***The Full Armor of God - The Shield of Faith

The Suffering of Spiritual Combat, No. 8 - PH32-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:28-30***

We are continuing in an expansion of Philippians 1:28-30. We are doing this via an examination of Ephesians 6 wherein we have described for us the Christian's armor for his survival in the angelic conflict which surrounds every believer today. We have studied the belt of truth which is doctrine learned and stored in the human spirit of the believer. We have studied the breastplate of righteousness which we have compared to the spiritual maturity structure with its five facets which the believer erects in his soul to guide him into right actions. We have looked at the shoes (the sandals) of the gospel of peace which is motivation to move out into the Lord's service because the peace of the gospel possesses the Christian's mind. We have recognized that the local church is the agency that makes this armor available to every believer. You cannot secure this armor on your own. You will find it very difficult to get the pieces of this armor together, and to be able to put them on simply on your own. If you do not have the guidance of a local church ministry giving you the information that puts these pieces of armor together, you will not be able to secure it. Consequently, you will be a casualty in the angelic conflict that surrounds us.

**The Shield of Faith**

Ephesians 6:16 says, "Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The words "above all" mean "in addition to all." The shield is a protective element on top of all these other pieces of armor that we have already discussed, and which the Christian will have put on. We are told that we are to take the shield of faith. The word "taking" is the Greek word "analambano." It comes actually from two words: a preposition "ana" which means "up;" and, the verb "lambano" which means "to take," so it means "to take up." We, in effect, are exhorted here to take up the shield of faith in addition to all these other elements that we have put on for our warfare.

This is in the aorist tense which means that at any point that you make contact with the demonic enemy, you are to use this shield of protection. It is active which means that you as a believer have to use the shield. This does not automatically protect you. No man in combat in ancient times could expect to be protected by a shield simply because he had it. He had to use the shield in a proper way. He had to put it at the point where the blow was coming from. Consequently, there was practice in how to use the shield. He had to practice in order to use the shield in an appropriate way. So, active means that you as a believer have to know your stuff with this shield in order to use it. Participle means it's a principle of defensive combat.

It is an aorist participle. We have an aorist and a participle. I think maybe you have learned by now that, grammatically, an aorist participle always identifies an action that has to come before the main verb. In this passage of Scripture, the main verb was back in verse 14 which said, "Stand," and that "stand" meant "win." This is not a no-win policy, but a win policy. However, it is put in this aorist participle form in order to show you that until you have the shield, you can forget about winning. You can forget about saying, "No" to temptation. You can forget about having God's guidance for your life. You can forget about having Holy Spirit reactions to the irritants of life instead of old sin nature reactions. You can just forget about all of the victorious elements that constitute your Christian life and its normative form. You have to have the shield before you can stand.

The word "shield" itself in the Greek is "thureos." "Thureos" comes from another Greek word "thura." "Thura" means door. This was a very appropriate word particularly for the Roman soldier's shield. The Roman shield was in an oblong shape. There was another type of shield that was circular, and it was about two-and-a-half feet in diameter. The Greeks used this, and the Romans used it. However, the Roman shield that developed later was in an oblong shape. It was about four feet from top to bottom so that it covered from a man's knees right up over his nose so that just his eyes looked over the top of the shield. Sometimes it actually curved on the edges so that it conformed a little more protectively about the body. However, when a soldier held it, it literally did look like a door. So, they called it by the word that came from a door. The shield was made of a wood frame. It was overlaid with leather. It was the basic and most universal item of defense in the ancient world.

It was used in mass movements that gave an extremely defensive position. A whole line of soldiers would line up and they would anchor their shields one to another so that literally a wall came moving against the enemy. A second group behind them would move their shields into an inclined position overhead, and they were protective of the lines coming behind them. The whole structure of the shield in tactical usage gave a military force an extremely defensive position in order to approach the enemy which was the important thing to do because combat in ancient times was hand-to-hand. The point was to get up close to the enemy and not get shot down before you were able to come to grips with them.

**Faith**

So, the Roman shield was what Paul had in mind. He was well acquainted with this. He knew something about how it was used in combat. He knew something about what it protected a soldier from. He's making this analogy now as he thinks about the Christian life. What is there in the Christian life that is an all around protective piece? That's what the shield was. It could be moved in any direction. It could get anything that was a hazard or a danger that was coming to you from any direction. It was the most basic protective element that a soldier had. Paul says, "What in the Christian life is comparable to that?" He comes up with the word "faith" which in the Greek word "pistis." He said that faith is what is comparable. It is the all-around protective thing of the Christian soldier's armor. The word "faith" here is a noun, and the verb is "pisteuo." "Pisteuo" means "to believe."

