

**Living In Resurrection Power
(Week 16)
Ephesians 6:10-17a
"The Armor of God" (Part 3)
Put Your Helmet On**

Introduction

"You will keep the mind that is dependent on You in perfect peace, for it is trusting in You." **Isaiah 26:3**

Satan is ever waging war against the mind of the believer. Paul understood this mental struggle all too well, and he warned the church at Ephesus to be on guard against Satan's psychological warfare. If the devil is allowed to gain a foothold in our minds, then we are in grave danger. Therefore, it is imperative as children of God to protect ourselves from the devils' encroachment into our thought life. How do we do this? By taking up the "Helmet of Salvation" (**Ephesians 6:17a**).

The first century Roman soldier wore a helmet made of leather, or sometimes of metal. It usually had attached to it strips that also covered the sides of his face. This helmet was worn for obvious reasons, to protect the head of the soldier against enemy sword blows. The most common sword used in battle was a broadsword that was up to four feet in length and very heavy to wield. These massive swords were often used by men on horseback, who would swing them back and forth as they rode into a group of soldiers. The intent was to rain a series of fatal blows down upon the heads of the enemy. One blow of a mighty broadsword from the height of a soldier on horseback could easily crush the skull of his opponent. Therefore, the helmet was an essential part of the soldiers armor.

Satan would love to defeat the believer by attacking his mind. He has had considerable practice at it down through the ages. So, we must be ever on our guard. He has many weapons at his disposal to attack the mind of the believer, and he is obliged to use each and every one of them. Again, we need to be mindful that we are engaged in a spiritual battle with an overwhelming adversary, whether we desire to be or not. In our own strength we have no power to overcome, but in Christ, we are more than conquerors.

As we have pointed out repeatedly in this study of "The Armor of God", to be "suited up" in the armor is to be wrapped in Christ Jesus, to stand in His mighty power and not our own. Part of being suited up in Christ is to have our minds fixed upon Him. The devil longs to distract us, but the one who keeps his mind fixated upon Jesus, will in fact remain in perfect peace (**Isaiah 26:3**).

When we are wrapped in God's truth (the Belt), and living according to this truth (Breastplate), then we know that we are at peace with God (the Shoes), and then we can use our faith to fend off Satan's temptations (Shield). After this, it is imperative that we "keep our heads in the game", as it were. For if Satan can get inside our minds, then we can no longer be effective in the battle. Psychological warfare has long been an effective tool to render an army paralyzed against its foes. If an enemy can get inside the heads of its opponents, the battle can be won, before it has even begun.

Paul describes the Christian's "headgear" as "The Helmet of Salvation", which actually means much more than just being "saved" by grace, but rather, it points to the entire salvation experience (more details to come). When we give our lives to Christ, *The Bible* tells us that our minds are completely "transformed" (**Romans 12:2**). God has renewed our way of thinking. We no longer conform to this world's wisdom. We now have been endowed with the wisdom of Christ.

"Yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, because God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength." **1 Corinthians 1:24-25**

Simply put, if you have Christ, then you have been given access to the wisdom of God, which is far superior to the wisdom of this world. If you allow yourself to be guided by His wisdom, then you have nothing to fear from the enemy. But if the enemy can cause you to forsake His wisdom, then you can be easily overcome. The key to being victorious is to allow God's wisdom to reign in our minds. And you can be sure that the devil will use every sword at his disposal to deal a death blow to your mind. We must be aware of his schemes (**Ephesians 6:11**) in order to be prepared. Three of his most common "sword blows" to our minds come in the form of Distraction, Doubt, and Discouragement. Please allow me to explain.

Distraction

This may come as a surprise for many *Bible* students, but the Church at Ephesus wasn't the only church to which Paul wrote with regards to the armor of God. He also spoke of it in his letter to the church at Thessalonica.

