**June 2023**

***Power*** means dominion or strength.

***Wiles*** means trickery, schemes or strategies.

***Withstand*** means to resist.

***Stand*** means firm, fixed or establish.

**Stand your ground**

Foundation scripture

The armour of God

How has God equipped us to stand?

Ephesians 6: 10 – 17. It requires the ***whole armour of God***.

* ***The belt of truth***

John 6: 63

John 17: 17

2 Timothy 3: 16 – All scripture is God breathed.

* + Roman soldier’s belt was made of metal and thick heavy leather and was the carrying point for his sword. His belt held all other pieces of his armour together. The truth is the belt that holds the believers armour together.

***119: 160***

Your word is truth from the beginning.

* ***Breastplate of righteousness***

***2 Cor 5: 21***

***Romans 5: 17***

We have been made righteous.

The breastplate protects our identity in Christ.

* + Protected the vital organs in battle. Our breastplate is God’s righteousness and it will never fail us. Gift of righteousness.
* ***Boots with the gospel of peace***

***Romans 10: 15***

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace.

* + Romans soldier’s sandals were called caligae. Very thick soles and wrapped perfectly around their ankles. They were also fitted with spikes on the souls to help them stand firm as they travelled. We also have a firm foundation in the gospel (1 Corinthians 3: 10 - 11).

***Shod*** means to put on.

* ***Shield of faith***
  + Complex piece of armour and primary defence weapon. It was made of impenetrable wood, leather, canvas and metal and could be doused in water to extinguish the fiery arrows of the enemy.

A soldier’s shield was stronger when linked with others. Stay connected with fellow believers in the fight of faith.

***Romans 10: 17***

When you are in the Word, your shield is up.

* + Faith is the shield of the believer. Trusting in God’s power and protection is imperative in remaining steadfast. Even when the battle is raging, God is always true to His promises.
* ***Helmet of salvation***

***Romans 10: 9 – 10***

-Salvation is believing.

-It can’t be earned.

-It’s a free gift from God.

-It requires believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth.

* + Helmet was vital to protect the most vulnerable areas. His armour would prove useless if he was not equipped with the helmet.

The battle ground will always be the mind which is vulnerable to the enemies lies and deceit

* + The helmet of salvation is the most important part of our armour as Christians. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit that enters a believer at the moment of salvation, all other armour is useless. Salvation empowers us to fight and protects us in our weaknesses. Without salvation there can be no victory.
* ***Sword of the Spirit***

***Matthew 4: 4***

*“It is written”*

***Hebrews 4: 12***

The word is sharper than any twoedged sword.

***Revelation 19: 15***

Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword.

* + The sword is a deadly weapon. In the hands of a skilled warrior, he could pierce through even the strongest armour.
  + The sword of the spirit is the ***Word of God***. Every other piece of armour protects us against attacks. But with God’s word, we are able to fight and defeat ***all*** enemies. Jesus used scripture to defeat Satan in wilderness. We must do the same. When under attack, double down in the word.
* ***Prayer***

Prayer is the foundation for all Christian success. Prayer doesn’t change God, but it does change circumstances.

* + In prayer we show our reliance upon God to act and move. Our entire armour is rooted in his strength. We must fight in the power of his might. The one who has won the war is with us in battle. Although the war has been won, daily battles must be fought.

Standing requires resisting.

***Clothed*** – like an apron or a badge of servitude. The usage here is referring to an apron of slaves, fastened to the belt of the vest. It distinguished slaves from free men. Peter is saying that Christians can show their subjection one to another by putting on humility.

1 Peter 5: 5 – 10

***Subject*** means to subordinate or submit to.

***Steadfast***

Solid, stable, rigid, strong or sure.

* Be clothed with humility.
* Cast you care ***first*** upon God and he will guide you concerning people.
* ***Resist*** the devil ***steadfast*** in the faith (stand against or oppose).
  + James 1: 2 – 3. Patience (endurance) has a chance to grow when your faith is tested.
  + 2 Timothy 2: 3 – 4.

James 4: 5 – 10

* Submit to God first, then ***resist*** the devil. That means submitting to his word.

***Resist*** means

To set one’s self against or oppose.

* God resists the proud but gives grace unto the humble.
* Psalm 138: 6 - Though the Lord be high, yet has he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knows afar off.
* Resisting is speaking the word of God over circumstances and declaring the truth. Redemption is a finished work which must be taken by faith.
* Neither give ***place*** to the devil (foothold or room). Ephesians 4: 27.

