



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them ***Part XI: What Does God Ask of Us?***



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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Helen is a lay-Dominican, which is also known as the Order of Preachers, and she, along with her husband Dan, are engaged in youth catechesis and music ministry at Saint Philip Benizi Catholic Mission in Cedaredge, Colorado. Sharon is our token cradle Catholic, and, as everyone by now knows, I am simply here to ask questions. The lucky ones who get to answer those questions make up our panel, so welcome to our panelists as well as to our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Discussion:

Last time, we discussed elements of the generational fight. We must recognize that the evil one works patiently. If one generation is not moved, he will turn to the next until he finds the

vulnerable soul. Of course, the tactics of deception and disinformation are nothing new. We saw them practiced by the serpent in the garden, but with the technology of our day, the errors of the evil one are spread ever faster.

As I pointed out last time, there is a lesson of hope revealed within the pages of LTG Pacepa's book. It is found as a result of analyzing the first attempt by Stalin to frame Pope Pius XII as "Hitler's Pope." The effort fell flat because true history was still fresh in the minds of those who lived it. (Pacepa, 59-61)

A generation later, though, Khrushchev picked up where Stalin left off and achieved a measure of success where Stalin's team failed. The major difference was the people's knowledge of truth. What this reveals is that truth, and our awareness of truth, is our best defense against the tactics of disinformation. If we are to help our children, then, we must help them learn the fullness of their faith and how they may discern and find sources of truth, especially God's truth.

We must remember, the faith which we hold now was passed to us through the generations. Some of us were blessed to be guided in our faith from our birth. Many of us have drifted in some form or fashion, but we were also blessed to encounter those who would bring us towards the light of God. The question before us is whether we are willing to do the same for a soul which may be floundering in the dark waters?

The struggles of our generation and the generations we influence are written daily. Let us consider where we might be if faithful souls had not defended our faith before us and passed it to us. Now, the question we must all discern is what shall we do for the benefit and blessings of the generations who will follow us? We must remember, what we choose to do today will influence the ability of future generations to defend their souls.

As we engage the fight for our soul, let us also consider 1 Peter 3:15-16, where we are advised:

(1 Peter 3:15-16)

Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, 16 but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame.

The better we know our faith, the better we are prepared to share the reason for our hope in conversation with another. The better we know our faith, the more we enable ourselves to take it into action. Most importantly, the better we know our faith, the better we understand what God asks of us.

Today, that is what we are going to talk about. Of course, within an hour, we will barely scratch the surface of this question, but hopefully we will provide our listeners with a few considerations which might provide an outline for our learning, reflection, and prayer time.

(Question 1: When we think of the question, "What does God ask of us," one of the things which comes to mind is what we call the Ten Commandments. What does the Ten Commandments reveal about what God asks of us? What else might God asks of us?)

(Question 2: One of the criticisms levied against Catholics is that the Vatican did away with the second commandment, which Protestants list as the command against idolatry. If we examine a chart which compares the Catholic and Common Protestant listings, it certainly appears that the critics may have a point. **Why is this criticism invalid?**)

10 Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17, Deuteronomy 5:6-21)	
<i>Catholic Listing</i>	<i>Common Protestant Listing</i>
1. Thou shalt not have other gods besides Me	1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain	2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day	3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
4. Honor thy father and thy mother	4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy
5. Thou shalt not murder	5. Honor thy father and thy mother
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery	6. Thou shalt not kill
7. Thou shalt not steal	7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor	8. Thou shalt not steal
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife	9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods	10. Thou shalt not covet

(Exodus 20:2-17)

3 **You shall not have other gods beside me.** 4 You shall not make for yourself an idol or a likeness of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; 5 you shall not bow down before them or serve them. For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their ancestors' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; 6 but showing love down to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 **You shall not invoke the name of the LORD, your God, in vain.** For the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who invokes his name in vain.

