

Stand- Shielded By Faith

Ephesians 6:16

Main focus of this series: This series is a formulation of key teachings and understandings from the book of Ephesians. In an effort to decipher each statement of Paul in Ephesians we believe we will learn how to successfully operate in the three positions of the believer: to sit (Ephesians 1-3), to walk (Ephesians 4-6:9) and over the next few weeks we will address the thought... stand (Ephesians 6:10-24) .

The importance of this message today: We are going to dive into one of the most important weapons in our arsenal. The discovery today is that this weapon must be used and can be used to defeat Satan's constant attacks as we advance the Kingdom of God. Also we will learn what it means to have the authority as a believer to function as a full on soldier of the cross. Today, faith is defined when confidence in God's Word meets action...real action, victorious action!

Introduction: In March of 1775 a group of men had gathered at Saint John's Church in Richmond, Virginia. Patrick Henry was one of the most influential of the American Revolution and the last people to make a speech that day urging legislature. His heated speech that day was to convince those who had the power to take military action against the encroaching British military force, to which he ended his speech with this statement:

"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

Of course, like that crowd that day something inside us wants to jumped up and shout the same way as they did that day, **"To Arms! To Arms!"**. (Along with Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine, **he was one of the most influential** (and radical) advocates of the American Revolution.)

It was not long after a few generations after him the attitude of that speech slurred into a simple statement of, "Give me liberty," until we arrive at our present state, a self-centered generation characterized by two simple words, "Give Me."

There is a challenge in our society today, no doubt about it. But when all is said and done in the business of our nation, liberty is still the resonating symbol of America! From all over the world, thousands upon thousands make their home in America. When people think of America they think of freedom, opportunity and hope. We are more than red, white and blue, we are **plaid**.

We are far from the sufferings of most of the world:

Around the world, some 26,500 children die every day.

- **1 child dying every 3 seconds**
- **18 children dying every minute**

That is equivalent to:

- **A 2004 Asian Tsunami occurring every week**
- **An Iraq-scale death toll every 15–36 days**

- **Almost 10 million children dying every year**
- **Some 60 million children dying between 2000 and 2006**
(www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Poverty/death/)

It would be easy for me to say that we are rarely touched by the pain of this world in a way that this world mostly suffers. While some live under repressive political governments others face the turmoil of drought, crop failure and starvation.

We sit in our homes most comfortably and never consider our freedoms, rather we dwell on our limits, or likes and dislikes. We can vote for anyone we choose, we can travel freely within our country, we can live where we want to live. This is the land of freedom, the freedom to waste it all or become a productive and contributing citizen. This is still the land of opportunity and freedom.

There is also another freedom that has become loud and clear in our society, and that is the freedom of what Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross and through the work He did in the empty tomb.

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

Two Important Truths

1. **Faith does not work independently of the previous three weapons in Ephesians 6- truth, righteousness and peace.**

In addition to all - This phrase is variously translated - "Above all", "besides all these", "with all these", "always, in all circumstances, at all times".

It is important to recognize the fact that Paul tells us that faith is something added to the previous three weapons. Faith is not to be left out nor is it to be the prominent one. The Scripture here in Ephesians 6:14-16, loudly proclaims that it is genuinely important to have **truth, righteousness and peace** in place so faith can have it's correct function. To understand where we are today we have to look how two words collide, **confidence** and **action** which are merged together to form a word called "**faith**."

*"For surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield."
Psalm 5:12*

Faith (4102) (*pistis*) is synonymous with **trust or belief** and is the conviction of the truth of anything. In this context it is a belief in relationship to God and divine things. Here's my definition of "faith":

"Faith is the absolute confidence in the Word of God accompanied with action"

Faith is a word that has been tossed and debated strongly over the last few years. Because of those debates and daring ventures we have a substantial amount of teaching on this area. There are many incredible stories of faith, through tears and pain and through incredible deliverance and freedom. There is a demand that we pick this instrument up and utilize it not only for the glory of God but for our own existence.

"For the Christian, faith is believing God and remembering that every fiery dart that Satan shoots is a lie. If we believe his lies, we are not believing God. It's really that simple." - Precept Austin Commentary

"When John Paton was translating the Bible for a South Seas island tribe, he discovered that they had no word for trust or faith. One day a native who had been running hard came into the missionary's house, flopped himself in a large chair and said, "It's good to rest my whole weight on this chair." "That's it," said Paton. "I'll translate faith as 'resting one's whole weight on God.'" MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press)

Peter encourages us:

"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you."