Psalm 112: 1 – 10 (his heart is established).

* He that delights in the word of God and has a reverence for God (to stand in awe of) is blessed.
* His seed is mighty because he will teach the uncompromised word of God to his children.

***Fixed*** means:

Firm, stable, fastened or upright.

* Wealth and riches shall be in his house because he seeks first the kingdom of God.
* No fear for the righteous because we have a spirit of faith.
* Heart is fixed trust in the lord, His heart is ***established*** (lean upon or take hold).

Philippians 1: 27 – 30 (NLT)

* Fight together for the faith which is the good news.
* Don’t be intimidated by your enemies.
* The struggle can be as simple as someone trying to turn you away from your unshakable faith in God and his word.

Acts 20: 18 - 32 (NLT)

Remember, the belt of truth holds the believers armour together.

* Paul was challenged with hardship.
* He endured many strugglers. But he wouldn’t be moved.
* The good news will always be the message about the wonderful grace of God.
* Satan always distorts the truth and we must be on guard against his schemes.

We never want to compromise any ground that we have gained.

Philippians 3: 13 – 14

* Standing you ground means not looking back.
* ***Press toward*** – to pursue, endeavour to acquire, seek after eagerly.

Standing requires trust in God

Trusting in an unseen God means having faith in his written word to man. The word of God is the wisdom of God.

Proverbs 3: 1 – 8 (KJV & NLT)

* Trust the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto you own understanding.

Never change the word of God to fit your lifestyle. Instead, renew your mind and change your lifestyle to fit the word.

* In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

Psalm 37: 1 – 5

***Trust*** -Be confident or sure, be bold – careless.

* ***Trust*** in the Lord.
* ***Delight*** yourself in the Lord (to be soft, delicate or pliable).
* ***Commit*** your way unto the Lord (Roll your way upon the Lord; roll your cares upon Him – because he cares for you).

Psalm 118: 6 – 8

* The Lord is on my side; ***I will not fear***: what can man do to me.
* It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

***Proverbs 29: 25 (NLT)***

Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety.

Proverbs 29: 25

* The fear of man brings a snare. Trust in the Lord and be safe.

The book shall not depart out of your ***mouth***. The Hebrew word is referring to speech.ebrew

Joshua 1: 6 – 9

Isaiah 41: 10

* Our place of rest comes in the knowledge that God is with us always.

Jeremiah 17: 5 - 8

Cursed is the man that trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord.

* Don’t trust in man and let your heart depart from the Lord.
* Keep (guard) your heart with all diligence (Proverbs 4: 23).

Transfer your trust from people to God.

* Natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, (1 Corinthians 2: 14).
* That’s why we are warned not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly (Psalm 1: 1 - 3).
* If we conform to the world (fashioned after their pattern), we will never trust God (Let **us** build a tower and let **us** make **us** a name- Genesis 11:4).
* That’s why the Bible warns us – “*Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12: 2)*.”
* God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty (1 Corinthians 1:27).

The attributes of God that would cause us to trust Him

* He is love, merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness.
* He is truth and not a man that He should lie. Unchanging and eternal.
* He operates by covenant. He tells us what He will do first, then he invites man to enter in to that agreement.
* He decrees something and it is so. “*Light be*” and light was.

Stay focused

Don’t allow distractions to get in the way of your stand of faith.

Proverbs 4: 20 – 27 (KJV & NLT)

A healthy heart (or spirit) means a healthy body. Envy or jealousy is a cancer.

***Garrison***.

A military outpost where troops are stationed to provide protection to an area.

* ***Attend*** means pay attention or prick up the ears. Have regard for.
* The word is health or ***medicine*** to your body (Proverbs 14: 30).
* ***Keep*** your heart – means to guard or protect like a garrison.
* ***Issues*** means – forces or course of life. Outgoings, like a fountain.
* Froward or perverse lips = a corrupt mouth.

***Matthew 12: 34***

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

* + Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18: 21).
  + We can have what we say – good and bad (Deut 30: 19).
* Look forward, not back. We are equipped with armour to advance, not retreat, so don’t get side-tracked or distracted.

Don’t look back

Philippians 3: 13 – 15

God’s love for us ***must*** be our anchor point. That’s where faith begins.