8 **Remember the sabbath day—keep it holy.** 9 Six days you may labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God. You shall not do any work, either you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your work animal, or the resident alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD has blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

12 *Honor your father and your mother*; that you may have a long life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

13 *You shall not kill.*

14 *You shall not commit adultery.*

15 *You shall not steal.*

16 *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

17 *You shall not covet your neighbor's house.*

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

(Deuteronomy 5:7-21)

7 *You shall not have other gods beside me.* 8 *You shall not make for yourself an idol or a likeness of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth;* 9 *you shall not bow down before them or serve them. For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God, bringing punishment for their parents' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation, 10 but showing love down to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.*

11 *You shall not invoke the name of the LORD, your God, in vain.* For the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who invokes his name in vain.

12 *Observe the sabbath day*—keep it holy, as the LORD, your God, commanded you. 13 *Six days you may labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God. You shall not do any work, either you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or donkey or any work animal, or the resident alien within your gates, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do. 15 Remember that you too were once slaves in the land of Egypt, and the LORD, your God, brought you out from there with a strong hand and outstretched arm. That is why the LORD, your God, has commanded you to observe the sabbath day.*

16 *Honor your father and your mother*; as the LORD, your God, has commanded you, that you may have a long life and that you may prosper in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

17 *You shall not kill.*

18 *You shall not commit adultery.*

19 *You shall not steal.*

20 *You shall not bear dishonest witness against your neighbor.*

21 *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.*

You shall not desire your neighbor's house or field, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

(Matthew 22:34-40)

34 *When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together;* 35 *and one of them [a scholar of the law] tested him by asking,* 36 *“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”* 37 *He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the greatest and the first commandment. 39 The second is like it: You shall love your*

neighbor as yourself. 40 *The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.*”

(Question 3: As we reflect upon the response of Jesus to the question, “*which commandment in the law is the greatest,*” He tells us it is to love God. Then, without prompting, He tells us the second is like the first, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” He continues to explain that, “*The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.*” Why would this be the case that the whole law and all spoken to us by the prophets depend on these two commandments? In what ways does this provide a guide to us for living our faith?)

(Question 4: We know that God loves us (cf John 3:16) and desires a relationship with us. What is a critical component to the maintenance of any relationship and how might we accomplish this with God?)

(Matthew 6:5-8)

5 “*When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. 7 In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*”

“*This is how you are to pray:*”

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread;
12 and **forgive us** our debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
13 and do not subject us to the final test,
but deliver us from the evil one.

14 **If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.**

(Question 5: Catholics are often criticized for reciting prayers, especially the Rosary. Matthew 6:7, “*do not babble like the pagans,*” is often cited as the justification for this criticism because the Rosary is viewed as “babbling” and repetitive prayer. What are the critics missing about the prayer raised by Catholics, especially in relation to the Rosary?)

(Luke 11:1-)

1 He was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said

to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples." 2 He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come.
3 Give us each day our daily bread
4 and forgive us our sins
for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us,
and do not subject us to the final test."

5 And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, 6 for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,' 7 and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.' 8 I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence."

One of the prayers which seems to drive the greatest anguish of critics is the "Hail Mary." The sentiment of some is that we somehow place Mary in competition with God, which is not the case. We recognize, with respect, her obedience to God and the special place she holds as the woman through whom God sent His only begotten Son into the world. Let's take a look at how the angel sent by God greeted Mary.

(Luke 1:26-28 NABRE)

26 In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."

(Luke 1:28 DRA)

28 And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

(Luke 1:39-42 NABRE)

39 During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, 40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, 42 cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

(Luke 1:42 DRA)

42 And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

(Question 6: If we look at Bible translations of earlier days, we see more directly the words contained in the “Hail Mary” prayer. Why is the criticism that we put Mary in competition with God invalid and why should we look to Mary with love and respect?)

(Luke 22:14-20)

14 When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. 15 He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, 16 for, I tell you, I shall not eat it [again] until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” 17 Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; 18 for I tell you [that] from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” 19 Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me.” 20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.”

