

Faith that Works

Ephesians 6:16 Sunday AM, April 14, 2024

Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-16 (NASB95) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Finally, be strong IN THE LORD. Being “in the Lord” is the only way to join Paul as a “prisoner of the Lord” seeking to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.” Being in the Lord is not merely a decision for heaven instead of hell or being “in the zone” and thanking God for it. Instead, being in the Lord speaks of provision that comes from the Lord for those He has redeemed to accomplish His will. The ability to stand against all that would oppose God and to live to please Him comes from God Himself and is described in terms of battle. **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.** While the devil and those under him work to defeat those who would be strong in the Lord, God has made provision of armor stronger than every other person, spiritual power, or thought that wars against the Lord and His purposes. Look to God for the belt of truth—stability against all other realities—theirs, yours, and the devil’s. Look to God for the breastplate of righteousness—a right standing producing right actions that please God. Look to God for footwear—the gospel of peace—quieting and protecting your soul, but also a message to be given. While we will never see the full extent of the spiritual struggle, turning to God in biblical faith in the face of the struggle we do see reveals One who is present, working, and able. Church, praise God for all given to us in Christ our Living Head!

***Hymn (Powerpoint): Complete in Thee**

16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

What is faith? Start with the simple faith required to receive the gospel. You should never get tired of singing these truths.

***Hymn (Powerpoint): With Simple Faith**

***Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn** **Choir: Be Strong in the Lord**

Scripture: Genesis 3:1–24 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” 4 The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! 5 “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. 8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.” 11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” 12 The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.” 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” 14 The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.” 16 To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.” 17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. 18 “Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; 19 By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.” 20 Now the man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. 21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. 22 Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Offering: *Doxology:

16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Did you hear the flaming arrows of the evil one? God said, you shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die. “The serpent said, You surely will not die! Instead, you will eat and know good and evil just like God. And just like that, the devil took the gospel away by making you question the goodness of God. He filled the hole created by discontent with another gospel. What other gospel threatens the gospel from God? What do you desire more than what God Himself gives you? Expose it and run from it, straight to the gospel of God Himself. Look to God and take up the shield of faith as you pray this next hymn.

***Hymn #327 (Red): O for a Faith that Will Not Shrink**

Be Strong, Be Strong, Be Strong in the Lord and be of good courage for He is your God. And what will help you to be strong in the Lord? Think on the goodness of God to His people. Perhaps you feel distant from God’s acts and His people—from His goodness. The Israelites also forgot God’s goodness and it didn’t stop God from promising goodness to them following His judgment for their disobedience. And what do you call goodness given in the face of dishonor? Mercy. Sing the mercy of God as Pastor prepares to preach on the shield of faith.

***Hymn (Powerpoint): Merciful God**

Message: Faith that Works Eph. 6:16

***Hymn #478: Soldiers of Christ, Arise**

***Prayer**