**Trust**

Faith and believe--both of them connote trust. Trust in what? It is trust in the statements of some authority. It is faith in some statement, or faith in some authority. It is trusting that what someone has told you is true. Faith is what you exercise when you sit down on a chair and trust that it will hold you. Therefore, faith is non-meritorious. It is the only non-meritorious way that we have of learning things. It is the way that we learn by simply accepting what someone has told us. So Hebrews 11:1-3 describe for us this quality of accepting what someone has said. It is faith in some object or some authority that tells you something that is the basic way that most of us learn things. Almost everything you and I know we have learned by faith. Few of us have learned things by experimentation and confirmation.

This is why a Christian school is so vital in the lives of your children. They learn the same way you do, by looking at somebody who is an authority in their eyes, and they believe everything that person says. Not only do they believe what that person says, but they also believe the implications that that person conveys toward life values; toward ideals; and, toward things that are worthy of that child's investment of his life and time. So, faith is something that all of us practice constantly. Rationalism is a way of learning things dependent on your IQ. So, the smarter you are, the more credit you get for learning. Therefore it is not a non-meritorious way of learning. Rationalism credits you with what you learn. Empiricism is using your senses, and the sharper your senses, the better you can learn; the better you can observe; and, the better you can put things together. So, it's a credit to you. So it's a meritorious system. Only faith is the way you can learn without the credit going to yourself. You're just believing somebody.

Everybody possesses faith, whether you're a moral person; an immoral person; or, a religious person. It applies to all areas of human learning. However, the value of faith is always to be found not in just the fact that you believe. Sometimes, when we think people are gullible, we say they are just guilty of blind faith. Faith in itself is not of any value. The value comes in the object of your faith. The value is in who your authority is--whom it is you are trusting. That's what makes your faith have value. If you put your faith in the wrong information, you can get hurt. If somebody tells you something that is not true, and you believe it, you can really get yourself hurt. We see that in life all the time.

So, in salvation, the object of faith is the Lord Jesus Christ. Anything else is useless. Therefore, Acts 16:31 says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." Believe here means faith in what? In Jesus Christ. Then you'll be saved. John 3:16 says the same thing. It is faith in the only begotten Son of God. That faith is of value because the object is Christ. He gives it value. Any other object for your faith will not bring you salvation. In the Christian life on earth, the object of faith is the Bible. Anything else is a fraud. So, Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Bible is a living and a powerful thing, and that it is able to divide the soul and the spirit. It is a discerner of the intents of the thoughts of the mind. It is faith in the Word of God that is of value because the Bible is a true book.

You are going to be constantly faced in spiritual things with placing your faith in some object. When it comes to salvation, if you place your faith in anything else except the sacrifice of Christ in your behalf, your faith will not bring you salvation. It will bring you disaster. As far as the Christian life is concerned, if you put your faith in anything else except doctrine based upon the authoritative Word of God, your faith will bring you no blessing. It will bring you disappointment. So, faith, as such, has no value as far as one's relationship with God is concerned. It is what you trust in and whom you trust that counts. Faith is meaningless unless that object is worthy of that faith, and only Christ and the Bible are worthy of it.

Faith also is a growing factor. You begin at the point of salvation with faith which we might describe as a mustard seed. It's infinitesimal in size. It just gets you into salvation. That's it. You don't know anything. You don't know up from down. You know that you're a sinner. You know that Christ has made a way out for you, and you know that if you accept it, you'll be saved. You'll go to heaven, and that much confidence and that much trust in the Lord is all you have. However, faith will mature to the point where you'll begin to believe the promises of God. Then you'll begin to understand the doctrines of God. Then it will blossom into the fullness of a spiritual maturity structure. When that is complete, you will go on into what Psalm 23 refers to as "my cup runs over." You will run into the super grace life which is spiritual maturity functioning at maximum level. In other words, you have to develop your faith.

