



Consider all the places in your daily life where you face obstacles or challenges in living out your faith. As you consider these obstacles, you will need God's wisdom and the ability to respond to them. We are not going to do that by just our sheer strength and will. We need God's power to do that. If we learn to align our lives with the heart of God; if we learn to hear from Him and walk with Him, we'll experience amazing outcomes and a supernatural strength to face those obstacles.

## I. PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH

Luke 21:10-18

*<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. <sup>11</sup> There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. <sup>12</sup> "But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. <sup>13</sup> And so you will bear testimony to me. <sup>14</sup> But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. <sup>15</sup> For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. <sup>16</sup> You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. <sup>17</sup> Everyone will hate you because of me. <sup>18</sup> But not a hair of your head will perish."*

- 1. Where have you seen an increase in persecution against the Church and Christians in America? How have you responded?**

## II. GOD WILL NEVER LEAVE US!!

Psalms 13: 1-6

*"How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?"*

*<sup>2</sup> How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?*

*How long will my enemy triumph over me? <sup>3</sup> Look on me and answer, LORD my God.*

*Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, <sup>4</sup> and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall. <sup>5</sup> But I trust in your unfailing love;*

*my heart rejoices in your salvation. <sup>6</sup> I will sing the LORD's praise, for he has been good to me."*

1 John 1:9

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*

- 2. How do you show praise to God in the midst of your own struggles and disappointments?**
- 3. Describe a time when you allowed your feelings to guide your decision rather than God's Word. What did you learn from that experience?**

### III. PUT ON YOUR ARMOR

Psalm 27: 1-3

*“The LORD is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear?  
The LORD is the stronghold of my life of whom shall I be afraid?  
<sup>2</sup> When the wicked advance against me to devour<sup>[a]</sup> me,  
it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall.  
<sup>3</sup> Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear;  
though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.”*

Ephesians 6:10-17

*<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

4. **When have you allowed discouragement, fear, or rejection to keep you from putting on your spiritual armor and going to battle for the Lord?**
  
5. **When has your faith or confidence in the Lord been challenged? How did you respond?**

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I rejoice in the protection of an Almighty God—my Shield and my Strength. Your grace and mercy sustain me. The Holy Spirit is my Helper. Through Jesus’ blood, I am delivered out of the hand of the enemy and held secure in the hand of my Creator. My hope is anchored in the faithfulness of my Lord and Redeemer. In Jesus’ name, amen.