

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 6
Message 104
Date: 10/23/2021
Words: 6015
Scripture: Ephesians 6:17a

INTRO: Our subject is spiritual warfare. One of the most difficult things about this battle is that we do not see the enemy. Like the wind, we can't see our enemy, but we experience the effects of them. But for a large part of lost mankind, and many Christians, we do not recognize demonic activity. Only when it becomes extreme do we recognize it. But yet our passage says, "We wrestle not with flesh and blood, with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this age, with spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies." There is our entire battle, and we may fail to recognize much of it.

I do wonder sometimes to what extent many of us as Christians bother the devil. How much of a threat are we to him? But on the other hand, anyone who truly belongs to the Lord by salvation is someone Satan wants to steal and bring him into his own domain. So though they may not be the threat that causes great concern for him, yet he is not content to leave them without seeking to bring them back to his fold. So every Christian is in this battle to some extent.

So we are to take up the whole armor of God, number one being truth; number two, living right; number three, stand on the solid foundation of the Gospel; number four, taking up the shield of faith; and now, taking the helmet of salvation. We might think of this armor like this: there are those things fastened to the body and are worn throughout the day. The belt and the breastplate and shoes would be worn all day and were attached to the body. The helmet, shield, and sword would be taken off when resting or eating.

Then the breastplate, shield, and helmet were protective wear. The shield was a kind of general protection. The breastplate protected all the vitals except the head, and that is where the helmet comes in and that is our subject this morning.

e) The helmet

-Description

So to begin, let us consider the helmet itself. I understand the helmet was made of metal and was beaten out of one piece of metal. It had cheek plates, something like a baseball batter wears, only the plates were on both sides. There were iron and brass decorations on the hat. I understand they were cheap to produce, but heavy and uncomfortable to wear. There was also a guard in the back for the neck.

-Purpose

The purpose of the helmet was twofold. First, of course, it was for protection for the head. The head is the most important part of any person. But the more important persons like the legionnaires or centurions had crests of horse hair on the helmet of different colors. These were worn for identification. A battle was a noisy affair, but a soldier could quickly look around for his commander by his helmet which stood out in color and size.

-What the helmet covers

The helmet covers the most important organ in the human body. That which is called an organ in the body is a collection of tissues that which has the purpose of performing a particular function. These are things like the heart or the liver or the brain etc.

The helmet covers the most important organ, though it is not the largest organ. Does anyone know what the largest organ of the body is? Some years ago I read the book, "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made." And to my surprise I learned that the skin is an organ and it is also the largest organ of the body. A study of the

skin is most fascinating. As I thought of this recently, I thought of how the Apostle Paul refers to our bodies as a tent that we live in. Certainly the skin covering the body is tent-like. He said in 2 Corinthians 5:1:

1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Then in verse 4 he said:

4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

The Apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 1:14:

14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.

An internet article said this about organs: "Body organs aren't all internal like the brain or the heart. There's one we wear on the outside. **Skin** is our largest organ—adults carry some 8 pounds (3.6 kilograms) and 22 square feet (2 square meters) of it. This fleshy covering does a lot more than make us look presentable."

In an earlier message we saw that the breastplate covers a number of very important organs. The human heart weighs about 9 ounces. The liver weighs about 3 pounds and the brain weighs about the same.

Now when you think of the helmet covering the head one would naturally make a connection to our mental faculties. For

example Jones says, "The spiritual application of the helmet is obvious; the Apostle is drawing attention to the head, to the mind, the brain, the understanding, the thinking of the Christian. We have already dealt with the feelings and the sensibilities, the emotions, and the desires, and have seen how the enemy tends to attack us at those particular points. But now we have to direct our attention to the particular aspect which involves the considerations of the mind and the understanding, the intellectual part of our whole position as Christians" (IV:309). End quote.

It is natural to come to that conclusion, but as we have seen from other studies, the Bible does not ascribe the mind and the intellectual activities of man to the brain, it ascribes those to the heart. So it says things like, "As a man thinks in his heart so is he." Or you shall love the Lord with all your heart.

