

HELMET OF SALVATION

Ephesians 6:17a

Review

Review: we're in a battle w/ a ferocious enemy; he has been defeated, yet God in his sovereignty has chosen to allow the devil to continue to wage war until the day when he will be thrown into the lake of fire for his eternal destruction. So the charge to God's people is to stand, to hold your ground, to take back lost territory, to fight the good fight of the faith. Paul in Eph. 6 is telling us that we need to put on the armor of God, a metaphor which is essentially telling us that we need to put on God. The armor of God is made out of God; i.e. the armor of God IS God:

- **Belt of truth**
- **Breastplate of righteousness**
- **Shoes of readiness of the gospel of peace**
- **Shield of faith**
- **Sword of the Spirit**
- **Helmet of salvation**

The helmet was an absolutely vital piece of armor for a Roman soldier, or for any soldier for that matter. They would never enter battle w/o their helmet.

Purpose: protect the head. Especially from the broadsword, a large two-handed, double-edged sword (rhomphaia); 3'-4' in length; often carried by cavalymen who would swing at the heads of enemy soldiers to split their skulls or decapitate them.

So here's the bottom line: you need your head! I've seen people who have lost a finger, my uncle lost a toe in WWII, We've all seen war vets without an arm or a leg. But you know what you've never seen? Someone w/o a head.

The helmet is meant to protect you. In doing so, it also gives you a sense of confidence. When you're up against your opponent, whether a football game or a military battle, being confident is what motivates you to keep going. .

So what's Satan going to try to do with you? To strip you of your confidence. How's he going to do this? Scripture tells us that there are two primary ways that he goes after our confidence: discouragement and doubt.

Discouragement:

Examples:

- Israelites in the Exodus
- Israelite spies on taking the land
- Elijah after Mt. Carmel
- Nehemiah and the Jews rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem

Doubt:

Satan is so good at this – casting doubt into the hearts of God's people. Doubt makes us feel insecure, hesitant, uncertain. I don't know if there is anything more paralyzing, more unproductive, or more miserable than having thoughts and feelings of doubt and insecurity take over your life.

Dual Problem:

- People who *think* they have saving faith, but they *don't*
- People who *have* saving faith, but they *doubt*

Jesus had some very unsettling words for people in his day who were banking on religious traditions and intellectual assent:

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'
Matthew 7:21-23

The apparent reality is that there are people in the visible church who think they're saved, but they're not. So the brutal question for some of you would be: Do I really have saving faith? Is my faith real? Or am I self-deceived? That's why the apostle Paul told the Corinthians in his second letter,

Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! 2 Cor. 13:5

Okay, so based upon just that verse alone, to be in the faith, to be saved, means that Jesus Christ is in you. He has actually moved into that person's life. He takes a person who was spiritually dead and makes them alive. He takes a person who was following the devil, and gives them the will and the desire to follow Him. He takes a person who was a slave to unrighteousness and transforms them in such a way that they now long to be slaves of righteousness. He takes someone who was unable to see the glory of God in the face of Christ and causes them to not only see God's glory in Christ, but to see it as being compellingly glorious. He takes a heart that was unmoved by the cross and causes it to be stirred in such a way that it will never be the same again. He takes a man or a woman who had no desire for godliness and righteousness and plants within them a desire for increased godliness which they know is only a possibility through the imparting of God's grace into their heart that causes them to have a desire to be holy even as God is holy.

I would encourage you – do not attempt to appease the unrest that is created by Christ's words or Paul's or James' when he wrote that "faith without works is dead" and that even the demons believe things about God and Jesus but they're obviously not saved.

- The helmet of salvation preserves the miraculous nature of salvation whereby a person is truly born again, given a new heart, converted, made alive.
- It preserves the transforming nature of faith which results in someone not desiring religion or tradition, but transformation, progressive sanctification, a movement of their life toward greater godliness and holiness.
- The helmet of salvation preserves salvation as a gift of God (Eph. 2:8,9) and a work of God from beginning to end which he will finish (Php. 1:6;)
- The helmet of salvation preserves the testifying work of God's Spirit in those who are saved:

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God." Romans 8:16

- The helmet of salvation is me resting completely in the finished work of Christ on the cross, that Christ, as the writer of Hebrews tells us, "has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).
- And the helmet of salvation is expressed in me being sanctified, in me, from one degree to the next, becoming more and more like Jesus.

So it is those in the second group, those who have saving faith yet they doubt, that Paul instructs to put on the helmet of salvation, the helmet of being secure in the salvation which is theirs in Christ Jesus. God is faithful. It is in his keeping that I find my confidence. It is the faithfulness of God which guarantees that he will keep safe and secure all whom he has called:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. John 10:27-29

"Those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Romans 8:30)

"The Lord will sustain (keep) you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. 1:8,9

"He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6)

"[We] are being kept by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:5)

"Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing . . . be glory forever!" (Jude 24)