* Paul refused to look back or allow his past to distract him from the higher call of God. What he lost for Jesus he counted as worthless.

Paul maintained focus on what was important to God.

* ***Forgetting*** – to lose out of mind, neglecting or no longer caring for.
* ***Reaching forth*** – To stretch out to or towards (only used once in NT).
* Your identity must be established in the fact that God loves you and has welcomed you into His family. You are now a joint heir with Christ.

***John 16:33.*** In the world you ***shall have tribulation*** – pressure, trouble, burden, anguish or persecution.

* ***Press*** means – to pursue or to seek after eagerly. It also means persecuted, harassed or troubled, depending on the context of its use.
* The armour of God is given to protect you as you advance, not retreat.

1 Samuel 17: 41 – 50 (David was not distracted by natural circumstances).

***1 Samuel 17: 24***

They feared based on what they saw.

David’s response was based on faith.

* Who is this uncircumcised Philistine? No covenant with God (v26).
* David didn’t choose Saul’s armour, he chose the armour of God.
* David’s boast was in the Lord, not his own ability.

Don’t run toward your giant unless you are speaking faith out of your mouth.

* David got what he said – First words matter. Faith words matter.
* David ***ran toward*** Goliath. He pressed forward trusting in his God.
* David didn’t have a sword in his hand, but a sword in his mouth.

The higher calling

Colossians 3: 1- 3

* Set your affections (mind) on the things above and not on the earth.
* Your real life (Zoe life) is spiritual, not natural.

Everything we see is temporary, but the unseen is eternal. Our hope is in the knowledge that we ***have*** eternal life.

* That’s the life Jesus came to give us (John 10: 10).
* Looking at things eternal. (2 Corinthians 4: 17 – 18).

Spirit of distraction

Mark 4: 18 - 20

* ***Cares*** of this world - anxiety, worry, stress.

***Unfruitful***

Barren. Not yielding what it ought to yield.

* ***Deceitfulness*** of riches – delusion. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6: 21).
* ***Lusts*** of other things – desire, craving, longing for the forbidden.
* ***Choke*** the word – to strangle completely, to drown or to crowd (press).
* The word becomes ***unfruitful***- not immediately, but it is progressive.

God can’t take what you won’t give him, and he can’t give what you won’t take.

Build your house upon a rock

Is the ground you are standing on solid or shifting sand? It’s hard to stand if the ground under you is moving.

We determine the foundation that is laid, not God.

Matthew 7: 21 – 25

This teaching must be read in conjunction with verses 21 - 23

* No man speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12: 3).
* ***Therefore,*** is a conjunctive adverb (meaning - for that reason or cause).
* Must be a hearer and a doer or the word (James 1: 22 – 25 NLT).
  + Don’t forget what you heard. Meditate therein day and night.
* ***Wise man*** – prudent, thoughtful, acumen or good judgement.

**-Rains fell**

**-Floods came**

**-Winds blew**

***Rock***.

Greek word ‘*Petra*’ meaning Peter.

* ***Beat upon*** – to rush upon as in a storm.
* ***Rock*** – digged deep (Luke 6: 48) and laid the foundation on rock.
  + Proverbs 2: 1 – 5 (search for her as hidden treasure).
* ***Founded*** – to lay a basis for, to make stable or to establish.
* ***Foolish*** – Dull, stupid or heedless.
* ***Sand*** – shifting and unstable. Easily moved and easily distracted.
* The natural forces beat against both houses. One stood, one fell.

Only one foundation

1 Corinthians 3: 4 – 10 (NLT)

* What’s important is that God makes the seed grow.
* Jesus is the one and only foundation.

Matthew 16: 13 – 18

* Peter received revelation from heaven.
* On this rock (revealed knowledge), I will build my church.
* The revealed word of God is the only ***rock foundation*** that we are to build upon. Everything else is shifting sand.

**I AM** Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end, says the Lord which ***is,*** and which ***was***, and which ***is to come.***

Jesus said, “Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that lives, and was dead, and behold I am alive forever more.”

* Hell won’t prevail against the church that Jesus builds.

Hebrews 13: 8

* Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today and forever.

Galatians 1: 1 – 12.

***Galatians 5: 1 – 4***

Trying to keep the law is when you fall away from God’s grace.

* The gospel of Christ is the grace of Christ (good news).

