

The Helmet of Salvation | Eph 6:17

*If you have your Bibles, turn to Ephesians chapter 6. Starting in verse 10, **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 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. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation.***

Don't forget your helmet. Don't forget that you still need salvation. We tend to believe that salvation is completely in the past-tense. We fail to realize that we're not just saved... There is a sense that salvation is in the past. We've been justified once for all. There is now no more condemnation. There is a sense that we have been saved, but there is still a greater since that we are *being* saved. We're not yet fully saved. We're not fully glorified. We're not resurrected yet. We're not done. We're not finished with the work that God has started in us. Now, Paul says, "I am confident that He who started a good work will finish it." But you're in the middle of construction. You're not what you were, but you're not what you're going to be. You're still a mixed bag of goods.

In one way, you're holy. You've positionally been made holy in Christ and set apart. You're holy in Christ, but you're still a sinner. There is still much sin in your life that needs to be perfected and worked out. You still have to crucify your flesh daily. You have to repent daily. You have to continue on. As Paul says, "I have to forget about the things behind me and press forward." Keep pressing forward. You cannot take confidence from where you've come. You can't go, "Well, this is what I've done. I've been a Christian for twenty years and have gone to church for twenty years and I've done this and I've done that." That doesn't matter if you don't persevere. It doesn't matter if you don't continue on. There are some who start well but they don't finish well. There are some where the weeds and tares come in. They sprouted out with joy, but they didn't sustain themselves. The book of Hebrews is a warning for those who start but do not finish. It's for all of us to make sure that we finish and work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

I believe that's what this is telling us to do. Take up the helmet of salvation. Don't forget that you still need to be saved. All of us here need to be saved. You say, "What do I need to be saved from?" Your sins. The sins you've committed this morning. You can say, "I haven't committed sins this morning." Then you need forgiveness for your pride. We're not yet fully molded into the image of Jesus Christ. We're a work-in-progress. We're not what we used to be. We have been purified. We've been given a new heart. The old, stony heart has been taken away. But Christ, in His perfection, is still further ahead of us. We have not yet made it. We need to be saved.

I have two points. Don't get too excited; each point has points underneath them. First, I think this implies this: when you wake up, remember what you've been saved from. Remember what salvation is. Everybody just wants to be saved from hell, but salvation isn't just being saved from hell. It's being saved from sin and Satan. Remember what you've been saved from so that we don't go back as the dog returning to its vomit. One, remember what we've been saved from. Two: remember how we are being saved. We never need to forget the process of salvation. How is it that we are saved? And the very thing that saved us in the past-tense is the same thing that is continuing to save us in the present-tense. We were saved by Christ, by the word of God, by the Spirit, by grace, and by repentance and faith. These things are ongoing. We must not just believe, but we must continue to believe. We must live and not just be born again by faith. We must continue to live by faith.

This is an ongoing process of sanctification that we must continue on. We need to take it seriously. I'm afraid we don't take it as seriously as we should. I know I don't. Have you ever been in a project and you wake up with the project on your mind? "I've got to get this done." Or you're studying for a test or trying to get something completed. I once made the mistake of laying tile and right in the middle of it, I had Nathan Hanks come and help me in the middle of it. I said, "If I ever get this project done, I'll never start another project like this again in my life." But it was then that I realized, thank God for the Sabbath. I have a compulsion. If I start a book, I can't stop until I finish it. If I start a project, I can't stop or rest. I get single-tracked. I can't multitask very well. I just have to get it done. I was doing this project laying tile and I worked nonstop until I had to go to bed. I'd get up and do it again the next day and the next day.

