



Meeting Notes: Shield of Faith – What it Protects Us From (August 14, 2013)

These notes capture our August 14, 2013 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything discussed. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. Details of what was discussed are the in the attached Teaching Notes. However, the general notes below capture topics that are not in the Teaching Notes or were expounded upon. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached.

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

New family member: We had the privilege of welcoming a new family member into our midst this meeting!

Closing the Loop on Last Week:

- **Thin mints exercise.** Someone was still having a hard time understanding the difference in hope and faith, so we did a little exercise. I stood across the room holding a box of thin mints. I explained the idea of having the thin mints in her hand was her “unseen” hope. However, her faith that she could obtain the thin mints combined with her action to obtain the thin mints moved the thin mints from unseen hope (still in my hand) to the “seen” evidence in her hand! This exercise sealed it for her, and she was even able to express hope and faith in her own terms: “hope is the map; faith is the vehicle to get us there!” Thanking God for the exercise and for bringing revelation! **Takeaway.** Just like she couldn’t get the thin mints without taking action, we cannot get what we hope for without taking action!
- **Other discussion.** We again discussed our circumstances are a mirror to reveal what’s in the soil of our heart! We discussed how our motives help determine when we do something for selfish reasons or for Godly reasons. We discussed how God plants seeds, but the devil plants weeds. Our circumstances are the devil’s weeds intended to choke out the seeds of God’s Word! We discussed how our circumstances give us an opportunity to grow, but that doesn’t mean we will take the opportunity! For example, rather than letting the circumstances reveal the condition of our heart, we choose to “justify” or defend our actions. As a result, we never get to the root of what’s going on with us. **Takeaway.** If the root in our heart doesn’t align with the Word, then we are in sin and need to change.
- **Putting our faith into action.** I shared my testimony of how the Renewing Our Mind exercise moves our hope from the unseen into the seen. With my first

prayer, my hope was to overcome judging by learning how to walk in humility. By faith, I completed my prayer. By faith, I did the works my prayer told me to do whenever I felt myself starting to judge someone. Thus, my hope gave me the vision for what I wanted to achieve, and by faith, I took action to make the vision come to pass. Now, whenever a judgmental moment arises, my renewed thoughts (usually) turn to God’s Word, and that Word guides my actions!

Takeaway. Hope gives vision; faith gets you to that vision!

Discussion Topic: Shield of Faith – What it Protects Us From

- **Ephesians 6:16.** “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (KJV).
 - **T-Time.** After laying a foundation by discussing most of the Teaching Notes, we updated “The Just Live by Faith” T¹ to reflect what we learned about the enemy’s arrows and how they correlate to the parable of the sower and the seed. Here’s the updated “T,” although now it’s a Table.

**The Just Live by Faith
Hebrews 10:39**

Soils	How Do We Draw Back to Perdition?	How Do We Believe to the Saving of the Soul?	Arrow
Wayside	Fear that results in no faith	Believe	Regular
Rocky	Unbelief that battles with faith	Obey	Fiery
Thorny	Doubt that results in little faith	Trust	Combustible
Good		Great Faith	

- **Explaining the T:**
 - **Middle columns.** For anyone who missed the explanation of the middle columns, they reveal what causes us to draw back to perdition in contrast with how we believe to the saving of our soul.
 - **Outside of the T.** We added the soils from the parable of the sower and the seed to the left of the T and the arrows to the right T, so we could see how each soil aligns with our faith and the type of arrow being launched at us.

¹ This T is still a work in progress; however, once it is complete, it will be posted on the website on the Documents page. The study that introduces and explains this T can be found on the Meeting Notes page of the website: www.wow2women.com, and is entitled, “Shield of Faith, Pt 2.”

me from “seeing” myself, time with God removed the blinders from my eyes, and I was able to repent and make amends with some very important people in my life! **Takeaway.** Don’t let the pain of truth keep us from acting upon that truth.

- **Clarifying Justification.** In discussing not wanting to justify ourselves, someone asked is it ever okay to justify. The bottom line was we are justified in God, but our ungodly behavior cannot be justified. Our feelings may be “justifiable” – normal for us to feel them – but if we want to believe to the saving of our soul, we have to allow God’s Word to transform us so we feel differently in the future. Or, as one of us stated, “just because the circumstances are justifiable doesn’t mean your feeling in that circumstance is justified.” **Takeaway.** If we stay in our negative emotions, then we are choosing to stay in sin.
- **Discussing hurt.** After much discussion, fumbling on my part, and a clarifying email, we finally used the broken bone in our midst as an excellent analogy. The short version is hurt identifies the location of a wound. We can choose to take action on that hurt and heal, or we can choose to wallow in that hurt and continue hurting. **Takeaway.** We have to recognize we have a choice to heal and then act upon that choice!
- **Who’s throwing the arrows?** We didn’t get a chance to really discuss this section of the Teaching Notes, but we will delve more deeply into this topic next meeting.