Well, various organs in the body are used to picture some part of our soul. If the bowels speak of the emotions in the soul, and the heart speaks of the mind, what does the brain speak of? As I was pondering these things, since I have done a lot of study on biblical psychology, that is the immaterial parts of man, which are the soul and the spirit, I wondered why does the Bible make no reference to the brain? The brain is a very vital part of man's physical makeup. The breastplate covered several vitals including the heart, but it does not cover the brain. To my surprise I had never pondered this before. And on further thought, I could not ever recall mention made of the *brain* in the Bible. Why does the Bible never mention the brain?

So let me ask, when the Bible talks about mental action, why does it use the analogy of the heart instead of the brain? Well, I think it is because nothing pictures the flow of thought and its processes better than the flow of blood in the body. And the kidneys and heart are often used together when speaking of the spiritual part of man. So the heart pictures man's mental processes. But why does it not speak of the brains? Why does it not even mention the brains? Or is there something in the soul that the brains could be likened to?

In my studies of biblical psychology or what the soul is made up of I have found a number of the vital organs of the body used to describe various parts of the soul. I pondered here for the first time why the brain is not mentioned in Scripture and why the heart is used to speak of the mind instead of the brain.

Well, though the Bible never speaks of the brain, what the Bible does speak of many, many times is the head. That is also what the helmet covers. The KJV uses the word "head" 279 times in the OT. But the Hebrew word "head" occurs 548 times in the OT. That is 269 times more than the English. Now why would that be?

Well that which was of most importance in various things was called the head in the OT. We use the word *head* in some of the ways the OT does as well. We speak of the head of the army or the head of the government, or the head of a business etc... Rulers were called heads. Then the capitals on pillars were called heads. The tops of mountains were called heads. And so, the top of the body goes by that very name, the head.

So the most important part of many things was called the head. Here is my proposition for you: The head of people speaks of the person, the real you. When God created man, He made him in His own image, that is in the image of the triune God. That means man has a likeness to all three Persons of the Triune God. When I taught the course, "Man, Sin, and salvation," I gave an assignment where the student had to find what it was in man that was like God and it had to be something that the animal did not have. It is an extremely difficult assignment, but it is this: personhood. Every part of man you can find in animals, except personhood, the self.

When a baby is born, usually one of the first things parents do, if it is not done before the baby is born, is give the baby a name. This name gives the identity of the person. This person is that which we call "self." But to differentiate so we know which self, or which person we are speaking about, we give names. Then we use personal pronouns to refer them, like *he* or *she*, or *him* or *her* etc... By these pronouns we indicate gender, and there are only two. The creation account says God made man male and female.

Whenever you have personal pronouns, they refer to the real person. Pronouns indicate gender and they are under attack today. The pronouns *he* or *she* may become *zie*. If so, then *him* or *her* is *zim*. And *his* or *hers* is *zis*. And there are many other new pronouns.

In 2018 a day called International Pronoun Day was started. It is the third Wednesday of October. Here is what they say:

International Pronouns Day seeks to make respecting, sharing, and educating about personal pronouns commonplace.

Referring to people by the pronouns they determine for themselves is basic to human dignity. Being referred to by the wrong pronouns particularly affects transgender and gender nonconforming people. Together, we can transform society to celebrate people's multiple, intersecting identities.

So lying about your gender has become human dignity. If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

(Let me just insert here that if you want to prove that a baby is a person from conception, you have a difficult assignment as well. It is difficult because the Bible does not seek to prove what is so obvious. But the facts are, it is there in the Bible because it uses personal pronouns for what is conceived in humans. That makes abortion at any stage murder.)

Now, pronouns are a very important part of grammar, and when you have what is called the 'LGBTQ' I am wondering if in some way it may not also be an attack on personhood as well gender. You see, God made man in His own image, and that image, I believe, is personhood and comes in two genders; male and female.

Go to Genesis 1 for a moment. We begin with verse 27:

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Notice, two genders. Now go 2:15 and we'll read on for a while:

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put **him** in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make **him** a helper comparable to **him**."

19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.

20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and **he** slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought **her** to the man.

Whenever you use a personal pronoun you are speaking of someone made in the image of God. Let me say this, the self, the person, the real you is not the body, not

the soul, nor the spirit, nor any other part. All of those are things that YOU, the real person possesses. You are not the sum of your possessions. You, the real you is the possessor of all those things. Let me add this, and I can't go through all the evidence for this because of time. But when God made man in His image, that image of God is the real you, the person, or personhood. The real you, the person, is the most important part of man. And the most important part of anything is spoken of as the head, and it is the head the helmet covers.

