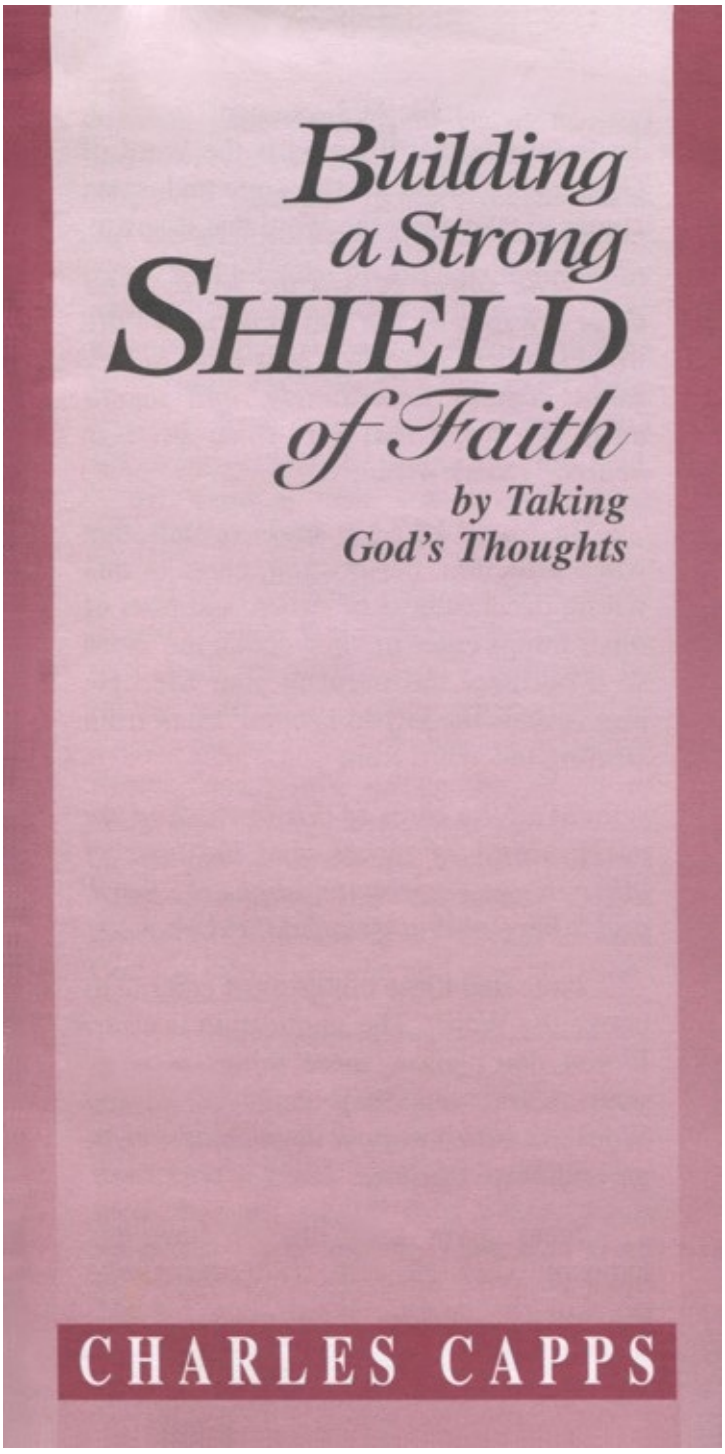
Building a Strong SHIELD of Faith

by Taking God's Thoughts

CHARLES CAPPS



Building a Strong Shield of

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Faith

In the parable of the sower in Mark 4, Jesus reveals that the seed is the Word of God, man's heart is the soil, and satan comes to take away the Word that is sown:

The sower soweth the word.
And these are they by the way side,
where the word is sown; but when
they have heard, satan cometh
immediately, and taketh away the
word that was sown in their hearts.
(Mark 4:14-15)

In Mark 4:17-19, Jesus reveals that when affliction, persecution, cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and lusts of other things enter in, they choke the Word so it becomes unfruitful in your life. He also reveals the key to keeping satan from stealing the Word from you:

And the cares of this world,

and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh

unfruitful. (Mark 4:19)

Note that these things must enter in to choke the Word. The implication is clear: If you don't allow these things to enter your heart, then they can't choke the Word. If we know how these things enter, we can close the door.