The law is always bondage to those who try to live by it.

* Paul’s revelation came from Jesus Christ, not man.
* Paul was warning the Galatian church not to go back to the law and be drawn away from the freedom they have in Christ, through false teaching.

***Empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense***.

-Man is a product of evolution – nonsense.

-Babies in the womb are just foetal matter – rubbish.

-There are many ways to God – lie from hell.

-Whatever will be will be – God is sovereign. His promises are yes and amen.

Beware of shifting sand

Colossians 2: 6 – 10

***Philosophy***

Love & pursuit of wisdom.

* Teaching builds faith (Romans 10: 17).
* ***Spoil*** means – to seduce or lead away from the truth.
* The world view (deluded & deceived) must be rejected.

Ephesians 4: 14

***Tossed***

To surge or fluctuate.

* We are not to remain children, but mature in the faith.
* ***Doctrine*** means – every wind of new teaching.
* ***Sleight*** means trickery and ***cunning craftiness*** means deception.

Don’t draw back (don’t quit).

Faith requires more confidence in what God said in his word than any natural circumstance.

***Believing is seeing. That’s how faith works.***

Israel drew back and never entered into the promised land because they believed God hated them. (Deut Chapter 1).

Israel wanted to go back to bondage in Egypt because they wouldn’t trust God.

Hebrews 10: 35 – 39

* Through faith & patience we inherit the promises.
* Now the ***just*** (righteous, innocent) shall live by faith.

***Hebrews 11: 6***

Faith pleases God.

* ***Draw back*** means – to shun, withdraw, cower or shrink.
* Perdition means – destruction or ruin.
* We don’t withdraw but advance in the kingdom of God.

***A Canaanite Women*** – This was a picture of someone unworthy of God’s grace.

Matthew 15: 21 – 28 (The Syrophoenician woman).

* Woman of Canaan (a Greek woman – a Syrophoenician by nation).

Jesus used this encounter to teach his disciples about the love and mercy of God. They believed the blessings of God were principally for them. The blessing and mercies of God are for all.

* In Israel, Jesus was trying to convince the Jews that he was Messiah.
* This gentile woman referred to him as ***Son of David*** – meaning ‘Messiah’.
* Grievously vexed with a devil – (miserably possessed with).
* Jesus answered not a word. He wanted her to persist and she did.
  + He wasn’t trying to avoid this woman. He went into the region of Tyre & Sidon because he was sent by the Father for that purpose.
* She wouldn’t back down (ask and you shall receive – Luke 11: 5 - 10).
* The woman ***worshipped*** him – (do homage, reverence or adore).
* Israel was ‘the children’ and the ***bread*** was their healing.

Her faith was evident by her corresponding actions.

* Was Jesus declining her request? Remember, ***faith*** pleases God.
* She was after uncovenanted mercy from God. No legal claim though.

She was a stranger from the covenants of promise.

***Ephesians 2: 12***

* The word “***Dogs***” referred to small dogs or pet dogs (little puppies).
* She knew she couldn’t sit at the Messiah’s table and eat (no covenant).

The parable of the widow woman and the unjust judge.

* She lived out the principles Jesus himself taught in Luke 18: 1 – 8.
* This was a mother’s heart that wouldn’t accept ‘***no’*** for daughter’s sake.
* Jesus acknowledged her faith was ***great*** just like the centurion.

Mark 10: 46 – 52 (Blind Bartimaeus)

* Bartimaeus sat by the roadside ***begging***. Totally dependent on welfare.
* He ***heard*** and ***believed*** in Jesus – He wasn’t spiritually blind.
* He was not moved by the opinions of men.
* He pressed in when opposition arose. No political correctness / protocol.

Faith gets God’s attention.

* This is the man that stopped Jesus. ***Will your miracle pass you by***?
* Faith is bold. God recongnises the cry of faith. This was a cry for mercy.
* He cast away his garment (his old identity, his license to beg, his position in society, his limitations).
* Law and grace don’t mix. ***Must discard the old first to receive the new***.
* He sought mercy but Jesus asked for specifics – “*What would you like me to do for you*”? He simply told Jesus his desire. No false humility or pretense.
* Jesus emphasised – “***Your faith has made you whole***” (‘***Sozo’*** – save, deliver, protect, heal, preserve, do well or make whole).
* Bartimaeus had ‘*God pleasing*” faith – a wholehearted trust in the healer.
* He didn’t go back for his garment, ***but followed Jesus*** – a new life in Christ. Don’t be like the Israelites who wanted to go back to bondage.
* Whom the son sets free is free indeed (8: 31 – 36).
* Our faith releases the power of God through corresponding action.