I Peter 4:12

John tells us:

"...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

We celebrate a wonderful political freedom here in the United States daily, but ceremonially on the Fourth of July. It is an incredible time around our nation and here at our church, **but there is another kind of liberty that is even more important: it is the liberty that comes because of our faith in an absolute God who will not fail.** Actually that is what part of the American Revolution was about, that we would have the freedom to worship outside a state church, according to our faith. But there is something bigger that we are engaged in. The faith we are talking about today does not reside inside the institution of a particular denomination or "special" group of people. It resides in our heart, in our spirit. **The liberty of our faith, that Christ has set us free for, was not for the freedom of church we would attend, but the freedom from our enemy who is deliberate in defeating God's purpose on this earth and therefore we are in the way. Our faith is his death threat. Let me say that again, "Our faith is his death threat."**

Just as the blood that was spilled by the first American patriots won our civil liberties over two hundred years ago from England, so the blood of Jesus has purchased your freedom two thousand years ago from the strongarm of the enemy. Just as we must protect the freedom of our country from the attacks of those who live to destroy it, we must learn to protect our own lives, remain vigilant to safeguard the freedom of our faith that Christ won for us on the cross!

2. Faith does not work unless you personally take up the shield.

Taking up (353) (*analambano* from *ana* = up + *lambano* = take) means literally to take up. Taking up is in the active voice indicating that **each believer make the choice to do this**. There is no secret bubble that covers us, even though God will not let us be under more attack than we can stand, (I Cor. 10:13). We must choose to believe God, His Word, His goodness, no matter what happens and take this shield of belief...faith and activate it toward our enemy. At the time it may feel like nothing is there, faith is

the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, (Heb. 11:1).

**"Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him."
Proverbs 30:5**

We take up our shield from time to time when the challenges arise and demand attention. Our spiritual warfare is a reality and must be dealt with or we will succumb to the attacks of Satan and the detestation of his attack.

- When we are overcome with an attack of depression or discouragement.
- When a relatively insignificant thing gets blown way out of proportion.
- When a sense of panic and helplessness invades you.
- When you lose your bearings and feel lost, emotionally depleted and you wonder, "Will this ever stop?"

This is a time that you not only cry out for liberty but a time you proclaim your liberty!

Take Up The Shield

Shield (2375) (*thureos* from *thura* = door) was originally a large, oblong stone used to close an entrance and later came to mean a shield, not the small circular shield (*aspis*, Latin *clipeus*) but the **large, oblong, and four-cornered shield** (Latin *scutum*) about **4 x 2.5 feet** in greatest dimensions and sometimes curved on the inner side. It was large enough to practically cover the whole body. This shield is the "door" to our faith, it is confidence in the Word of God activated at the moment of attack.

The Roman legionaries were trained to form close ranks with these shields, the first row would hold their shields side by side in front, and the rows behind them would hold the shields above their heads. In this formation they were practically invulnerable to arrows, rocks, and even spears. The soldiers would wet the leather covering with water to extinguish the arrows shot at them. The shield consisted of two layers of wood glued together, covered with linen and hide, and bound with iron. After the siege of Dyrachium, Sceva counted no less than 220 darts sticking into his shield. Herodotus described how cane darts tipped with tow were dipped in pitch and then ignited. The arrows would be covered with a inflammable material (easily set on fire) such as tow (the coarse and broken part of flax or hemp prepared for spinning) would be placed and then dipped in pitch (a sticky resinous black or dark brown substance which hardens on cooling, obtained by destructive distillation of wood or coal this process yielding tar) and then set on fire.

An attack can be considered a crisis or conflict. I believe a crisis is something that happens to you and a conflict is something that comes against you. No matter what the debate might be, if you have a victim mentality you will always be in crisis, but if you are a believer and hold to the truth of God's Word, there will be conflict. The weapon of the Christ follower is a shield is faith, a faith that must be taken up with confidence and action. The only defense against the fiery missiles of Satan, desiring to hurt or harm you is the shield of faith. It is not a matter of if, but of when the enemy will strike.

The Surprise of Attack

Flaming (4448) (*puroo* from *púr* = fire) means to be ignited or set on fire, to be kindled, to burn, to set on fire.

When we are attacked by our enemy, we tend to think that something most unusual is happening to us. We can become isolated and believe that no one has ever gone through what we are going through. It is possible to believe that no one has had to undergo the excruciating depression and pain that we feel and more than that, that they survived.

Paul is not saying that devil personally takes time to come after just you... God is omnipresent, but the devil is not. The point is that his minions, the demonic forces, are sending "Scud missiles" constantly and yet at random. They come at you because you are encroaching on their territory. Those who had to use their shield were mostly in advance position. Those throwing the darts were mostly holding their position.

David Guzik writes that in ancient warfare, these fiery darts were launched in great number at the beginning of an attack. The idea was not only to injure the enemy, but to shoot at him at all sides with a massive number of darts, and thus confuse and panic the enemy.

Arrows (956) (*belos*) is literally something thrown (pointed weapon, arrow, dart) and metaphorically as used here speaking of Satan's temptations as weapons of attack.

This scripture indicates that we are getting more than taunting words from our enemy, we are getting attempts on our lives from flaming arrows that want to **brand us, burns us and delays our purpose here on this earth.**

1. Brands Us

It brands us in a way that we are constantly reminded of our war scares. It is a reminder of our pain and scars. It tells us that we are to live in fear or it could happen again. It reminds us constantly of what our enemy can do to us. Satan wants to throw fiery darts to burn your mind and memories.

2. Burns Us

A burn is like a brand except it distorts our figure. It disfigures us in a way that we want to cover up or that incapacitates us. It causes shame and constant tending to. Burns are a horrible recovery and Satan would have us live there.

3. Delays our purpose

It delays the purpose of our warfare. It is such a distraction tending to these darts that Satan constantly throws at us. But we were not meant to dodge them or try to run through them unscathed. We were equipped to take up the shield of faith and defend ourselves as we advance toward our enemy.

His attacks are from the air, silent, surprising attacks. He is out to destroy you because you are the destroyer of him. Of course he wants to attack you, you mean the difference between him having his reign or not! You are not being treated unfairly, you are being treated according to his rules until you take up a higher authority and function our of God's rules. Satan's nature is to cause struggle, attempt warfare, and create strategic attack.

When these darts are launched against the on coming troops, they were mostly caught by the shield and did not penetrate to the body but it caused unusual panic. When darts were

thrown through the air it made the blaze of the fire more inflamed and when it struck it was hard to believe this fire was not going to overcome him and he was tempted to get rid of his burning shield and expose himself to the enemy's spear-thrusts. But this shield of faith that we hold not only catches these flaming darts, but it confidently extinguishes them.

Extinguish (4570) (*sbennumi*) means to quench, put out or extinguish referring to a light or a fire. Metaphorically, *sbennumi* speaks of ceasing, thwarting or blocking an activity. Satan and his minions literally bombard the believer with fiery darts of seductive temptation to draw them into ungodly and evil responses. The only defense we have at that point is the shield of faith.

But Paul says,

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

1 Corinthians 10:13

What Are Not Weapons

1. Complaining Is Not A Weapon

Many Christians spend their whole life complaining about the situations of their life never realizing that those statements will never make a difference. **Complaining is a proclamation of fear that God cannot make a difference.** All of those words only indicate to the enemy that he is right on track and all he has to do is continue to push your buttons.

A MAN NAMED THOMAS became a monk, joined a monastery, and took a vow of silence. The only exception to the vow was that, once every ten years, monks were allowed to make one statement then the silence must resume for another decade. After his first ten years in the monastery, Thomas was called into the study of his superior, who said, "Brother Thomas, do you have anything to say?"

"The food is bad," the monk replied. Then he went back to his duties.

A decade passed. Again, Thomas was summoned to the study of his superior. "Brother Thomas," said the superior, "do you have anything to say?"

"The bed is hard," the monk replied. Then he returned to his chores.

Another decade passed. Again, Thomas was called in before his superior. "Brother Thomas," said the superior, "do you have anything to say?"

"I quit," the monk replied.

The superior frowned. "I'm not surprised. You've done nothing but complain ever since you got here!"

2. Worry Is Not A Weapon

It is easy to fall into the trap of worrying. **Worry is just fear internalized.** Persistent fear is a spirit and it is not from God.

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline."

II Timothy 1:7

Like worry, complaining can also become a habit that is hard to break. Complaining is fear externalized. **When worry rules faith drools!** Not really creative, but you get the point. **Worry deactivates the power of faith. Worry cannot co-exist with faith.**

Fear cripples your life and it is not from God. It is of the devil and it is bondage only if you let it. Whatever the fear, it is not from God; it is a subtle tool designed by the devil to keep you living in bondage. Your bondage is exposed in worry and complaining. Jesus tells us:

"...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

When a true believer knows the final outcome of his enemy, his perspective takes on a whole new shape.