"About the times and the seasons: Brothers and sisters, you do not need anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of The LORD will come just like a thief in the night. When they say, 'Peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the dark, for this day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or the darkness. So then, let us not sleep, like the rest, but let us stay awake and be self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled and put on the armor of faith and love, and a helmet of the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our LORD Jesus Christ, Who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him." **1 Thessalonians 5:1-10**

Paul admonished the Thessalonians to be self-controlled, which is another word for Spirit-filled (**Galatians 5:22-23**). He reminds them that Jesus not only saved them, but is also coming back for them. Therefore, they must live in readiness for His return. When he mentions the "helmet", it is important to note that he refers to it as "The Helmet of The Hope of Salvation", as opposed to just "The Helmet of Salvation" in **Ephesians Chapter Six**. This word "hope" is a very helpful addition for us to understand exactly what Paul is talking about when he tells us to take up the helmet. The word "*hope*" in the *Greek New Testament* means something entirely different than the way we use it in the English language. If you ask someone if they are going to heaven when they die, they might reply, "I certainly hope so." Meaning that they are not sure. This kind of hope is simply wishful thinking.

The word translated "*hope*" in *The New Testament* (*eipis*) conveys the message of confident expectation. Biblical hope is not wishful thinking, but rather the confident expectation of things that are sure to come. The Christian does not "hope" that he belongs to Jesus, he knows it. And just as sure as he knows that he is saved, he knows that one day, he will be together with Christ... forever. It is not wishful thinking, it is a confident expectation of the reality that is to come. Therefore, the "Helmet of Salvation" represents a mindset on all that Christ has in store for His own.

When we think of "salvation", we often think of the day that we surrender our lives to Christ, and we are saved from our sins. But actually there is so much more to salvation than simply the **day** you were saved. Salvation is actually a three step process. First, you surrender your life to Christ as Lord, and your sins are forgiven. This is called "justification" in *The New Testament*. Then, The Holy Spirit begins to transform you from the inside out. **Old things are passed away and all things become new (2 Corinthians 5:17)**. He changes your way of thinking by renewing your mind (**Romans 12:2**). This is called Sanctification. But there's more!

One day Christ will return for His Bride, The Church, and we will be raised to be with Him, not just spiritually, but physically as well. We will be completely made new, with a glorified body to live in an environment that is totally free from sin. This is called Glorification, and it is the final step of our salvation process. So, there is Salvation in the whole: Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. All three are parts of the "salvation process". So then, to put on our "helmet" is to have our mind focused upon these truths at all times. We are to live in constant expectation of our salvation being made complete. Allow me to explain: If I asked the question this morning of how many people truly believe that Jesus is coming back soon, most of the people in the room would raise their hands in the affirmative. The truly born again Christian believes in his heart that Jesus is coming back one day. But what if you knew for certain that He was coming back this Thursday? How would that change the way that you live? Would there be a difference in the way that you conducted yourself these last few days upon this earth? That my friends is living with the mindset that our salvation is about to be made complete. And that is what it means to have the Helmet of Salvation upon our heads. To be focused upon Christ and His eminent return as if it could happen at any moment.

The devil can and will do EVERYTHING in his power to distract you from this mindset. He will tempt you with every sin imaginable, or consume you with things that are not in and of themselves sinful, to use them to become idols in your life in order to change your focus from Christ to the things of this world. For example, working is not a sin. We are commanded to work in order to eat. The book of *Proverbs* is filled with verses that speak of God's disdain for the lazy person. It is a good thing to work and to work hard. However, when your job becomes the focus of your life, and you are not living in a constant expectation of Christ's return, you have removed your helmet and are susceptible to some pretty heavy sword blows from the enemy. The devil will stop at nothing to take your focus off Christ. So what must we do to keep our helmet on?

"Love The LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your MIND." **Matthew 22:37**

Doubt

Another "sword" that Satan uses to take out the believers mind is the sword of doubt. Nothing will render a Christian as ineffective as doubt in God's Word of truth. Satan will try and confuse you about the truth of scripture, and if that doesn't work, he will even try to get you to doubt your own salvation. I cannot begin to tell you how many people that I have counseled that are insecure about whether they are truly saved or not. Please allow me to quote a wondrous verse for you this morning, if you are struggling with the security of your salvation.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is LORD,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." **Romans 10:9**

Pretty simple, huh? So let me ask you a couple of questions here. Do you believe that Jesus is God in the flesh and came to earth to die on a cross for your sins? Do you believe that He rose again? Have you confessed Him as Lord by surrendering your life over to Him, putting Him in charge of all that you are? If the answer is yes to all these questions, then my friend according to the infallible Word of God, you are indeed a born again child of God. So trust God to do what He says He will do. Anything short of that is to call God a liar, and I don't know about you, but that actually sounds pretty dangerous to me!