(Question 7: As we discussed during our “Scriptural Walk through the Mass” series, we celebrate and reflect upon over 100 segments of scripture during the course of a single Mass, but especially the segment of Luke 22:19-20. As we reflect upon what Jesus asked of us in this passage, what message do we send when we skip Mass or rush out the door before Mass is over?)

(Matthew 25:31-46)

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, 32 and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another; as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 34 Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ 40 And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ 41 Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ 44 Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ 45 He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ 46 And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

(Question 8: As we reflect on this passage, known as the “Judgment of Nations,” we see examples of what God asks of us. It reflects actions taken and not taken. What does this reveal to us about the importance of our works as Jesus views what we do and what we fail to do?)

Quotes:

(Philippians 2:12-18)

12 So then, my beloved, obedient as you have always been, not only when I am present but all the more now when I am absent, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work. 14 Do everything without grumbling or questioning, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine like lights in the world, 16 as you hold on to the word of life, so that my boast for the day of Christ may be that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 But, even if I am poured out as a libation upon the sacrificial service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with all of you. 18 In the same way you also should rejoice and share your joy with me.

– Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

The first end I propose in our daily work is to do the will of God; secondly, to do it in the manner he wills it; and thirdly, to do it because it is his will.

– Saint Elizabeth Anne Seton

To imitate our Lord's own humility, we must return to the simplicity of God's little ones.

– St Hilary of Poitiers

Final Thoughts:

Today, we barely scratched the surface of the iceberg when discussed the question, “What does God ask of us?” Of course, there is no way we can answer this question in an hour, because our conversation with God is not only a life-long journey, but hopefully an eternal one. I have on my to-do list to work on a series concerning this question, but even that will only give us a small peek at what God desires of us. To truly answer the question, we must spend time in prayer and study and take advantage of the teachings at Mass. More importantly, we must seek to put our faith in action.

If our faith is words without action, then, there is little purpose to our faith. We make it simply academic; a curiosity, if you will. It is our action which demonstrates we understand what God asks of us. As we speak and present our faith, we should remember the parable of the two sons presented in Matthew 21:28-32.

(Matthew 21:28-32)

[Jesus asked:]²⁸ “*What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, ‘Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.’* ²⁹ He said in reply, ‘*I will not, but afterwards he changed his mind and went.*’ ³⁰ The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, ‘*Yes, sir, but did not go.*’ ³¹ *Which of the two did his father’s will?”* They answered, “*The first.*” Jesus said to them, “*Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you.*” ³² *When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.*

It is true, we cannot buy our way into heaven through our works, because our place in His kingdom was purchased for us by the sacrifice made for us from upon the cross. We are saved by grace as we are told in Ephesians 2:4-10, but we must remember, our works do matter as we are told in James 2:14-26 and Matthew 25:31-46. We must consider, if we profess our obedience on our lips (cf Mark 7:6), but live in disobedience, which do we believe will speak louder when Jesus asks us, “Do you love me?”

“Of course we love you,” we will say, but then, perhaps, we should be prepared for the next question Jesus might ask; “And how should I know?” We should consider what Jesus told us in Mark 7:21-23, where he says:

(Mark 7:21-23)

21 “*Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.*” 22 *Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?’* 23 *Then I will declare to them solemnly, ‘I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.’*

On the surface, the forgiveness offered to us and what God asks of us appears to be relatively simple. To truly understand, though, we must spend time in prayer and study, but we must also endeavor to practice what God teaches as we learn it. The more we understand our faith, the better we may live our faith. More importantly, the better we understand our faith, the more difficult we make the task of the wolves who endeavor to take it from us.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we conclude our series, “By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them,” with a discussion as to how we might engage to defend against the wolves.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may put on the armor of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: [By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them – Part XII: Engaging to Defend Against the Wolves.](#)

References:

The Holy Bible Douay-Rheims Version; (1899); With revisions and footnotes (in the text in italics) by Bishop Richard Challoner, 1749-52. Taken from a hardcopy of the 1899 Edition by the John Murphy Company; IMPRIMATUR: James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, September 1, 1899; <http://www.drbo.org/about.htm>

The New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE); (9 Mar 2011); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; <http://usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm>