



Armor of God Week 5: The Shield of Faith Discussion Questions

1. Roman soldiers, when advancing in battle, would naturally hold their shields in front of them. But when the enemy was launching the flaming missiles, the soldiers would use them more strategically – dipping them in water, then huddle together in a group, hoisting the shields overhead. This was called the turtle formation. Consider the Roman army's turtle formation in light of Paul's emphasis on our relationships with one another in the body of Christ. What does this say about how we should concern ourselves with building up the faith of others? And, how should active faith strengthen the broader community of Christ? See Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 for inspiration in your discussion.

2. Have you ever felt the need for "more faith" to do what you feel God is asking you to do? What were the circumstances surrounding this?

Look up Matthew 6:30, 8:26; and 16:8, where Jesus quantifies someone's faith as "little." In these cases, the size of their faith correlates directly to their view of Jesus. Jesus is calling the disciples to a clearer understanding of His ability and His care for them. He is not challenging them to focus on faith; He is telling them to focus on Him.

Leaders, refer to page 2 of this document for a special excerpt on faithfulness from Armor of God by Priscilla Shirer. You may want to read this prior to your group meetings to enhance your discussion.

3. We defined *faith* with this simple meaning: acting like God is telling the truth...why do you think the connection between truth and faith is critical?
4. Consider all of the areas that God may be asking you to take a step of faith in right now (from this week's homework). Fear is one of Satan's primary schemes for crippling and paralyzing God's people. Take a moment to write down any part that fear is playing in keeping you from walking by faith in your life right now. If you are comfortable, please share with your group.
5. Let's remind ourselves of God's loyalty, integrity and unmatched faithfulness. He has carried the weight of a covenant with His people across generations. Use these declarations of faithfulness in your prayers, as one mention of them will surely extinguish some arrows from the devil aimed in your direction. Split up the following verses.

Deuteronomy 7:9

Romans 8:28

Hebrews 10:23

Psalm 118:6

Faithfulness

If you are struggling to move forward in obedience to God, you do not need bigger faith. You just need to realize how big your God is. The more faithful and strong you believe Him to be, the more willing you will be to depend on Him. Your level of faith will always be tied to your perception of God. If your perception of Him is faulty, your faith will be faulty. If your perception of Him is on point, your faith will be too. You don't need more faith; you need a more comprehensive and accurate view of the faithfulness of your God.

Our action or inaction is a litmus test that gives us an accurate reading of what we believe to be true about God. We may feel like we have very little faith, and yet still be a man or women of strong faith because we choose to move forward despite what we feel. Conversely, we can be men or women who puport to have strong faith, ready to go on an adventure with God – and yet when He actually calls us to do it, we refuse either because we succumb to fear and doubt or we're distracted by life circumstances that seem more pressing and urgent. So we can never detect our level of faith (or the faith of another, for that matter) by how we feel, only by what we're willing to do in obedience to God.

As you proactively remind yourself of how faithful and reliable your God truly is, you'll become more willing – even excited – about actually relying on Him. Your shield of faith works because it is directly connected to the faithfulness of your God.