**Faith and Dealing With Oppression**

[November 7, 2024](https://faithencounters.impart.org/2024/11/07/faith-and-dealing-with-oppression/)[Martha Rodman](https://faithencounters.impart.org/author/martharodman/)

*A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. Ephesians 6:10-11. NLT*

Oppression is one of Satan’s subtle tactics that can sneak up on believers. Sometimes it is like a mist that rolls in. It goes unnoticed until it thickens into a deep fog. This fog can cause confusion and disorientation. Years ago, while living in the Rogue Valley in Oregon, we experienced a weather inversion. There was no wind for days and the fog became thicker and thicker. Because the fog obscured normal landmarks, people lost their way.  The government issued health alerts because the air quality was so bad. This went on for days. Normal, peaceful people became angry and frustrated much more easily because of the pollutants in the air. This went on for days.

We got used to it. We didn’t really understand the scope of the problem until we left the valley and drove back into the sunshine. The difference was shocking! Oppression is like that. It starts very subtly, and if we don’t deal with it, it gets worse and worse. It clouds our thinking and makes it hard to see clearly. It targets our emotions. As a result, we find ourselves dealing with anxiety, fear, and a lack of peace in an ever increasing manner. Self-pity draws us inward, and we isolate.

To be honest, I started noticing some of these symptoms a few weeks ago. Lack of confidence, insecurity which led to uncertainty started creeping in, in areas I normally had no trouble with! Life felt hard, and joy was hard to find. I first made excuses. Life hasn’t been easy for our family and I just blamed those things. But, I am so grateful for the Holy Spirit. He whispered, “oppression”.

Oppression? I suddenly felt freer, just knowing the truth of what I was fighting. The enemy tool had me focusing on what was wrong with me. He tried to get my focus off of the Lord and His workings, and onto myself. And, I admit, it worked for a while. Since then, I have noticed others dealing with some of the same things!

I would like to remind you, God has given us His armor. Paul’s exhortation to put on the whole armor, not just part of it, is invaluable. The helmet of salvation is so key to protecting our mind. Satan delights in targeting our thoughts with his condemnation, fear, and hopelessness. This can lead to self pity, which is never helpful for anyone. Forgetting to access this helmet opens us up to his lies and deception. We wander through life feeling like we are all alone, without help and hope. What a lie! As you put on this helmet, remind yourself of Philippians 4: 8. *And now dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure and lovely, and admirable*. *Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.* It can take effort to do the “fixing”, but it is so worth it. Praise and worship are excellent tools to shift our thinking away from our own puny selves and onto Him.

Wearing the helmet reminds us who we belong to. Every time a sailor or soldier puts on their uniforms, they remember their commitment to Uncle Sam. I know that, in the Navy, sailors refer to their hats as “covers.” What a wonderful reminder. When we put on the helmet of salvation, we are covered. We are protected by Him. Beginning your day with Him, in His Word and prayer, is essential. Walking together closely with other brothers and sisters is also essential to walk in freedom and clarity.

My friends, oppression can make it difficult to ask for prayer. Lies and condemnation can lead to shame and discouragement. I would like to remind you, every believer is a target for Satan. If you need prayer, ask for it. I did. What a relief when the oppression lifted. Sometimes we need the two or three standing together to break its hold on us. That’s why God adopted us into His family, so we wouldn’t be alone.

Please take the time to re-acquaint yourself with the whole armor of God found in Ephesians 6. 13  *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints*. ESV.

Satan’s plan in using oppression is to make us useless for God’s Kingdom. He wants us to feel powerless, hopeless and weak. But this is not who we are. We’ve been given power over every wile, strategy, or scheme of the enemy. Stand strong my friends. No matter what you are facing right now, God has a solution. Remember: *God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and a self-discipline (sound mind*). *1Timothy 1:7. NLT.*Take the authority God has already given you to speak freedom and life into your circumstances. He is the way maker and will show you how and where to walk through whatever valley you are in. Remind yourself of the price He has paid for you. He will take care of you at that expensive price! It doesn’t mean we won’t face hard challenges. It means He knows the outcome and is working them together for His good plan. No matter what it looks like, He is worthy of our trust.

I was thinking about believers who are in prison today for their faith. Comparing their life to mine is foolish, but also sobering. I pray for them.  *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God*. *2 Corinthians 1:3-5. ESV.* When we face oppression or afflictions, we must walk with faith. We must have faith in our Lord. Having faith in His purposes in and through our lives is crucial. It is essential to living a fruitful life in Him.