Let me just give one bit of evidence for what I just said, that the real you is not the sum total of what you possess. The real you is that which cannot be spoken of in the possessive case, because the real you is the possessor of all the rest, like the body, the soul etc... You cannot possess yourself, you are self.

So you can say, "My soul." That means the soul is not you. And we could list all of the parts of man and of all we could say they are mine. There is one thing we cannot say is mine, because it is me. That is self. Listen carefully now; you cannot say my self, as two words. It has to become one word, "myself" and myself is not a possessive pronoun, it is a reflexive pronoun. Grammar demands that.

So consider the head. Though it houses the brain and the skull is a natural helmet for the brain, the head is the center of all five senses of the body. Smell, sight, taste, and hearing are right on the head itself. And the sense of touch is all throughout the body, but the sensations all go to the head where the right response is made according to the sensation. And who decides that

response? You! The self. And so the head, not the brain, is the most important part of man.

I believe this is where the self, the person resides. Now I want you to think of yourself, the real person. Where do you feel "you" the personal being is in your body? Do you feel like you are in the feet? In the knees? In the hands? No, you feel like you are in the head somewhere. Here is my proposition for you: the head pictures the real you. This is what we call "self."

Now I want you to see how this head is protected in the picture of the Roman soldier. It is surrounded by a strong metal shield. It is the most protected part of man, naturally, and the literal head was the most protected part of the soldier.

When I taught the Bible course on anthropology, or man, I said I felt we could picture the heart of man, which is the mind, to the parliament buildings of our country. And by the same token, we could picture the "self" to the prime minister, or the leader of the country.

In the same way, self is the determiner of the entire human being. Self is responsible to obey God. Matthew 22:37-39 says this:

37 *Jesus said to him, "'You (the real person) shall love the LORD **your** God with all **your** heart, with all **your** soul, and with all **your** mind.'*

38 *"This is the first and great commandment.*

39 *"And the second is like it: '**You***

*shall love **your** neighbor as **yourself**.'*

Whenever you have personal pronouns, they refer to the real person. Pronouns are a very important part of grammar. You see, God made man in His own image, He made him a personal being.

Well, this helmet covers and protects the most important part in spiritual warfare. All the information from the outside world comes right here to the head, and right here, self decides what to do with the incoming information. Here is the place self makes decisions by free personal choice. I am fully convinced that for any human being to bring glory to God, it must come from free personal choice. To be preprogrammed or predestined so that you have no choice ruins any potential of glory for God. And here is the head of the human being, and it is protected by the helmet.

-The command

Now notice the words, "And take the helmet..." The verb "to take" is first an imperative. It is the first imperative when it comes to putting on the pieces of armor. The main command is to stand. Now this standing is done after having put on the belt and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and having put on the shoes. These are pieces of equipment worn at all times.

But if the soldier would sit down to rest or eat he would put down the sword, the shield, and take off his helmet. The other pieces are constantly worn. But the shield, the helmet and the sword are taken up whenever the soldier is on the move.

The command now is to take up the helmet and the command is in the middle voice. It could be translated like this, "And you take up for yourselves the helmet..." Here is the choice the Christian is to make. No one else can do this for you. All commands are directed to the head where all decisions are made.

If I am correct that the head stands for the self, we must then consider what this helmet stands for in the Christian life. It is called the helmet of salvation. Now when we speak of salvation, what is understood is that we were in some kind of danger. And what put us in danger? Sin! And the Lord wants to first and foremost save us from sin. Jesus was given the name "Jesus" which means "Jehovah saves." And He was given this name because He would save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:18).

Now sin put us in danger of eternal damnation. There is no danger greater than that to fall into. And we have already spoken of the Gospel, how Jesus gave His life in our place in death, and that He was raised from the dead and is now at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

But the whole world lies in another danger, and that is the danger of the wrath to come. And this wrath to come is not hell fire, it is the 7 year tribulation period. The world is now rushing toward that time. Anyone with any understanding of what is coming, should lay their hand over their mouth, and flee to God to be delivered from it, and we will see more of it later.

Now consider that salvation has three tenses; past, present, and future. First

and foremost, the most important decision self, the real me or the real you, will ever make is regarding salvation. However, the salvation in view here is not a reference to initial salvation. The picture here is of a Christian soldier, so he has already experienced initial salvation.

