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Sermon – Sword and Shield (Armor of God Week 5)

Scripture – Ephesians 6, Hebrews 11, Mathew 4:1-11

Main Message – The attack on your faith comes from many directions and it must be protected by supernatural means, which is Christ the Lord.

So, you're in battle and strong men are coming against you armed with swords and shields. At a distance are the archers trying to break the ranks of those against them. You don't want to face this without a shield. You might be able to win against a lone swordsman, but your chances are small when faced from both near and far. A good shield is an effective barrier against the darts of the enemy. A good sword is how you can parry and push back against direct attacks. You've got to have them both handy.

This piece of armor, along with the sword, are the only active pieces of armor that we have. All the other pieces are passive in that you put them on and they simply do what they are intended to do without your active control. A sword and a shield require skill which comes from study and practice. Your chances of being effective in battle depends on it. Your chances of pulling your weight in battle depend upon it.

In a spiritual battle, these principles apply the same way. We are talking about the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God just as **Romans 10:17** tells us. It isn't a one and done. You are all hear today worshipping God and hearing the word of God. This is part of the study that helps you stand against the enemy darts – which are increasing in intensity. **Hebrews 11** gives examples of those who put Faith into practice and hence were effective for the Kingdom of God. Study is all well and good and necessary. Faith put into practice is where it's at. That is why faith without works is dead. We got to get out of the classroom and join the battle. Our fellow combatants need some help wherever they may be found.

The sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, is the most effective offensive and defensive weapon we have. When wielded by a skilled master, the enemy will have no chance. Even those who are wicked and cunning, like the devil himself, will not be able to stand against those who it effectively and the enemy will flee. The best example is Jesus in **Mat 4:1-11**.

Jesus is the Word made flesh. He is the only reason we have a sword at all. Its not actually our power, but the Word of God, the Bible and guided by the skilled hand of those who listen to the HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD. This next image is what the Jews were hoping for 2000 years ago.

Read Rev 19:11-16

That's the power we serve. Cast aside the doubt and join the battle.