There is a way for you to increase in faith. There is a means to develop your faith--your trust in God. Number one is by the intake of the Word of God. Romans 10:17 tells us that our faith increases as we learn doctrine. Faith comes as the result of your hearing. That means hearing the Word of God in a positive way. So, if you say, "I need more faith," don't go around and go to some counselor and say, "How can I have more faith?" The answer is to learn the Word. Every time you learn a piece of doctrine and every time you grasp a promise from the Word of God, your faith has increased. This is because you know what God thinks, and all you have to do is believe Him. You have the ground for the expansion of your faith.

You also may expand your faith by use of the faith rest technique in daily living. We have this described in Hebrews 4:1-3. As you learn the Word of God and then believe it, your faith will expand. This is the use of the faith rest technique. Your faith also expands by the filling of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22 tells us that one of the facets of the fruit of the spirit is faith. So, if you want to increase your faith, get your known sins confessed. That in itself will make a great stride forward. Then Hebrews 12:2 calls upon us to be occupied with Jesus Christ. When we are occupied with Christ (that is, our mind is hooked into divine viewpoint), He is able to bring our faith to completion. So, he's called the finisher of our faith in Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." So if you want to increase your faith, get tied into divine viewpoint.

**Increasing your faith**

All of these things are related:

1. By learning the Word of God, your faith increases.
2. By learning the Word of God, you get divine viewpoint, so that increases your faith.
3. By learning the Word of God and being positive to it, you're using the faith rest technique, and that increases your faith.
4. By being positive toward the confession of known sins, you're filled with the Spirit, and that increases your faith.
5. Then 1 Peter 1:7-8 tell us that suffering increases our faith. This is one of the reasons that you and I are constantly under such pressures.

So, in these five ways, you may increase your faith. Actually there's no limit to the amount of faith that a Christian can have. However, faith is no stronger than the amount of doctrine that you have learned and stored in your human spirit.

So if you want to come up with a cheap substitute, it's easy enough to do, but you are only kidding yourself. I'll tell you that you can go along for a long time thinking you have really developed faith. You yawn about Bible study. You're indifferent toward being taught the Word of God. You don't care to come to church and concentrate on the Word. You don't follow through daily in the Word yourself, but you think you are a person of faith. You think you believe a few things about the Bible like the stories that you learned in the Old Testament, and so on.

Then a tragedy comes into your life. Some kind of real tragedy or crisis comes into your life, and then you find yourself absolutely naked when it comes to faith. You wouldn't begin to know what it is to say, "The battle is the Lord's," because you have not developed and you have not matured the faith you thought you had. If you are not learning doctrine and if you are not storing the Word within your human spirit, you don't have faith. You have a kind of Pollyanna "everything's going to be well." That's the idea of positive thinking. That's getting in there and being absolutely positive in your thoughts. That's human viewpoint. You don't have to do that. There is no limit to how much faith you can develop, but it's all dependent on how much knowledge you have of the Word of God. That's why we say to you that's the most important responsibility in the Christian life is to learn the Word. Faith is merely an expression of Bible doctrine. When a Christian is spiritually defeated, the reason is lack of doctrine in the soul.

So, the only means that we have for dealing with God is this technique of faith. Hebrews 11:6 declares that no other means will be acceptable for us to deal with God. This is because you can't learn spiritual things through rationalism, through your thinking. Also, you can't learn spiritual things through your senses. The Bible makes that very clear. The only way you can learn spiritual things is by reading the Bible and believing it. Faith is the only technique upon which God deals with us. This is because grace requires that no merit should go to man, but all the glory and credit goes to God. God could not let you come to salvation through rationalism or you would get some of the credit, nor through your senses or you could have some of the credit. Therefore, He has closed us up to faith and we just have to believe Him. We have to believe that He's out there. We have to believe that this is His book, and we have plenty of evidence for that, and we have to accept what he has said. Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith, it is impossible to please Him (that is, God), for He that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

To believe in Christ means to have faith in Him or to trust Him for eternal life. Anywhere in the Bible that you find the subject of salvation discussed, you will also discover that the word "believe" or a synonym for faith will appear in the context, such as you have in 1 John 5:1. There is always the word "believe" or a synonym for it is there when it comes to salvation. Some of these synonyms for believing are "called upon the Lord" as we have in Joel 2:32, Acts 2:21, and Romans 10:13. Another one is the word "come" as you have in Matthew 11:28. That's another synonym for believe. Or, "as many as received Him" in John 1:12. That's another synonym for faith. Or, "they obeyed the gospel" in Romans 10:16. That's another synonym for faith. You'll never find salvation presented anywhere in the Bible, but you have the word "pisteuo" (believe) or you have a synonym that means the same thing.