"But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills."

Psalm 73:2-5

"Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. They say, "How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?" This is what the wicked are like— always carefree, they increase in wealth."

Psalm 73:9-12

"Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning. If I had said, "I will speak thus," I would have betrayed your children. When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny."

Psalm 73:13-17

I love a powerful statement that Dutch Sheets makes in his book, "Authority in Prayer." He says:

The war has never been about who will win ultimate control of the earth- it's about who will be on the winning side with God!

God did not create the earth and then decide what He might do with it. From its inception He knew its purpose and the role we would play in it. This earth is where Satan fell, but it was our domain to start with. In Genesis 1:26 it says that God made "man" (adam) in His image and then said, "let them rule." We were all given authority to rule over the earth.

"The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to man."

Psalm 115:16

The word "given" comes from a Hebrew word that can mean ownership but also means "to give in the sense of an assignment"; it means "to put in charge of." We were given

the command to go out and multiply and take dominion of this earth. Satan has moved in on us. He is taking our neighborhoods and families. He is a spiritual mafia that must be dealt with and he is openly resistant to that fact! God says, "I'll take care of the stars, you take care of the earth."

God didn't give away the ownership of the earth. Satan ruling the earth was not a penalty of our sin, it was the consequences of it. **Satan does not rule because of our sin, he rules because we haven't take advantage of the freedom or liberty God has given us and we step boldly, intentionally, picking up the shield of faith and advancing toward our enemy. God works on this earth through those who understand this, not independently of them! In other words, God is limited when we limit God. Our limiting God does not make God less, it just keeps Him from displaying His fullness. We are waiting on God to do something but the truth is, God is waiting on us to do something! If we don't understand God's plan of partnership we will continue to be surprised attacks of fiery arrows of the enemy constantly worrying, "Why is this always happening to me?"**

- 1. Complaining Is Not A Weapon**
- 2. Worry Is Not A Weapon**
- 3. Wishing Is Not A Weapon**

I've heard so many people say, "I wish...this or that." Wishing is like a cloud that will never bring rain. There is no substance to it. It is wishful but it is not connected to reality.

A wish is a thought without confidence and action to complete it.

"Faith is the absolute confidence in the Word of God accompanied with action"

Faith is a thought with confidence and action to complete it. See, God's ultimate intention for you is that your thoughts would move from wishes to confident action, over your personal world and to partner with others in God's Kingdom to rule in the world around you. God didn't give Satan authority on this earth, Adam did. When Adam submitted to Satan in the garden instead of God's intentional rules, he delegated the authority that was rightfully his. In that, Satan gained governmental authority over the earth, but it is still yours...but wishing will not make a difference.

Many people are content in wishing. The wish they looked different. They wish they had more money. They wish they lived someplace else. I once read a frustrating and difficult book. What it told me is that I was exactly where I was in life because I wanted to be there. When I read that part of the book I literally threw it across the room. I was so mad at that idiot author that I wanted to strangle him. It took me a few hours when the words made famous latter by Dr. Phil entered my mind, "Well, how's what you are doing working for you?" I eventually picked up the book and started reading again. It asked me pertinent questions like:

- Do I know what I want my future to look like?
- Do I know three things that need to be changed so I could get to that future?
- Am I willing to make those changes to have that future?

I knew exactly what I wanted, but I had no idea how to get there. Up to that point I just

thought people were lucky or God wanted them to have the things He didn't want me to have. I was trying with all my might to be content with what I had. I also thought that this was my spiritual journey. This is the road that God had for me, scraping and struggling for finances and opportunity. When I read on in the book it said, "You are exactly where you want to be because you are not willing to make the changes necessary for the future you want. No matter what amount of things you wish for, you will never achieve them unless you start getting out of your nice little cocoon with all its excuses and reasons why it won't work and you move on to the next step of your success. Faith is simply belief that success if possible in your life.

Many people in this world has figured this out. They are masters of success because they are masters of faith. They believe the world is theirs for the taking. They don't believe they are enslaved to their circumstances. I believe there is a faith for success. I believe there is a success that lies within each one of us. But I also believe that there is a success that we are all called to that the world cannot participate in. That is the success of a true believer who knows what Christ has done on the cross and the price He paid for our sins. This believer realizes that Satan has not only ripped us off, but he has taken the whole world for a ride and we are the influencer's of change. We are masters of spiritual renewal for this world. I like Bill Cosby's new book title, "Come on People!" I believe that is what the Holy Spirit is saying today.