I was like, "If the Lord didn't give us a Sabbath, I'd be doing this on Sunday." I'm thankful for that. But you know, what if we all had that same motivation on our salvation? When's the last time you woke up and went, "Man, I've got to work on this. I'm not where I need to be." I'm convinced you can have as much of Christ as you want. The reason you don't have any more of Christ than you have is because that's all you want of Him. You're not really working this out. You say, "Well, Jeff, can we not relax a little bit?" No, it says with fear and trembling, does it not? I want to be like Christ. I'm not content with where I'm at. There's still a lot of pride and arrogance. There's a lot of distrust and unbelief in me. After last week's sermon, I've come to the conclusion that I hardly have any faith.

Are you working on this? Are you working on your salvation? Are you taking it seriously? Are you picking up your helmet saying, "I need to be saved today. I need sanctification. I need progress"? Paul told Timothy, "Let your progress be known to all." Work so hard that other people are going, "Wow, you've grown a lot. You've matured a lot." Some of us are older and you go, "It's hard to see growth in me. Young kids, they can sprout overnight. You miss them for a month and by the next month, they look like they've grown a foot." But in us older people, it takes a lot to see growth. But are you content? Are you content where you're at?

If we want to grow and fight this battle, we don't fight with flesh and blood. We're fighting against demonic powers. Don't think that the demonic powers are not keeping your phone in front of you. Don't think it's not the demonic powers that say, "Listen, let's make videos where you watch

one and another pops up right after you're done with the first one." Then you spend thirty minutes not reading your Bible, but wasting your time watching silly videos that don't help you at all in your salvation. Don't think that Satan is not crafty in how he will steal your time and take away your focus. He'll put the things of this world in your mind and in front of you and say, "Look at this. Look at that. You need this and you need that to be happy." You begin to believe it. "I could use that. I do need that." I've waited a long time to get something nice like that. And it's not that that's the problem. Buy yourself something nice and enjoy it. God's given us things to enjoy. Buy that but it's the lie that that'll make you happy.

Don't buy into that lie. It won't make you happy. So, the first point is this: what have we been saved from? We need to remind ourselves. What has God saved me from? Why did He come into this world? Did He come just to give me a ticket to heaven so that I could live my selfish, worldly life forever and in all eternity continue to live the life that I've been living? And to have eternal life in my sin? Or did He come to save me from my sins? Yes, we know He came to save us from the wrath of God and from the penalty of sin. Thank the Lord that He's give us free justification in Christ Jesus and there is now no condemnation for those of us who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We've been delivered from the wrath of God. We've been saved from God's wrath and hatred. We've been saved from God Himself. We're thankful for that and I'm convinced that that part of salvation is completed. Once you believe, the moment you believe, you have been delivered from God. That is not a process. You're no more delivered from the wrath of God today than you will be. You're just as much justified and righteous as you ever will be. That's past-tense. Thank the Lord that we've been saved from the wrath of God.

But that's not all that we've been saved from. We've been saved from Satan himself. The Bible depicts Satan as a strong man who binds all of us. And we're not going to be free from his dominion unless there's a stronger Man, which is Jesus Christ, who sets us free. The Bible tells us that we were once the sons of disobedience following the course of this world and the prince of the power of the air. The Bible tells us 2 Timothy 2:26 that we were once under the dominion of Satan to do his will. Acts 26:18 says, ... *To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.* We have been saved from the grip of Satan. He still is tempting us. We still battle him but we've got to remember that we have already been set free from Satan. We are no longer under his dominion. We no longer have to listen to him. We don't have to obey him. We don't have to submit to Satan. Now, we may do so but we don't have to. He no longer has dominion and power over us, thanks to the Lord's salvation.

But the main thing we've been saved from is our sins. You see, we were enslaved to materialism and earthly pleasures. The Bible says, *For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.* You know what it is, the pride of possessions. The pride of possessions is what motivates us to go and buy new clothes, new vehicles, and bigger houses. You know, to keep up with the Joneses. It's not so much that we need that as we could imagine when people come over and see what we have. It kind of makes you sit up in your car seat a little bit higher. It's not the materialistic thing that is evil. God made these things for our enjoyment.