

What On Earth Am I Here For?
Ephesians 6:10-20
“Put Your Armor On” (Part 2)

Introduction

Last week we discussed the first three components of the Armor of God: The Belt of Truth, The Breastplate of Righteousness, and the “Boots” of the Gospel of Peace. Today I would like to focus our attention on two of the remaining three components: The Shield of Faith and The Salvation Helmet. Just as we have previously discussed, Paul is using the pieces of a Roman Soldier's armor to illustrate the believer's need for spiritual preparedness to stand against the Devil's schemes. Satan cannot take us away from Christ, if we truly belong to Him (*John 10:28*). So, he tries to do the next worst thing, to use all the weapons at his disposal to render us ineffective as witnesses for Christ in this fallen world. Paul compared this struggle with Satan and his demonic forces as a “wrestling match” where the enemy tries to “pin us to the ground” (figuratively speaking) and bring us to submission, so that we can no longer have any useful purpose in our endeavor to take the gospel to a lost and dying world. The Devil uses the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, and the lust of the flesh to entice us into debilitating sin. For once a Christian has fallen, their testimony becomes invalid, and rather than being a light for others to follow, the fallen believer becomes a stumbling block to those who might have repented. For this reason, we **MUST** take to this struggle in a sober minded fashion, for it is quite literally a conflict concerning life and death. We, as Christians, will one day report to our commanding officer (The Lord Jesus) and give an account for just how effective we were in this battle (***2 Corinthians 5:10***).

If we remove the descriptive pieces of armor from Paul's statements in ***verses 10-20***, then we are left with a list of six, actually seven, things that every Believer must have in order to stand against the Devil: Truth, Righteousness, The Gospel of Peace, Faith, A Renewed Mind (Salvation), The Word of God, and Prayer. These are the very essentials that are necessary for any believer to have a healthy spiritual existence. When one or more of these spiritual disciplines falls by the wayside due to neglect or distraction, then the believer becomes an easy target for the enemy. We **MUST** maintain spiritual discipline, if we are to survive the battle. We must fully equip ourselves with The Armor of God. That being said, let us now look at two of the remaining pieces of the Armor this morning: The Shield of Faith, and The Salvation Helmet.

The Shield of Faith

Depending on your translation, Paul says that this particular piece of armor is valued above all the others. What is it you may ask? FAITH. The Bible says that without faith it is impossible to please God (***Hebrews 11:6***). Without faith, there would be no possible chance of standing against the wiles of the Devil. Faith is the calm assurance that allows us to walk through the storm knowing that God is in control of it. Without faith, we could never come to Christ in the first place. When Paul talks of faith here in ***Ephesians 6***, he is not only referring to the kind of faith that brings us to the place of salvation, but also the kind that sustains as well. The readers at the Church of Ephesus were already Believers. They had already obtained salvation by grace through FAITH, but now Paul wanted them to fully comprehend that it is exactly that same faith that brought them to Jesus in the first place that must also be utilized to trust in Jesus in the midst of the storms of life. I tell people all the time when they have anxieties about whatever struggles they are currently enduring, “If you truly believe that you can trust in Christ for your eternal soul, then why not believe that He can get you through this trial?” I personally think that the former would be a much larger task than the latter. I mean think about it! Eternity is forever! What I'm going through right now is only temporary. If Jesus can keep me safe from the flames of hell for an eternity, then **SURELY** He can get me through any circumstance that arises in my day to day life! So you see, Faith not only brings you into a saving relationship with Christ, but it also enables you to face whatever the Devil throws your way, knowing full well that God has “GOT THIS”!

In Paul's day, the shields of a Roman Soldier were made of thick leather stretched across a metal framework. A common weapon of war in those days was a flaming arrow. These arrows that had their sharpened broad-heads dipped in pitch and lit aflame just before they were released from the bow. The flaming arrows not only could bring death to a soldier, but the very sight of them streaking through the sky could strike fear into the opposing forces, as a wall of fiery death came whistling toward their ranks. The Romans would prepare for such an onslaught by soaking their leather shields in water before taking the field of battle. The heavy, drenched shields would not only stop the flight of the arrows, but would also extinguish them as well. Good preparation wins every time! Paul urges believers to use their faith as a barrier to any fiery attack that Satan may throw at us. God has equipped us to win this battle. So, have no fear, but have faith instead. Whatever Satan launches at you, God can easily overcome. Let this assurance shield you so that you neither fail, nor lose heart. In all things trust in God.

Yes, trust in God and believe that if you respond according to His Word, you will be protected. When that young girl at the office makes her flirtatious pass at you, remember what God's Word says about the adulteress in **Proverbs 7**. Make a decision to trust God that no matter how alluring her enticements, God has a much better plan for you, if you can just trust Him in this moment. Be willing to trade the temporal for the eternal.