***Don’t quit on God, for He’ll never quit on you.***

The knowledge of God

The context of Chapter 10 is Paul defending his authority. There were some jealous of what Paul was doing. They attacked Paul, claiming that he was not a true apostle. He is tough in his letters but weak in person. He was acting boldly behind his letters. False teachers were slandering Paul.

1 Corinthians 10: 3 – 5 (NLT & KJV)

* Paul is instructing us on how to deal with lies and deception.

The battle ground is in the mind. Our battle is not to ***gain*** but to ***retain***.

* As believers in Christ, our fight is not natural but spiritual. Therefore, our weapons are not natural (carnal) but ***mighty through God*** (effective for the cause of God).
* ***Strongholds*** – Fortress. In this context it’s an imagination, a reasoning, a thought pattern or a mindset. A stronghold is a paradigm, a way of thinking that goes so deep into the mind that it becomes a part of us. A stronghold will affect what you think, therefore how you feel and how you behave, which will produce a pattern in your life.

***Examples:***

-There are many ways to God.

-I’m a good person, that is enough.

- The Bible is not the literal word of God.

* ***Pulling down*** of strongholds means the utter destruction of, or total removal of a barrier or obstacle. Nothing left behind.

These lies warp our view of who God is, and once our view of God is warped, everything about us becomes warped.

* Imaginations and every high thing are built on human reasoning or mindsets that keep us from truly knowing God.
* What you believe about God will affect every aspect of your life.
  + If we see God as angry and vengeful, it affects the way we live and we become religious (always performing for his acceptance).

Satan attacks

-***Thinking***

***-Feeling***

***-Choosing***

* + If we see God as never punishing sin, we become carnal.
  + If we don’t believe God loves us, we can never fully trust him.

***John 8: 32***

And you shall ***know*** the truth and the truth shall make you free.

*(To have knowledge of or to understand*)

* We must bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.
  + That means to believe God at his word – absolute truth.
  + The truth will ***always*** make us free and keep us free (John 8: 32).
  + Romans 8: 2 – law of the Spirit of life ***has*** made me free.
* When you tear down a stronghold, you can go in and take captives.
* Once you expose the lie, mindset or though pattern, then you can recognise and more easily take captive the thoughts.

2 Corinthians 4: 4 – 7 (KJV & NLT)

* Satan’s job is to ***blinds the minds*** (Intellect, perception, thought or purpose) of them that believe not. These are strongholds.

***Hosea 4: 6***

My people are destroyed (perish) for a lack knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you.

* They are unable to see the glorious light of the good news.
* Remember, he’s the father of lies and there is ***no truth*** in him.

2 Peter 1: 1 - 4

God’s word is his promise. It cannot change and it will not fail.

* Grace and peace be multiplied through the knowledge of God.
* We partake of the divine nature through the knowledge of God.
* We can only partake of the promises of God when we know they exist.

Colossians 1: 9 - 10

* Paul prayed the church would grow in the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2: 1- 4

* We seek knowledge like we search for hidden treasure.

Paul’s knowledge of God sustained him throughout his ministry.

2 Timothy 1: 11 – 12 (NLT)

* Paul said “for I ***know*** whom I have believed”.

The Lord is with us

***Psalm 23: 4***

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, ***for you are with me***.

***Isaiah 41: 10***

Fear not, for I am with you: be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen yes, I will help you yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness – JESUS.

We are not standing alone.

Matthew 28: 20

From being sold into slavery (age 17) and raised up second Pharaoh in Egypt was 13 yrs.

Genesis 39: 1 – 5 & 20 - 23

* Joseph was sold into slavery and the ***Lord was with him***.

***Psalm 35: 27***

The Lord has ***pleasure*** in the prosperity of his servants.

It’s his delight.

* + He succeeded in everything he did.
  + The favour on his life was recognised by his Egyptian master.
  + The lord blessed Potiphar’s house for Joseph’s sake.
* He was accused of a crime and thrown in prison. ***The Lord was with him***.
  + He was thrown in the prison where the king’s prisoners were held.
  + Joseph was given great favour whilst in prison and prospered.
* He was used mightily by God, being raised up second to Pharaoh in Egypt.