He was saved, initially, somewhere in the past. But with regard to past tense salvation, the believer may doubt his or her salvation. The helmet of salvation says, "I am already saved. I do not doubt my salvation." When we put our helmet on we say we are already saved. How can one take up the helmet of salvation and doubt one is saved?

Let me add this here, that if we live in sin, one of the things that wants to happen is a loss of assurance of salvation or doubts regarding salvation. If such is the case, such a person must deal with sin. Unconfessed sin, a failure to repent, can cause a loss of assurance.

So, if the salvation spoken of here is not past tense salvation, what salvation is referred then? The second tense in salvation is ongoing salvation, or as it is otherwise called, sanctification. You see, the one commanded to take up the helmet of salvation is already a Christian. Now consider this. He is a Christian, and he is told, "Having done all to stand, stand therefore." And here is how you stand; having put on the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having put on the Gospel shoes. These things are fastened to the body and will stay on all day.

But having done all that, now he is to take up the shield of faith, and we saw

that in the last message. And then he is to put on the helmet of salvation. After this, he is to take up the sword.

When he takes up the shield and puts on the helmet of salvation, he is almost ready for battle. And I propose that this battle will largely be a battle with sin. There is first, initial salvation, and then ongoing salvation. Ongoing salvation is the process of sanctification or becoming holy, or overcoming sin in its every form and sin as it tempts in the various stages of life.

This is a constant battle. The shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit are essential to this part of the Christian life. So present tense salvation is an everyday thing.

When we get saved initially, I have likened what we are like to a raw piece of land in our area. When it is bought, it initially becomes one's land. But to make it productive all the trees and brush will need to be cleared. All the roots will need to be picked. All the holes will need to be ditched. Then all the weeds that have lain dormant will begin to rise and they will need to be dealt with. It is a huge job to make it productive.

Just so is the Christian life. In the battle many things will need to be taken care of in the Christian character. Many a Christian stands stubborn at many points, and the Lord wants to deliver him from every area not pleasing to the master. This is a huge job. To make a Christian productive is a huge and divine task, and it happens in the battle. And what the Christian will need in this present tense salvation is the helmet of

salvation.

When self is knocked out, the battle is over. So day by day, week by week, month by month, and year by year, he must stay on his feet in the battle. He is told, "Having done all to stand, stand therefore." In life many things come along that want to take one out of the battle.

There are many things in ourselves that need to be rooted out and this is a big job. It is a number of years ago I preached through the book of Job. I do not see it as a book on why good people suffer so much as a book on God's remedy for pride. Pride is a monstrous thing. It is my view that all undetected, spiritual pride had crept into Job's life. There is no pride that reeks like spiritual pride. It is a danger to those who live very close to God.

Let me just reduce some of the last chapters into my own words. God says, "All right Job. You wanted to talk to Me, now talk to Me. I will ask the questions and you answer. You thought you could teach Me a thing or two if you could only talk to me." Question after question and no response from Job. And when God is done, Job says, "Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth."

Then God says, "Job, consider proud people. Then go and cause them to become humble. If you can do that, you don't need Me anymore. You can save yourself." Then God says, "Look at Behemoth. If you can catch him when he is looking, you have a chance to deal with your own pride." And then He said, "Look now at Leviathan, that greatest of water

creatures. Cast in a fishing line and pull him in, and if you can do that you can humble people."

Now listen to Job when God is done with him. I'll read Job 42:1-6:

1 Then Job answered the LORD and said:

*2 "I know that You can do everything,
And that no purpose of Yours can be
withheld from You.*

*3 You asked, 'Who is this who hides
counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I
have uttered what I did not understand,
Things too wonderful for me, which I did
not know.*

*4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You
said, 'I will question you, and you shall
answer Me.'*

*5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of
the ear, But now my eye sees You.*

*6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent
in dust and ashes."*

Humility had come. Oh, what a monster pride is and God wants to deal with every area of wrong in our lives.

So salvation has a past tense and a present tense, but salvation also has a future tense. This is most crucial in the battle. It is hope of the future that can keep one going in the battle when all else seems dark and lonely. Turn to 1 Thessalonians 1. It is salvation from the wrath to come.