When you have given your all to your marriage and yet in spite of all your best efforts, your spouse is unfaithful. When the court official hands you the divorce papers, believe with all that you have that God still loves you and has blessings in store for you. Don't allow yourself to become a doubter in the goodness of God. He will NEVER leave you, nor forsake you (**Hebrews 13:5**). Remember what His Word says in Joel, that He can repay you for the years that the locust have eaten (**Joel 2:25** - Love that Verse!). Cry out to him and for His comfort, strength, and healing. Keep that shield of faith held high until He proves to you that you are loved with an everlasting love (**Psalms 136**). When the bank or the doctor calls to give you the bad news, don't drop your shield of faith for a second. Just Believe and trust that God has a better plan. Submit yourself to His care, desiring above all else that He receive the glory from your trials and persecutions, just as He received glory from all that His Precious Son had to endure in order to purchase our salvation. Suffering for His glory was considered a great honor by the early Church (**Acts 5:41**). Trust in God, for He can bring awesomeness from the most bitter tribulation.

And, no matter what happens, STAY CONNECTED TO THE CHURCH! The legions of Roman Soldiers would use their shields in concert to form a connected wall in front of them, as the soldiers directly behind them raised their shields, enjoining them to cover their heads. This shield formation was called Testudo in the Greek meaning "tortoise". The soldiers would use their shields collectively in this manner to make their forces virtually impenetrable. The Church, likewise, can use its collective faith to shield one another from harm. Whatever you are going through, combine your faith with the faith of others in your church. Share your burdens and allow your brothers and sisters to comfort you. Don't let the Devil cause you to stray out of formation. Use your shield of faith to stand against whatever flaming arrows that come your way. Life is hard, but God is good.

The "Salvation" Helmet

When a Believer has been saved, His mind is transformed (**Romans 12:2**). No longer are we supposed to think as the world does, but rather, we have our minds and desires set on things above (**Colossians 3:12**). That being said, there is a constant war being waged against the "thought life" of a Christian. Just as a soldier's helmet is worn for the protection of his head, we too are to make provision to protect our minds from the onslaught of Satan's attacks. There are many ways that the devil can "get inside our heads" as it were, and thereby, render us ineffective. For the purposes of this study, we examine three of his most common weapons that he employs to attack the mind of a believer.

The FIRST is DOUBT. Satan will do everything that he possibly can to get a believer to either doubt the trustworthiness of God, or sometimes, even the believers very own salvation. We discussed this tactic in some detail last week when we studied the Belt, Breastplate, and Boots, but let us revisit it as

we discuss the Helmet of Salvation. If Satan can just get you to doubt, then he can completely paralyze you on the battlefield. A lack of confidence in your own salvation or in God's own integrity will most definitely keep you from being an effective soldier for Christ.

Doubt is the most debilitating of all emotions. I once had a very dear friend who often had bouts of serious doubt, which would inevitably lead him into depression. I would try and try to encourage him, and although most of the time I was somewhat effective, at other times it was incredibly frustrating to make any headway in my endeavors. He just struggled mightily with doubt, and I'm not talking about your every day garden variety doubts and fears. He was oft times plagued with doubts about whether he was saved or not. While I believe that doubt comes to us all at times, I don't believe that all of us struggle with doubts about our salvation, nor should we.

To make matters worse there are far too many preachers who seem to thrive on making people doubt their salvation. Apparently, they get some sense of accomplishment by scaring people into running back and forth from the altar to make sure that they have really been saved. First let me say this. IF you, BY FAITH, have BELIEVED that Jesus is in fact GOD and that His DEATH and RESURRECTION are proofs of this fact, and if you have REPENTED of your sins and EARNESTLY PRAYED for His FORGIVENESS, and if you have made a DECISION to follow Him for the rest of your life, then according to the promises found in GOD'S WORD, you ARE BORN AGAIN! Now take God at His Word and get on with serving Him! There comes a point when you just have to settle it in your mind that Christ is telling you the truth when He promises that anyone who comes to Him in faith has been led there by The Father and will NEVER be sent away ([John 6:37](#)). This is why I HAVE always and WILL always believe in the eternal security of the believer. It is God The Father who sends you to Jesus in the first place ([John 6:44](#)). It is The Holy Spirit that gives you the faith with which to believe in the first place ([John 16:5-15](#); [Ephesians 2:8](#)), and it is Christ who promises to keep you safe ([John 18:9](#)). Now, I'm not the smartest guy who ever lived, but it sure looks like the trinity is pretty much carrying the whole load here! So let's put this in perspective then shall we? If you have done all that it is commanded for you to do to receive salvation, then you must receive it BY FAITH. To doubt your salvation is really an assault on the integrity of God. So stop doing that! Take Him at His Word. He's completely honest ([Hebrews 6:18](#)).

As a matter of fact, let us just go ahead and apply that truth to doubt of any kind. Keep your focus on Christ and His mighty power, and you'll be just fine. Doubt will sink you like a rock. Remember the story of Peter, when he was determined to walk on the water with Jesus ([Matthew 14:22-33](#))? He did a great job of it as long as he was so caught up in going to Jesus that he forgot that he was actually WALKING ON WATER! He took his eyes away for a split second, and then, panic set in it. And, after that of course, the inevitable happened. He started plummeting to the bottom like the stone he was so aptly named for (Peter means "rock" by the way). Jesus caught him by the hand and asked him one simple question, "Why did you doubt?"