Exodus 14: 10 – 14 (NLT)

* The Israelites thought it better to be slaves in Egypt. Bondage isn’t better.
* They murmured and complained, but God responded with grace.

***Proverbs 13: 3***

He that keeps his mouth keeps his life: but he that opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

* Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord.

Joshua 1: 5 – 9

***Strong and of a good courage***

-Alert

-Secure

-Steadfast minded

* No man will be able to stand against you all the days of your life.
* As I was with Moses, so shall I be with you.
* The book of the laws shall not depart out of your ***mouth***.
* ***Mediate*** means – to murmur, ponder, imagine, speak, utter, study or talk.
* Be strong and courageous, be not afraid, neither be ***dismayed***; for the Lord your God ***is with you wherever you go***.

***Dismayed***

To be broken, afraid, beat down, confused or discouraged.

* Our place of rest comes in the knowledge that God is with us.

2 Chronicles 20: 15 - 22 NLT (Jehoshaphat trusted God).

* Ammon and Moab came against Israel and the King sought the Lord.
* Be not afraid or dismayed for the battle is not yours but God’s.
* Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord ***for he will be with you***.

Mark 16: 15 - 20

Signs always follow the word, not the other way around.

* Sow seeds of the kingdom so people can believe.
* The Lord was ***working with them*** and ***confirming the word*** with signs following.
* Remember, we are working with God, not for God.

Acts 18: 7 – 11

* Paul needed encouragement – Keep preaching the gospel.
* For I am ***with you*** and no man shall hurt you.

John 14: 15 - 17

1 Corinthians 3: 16

2 Corinthians 6: 16

* We are the temple of the living God and the Spirit dwells in us now.

Strategies of the enemy

Our enemy is Satan, not people. We are to ***love*** people and ***resist*** the devil. Our fight is spiritual.

***That’s why we fight the good fight of faith.***

-We are not fighting ***for*** a place of victory.

-We are fighting ***from*** a place ofvictory.

-The believer’s authority enables us to enforce Satan’s defeat.

-If we are not living in the supernatural, we are living in the superficial.

Ephesians 6: 10 – 12 (KJV & NLT)

Stand firm against ***all*** strategies of the devil.

John 8: 44 (*deceiver, liar and murderer*)

2 Corinthians 2: 11

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.

My people perish for a lack of knowledge.

* ***Advantage*** – defraud, make a gain or to outsmart.
* ***Ignorant*** – not to know through a lack of information or intelligence.
* ***Devices*** – mind, thought, intentions or schemes.

**Strategies of the devil** (*His plans or goals. Tactics are his steps or actions*).

Denies the existence of God.

***Tremble*** – To shudder or be struck with extreme fear.

Will deceive man into believing that the devil is symbolic (an evil force).

* It is a fool that says there is no God (Psalm 53: 1 & Psalm 10: 4 NLT).
* Creation reveals God. Man is without excuse (Romans 1: 20 NLT).
* Devils believe there is only ***one God*** and ***tremble*** (James 2: 19).

Presents many ways to God

Self-righteous attempt to connect with God will fail. Jesus is the door that the sheep ***must*** enter through.

* Jesus is the only way (John 14: 6).
* Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is ***no other name*** under heaven given among men, whereby we ***must***be saved (Acts 4: 10 - 12).
* For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the ***gift of God***. Not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph 2: 8 – 9).

Steals the word

* Mark 4: 15 (***immediately*** Satan comes to steal the word that was sown).

***Genesis 3: 1 – 4***

Did God really say? If satan can get you to doubt the truth of God’s word, it’s “Check Mate”.

* Satan wants you to doubt the truth of God’s word. That’s his master hand.
* John 10: 10 (the thief comes ***only*** to steal, kill and destroy).

***No word, no fruit***.

***Much word, much fruit.***

Bearing fruit glorifies God.

* Without Jesus and his word abiding in us, we can do nothing (John 15: 7).
* The Bible warns us to guard our heart (Proverbs 4: 23).
* If you are not spending time in the word of God, you are at risk of being ***’spiritually hacked’****,* because your shield of faith is down.
* Result – identity theft (Matthew 4: 4 & 2 Corinthians 5: 17).