Have you surrendered yourself to the LORDSHIP of Christ or not? This means that not only do you believe that He is God, but you have put Him in charge of all that you are! This is the reason that most people who have doubts about their salvation have them to begin with. They aren't living in the power of The Spirit. Rather, they are under the influence of some sin. Make no mistake. If you can live in sin and are not convicted by it, then you do not belong to Christ. But if He is your LORD, that means that He will not allow you to live as this world does. So don't allow the devil to distract you to sin which can lead you to doubt. Keep your mind fixed upon Christ and be wrapped in the truth of His Word (Belt). Live your lives according to the truth of The Word (Breastplate). Then you will have the assurance that you are truly in the will of God and are at peace with Him (Shoes). When Satan attacks, you know the Word of Truth and can deflect his fiery darts by faith (Shield), because your mind is focused upon Christ, and you refuse give in to doubt or to be distracted by the things of this world (Helmet).

Don't be a doubter. Make up your mind to believe what God says is always the absolute truth. Trust Him to do what He says He will do in spite of what everyone else does. He keeps His promises even when we fail.

"What then? If someone were unfaithful, will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? Absolutely not! Let God be true, even though everyone is a liar, as it is written: That You may be justified in Your words and triumph when You judge." **Romans 3:3-4**

If you don't want to be ineffective in this battle against the devil, do not allow your mind to be influenced with doubt of any kind. Ask God for His wisdom and be confident when He provides it. Keep your focus on Him and do not allow any doubt to penetrate your helmet of salvation.

"Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God — Who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly — and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith without doubting. For the doubter is like the surging sea, driven and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from The LORD, being double-minded and unstable in all his ways."
James 1:5-8

Discouragement

If Satan cannot distract you with sin and idolatry, and if he cannot overcome your mind with fear and doubt, the next sword that he will often use to overcome your mind is discouragement. In short, he will do everything within his power to get you to quit, to simply leave the battlefield, as it were. Paul was no stranger to the discouragements of the devil. He lists several of them in his second letter to the Corinthians when his commitment to Christ was being questioned by some.

"Are they servants of Christ? I am talking like a madman — I am a better one: with far more labors, many more imprisonments, far worse beatings, many times near death. Five times I received the forty lashes minus one from the Jews. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day in open sea..."
2 Corinthians 11:23-25

And the list goes on. Ok Paul, we get it. If this were a contest for the enduring servant of Christ... you would win, hands down! One thing you can say about Paul, he certainly had his helmet on! But even though I am not in his league when it comes to enduring faith, I know that the devil will do everything that he can to get me to quit. And he will do the same to you my friend if you don't have your helmet on, if your mind is not fully focused on Christ. I have witnessed over my many years of ministry several people who simply did not make it to the finish line. Oh, they started off well enough, but a race is only run when the runner reaches the finish line. Satan will stop at nothing to get you to give up, so don't let him get inside your head.

I suppose that my favorite thing that Jesus ever said (there are so many) can be found in Matthew 24:

"This is why you are also to be ready, because The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Master has put in charge of His household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom the Master finds doing his job when He comes."
Matthew 24:44-46

Now, I cannot speak for you, but I want to be THAT servant. The one who keeps his head in the game no matter what. When Jesus comes back for me, I want Him to find me faithful, with my helmet on! When He comes to take me home, I hope He finds me loving Him with all my heart, soul, and MIND. I want to have the mind of Christ. I want to wrap myself in Christ Jesus and fight in the power of His Spirit. I want to be a faithful soldier of the cross, steadfast in the confident expectation of the soon coming KING. I will fight to keep the devil from gaining even an inch of the ground necessary to build up a stronghold in my mind.

"For although we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh, since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ."
2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Pretty much says it all, now doesn't it ?

Now let all of God's soldiers say... TRUTH!!!