I'm sure that was an awfully embarrassing moment for ol' Pete, but before we beat him up too much, just remember, that he was the ONLY one who actually offered to get out of the boat in the first place! The best way for us to "Keep our helmets on" when it comes to doubting, is to focus our full attention on Christ. Don't think about the waves the devil is stirring up around you. Just watch Jesus. HE'S GOT THIS! I don't care what kind of water you are trying to walk on right now, Jesus is still the master of the sea. Never doubt in the dark, what God has taught you in the light. So take a deep breath and keep moving forward. Trust God for the outcome.

The SECOND spear that the devil likes to throw at your head is DISCOURAGEMENT. I cannot begin to tell you how many wonderful Christians have been knocked out of the ring by discouragement. The devil loves to whisper in the ears of God's people that that they'll never amount to anything, that they are unworthy, that they are in over their heads, and so on. Scripture verse for the day, "[I can do ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST, who gives me strength](#)" ([Philippians 4:13](#)). Of COURSE, we will never amount to anything on our own ([John 15:5](#)). Of COURSE, we are not worthy to serve Christ ([Luke 17:10](#)). Of COURSE, we are in over our heads ([Romans 8:8](#))! But guess what? We have JESUS, and

having Jesus is a game changer! Don't allow Satan to get inside your head with his fiery darts of discouragement! Jesus has guaranteed you a win (**John 15:16**). Just keep your eyes on Him and get out there and do what He tells you to do. Do not grow weary in well doing, for the harvest is sure to come in soon (**Galatians 6:9**)!

The THIRD weapon the devil uses is DEPRAVITY. If he can persuade you to take your thoughts away from things above and entice you to drag your thought life through the gutters of this world, then you, my friend, are in grave danger. This world is a sewer, and the transformed mind of a believer has nothing in common with depravity. Christians who are serious about following Jesus must crucify the desires of the flesh (**Galatians 5:24**). God didn't set us free from sin so that we could fill our thoughts with its lewdness. Think about it this way... If Jesus were to stop by your house this evening would he enjoy the stuff that you are watching on TV? Would He approve of your internet sites? Would He enjoy the magazines that you subscribe to? If the answer to any of these is no, then get rid of them. Fill your mind with good things. Guard your thought life. Do not give the devil a foothold IN YOUR BRAIN! Sounds a little ridiculous when you say it like that, huh? Put on your helmet and keep your mind away from the things that are intended to debilitate you spiritually.

In fact, Paul explained to the Ephesians that all "coarseness" is out of place for the Believer (**Ephesians 5:4**). **"Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk, or coarse joking, which are out of place..."**. The three words that Paul uses here in the Greek are *Aischrotes*, (profanity or shamefulness), *Morologia* (the speech of a fool, moronic), and *Eutrapelia* (dirty jokes, or innuendo). A Christian's speech is to reflect the purity and wisdom of The Holy Spirit. You cannot be filled with the Spirit and see sexual innuendo in every thing that is said around you. Have you ever met someone like that? You know the type I'm talking about. That guy (in my experience, it's usually a guy) who can find something dirty about anything and everything that is said. I absolutely hate being in the same room with someone like that. A Christian has absolutely no business trying to be funny with lewdness. Any who behave in such a manner merely offer proof that their heart is given over to filthiness. **"For a good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings out of the evil things stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."** Who said that? Jesus (**Luke 6:45**). Put on your helmet. Stop thinking like the devil, and start thinking like Christ, He is the ultimate "good man".

So, in order to be fully equipped for this battle, we will need to be armed with a trusting faith and a clean and focused mind. God has provided each piece of our armor so that we can **"do all to stand"** as Paul so eloquently stated in **verse 13**. Thus far in our careful examination of the armor of God, we have only described the pieces whose intended uses are solely for defensive purposes. We have not, however, been called to this battle simply to hold our ground, but also to advance upon the enemies territory. Remember what Jesus said? **"The gates of hell will not prevail against His Church"** (**Matthew 16:18**). In order for this statement to be true, we must first storm the gates of hell! That means we must attack. This strategy ultimately requires offensive weapons, and not just defensive. Next week we will conclude our study by explaining the weapons we have been given not to simply keep the enemy at bay, but to defeat him. There are two offensive weapons in every believer's arsenal. They are Prayer and The Word. Next week we will learn just how to utilize these weapons of war to overcome this wicked world. Are you ready to do battle? Wrap yourself in TRUTH. Live a life of holy RIGHTEOUSNESS, standing firmly upon THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Deflect the body blows of the enemy with strong FAITH and guard your thought-life with the HELMET OF SALVATION. Now let us take up our weapons and make ready. The victory is ours for the taking, for the battle belongs to The LORD.

And ALL of God's people said... TRUTH!!!