Stops the spread of the Gospel

* Paul’s ministry was continually attacked and resisted by ‘*the messenger of Satan’* sent to ***buffet*** him (strike with the fist or treat with violence).

(2 Corinthians 12: 7 – 10 & 2 Timothy 3: 10 – 12). ***Grace was sufficient***.

* Romans 1: 16 – The gospel of christ is the power of God unto salvation.

And the cares of this world, and deceitfulness of riches and lust of other things entering in, choke the word, and it ***becomes unfruitful***.

Promotes business & distraction

* Keeps you busy and out of the word of God. Seek first the kingdom of God.
* Only one thing is needful (Luke 10: 38 – 42).
* Keeps you distracted, looking to the right and to the left (Prov 4: 25 - 27).

Promotes religious tradition (the law)

Perform for God to earn his acceptance.

* Wants to keep people under the bondage of the law (self-righteous).

(Romans 3: 20 (NLT) & Hebrews 7: 18 – 19 NLT).

* Galatians 5: 1 & 4 (NLT). We are free in grace and grace alone.

The sin problem has been dealt with. Jesus paid it all. One sacrifice for ***all*** men, for or ***all*** sin, for ***all*** time.

Love never fails

Love keeps us anchored to the rock in which our house is built upon.

Love is God’s language

If we stay in the love walk, we will keep standing and never be moved.

Love is our greatest defence against the enemy and our most powerful counteroffensive.

John 13: 34 – 35

* A ***new commandment*** I give unto you, that you love one another *as I have loved you*. The God kind of love is sacrificial.

***Matt 22: 36***

Love God and man.

* This is not an option, but a command from the Lord.

***Galatians 5: 22 (NLT)***

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control. ***There is no law against these things.***

***1 Corinthians 15: 56***

The strength of sin is the law.

The law gives sin its power (NLT).

* Christians are identified by love.
* A house divided against itself cannot stand.

1 Corinthians 13: 1 – 8 (NLT)

***Fails***

-To drop away

-To fall off

-To take no effect.

-To lose.

* The characteristics of ***love*** (God himself).
* Where there is no love, there is no peace.
* Don’t rehearse the wrongs done to you.
* Love never gives up and never loses faith.
* The enemy has no power over us when we choose to walk in love.

***Romans 5: 5***

The love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

He has given us then Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

1 John 4: 7 – 21 (NLT)

* God ***is*** love. That’s why love never fails.
* There is no fear in love, but ***perfect*** love casts out fear.

Matthew 5: 43 - 48

***Romans 12: 14***

Bless them which persecute you. Bless and curse not.

* Love your enemies (love, bless, do good and pray).
* ***Bless*** means – to speak well of or to praise.
* How can we love our enemies? – supernaturally.
* Remember, there is no law against love. Satan has no response.
  + Matthew 14: 13 – 14 (Jesus response to John’s the Baptist’s death).
  + Acts 7: 54 – 60 (Stephen forgave his killers and Saul heard him).

Unforgiveness

Matthew 18: 21 - 35

* Ephesians 4: 31 – 5: 2 (we were forgiven of a debt we couldn’t pay. We must do likewise).
* Keep unforgiveness out.
* Faith won’t work in an unforgiving heart.
* Father forgive them, for they no not what they do (Luke 23: 34).

***Offence:*** A trap. A snare, an occasion to fall or stumbling block.

Offence

Luke 17: 1 - 4

Mark 4: 16 - 17

* Keep offence out.
* If we are offended for the word’s sake, we are not established in the heart.

Strife

***Confusion***

Instability, disorder, commotion, disturbance or tumult.

James 3: 13 – 18 (KJV & NLT)

* True wisdom comes from God and ***always*** brings peace.
* Keep ***envy*** (jealousy) and ***strife*** out (contention or self-promotion).
* For where envying and strife is there is ***confusion*** and every ***evil work***.

Grace to stand

***John 1:17***

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

***2 Corinthians 12: 9***

My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is perfected in weakness.

***Grace*** means divine favour, loving kindness, gift, liberality or benefit.

***Sufficient*** – to defend or to ward off. In other words, grace is enough.

John 16: 32 - 33

* ***Tribulation*** - pressure, affliction, anguish, burden persecution, distress and trouble. At times, it’s going to be tough.
* ***Cheer*** – be of good courage.

We have a legal right to use the name of Jesus, both to stand and overcome. That’s the grace of God.