In an article, "Planet in Rebellion," George Vandeman wrote:

It was May 21, 1946. The place: Los Alamos. A young and daring scientist was carrying out a necessary experiment in preparation for the atomic test to be conducted in the waters of the South Pacific atoll at Bikini.

He had successfully performed such an experiment many times before. In his effort to determine the amount of U-235 necessary for a chain reaction- scientists call it the critical mass- he would push two hemispheres of uranium together. Then, just as the mass became critical, he would push them apart with his screwdriver, thus instantly stopping the chain reaction.

But that day, just as the material became critical, the screwdriver slipped. The hemispheres of uranium came too close together. Instantly the room was filled with a dazzling bluish haze. Young Louis Slotin, instead of ducking and thereby possibly saving himself, tore the two hemispheres apart with his hands and thus interrupted the chain reaction.

By this instant, self-forgetful daring, he saved the lives of the seven other persons in the room...As he waited for the car that was to take them to the hospital, he said quietly to his companion, "You'll come through all right. But I haven't the faintest chance myself." It was only too true. Nine days later he died in agony.

Nineteen centuries ago the Son of the living God walked directly into sin's most concentrated radiation, allowed himself to be touched by its curse, and let it take His life...But by that act He broke the chain reactions. He broke the power of sin." (Craig Brian Larson, ed., Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching: From

Leadership Journal [Grand Rapids: Christianity Today and Baker, 1193], 48)

Jesus took our place in death while at the same time conquered the strongarm of Satan and we are in spiritual warfare to claim what Christ has done for each one of us. This is not just a faith for success which has its own incredible challenges and mountains to climb, but this faith has an opponent, and an enemy that is set on winning. But look what it says in God's Word:

"...and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority."

Colossians 2:10

It's About Truth

"I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts."

Psalms 119:45

Knowing what God's Word has to say about this faith is the greatest step that you can take. Only by appropriating God's Word correctly in your life will you be able to walk in the freedom to stand your ground against Satan. God wants you free, Satan wants you enslaved to ignorance. Paul says in Romans:

"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been freed from sin."

Romans 6:6-7

The old man refers to the natural sin nature that resides in all of us. When Satan controls this part of us, we will always be a slave to sin, unable to do what you know you should do or what God is calling you to do. All because he has "authority" in your life. Knowing God's "precepts", His Word sets you free.

It's About Authority, Not Power

Satan was kicked out of heaven and a huge flash of lightening was seen as described by Jesus in Luke 10:18, and poof, he was no longer there. Our contention with Satan is not about his power, it is about his authority. God has all the power in the universe. There was no battle or civil war in heaven, God looked at him and said, "That's enough, you're finished!" Bam, it was over. God didn't have to lift a finger because it wasn't a power struggle.

Satan did not gain power when he fell to earth nor did he lose any when Jesus went to the cross. His power remained the same. His power didn't become more or less. If Jesus stripped Satan of his power then why should we be concerned with him? If we have been delivered from Satan's power then he can no longer have control over our lives, but that is not what the Word of God says. When Jesus dealt with Satan, He dealt with his authority- the **right** to use his power against us. Our liberation in Christ is that we no longer have to be under that sort of authority, we treat him as a rebel and as a thief who has no right to steal kill and destroy, (John 10:10)

Now, if we have been delivered from Satan's authority and given position with Christ and given authority through Christ's name, Satan rules unless you do. Simple and plain. He doesn't walk off the job because of what Christ did on the cross, but because of

what you do because of the work of the cross he loses ground.

"I have given you *authority* to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you."

Luke 10:19

Isn't it interesting that Jesus uses the word "authority" instead of "power?" See, we have not been called to wizardry or witchcraft, where "power" determines the response which ultimately remains in the individual. But we have been given "authority" which determines the response which ultimately remains in Christ. We do not work independently from God, and neither did Jesus. But the powers of this world does.

Acting In Our Authority

When I was a kid and I turned the toward the barn, it would sprint out of control in that direction. It had the *power* to make that dead dash toward the barn, but not the *authority* to. It resisted my authority to turn her around and go in another direction. But my authority would not allow her to get in the barn and eat the oats she thought she so wonderfully deserved. I shut the gate that would allow her to have her way. I had authority to control the outcome.