**Faith Rest**

When we try to convert the idea of this shield into a usable form, it is comparable to what we have described as the faith rest technique. We're not going to discuss the faith rest technique here, but it is a very vital technique for living the Christian life. This is on covered in the Basic Bible Doctrine series and the Techniques of the Christian life series. We have gone into detail on this technique. But just briefly, to summarize it, the shield of faith is the faith rest technique in action. Faith is exercised toward the promises and the doctrines of the Bible in order to meet the angelic warfare in peace and in rest, as we have in Hebrews 4:1-3. Satan's attacks are repulsed, in other words, by the Christian who has the Word of God and who believes it. He applies the promises of the Word of God so he can meet the situations in his life (2 Corinthians 5:9). He applies doctrine from the human spirit to the circumstances of life.

How to use the faith rest shield is described for us in Hebrews 3:7-4:16. This is the thing that produces a relaxed mental attitude for us here in the midst of the angelic conflict. Isaiah 26:3-4 says that he whose mind is stayed on Him is at peace. That's the faith rest technique in action. It provides power for prayer, Matthew 21:22 tells us, in the midst of the angelic conflict. Faith rest is the basis of spiritual victory (1 John 5:4-5).

This, of course, leads us to wonder, "How shall we pick up the shield of faith?" That's what's important. How are we going to actually pick this shield up and use it? It is the faith rest technique in action. It is taking the promises of the Word of God and using them. It is taking doctrines and believing them. It is taking prophecy and trusting in the God who has indicated that this is where the future is going. All of this is faith rest. It is summarizing what the Old Testament tells us when it says, "The battle is the Lord's." That's what faith rest is. It is the battle being left with the Lord. Whatever comes into your life this week; whatever crises you may have; or, whatever problems that seem to be insurmountable, faith rest says, "The battle is the Lord's. Satan is going to try to get at you through that problem; through that conflict; and, through that tension. This is when you have to pick up the shield of faith and shove it right at him. The faith rest shield of faith says, "The battle is the Lord's," and his attack bounces right off.

**Taking up the Shield of Faith**

Now there are ways for taking up the shield of faith:

1. First of all, as we we've already indicated, we take up the shield of faith by means of learning the Word of God. Once more, Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." God has provided a grace system for learning spiritual things. As you enter daily into doctrine, you will build a spiritual maturity structure in your soul. One of the nice things about this church is that you can study the Word of God through the audio recordings that are available. There are not as many as we'd like to see, but steadily growing. They are produced in such a form that I think they're usable to you.

Again I remind you that it would not be beneath any of you to decide that you're going to start at the beginning of the book of Jude, and just study the whole series of recordings. Or, you could start at the beginning of the Basic Bible Doctrine series, and you can study the whole series through. Or, you could study some of the other series that you can systematically go through. If you do that, you will make up for all the times you had to be absent from church. You'll get the picture of what you particularly need.

I want to remind you that this is one of the ways that Satan shoots a fiery dart at you. Since Satan knows what's going on, and since he has a vast computerized system of information, he knew well in advance of any of us exactly what was going to be discussed here in this session. He knew what was in preparation for this sermon. He knew the information that would be given out. He knew the part of the Word of God that would be explained, and he knows your particular conflicts and weaknesses. I'll tell you that the time that the Word of God explained something that you need to know; that would clarify a problem for you; or, that would clear up a difficulty, that's the time he keeps you away. That's the time you begin to fragment off from the Word of God.

So, the next time you're not up to coming to a Bible study, you ask yourself, "What is that snake trying to keep me from finding out? There must be something really hot down there today because I've got a lot of pressures to stay home." But be that as it may, you will fill in the gaps and take up the slack by using the audio recordings. So, one way of putting on the shield of faith is, of course, first of all, you have to know the Word. That gives you the ground for the faith rest technique. So, get into a study of the Word.

I know the excuse because I've gotten it from some of you: "Well, it's 45 minutes." I had a man this summer that said, "You know, the thing that's wrong with Berean audio recordings is they're 45 minutes long. They're just too long to listen to." Well, they were for him, and maybe in your situation it might be too long. Why not listen 15 minutes at a time? You could listen to a segment. You could even sit with your family and say, "Now we're going to study the Word of God together. We're going to have family devotions. We're going to put the audio recording on." You could listen to short segments, but I'm telling you that you would be surprised on how your life would have its rough spots smoothed out if you listened to the Word of God on a daily basis. We live by every Word that comes from the mouth of God. It is our bread, and it's a daily function.