Jesus gives us a clue to how this happens when He said, "*Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?"* (Matthew 6:31) The word "thought" in this passage means "to be anxious or troubled with cares." Jesus said to "take no anxious thought, by saying"

revealing that when you have these thoughts and speak them, you take them into your heart. You can't keep thoughts from coming. But if you don't speak them, they die unborn. Paul said, *"... the word is near you even in your mouth and in your heart."* (Romans 10:8a)

Here is the point I want to drive home to you: When you declare what God has said, you are taking God's thoughts by saying with your mouth what God has already established. In

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Ephesians 6:16 Paul wrote, *"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."* God's Word is a shield that the enemy cannot penetrate. It is "taken" by declaring what God has said about you and your situation.

Overcoming Deception

In Luke 4:4, we have a classic example of Jesus using a shield fashioned from God's Word. When challenged by satan to turn stones into bread, Jesus answered, *"It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God"*

When the devil tempted Him by promising to give Him all the kingdoms of the world (without going to the cross to defeat satan), Jesus answered again with God's Word, *"Get thee behind me, satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve."* (Luke 4:8)

Finally, the devil used his ultimate deception of twisting God's Word—trying to influence Jesus to jump from the pinnacle of the temple to prove He was

the Son of God. (Luke 4:9-11) Again, Jesus answered with the Word of God.

In Ephesians 6:13-14, Paul said,

“Having done all, to stand... Stand!”

That is exactly what Jesus did—He stood with His loins girted with the truth of the Word. Jesus spoke God’s Words out of His mouth, allowing them to radiate from within Him and, in doing so, created a canopy of protection which the deception of the enemy could not penetrate.

In John 12:49-50, Jesus gives us the clue to how He did this,

... but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even

as the Father said unto me. so I speak.

Many Christians try to bind everything by their own words, but it is God's Word that limits satan and stops him in his tracks. Each time Jesus responded with the Word, satan had nothing else to say about that particular subject. The temptations were so totally

defeated in the atmosphere of faith that Jesus never again had to deal with those issues.

The faith shield that cannot be penetrated by the enemy is created by God's Word radiating from within you, creating a canopy of protection around you.

So Why am I Being Hit?

You may ask, "If this shield is all the

way around me, then why am I continually being hit by the enemy's fiery darts?"

Anxious thoughts and words produce fear which, in turn, creates an opening in your protective canopy and allows the enemy easy access.

To protect your faith, you must learn not to dwell on negative situations. Instead of dwelling on the problems, make a decision to meditate on the answers found in the Word of God.

Don't give voice to your failures, for that will produce fear; but as you talk about the success promised in God's Word, your faith and confidence will grow.

Don't rehearse what satan has done in

your life, or what you think he is about to do; but rather what God has done and will

do. Don’t give the devil authority over you by talking about the things that he is doing to hinder you. If you are doing that, you are giving him authority to operate through your words to bring those things to pass. The devil knows that Mark 11:23 states that you will have whatsoever you say if you believe and doubt not in your heart. The more you talk about what the enemy is doing, the more you will believe in his ability to do it—for faith cometh by hearing. It is a subtle way of getting you to release faith in his ability to hinder you. Give God’s Word first place in your life, and you will find that there is always a way of escaping what the enemy has planned for you.

God Has Made a Way of Escape

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will

not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (I Corinthians 10:13)

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Every problem we face is common to man, and God always makes a way of escape.

Satan is limited. He can't tempt you supernaturally. He can only tempt you with what is common to man. But God is faithful and has already made a way of escape, regardless of the temptation, trial, or test you face. God has provided supernatural weapons for your victory.

As Far as God is Concerned—the War is Already Won

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through

God to the pulling down of strongholds. (II Corinthians 10:4)

Since God has already delivered us from the authority of darkness, what does it mean when the Scripture says that our weapons are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds? Why would we want to fight a battle that Jesus has already won?

This passage clearly identifies the strongholds we must pull down:

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth

itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (II Corinthians 10:5)

It is our responsibility to cast down wrong imaginations. Imagination is a

powerful thing. Your words create images and, eventually, you will live out the reality of those images. When you make negative confessions, you create negative images that result in spiritual strongholds. Confessing God’s Word creates positive images which, in turn, will renew your mind and change your heart.

Here is the bottom line: You take God’s thoughts by speaking them into your heart to create a canopy of protection. When His Word abides in you in abundance it will, without fail, reveal God’s way of escape so you can live in victory.

MARANATHA!

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Document Outline

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