV is just showing what it received, what the dish received. And if you knock the dish out, you disconnect the dish, you're not getting anything. Why? You can only show what the dish receives.

How many follow it? Faith only comes when you open your heart to God and you say, God, speak to me. Show me, God. Talk to me today.

Walk with me. Let me open my heart and pour out my needs to you. But God, shower me with what you have for me today.

Give me this day my daily bread, not just physical, but spiritual. I need food from you. I open your word, but God, I'm going to read it.

Please speak to me. Open my heart so that this thing will go in there and produce faith. Otherwise, it goes to the intellect only and 40 minutes later, you forgot what you read.

So to take up the shield of faith, first thing you have to do is open your heart to that invisible world. Wasn't that invisible world so real to us when the choir was singing that song? How many felt God's presence? If somebody came in at that moment and said, what are you all doing? Why are you standing? I saw some of you crying over here. I saw some of you with your hands up.

Why are you lifting your hands? There's nobody up there. Ah, but faith says the Lord is here. Come on.

Is the Lord here? The Lord is here. See our hearts. Our hearts are receiving.

I love you. I am faithful. I will never leave you nor forsake you.

And we start getting happy because our dish just received what the Lord, our heart received what the Lord is saying. To put on the shield today, what you got to do if you're bothered by these arrows, if these arrows are coming at you and messing your life up. Take up the shield today, i.e. Open your heart to God and say, God, teach me to live a life because I need that shield all the time.

Who knows when he'll fire another arrow? And the moment you feel that arrow approaching or you feel it hit, what you have to do is don't fight it. Don't resist it yet. First thing you do is, oh God, I need you.

Oh God, draw near to me. Oh God, I open my heart to you. Speak a word to me right now, God.

God, let me sense your presence. God, right now I cannot fight this on my own. That arrow is too strong for me.

But the shield of faith brings your presence. God, come and fight for me. Stand with me, God.

I cannot deal with this. It's too big. Everybody close your eyes.

If you're here today, under siege, the enemy is firing all kinds of nasty arrows at you. And today you believe God brought you here today so that you can take up the shield of faith. You're going to open your heart to God.

You're going to pray and you're going to say, God, be my shield today. Be my shield. I take it up.

Be my shield today. I want you to just stand where you're sitting. Just stand where you're sitting.

Pastor, that was from me. That had my name on it. You said sentences that made me wonder, how in the world why would you say that when that's exactly what I'm going through? Lord, thank you for your word.

Thank you that we can put on the full armor of God, including the shield of faith with which we are able to extinguish every fiery arrow of the enemy. Every one. Keep us watching and praying.

Keep us with an open heart to you all day long. And now we realize how you can't live just victoriously by going to church on Sunday. We have to keep an open heart to you all day long so we can enjoy your presence and we can live in the reality of eternal invisible things.

Thank you. Thank you, Lord. We're going to give you one last hand clap of praise.

Let's do it together. Come on, everybody. Thank the Lord.

And let the Lord's face shine upon his people and give them peace. We pray all of this in Jesus' name. And everyone said,

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