1. Secondly, we take up the shield of faith, of course, by applying the promises and by conforming our lives to the doctrine that we have learned (Hebrews 4:1-3). We have the application of promises. There are at least 7,000 promises in the Bible. All of them can only be used in this life. Once you die and go to heaven, these promises can no longer be used. All of these are given for our use right now. As you read the Bible, promises should be constantly leaping out at you. You should be observing them because if you remember them, then you can claim them when you need them. It's doctrine that gives you God's guidelines in the way that God acts.
2. Next is the filling of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22 tells us that when we are filled with the Spirit, one of the things we get is faith, and thus we secure the shield of faith.
3. Next is the use of the faith rest technique in our pressure situations as first Peter 1:7-8 told us. When we are under pressure, then remember that the battle is the Lord's, and learn what it is to trust God. That's how you take up the shield of faith.
4. Finally, we think divine viewpoint by being occupied with God's thinking--occupation with Christ (Hebrews 12:2-3).

All of these are methods of taking up the shield of faith. This is not very complex. The shield of faith is one of the easier ones to understand. It is simply trusting in a worthy object. You can go ahead and trust in your psychiatrist if you'd like. You can go ahead and trust in your preacher if you'd like. You can go ahead and trust in some member of your family; your friends; or, your boss. You can even trust, if you care to, in the President of the United States. You can trust whatever you want to trust, but your trust has only as much value as the object of that trust. The only real value that will ever stand you is the Lord Jesus Christ and the mind that he has revealed to us (His mind) in the Word of God.

The whole point of this, of course, is protection in combat. So, what are we trying to protect ourselves from? Well, the thing that the Scriptures tell us here now in Ephesians 6 is that if we have the shield of faith in a usable form, and we use it, we will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. "With which" refers to the shield of faith. "You shall be able" is the Greek word "dunami." "Dunami" is a word of ability or power. Here it is capacity to escape becoming a casualty in the angelic warfare. It is in the future tense which indicates that you will have a future capacity to use this shield, if you take it up by the ways that we have mentioned of taking up the shield. It is middle which means that you will benefit by using the shield. You will ward off the demon angel attacks against you. Make no mistake that you will be under demon angel attack. You are constantly. It is indicative. It is a statement of fact.

What you will be able to do is to quench. The word "quench" is the Greek word "sbennumi." "Sbennumi" is the same word which is used in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 for quenching the Holy Spirit through negative volition to his leading. One of the things a Christian is warned that he is not to do is to quench the Holy Spirit. This stops your spirituality progress. Quenching the Holy Spirit, in other words, means to make him ineffective. This word means to make something ineffective. Here it's going to make Satan's attack upon you ineffective by use of this shield. It is in the aorist tense which means any point of demonic attack. It is active which means the Christian has to do his own defending with his faith in God. It's infinitive which expresses the purpose of the shield. The purpose of the shield of faith is to keep you from being a spiritual casualty, and to enable you to take what Satan throws against you and to resist him.

**Fiery Darts**

What does he throw against you? Fiery darts. This refers to arrows or missiles whose tips have been coated with something that is flammable, and thus will hold a flame. It is shot in that condition at the enemy. This is like the old Indian shooting at the wagon train with the flaming arrow bit. "Fiery" is the word "puroo." "Puroo" is perfect which means, having been set on fire. That is, the archer lit it, and then shot it. Perfect means something that happens and then continues to happen. It goes whinging through the air, and the impact of oxygen, as it goes through the air, causes the flame to intensify. In ancient times, this was a frightful thing to see the air just filled with flaming arrows coming toward you. It is something comparable to modern times where a large number of machine guns are firing with tracer bullets. The whole air is filled with these streaking flashes of light.

Well, here's a soldier seeing this flying mass of flame coming toward him. The shield is put up there. It strikes the shield. However, in ancient times, even this was not protection because when it struck the shield, even though it did not go through and hit the body, the intensity of the flame that had developed splattered it and it just blazed on his shield so that it frightened the soldier off; he dropped his shield; he was exposed; and, they got him. Therefore, this was a common technique. The soldiers knew it well. It was something they inevitably expected, and had to steel themselves for in combat that they would not panic when that flaming arrow or missile hit their shield.