"For he has rescued us from the *dominion* of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves..."

Colossians 1:13

Dominion is from the GK. Word *exousia*, or authority. Jesus has given us control of the wild horse. He has given us the keys to bind and loose.

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you *bind* on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 16:19

Jesus gave us the authority to, "bind", *deo*, which means to "fasten or tie, as with a chain or cord" the wild horse of our life. This word can be used and is used in legal circles to mean "legally or contractually binding," which obviously conveys the idea of authority.

You cannot see spiritual bondage, you can only see the result of it, alcohol and drug addiction, etc. But this bondage is real. It is a bondage that goes deep into your heart and life and if you can get freedom here, you will see the result of it out there. A cure of the heart is a release of a life.

We have been given the opportunity to pray with authority, to walk around in it, binding or tying Satan legally, and God will back us up with His power. Understanding this will determine the victories we face in the future. We should never waste the work of Christ.

Stopping The Evil One

"In addition to all this, *take up* the shield of *faith*, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the *evil one*."

Ephesians 6:16

Evil one (4190) (*poneros*) refers to actively harmful or hurtful evil one. The definite article points to a specific evil entity, undoubtedly Satan. The idea is one who is pernicious, which means highly injurious or destructive, exceedingly harmful, and vicious.

Jesus' Acceptance Speech

In Matthew 28:18, Jesus has risen from the dead, standing before His disciples and declares the victory He had just clinched.

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."
Matthew 28:18

The *exousia*, the authority, the same word that was translated dominion in Colossians 1:13. Jesus was telling us that once and for all, "Satan no longer holds the power over you because he no longer has authority over you, I do. I took you back, you are not only my child, but the government shall be upon YOUR shoulders and because I have all authority, you have it too, not only in heaven but on this earth as well."

The first Adam lost authority and because of the last Adam, Jesus Christ it is sealed and safe in the hands of Christ, (Romans 5). Now you and I can pray with true authority knowing that Christ our Lord will release His Kingdom to rule and reign through us!

Our Freedom Through Faith

Have you ever seen the Constitution of the United States? Unless you have physically traveled to Washington, D.C., and seen it on display, you have never laid eyes on the original document. How then, do you know what your rights are, if you've never seen the actual Constitution? You weren't there when this document was drafted, but when you were in school, a teacher told you, "You are an American citizen. These are your rights." Then you probably read the "Bill of Rights" which tells you of your freedom to free speech, freedom of press, the right to assembly, and all the other liberties that are true, even though you had never seen the document.

That's the same way you operate in the authority of your faith. You did not actually see Jesus die on the cross or what He did when He took the keys of death, hell and the grave from Satan. But your faith accepts this work of Christ and when your faith is weak, your authority is weak. Satan love to have you doubt and second guess. The cross is the dividing point of all history and all powers that exist. It is not about being more powerful, it is about becoming rightfully authorized. Our faith in the cross of Jesus Christ represents the "property line" of the world as it is and the world that could be. It is the place where God wants us to live, and it is a restoration of what was lost. To utilize this shield of faith you must know what Christ did for you and then understand the authority to respond to your enemy to saying **NO to the devil, sin, and temptation.**

Authority By Grace

Jesus' work on the cross gives you a way to replace all the guilt and shame of your life with His unending grace.

"For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."
Romans 6:14

Jesus Christ was nailed to a wooden cross, and Colossians 1:14 records that He "wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." Every sin that you and I ever committed

was nailed between the hands of Jesus and the wood of the cross.

Authority By The Spirit

"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father.""
Romans 8:15

You are God's child, and you can call Him "Daddy." You are that special to Him. Never listen to the devil's lie that God does not accept you. He only wants you to believe that because if you don't then he loses his power and position. He knows that there is authority in your words and in your heart. He knows that you are limited by what you personally believe. He knows that He is defeated. This is what he cannot let you know!

God's embrace of you is not only one of protection but also one of assurance that you will and can win. You are welcome fully into His family, having adopted you as His very own. He gives you the authority of His Son and seats you with Him in the heavenlies. But we are to act on this heavenly position. We must take up the shield of faith and protect ourselves from the attacks of the enemy by utilizing the weapon of our faith and utilize the weapon of our prayers for something else. Let's march together, advancing toward the enemy to bring liberation on a generation that does not know God or fear God. A generation that needs His love and His family!