* ***Overcome*** – to subdue, conquer, prevail or get the victory.

1 John 5: 4 – 5

We are joint heirs with Christ, not sub-heirs.

* Born again believers ***are*** overcomers.
* Faith in Jesus gives us supernatural overcoming victory against the devil.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (saved by grace through faith).

* Therefore, if any man ***be in Christ***, he is a new creature (creation): old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.

2 Corinthians 5:21

* Our identity card is stamped “***righteous***” not “***sinner***”.
* Our sin nature had an old identity, characterised by defeat, bondage, fear, guilt, shame and condemnation. That nature is dead.
* We have a new identity as sons and daughters of God.

Luke 15: 17 – 24

Grace enabled him to stand in his presence redeemed and restored to sonship.

* The prodigal son was an expression of grace.
* He didn’t want to identify as a son. He considered himself unworthy.
* An old identity can blind us to the reality of God’s grace, enabling satan to deceive through guilt, shame, condemnation and performing for God.

Abraham

* God had to get him to think differently about himself. He had to see himself from God’s viewpoint.

With right believing came grace.

* Genesis 15: 1 – 6 & 17: 1- 8.
* Romans 4: 16 – 22.

Our new identity is a gift of grace and is recognisable in the spirit realm.

Acts 19: 13 – 16 (NLT)

* Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?
* There was no grace to stand, because they had no identity in Christ.

Under God’s grace, our identity is in Christ.

***Complete***

To make complete in every particular. To render perfect. Spiritually speaking, we are not a ‘*work in progress’*. We have been made righteous through right believing.

We are complete

* Colossians 2: 9 – 10 (we are complete in him).

We are sealed

* 2 Corinthians 1: 20 – 22.
* ***Earnest*** - a pledge in advance as security.
* ***Sealed*** – Mark or stamp for security or preservation.
* Ephesians 1: 13 (we are sealed ***after believing***).
* Ephesians 4: 29 – 30 (sealed unto the day of redemption).

Rewards for standing

***Matthew 7: 24 – 25***

A wise man builds his house on a rock. The rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: ***for it was founded upon a rock***.

Matthew 5: 1 – 12

* Rejoice and be exceeding glad for ***great*** (many, much or large) is your reward in heaven.

Hebrews 10: 35 – 36

* ***Recompense of reward*** (payment of wages due).
* Through faith and patience, we inherit the promises of God.

Hebrews 11: 1 - 6

* ***Rewarder*** means – one who pays wages, a remunerator.
* ***Diligently*** means – to search out, investigate, crave, demand or seek after.
  + Jeremiah 29:13 – You will seek me and find me when you search for me with ***all*** your heart.
  + Romans 10: 13 – For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord ***shall*** be saved.

Paul pressed toward the mark for the ***prize*** of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 4: 1 – 8 (NLT)

* 1) Fought a good fight 2) finished my course 3) kept the faith.
* Passive resistance is not an option if we are going to fight the good fight.
* A crown of righteousness awaited Paul and awaits us also.
  + 2 Corinthians 11: 23 – 30. Paul endured great hardship for the name of Jesus, knowing that an eternal reward awaited him.
  + Everything he lost in his old life he counted as worthless garbage that he could win Christ and become one with him.

1 Timothy 6: 9 – 12

* Don’t be seduced by the desires or cravings of this world that can cause us to wander from the faith. The word is ***choked*** and becomes unfruitful.

War a good warfare.

* Fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life.

Luke 4: 4 (temptation of Jesus)

That stand of faith laid the foundation for his entire ministry.

* Jesus endured temptation with the Word of God.
* He used the sword of the spirit to good advantage.
* Luke 4: 14 – Jesus returned in the ***power of the Spirit*** to Galilee.

Daniel 3: 16 – 18 & 24 - 30

* Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego withstood Nebuchadnezzar.
* Our God, whom we serve is able to deliver us and he ***will*** deliver us.
* If you don’t bow, you don’t burn.
* Their stand brought great honour to God & their reward was promotion.
* In the last days, there are those who will be forced to worship the image of the beast and receive a mark in their right hand or forehead.
* The God that delivered Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego, is the same God that delivers us today. In him we cannot be overcome by evil.
* Standing firm in God gives peace, assurance, strength, confidence, hope, joy and victory. So, when you have done all to stand, ***stand***.