Paul says that's what Satan throws against us. It's passive because the missile is ignited by the archer. It's participle--a statement of combat fact. He calls this a "dart" which is a "belos." it comes from the word "ballo" which means "to throw." So it's a missile; an arrow; or, a javelin of flame. These flaming missiles come screaming at the soldier, and his defense is that shield. It strikes the shield; he shakes it off; and, he goes on. These are flaming arrows of the wicked one. It's "poneros." This is the very insidious pernicious one, namely, Satan himself. So, the proper use of your shield of faith is going to protect you from the fiery missiles that Satan is going to throw at you.

What are the fiery missiles? These are a variety of temptations that will come to you. These are pressures and human viewpoint which are thrown at you. You will have moral temptations, perhaps, this week. You'll have economic temptations. You'll have temptations of one kind or another. For example, Eve was tempted when Satan shot a fiery missile at her. She was tempted by his saying, "Has God said?" She was tempted regarding the Word of God. Had Eve held up her faith in God with a definite, "Yes, God has said," all would have been well. But she didn't put up the shield. Instead, she was shot down. When the Lord Jesus Christ was under similar conditions in the wilderness, He used the Word of God. He deflected every fiery missile that Satan directed toward Him that would have questioned the Word of God. It is the shield of faith that is our protection.

Out in the world, Satan has many ways for seeking to attack our thinking and our lives. He gets believers to ignore doctrine with promises that are false. Satan shoots flaming arrows of intellectualism. This is one of his favorites--the attitude in higher education, for example, toward the concept of evolution. I've been told this week that now the Irving High School textbooks on science no longer present evolution as a theory. It now presents it as an accepted fact. I have a letter from a college student here written to the Creation Science Research Center that I think amply demonstrates the kind of flaming arrows of intellectualism that are destroying our young people today in state schools. If your kids have to attend a non-Christian oriented institution of higher learning, God help you. You are opening the doors to all kinds of troubles unless they stay very firm in their own spiritual maturity. This student wrote to the Science Research Society, which has done a great job of putting together for schools science materials from a biblical frame of reference.

The letter says, "Dear Sir, I would like to take just a moment of your time to sincerely express how grateful I am to the Creation Science Research Society. In regard to your letter about Johnny ..., I am well aware of the struggle Johnny is faced with. I am 22 and in my third year at the University of California Riverside. I can honestly say that during my years here I have yet to find even one faculty member of this university who is not an ardent evolutionist. It is hard to explain the degree to which evolution has permeated this campus. It is impossible even to walk through the halls without running into some display demonstrating the supposed evolution of primates; the geological time scale; or, some other aspect of evolution. In anthropology, biology, geology, and other science classes, it is next to impossible to even mention Adam and Eve or Noah, even as a possible theory to consider, without turning into a furor of ridicule and derision.

"It seems hard to believe, but I even find inferences and critical remarks of the Bible such as reference to the "Genesis Myth," the higher superstition, etc. in such classes as English and music. During my 3 years here, time after time, I have seen so many young people who in most cases come from families which at least believe in God, even if they are not regular church members. They weaken and immediately fall into accepting evolution. Unfortunately, many older Christians do not realize the tremendous pressure in regards to evolution that students are exposed to."

"Of course, many of these professors here are highly intelligent, and this, together with peer pressure from other students, plus the general acceptance of evolution by the news media with such programs as "Primal Man," which was just recently aired on TV, is it any wonder that students are blindly accepting evolution? I know what a struggle it has been for me to find answers to these problems concerning evolution. This is not because it is in any way true, but simply because, in an environment such as this, the true facts just aren't brought out. I know from personal experience that most preachers, elders, etc. are not able to give the type of technical and scientific answers demanded by serious college students regarding these matters concerning evolution. This is why I am so thankful to your organization for the help they've given me in obtaining the necessary scientific answers I desired."

So, this is kind of an example of what we're talking about. This is one of the biggest fiery arrows that college students have thrust against them. If you want to be an intellectual, you go along with the god of science expressed primarily in the view of evolution. That fraud has now come down to where your children are learning it, not only in high school. They learn it on junior high and elementary level as well. This liberal mentality in the nation is a flaming missile from Satan, and it's hitting us on all sides. It's human viewpoint. It ignores divine solutions.

