

Helmet of Salvation

Ephesians 6:17a

17 ...and take the helmet of salvation

We are in a fierce battle with a personal adversary who is enormously powerful, intelligent, and supremely wicked, whose desire is to destroy us and whose methods are condemnation, intimidation, discouragement, seduction, and deceit. Paul enjoins us to take up every piece of the armor that He has given us, and today we look at this fifth piece of our armor, the helmet of salvation. We all know (from football and warfare) how important helmets are, and it is no less true in spiritual warfare. With this text, we should ask ourselves two key questions: 1) What is this helmet? 2) How does this helmet work for us in our battle with Satan?

- I. What is this helmet? It is the helmet of salvation.
 The word “salvation” we find in the ESV 170 times. It translates the Hebrew word “yasa,” and in the Old Testament we are saved from famine, terror from our enemies, and exile from God. The New Testament word for salvation is “soteria,” and the best summary of the New Testament view of salvation is found in Matthew 1:21, where Gabriel says to Joseph, “She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” Christian salvation is deliverance from sin, specifically its curse, its corruption, and its various miseries, including death and final judgment.

 The salvation God has provided for us includes predestination, union with Christ, regeneration, conversion (repentance and faith), justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification. Often times we divide these elements into past, present, and future. The salvation God has accomplished removes the curse from us because of Christ’s substitutionary atonement, it increasingly delivers us from the power and pleasure of sin by regeneration and sanctification, and it delivers us from the very presence of sin by glorification. We can, therefore, say that we *have been saved*, we are *being saved*, and we *shall be saved*.
- II. How does our helmet work? Each “tense” of our salvation strengthens us in our fight against the devil.
 - A. Our election, regeneration, justification, and adoption develop in us a profound gratitude which defends us against the seductions and allurements of Satan. We can see this in the life of Joseph (Genesis 39:8-9) when Joseph is being tempted by Potiphar’s wife, and he says to her, “Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. *How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*” (emphasis added). Here we see that Joseph, out of gratitude for what God had done for him, resists the allurements of his seductress. So it is with us: when we contemplate what Christ has done for us, we are shielded from the allurements of idols.
 - B. Our indwelling of the Spirit, Who sanctifies us and empowers us, leads us to a holy boldness, which defends us against the intimidation of the devil. At Pentecost, God delivered His promise from ages past to be with us. Just as the Shekinah glory filled the Tabernacle in Exodus 40, so surely the glory of God has come down to be with us. His presence is the reason for our confidence against all the intimidating schemes of the evil one.

- C. Our future glorification gives us a lively hope that defends us against every attempt of the devil to discourage us. In 1 Thessalonians 5:8 Paul speaks of the “helmet, the hope of salvation.” Here he speaks only of “the helmet of salvation,” but it seems that he may mean the same thing; namely that our helmet is our hope of salvation. We can see this in Paul’s description in 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul describes the glory of our future resurrection, and concludes by saying, “Therefore my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:58). Because we know where we’re going and that it will be absolutely glorious, we cannot be ultimately discouraged by the evil one.

This is our helmet. Put it on! Wear it continually. Use it in the battle. Trust in God’s provision to protect you against the devil himself.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do we need to be saved? What are the consequences of sin in our lives?
2. What all has God done to save us?
3. Why does God not only save us from sin, but also tell us the details?
4. Why is it important that we be assured of our salvation? How can we be sure?

Going Deeper

1. Name three besetting sins in your life that demand your special diligence.
2. Describe how past, present, and future salvation should be applied to your strategy for spiritual warfare in these three areas.