We begin in verse 9:

*9 For they themselves declare concerning
us what manner of entry we had to you,*

and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

When the Gospel first began to be preached, the judgment of the world lay before them. That is the wrath to come. God will pour out His wrath on the world and that is the tribulation. I do not find that the wrath to come refers to hell. It is not deliverance from hell they were looking forward to; it was deliverance from the wrath to come, and the wrath to come is the time when God would pour out His wrath on mankind. That is what the book of Revelation is mostly about.

And now, these Thessalonians, who had such a short while ago not even known about Jesus Christ, were eagerly awaiting Jesus' return for them. We are still in the very same situation. We see the storm clouds coming, and they look darker all the time. But the helmet of salvation assures us of deliverance from the wrath to come.

Well, Paul heard that some Christians had died in Thessalonica and now they were despondent because they thought these Christians would miss out on the great catching up, the deliverance, the salvation from the wrath to come. And so he wrote them to assure them that if the catching up did happen, those who had passed away would be resurrected and go up before those who were alive would go up. So look at chapter 4:13-18 in that light:

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant,

brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

So this helmet of salvation gives the believer a hope of salvation from the wrath to come, and it is a comfort to the believer. We go on now in chapter 5:

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

In my understanding the day of the Lord begins when the tribulation begins. And it will come on the world as a surprise like a thief in the night comes as a

surprise. This is the wrath to come. But it begins as a promise of peace to the global village. Verse 3:

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.

7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

In all the darkness that is coming over the world, there will come a day when the world will sigh a sigh of relief and say, "We finally have peace and safety." The book of Revelation pictures this with the entrance of a white horse, a false Christ, the antichrist.

But our passage says that when they think peace and safety has arrived, then sudden destruction will come upon them. Notice the pronouns, 'they', and 'them.' It is not us. It is then that the night time of this world begins. The light of that day will be the millennium.

Verse 8:

8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope

of salvation.

Paul pictures the Christian soldier's breastplate here as faith and love. This is not the faith, but living by faith, and living in love. This is right living. But note now that the helmet is the helmet of the hope of salvation! Salvation from what? Well, it is related to the hope of the Christian. What is that then? Verse 9:

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

It is the hope of deliverance, the hope of salvation from the wrath to come. It is that we might obtain salvation from that wrath through Jesus Christ our Lord! And what message can we give one another from that? Verse 11:

11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

There is a future salvation, and it has not yet come. But from where we are now it is coming into sharp focus. In these days of earthquakes, deadly diseases, national unrest, natural unrest; we need hope, and the helmet of the hope of deliverance from the wrath to come gives us just that. It causes us to be unafraid in this time when the world reels with fear. Our hope has just gotten a little brighter.

Paul says in Colossians 1:

24 *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,*

25 *of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,*

26 *the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.*

27 *To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

There is glory that awaits every true believer. Some attain it at death but one day a large group will come to it suddenly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. It lies now shortly before us. And what happens after the believer is caught up? It is the hope of the realization of glorification! It is eternal salvation.

CONCL: So we conclude on the helmet of salvation. The helmet was made of metal for the purpose of protecting the head. The head has a natural helmet, and on top of that natural protection, the Christian soldier is to wear additional protection. The head is the most important part of the body. It speaks, as I see it, to personhood. The most important part of the human being is personhood. It is here that man is like God and unlike any other animated being.

It is this self that must be crucified with Christ, and it is this self that becomes the new man in salvation.

What protects the believer as a personal being? Salvation! Salvation is first and foremost deliverance from sin and deliverance from sin results in deliverance from the

consequences of sin. So the believer has been delivered from hell. But this deliverance is also from the wrath to come. That is becoming more and more meaningful as time goes on. We are now in the last of the last days before God's wrath will be poured out on the earth. Read through Revelation 6-19 and you will see some of the horrific destruction that will take place in this time.

Initial salvation, for the Christian soldier, has taken place. That is deliverance from the penalty of sin. But now, in the process of life, the believer is being delivered from the indwelling sin nature. All that is within the believer that is not right is to be overcome. This is sanctification. This is deliverance from the power of sin.

But there is coming a future salvation. It is deliverance from the actual presence of sin. It is then that glorification takes place. And in glorification everything that has been overcome in life, all that one has accomplished in laying up treasures in heaven will be revealed and it will be the believer's identification badge for the duration of the millennium, and then for eternity in the time of the new heavens and the new earth.