These flaming arrows are designed to get your eyes off the Lord. That's what you want to watch for. It's to get your eyes on some other object, like to get your eyes on yourself (1 Kings 19:10, Matthew 26:33-34). Or it is to get your eyes on things (Hebrews 13:5-6). It is to get your eyes on people (Jeremiah 17:5). But, the shield of faith means to get your eyes on the Lord (Hebrews 12:2, Colossians 3:1-2). All of this we may summarize by saying that what Satan is out to do is to destroy the spiritual maturity structure of your soul. He wants to hit your grace orientation, so he tempts you into a false spirituality of legalism. He scoffs at your Christian service by throwing up to you, "Who do you think you are, serving the Lord with all the shortcomings you have?" Have you ever been hit by that? Have you ever been zinged by that flaming arrow? Here you are, and all of a sudden, you see yourself; all of your shortcomings; and, all the terrible things that are true about yourself. We know them. You know them. You know better than we know.

Satan says, "Who do you think you are?" That's a flaming arrow. Don't let it knock you down. Hold up the shield of faith because if you're serving the Lord, to whose glory is it? Who's accomplishing it? It's the Lord who is doing it--not you. It's a grace system. He wants to hit your relaxed mental attitude. Instead of having "agape" love, he tempts you with a pseudo love coming from your old sin nature, so you're blubbering at the mouth about how beautiful the Lord is and how precious Jesus is, and you're carrying on with all that fake stuff that revolts people with any spiritual sensitivity.

Instead, Satan goes around and he tries to bestir roots of bitterness in your soul. Have you ever been zinged with an arrow where Satan has called up to your mind how you were mistreated by this person? Do you remember how you were reading the Bible that time, and all of a sudden, somebody came to your mind who did you a real disfavor? You thought, "That dirty so-and-so." Bang. There goes the end of your spirituality.

With the shield of faith, there's no bitterness. Watch out for anytime somebody tries to tell you to remember all your wounds and griefs and all the things that were done in the past. This is when friends and husbands and wives get into debate. They throw up to each other all their past wrongdoings to one another. That's the old devil having you shoot fiery darts. And boy, you're shooting just as fast as you can. He just helps you remember. You think of all those things--those marvelous wonderful things you were wounded with. This is what he's doing. He's destroying your "agape" love--your lack of bitterness. Only positive volition faith in doctrine and its principles will quench that arrow. It causes us to reject what we should welcome.

He wants to hit your mastery of the details of life. We've got economic problems in this nation. People who know are telling us such frightful things that there is no way out but a good rock-bottom busting depression. We're not going to go any other way. This is the time you better learn about how to be related to material things because you may get the opportunity of your life. We live with this; this is big; and, this is tough to deal with. Satan is going to zing you someplace along the line on material things, and you're going to have to learn the value which is a hard perspective for Americans to have of a material factor.

Satan is also going to try to hit your capacity to love. He's going to hit that quality of "philos" love that should be in your soul toward God; your mate; and, your friends, and society will encourage a pseudo fake emotional outrage. This is a prime target of marriage. Here is where Satan hits fiery darts against you in marriage on the capacity of love like no other level. God help you if you don't have this developed in your soul because it will turn you into a raging animal. Courtships which have been shallow spiritually make life a conflict in marriage. If you've got that problem, then get it corrected because Satan is going to keep firing at you again and again. He will win great victories over you. Only the shield of faith developed through the Word of God, the maturing of this facet in your soul, will carry you through.

Finally, there is inner happiness that completes the spiritual maturity structure of your soul. Satan tempts us with a seemingly glamorous happiness which is based on people, circumstances, and things. But only faith in God and His Word ensures happiness in the soul. The world is filled with unhappy Christians whose lives are filled with tensions because they have not been able to meet Satan's flaming missiles with the shield of faith.

May God help you to learn the technique of faith risk; to develop that shield of faith; and, then to be prepared to use it when Satan zings you. Hold it up there. May your confidence in the living Lord God never waver for one moment. May the weaknesses and defeats that you've experienced and that you are experiencing be brought to Him for the solutions that He can give you, and for the strength and the capacity to rise above it. Do not live as if you were an animal. You are a prince or a princess. You are a child of God. You are part of the royal family. You are a royal priesthood. Therefore, Satan is trying to humiliate you. On every account, he's trying to humiliate you from the position that you hold with the Lord. Your shield of faith is your primary defense. Develop it, and learn to use it.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

[**Back to the Advanced Bible Doctrine (Philippians) index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/philippiansdanish.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)