Homework assignment:

- Read the parable of the sower and the seed to identify the condition of your heart based on this parable. The parable can be found in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8. Be prepared to share where you are in our next meeting.
- Decide upon at least one “It” or “giant” in your life; come to the next meeting prepared to discuss your “giant,” so we can put our faith into action.

Next Meeting: Our planned discussion topic is “Putting Our Faith Into Action.” We will examine as many “giants” as we can to determine our hope (what is our unseen vision) and our faith (what am I believing God for and what actions will I take to bring my hope from the unseen to the seen). It’s important to note, this unseen vision will be based on how God’s Word can change the condition of our heart, not what we are expecting Him to do in our circumstances!

Closing: We closed our meeting in prayer with a time of need-specific prayer for the challenges that were lifted up, for the group overall, and as the Holy Spirit led

If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at wow2@wow2women.com or complete a Contact Form on our site, www.wow2women.com.



ATTACHMENT: TEACHING NOTES FOR AUGUST 14, 2013

Memory Verse:

- **Hebrews 11:1,6:** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen ... But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (NKJV).

Discussion Topic: Shield of Faith – What it Protects Us From

- **Ephesians 6:16:** “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (KJV).
 - **Defining Key Words in the Memory Verse:**²
 - **Fiery:** (G4448) ... kindle, i.e. (passively) to be ignited, glow (literally), be refined (by implication), or figuratively) to be inflamed (with anger, grief, lust):--burn, fiery, be on fire, try.
 - **Darts:** (G956) ...a missile, i.e. spear or arrow:--dart.
 - **Wicked:** (G4190) ...hurtful, i.e. evil properly, in effect or influence ... [does not refer to character or the ills of society]
 - **Points of interest from *Dressed to Kill*, by Rick Renner.**³ Renner describes the three different types of arrows used during the time Paul wrote Ephesians: regular arrows, “arrows dipped in tar and put on fire,” and “arrows containing combustible fluids that burst into flames upon impact.” Regular arrows were for “normal combat” and “fire-bearing arrows were reserved to inflict damage on a fortified place or an encampment.” However, it is important to note there were two types of “fire-bearing arrows.” The type dipped in tar could be seen coming, because it was set on fire BEFORE it was launched! However, the type filled with combustible fluids was deceptive! Upon first glance, the arrow appeared harmless. As Renner describes, “those inside the encampment often made the fatal mistake of ignoring them – *at least until the first one hit the target.*” Moreover, the arrows did not stop coming! They continued coming, and coming, and coming – one after another!
 - **Pulling it all together.**

² Strong's Concordance for the iPhone version 1.5.3, Copyright © 2009 Brian Thomas Webb

³ Rick Renner, *Dressed to Kill: A Biblical Approach to Spiritual Warfare and Armor*, (Tulsa: Teach all Nations, 1991), p. 357-358.

- **Key Words.** When we look at what the key words mean, we find the fiery darts are intended to “kindle” or cause us to be “inflamed” (with anger, grief, lust). We also see “wicked” does not refer to another person’s character or to the “ills of society,” i.e. what is going on around us. “Wicked” refers to something being hurtful [i.e. causing injury, detriment, or suffering]; however, the circumstances can only hurt us if something within us responds to the “hurtful” arrow hurled our way! Thus, hurt generates from within us, not external to us! Therefore, the “wicked” we have to deal with is within not without!

- **This portion of the verse.** As we learned in our last study, Hebrews 10:39 identifies two choices: draw back to perdition OR believe to the saving of our souls. This verse reveals the spiritual battle in which we are engaged! By looking at the definitions, we see three things about this battle. One, the fiery darts launched at us are meant to inflame us with anger, grief, lust, and the like. Two, the target of those arrows lies within us and not in our circumstances! And, three, with our shield of faith, we are able to quench ALL those fiery darts.

- **Connecting it to the parable of the sower and the seed.**
 - **How we draw back to perdition.** Last week, we correlated the different forms of faith to each soil mentioned in the parable of the sower and the seed.⁴ As a quick review, we saw three different paths that lead to us drawing back to perdition. The condition of our heart combined with our faith determines the path we take: wayside (fear results in no faith); rocky soil (unbelief battles with our faith); or thorny soil (our doubt results in little faith).

