

Candlelight Christian Fellowship

Worksheet Ephesians 6 (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:10–20 (Spiritual Warfare—Part 4)

“10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

The Shield of Faith

One might successfully argue that “the shield of faith” might read the shield of *the* faith as the Greek contains the definite article “the.” Therefore we will address the importance of *the* faith and that of faith itself.

Faith and *the* Faith: The Noun

When we speak of “faith” and/or “*the* faith,” we are being descriptive. In this case we use “faith” (*pistis*) as a noun. When we speak about the shield of faith, we are describing the protective nature of “*the* faith” and the object of our faith: God Himself. Although the words “faith” and “shield” are both nouns, we understand that there is an activity behind the meaning.

To be sure, Paul would have us understand that our faith must be properly placed. We must place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and rest fully in *the* faith as described in the Scriptures.

Faith can be placed in vain. Faith can be misguided. Faith can be frail, movable, defilable. For this reason we define the object of our faith (God) and that of “*the* faith” itself.

Trust (Believe): The Verb

Trust is what we do with faith. It is an action (*pisteuo*). Therefore faith must be exercised and *the* faith must be acted upon. Simply knowing the facts upon which faith is built is not enough. Even the devil knows the facts and trembles as a result (James 2:19).

Faith

Faith in God and faith for Salvation are acts based upon revealed truth. Refusal to believe is likewise an act. A man or woman may exercise faith or rebellion—but they do so in response to revealed truth. Unbelief and rebellion cannot be blamed on God as though He has made faith and truth unavailable. Neither can man suggest that we who believe are forced to do so against the *limited*⁽¹⁾ free will God has given to every man. Paul makes these things clear within a single address to the Romans. He said, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:16–32).

Please notice a few key statements included in this passage. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...”* but also that *“the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth...because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood...they are without excuse... they...exchanged the truth of God for the lie...”* and that *“they did not like to retain God in their knowledge...”* (Romans 1:16–32).

Herein we can see that the Gospel is available to *“everyone who believes”* but also that *“the wrath of God”* is justly dispensed to those who *“suppress the truth in unrighteousness”* since having *“clearly seen”* and *“understood”* they are *“without excuse.”*

With these things in mind we can clearly see that unbelief like faith is an exercise man is privileged to engage in. It is neither the fault of God if men refuse to believe, nor is it the causation of God that forces men to faith.

Faith to believe is granted to men by the revelatory and gracious act of God. Man left to himself, on his own, without the glorious revelation of God’s own person, grace, and truth, would not nor ever could believe. However, *“the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men”* (Titus 2:11), and therefore we rejoice!

Faith is Not Work

Paul contrasts faith and works succinctly by saying that it is *“by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them”* (Ephesians 2:8–10). Those who suggest that believing is work have failed to correctly interpret Scripture. Faith as mentioned above is a noun. “Saved” and “created” are verbs and refer to God’s “workmanship”—not the work of man.

Faith is Not a Magic Formula

Faith is not a magic formula by which we get what we want. Faith is not a tool we use to manipulate the Lord or venture into the dimension of the spirit. Sadly this seems to be the “faith” many embrace today—even citing Hebrews 11:1 as a proof text. It reads, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* A misapplication of this verse leads people to believe that the one who has faith can *hope* for something (anything) and therefore receive it. However, the author to the Hebrews is telling his audience that what they had been promised had come (The New Covenant) and that exercising “faith” in its fruition manifested their trust in God. He was telling them that God had brought to pass what they had been longing and hoping for. It was the realization of what the Scriptures had promised. Therefore “faith” points to *“the faith”* they had been anticipating and contrasts the “works” of the law with the new and better way God foretold. It is for this reason he illustrated the anticipated hope longed for by listing those mentioned throughout the entire chapter.

The Faith

It has been said that a person who believes with all their heart may have confidence in whatever god or faith they embrace—as long as they believe with all their heart. However, this is simply untrue. The object of one’s faith must be real, reliable, and true. (Please note the discussion on truth in the lesson entitled Ephesians 6:10–20 Part 2)

The Scriptures plainly tell us that there is only one God and that Jesus is the physical embodiment of His person. In Isaiah we read, *“‘You are My witnesses,’ says the LORD, ‘And My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD, and besides Me there is no savior”* (Isaiah 43:10–11). And, *“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God’”* (Isaiah 44:6). When writing of Jesus, Paul told the Colossians, *“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power”* (Colossians 2:9–10). Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Faith in any other is faith built on a lie.

Secondly, *the faith* refers to the Gospel and its associated truths as revealed in the whole of Scripture. Faith in a false gospel provides no protection at all. For this reason Paul told the Corinthians, *“...I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!”* (2 Corinthians 11:2–4).