 - **How we believe to the saving of our soul.** In looking at what hinders our faith in each of the soils, we summed up one principle that can help us transition between the soils. If we believe the truth of God’s Word in the wayside, obey that truth in the rocky, and trust God to bring that truth from the unseen into the seen while in the thorny, our heart will become good soil and we will have great faith! And, with great faith we can quench ALL the fiery darts hurled our way and believe to the saving of our soul!

 - **The role of the arrows.** If we correlate the progression of the arrows to the each of the soils, we can see why and how

⁴ This study can be found on the Meeting Notes page of the website: www.wow2women.com. It is the study entitled, “Shield of Faith, Pt 2.”

our trials intensify as we cultivate our hearts to be good soil and produce mature fruit. For example, if the regular arrow aligns with the wayside, the fiery arrow with the rocky, and the combustible arrow with the thorny, the closer we get to good ground, the more intense the battle becomes!

Therefore, if we know where we are in the soils, we not only know the battle plan (or wiles of the devil) we are facing, we also know God's way of escape! His way of escape is to believe, obey, and trust in Him no matter what we see!

- **Who's throwing the arrows?** Ephesians 6:11 tells us to "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (NKJV). As we see, the devil is throwing the arrows, intending to not only hurt, but to ultimately destroy us! But like any good general, he has lots of soldiers to do his work! We can find insight into the "wiles of the devil" and his soldiers by looking at the "ites" in Joshua 3:10 (see attached). Each "ite" represents a "giant" we must overcome; our giants are areas in our mind and heart the devil targets to find where he can inflict the most pain, so we will draw back from God!
- **Scriptures to consider:**
 - **Ephesians 6:2:** "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*" (NKJV).
 - **2 Corinthians 10:4:** "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds" (NKJV).
 - **1 Corinthians 10:13:** "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*" (NKJV).
 - **Galatians 5:19-21:** "¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish, ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like ..." (NKJV).

- **Proverbs 3:5-8:** “⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. ⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. ⁸It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:7:** “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (NKJV)
 - **John 8:32:** “And, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (NKJV).
- **Takeaway.** Our faith protects us from the various arrows the devil hurls our way! Each of those arrows is targeted at something in us the devil knows will cause us hurt and inflame us with anger, grief, lust, and any other work of the flesh found in Galatians 5:19-21. However, if we recognize where we are in the soils, we can find our way of escape as we quench every fiery dart of the enemy!
- **Summing it all up:** We must understand our faith is part of an on-going spiritual battle for our souls! However, God has given us a shield to protect us, faith to guide us, and revealed the weapons the enemy uses to attempt to destroy us. Each fiery dart hurled our way is intended to hurt us. If we walk by sight, we will receive the hurt and draw back to perdition. However, if walk by faith, we will quench every fiery dart and believe to the saving of our soul!

Revelation from the Holy Spirit: Faith is not hope for deliverance from our trials, but steadfastness through our trials.

Question to ask ourselves: In whom am I placing my faith right now: God or myself?

New Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 10:4-6: ⁴For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Homework assignment.

- Read the parable of the sower and the seed to identify the condition of your heart based on this parable. The parable can be found in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8. Be prepared to share where you are in our next meeting.
- Decide upon at least one “Ite” or giant in your life; come to the next meeting prepared to discuss your giant, so we can put our faith into action.



Attachment: RECOGNIZING OUR GIANTS

The "Ite"	What it Represents in Our Lives	Question(s) to ask Ourselves
Canaanites	Represents a "peddler."	What lies is the devil "peddling" to us to replace the truth of God's Word?
Hittites	Represents "terror."	What are we responding to out of terror instead of faith in God?
Hivites	Represents a "villager."	What strongholds, "living places," are we creating in our lives for the enemy's lies to live in? What behavior in us is those strongholds "giving life" to?
Perizzites	Represents "open country" or a place "without walls."	What areas of our lives are "without walls," because our spirit does not have control? In what ways are we walking in the flesh rather than in the spirit?
Girgashites	Represents the "unknown."	What areas of our lives are we struggling in but can't identify where it's coming from?
Amorites	Represents a "mountaineer."	What areas in our lives are we making "mountains out of molehills?"
Jebusties	Represents the "threshing place."	What circumstances in our lives are causing us to be "sifted" where the wheat is being separated from the chaff--the useful being separated from the useless?