Paul did not want the Corinthians to accept a false Gospel or put their faith in a false Jesus. Furthermore, he did not want them to “*put up with*” such things at all. Neither should we! He told the Ephesian elders, “*...I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock*” (Acts 20:26–29). His concern for their faith is our concern today. We must understand and embrace “*the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3).

Faith and Trust

Once we are certain of *the* faith and have been born again, there is the need to grow in trust. We must grow to understand the ways of the One in whom we have believed. We must know who He is, what He does, and how He cares for His own. All believers will grow to see that there is a difference between faith (*pistis*) and trust (*pisteuo*). Although one might argue that the differences are subtle, they are nonetheless distinguishable.

As we study the whole of Scripture, we see the stories of men and women who put their trust in the Lord. The people we read about faced the fiery darts of the wicked one. They faced the trials we all face in the world, as the result of the flesh and of the devil. As we examine the big picture of their recorded lives, we can see that inasmuch as few accounts show exemption from trial, all who trusted in the Lord were greatly rewarded.

The Scriptures declare, “*Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; they trusted in You, and were not ashamed*” (Psalm 22:4–5). “*For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame’*” (Romans 10:11).

No believer is exempt from suffering and trial. However, those who trust the Lord, committing their lives to Him, will come to see that God is their hope in the day of trial—and their peace in the midst of the storm. “*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah*” (Psalm 46:1–3).

Trust is needed when we pray and do not see the answers we desire. Trust is needed when times are rough. Trust is the exercise of confidence in the overall plan of God. The man or woman who endures the attacks of the enemy must trust in the purposes and plans of God. We are told to, “*Trust in the LORD with all [our] heart[s], and lean not on [our] own understanding; in all [our] ways [to] acknowledge Him, and He shall direct [our] paths*” (Proverbs 3:5-7).

God will bring every believer to the understanding that He can be trusted—as the Sovereign Lord over every area of our lives—and over everything in this world.

As we trust the Lord, we will experience the usefulness found in “*the shield of faith.*” By trusting in the Lord, we will be spared sleepless nights, depression, anxiety, and the temptation to react poorly to the trials we all face.

God is sovereign over all the affairs of this life—our lives. He alone has promised us completeness and safe arrival into the Kingdom. God can be trusted. Trust in Him is genuine worship.

“*For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love*” (Colossians 1:9–13).

Therefore, take up *“the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one”* (Ephesians 6:16).

Jesus said, *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also”* (John 14:1–3).

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13).

Questions

- 1) **True or False:** One may correctly conclude that there is a distinction between faith and trust.
- 2) **True or False:** Faith can be placed in vain. Faith can be misguided. Faith can be frail, movable, defilable. For this reason we define the object of our faith (God) and that of *“the faith”* itself.
- 3) **True or False:** Faith in God and faith for Salvation are acts based upon revealed truth.
- 4) **True or False:** A man or woman may exercise faith or rebellion—but they do so in response to revealed truth.
- 5) **True or False:** Unbelief and rebellion cannot be blamed on God as though He has made faith and truth unavailable. Neither can man suggest that we who believe are forced to do so.
- 6) **True or False:** Faith to believe is granted to some men by the revelatory and gracious act of God. Man left to himself, on his own, can believe.
- 7) **True or False:** Believing (the exercise of faith) is a “work,” and therefore the Gospel we preach is a combination of faith and works.
- 8) **True or False:** Faith is not a magic formula by which we get what we want.
- 9) **True or False:** A person who believes with all their heart may have confidence in whatever god or faith they embrace—as long as they believe with all their heart.
- 10) **True or False:** *The faith* refers to the Gospel and its associated truths as revealed in the whole of Scripture.
- 11) **True or False:** No believer is exempt from suffering and trial. However, those who trust the Lord, committing their lives to Him, will come to see that God is their hope in the day of trial—and their peace in the midst of the storm.
- 12) **True or False:** Trust is the exercise of confidence in the overall plan of God.
- 13) **True or False:** God will bring every believer to the understanding that He can be trusted—as the Sovereign Lord over every area of our lives—and over everything in this world.

14) **True or False:** By trusting in the Lord, we will be spared sleepless nights, depression, anxiety, and the temptation to react poorly to the trials we all face.

Note:

(1) I suggest that free will is limited. There are many things God allows men and women to do. We are free to sin—and suffer the consequences. We are enabled to believe—and experience the blessings. However, if God did not desire to save, we would not nor could we be saved. Likewise there are many things God does not allow men to do. We are not free to obtain salvation in any other. We are not in control of when we will be born, to whom, or where. On this much can be said. We have *limited* free will.

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