

6:17a *And take the helmet of salvation...*

Introduction: All That God Has Given (“and”)

- 6:14-17 contains four conjunctions: the word “and.”
- Twice Paul tells us to put on the “full armor of God” (6:11,13).
- Paul himself describes struggles in Ephesus:
 - “...some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people” (Acts 19:9).
 - There was a riot that began because of the Gospel’s affect on the godless Ephesian economy (Acts 19:23-41).
 - Summoning the elders of the church in Ephesus to him, Paul refers to the grievous oppositions he faced (Acts 20:19,29-31).
 - “I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus” (1 Corinthians 15:32).
 - READ 2 Corinthians 1:8-11.
- At the beginning of his description of the “full armor of God,” he doesn’t focus on the people or bestial metaphors, but wants to focus the Ephesian believers on the spiritual, invisible enemy behind these human enemies (Ephesians 6:12).
- The “and” at the beginning of 6:17 reminds us that this piece of the spiritual armor God has provided against spiritual enemies in a spiritual war is just a part of a fullness, a sufficiency provided by God.

Threat to Our Thoughts (“helmet”)

Guarding Our Minds

- READ Philippians 4:4-9.

Attacks on Our Minds

- Paul, in 2 Corinthians, seems especially concerned about our spiritual enemies and the spiritual warfare for our minds:

- There is a power that blinds: 3:14; 4:4
- Once we are in Christ, the enemy still seeks to draw us away from Christ: 10:5; 11:3.
- Serpent’s questions: Did God really say? What’s the use? Isn’t it all about you? Aren’t you weary of doing good? Where’s the benefit, the reward? Wouldn’t it be better to live as the world does? Don’t you deserve a break from serving Christ in His Church?

Salvation as Our Mindset (“of salvation”)

Salvation in the Letter to the Ephesians

- READ 1:13.
 - We are protected by salvation by speaking often of “the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation.”
 - We are held in Christ by the Holy Spirit.
- READ 2:4-9.
 - Remember grace (twice mentioned in this section).
- READ 5:23.
 - 5:25-27 explains how He does this.

Salvation Past, Present, and Future

- **The day we put on the helmet (salvation past).**
 - The day we heard the Gospel and believed, our guilt before God was erased because Jesus took the penalty on our behalf when He died on the cross.
 - The day we heard the Gospel and believed, Jesus’ record of perfect, righteous, holy obedience to God was credited to our account (we were **justified**).
 - The day we heard the Gospel and believed, the Holy Spirit came to dwell within us, binding us forever to Jesus and helping us call on the

Father by faith in prayer. We were saved by faith in Jesus alone.¹

- **Wearing it every day (salvation present).**
 - By the indwelling Holy Spirit and according to the Word of God, we are daily being saved – made to conform to the image of the Son of God (we are being **sanctified**). The Bible speaks of salvation as an ongoing, present event.²
 - Saving faith is always present tense. I am not saved because I once believed, but because I continually believe in the sole sufficiency of Christ to save. “We are directed to take the helmet of salvation – and this, not for some particular occasion and then hang it by till another extraordinary strait calls us to take it down and use it again – but we must take it so as never to lay it aside till God shall take off this helmet to put a crown of glory in the room of it.”³
- **Until the day it is replaced with glory (salvation future).**
 - The salvation begun by God and continued through our lives will one day reach its perfect goal in our lives (we will be **glorified**). We will be saved finally and forever.⁴

¹ For passages on past-tense salvation, READ John 5:24; Romans 3:24; 4:5-8; 5:1,9; Colossians 1:13; 2:13; Titus 3:4-5.

² For passages on present-tense salvation READ Romans 6:11-14; 8:13; 1 Corinthians 1:30; **2 Corinthians 2:15**; Ephesians 4:20-24; 5:25-27; Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23;

2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:1-2.

³ William Gurnall (1616-1679), *Christian in Complete Armour*.

⁴ For passages on future-tense salvation READ **Romans 5:9-10**; 8:23; 13:11; 1 Corinthians 15:54; Ephesians 1:14; 5:27; Philippians 3:20-21; Hebrews 9:28; 12:23; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24; Revelation 21-22.

- It may this future aspect to salvation that Paul has in mind. When he uses this metaphor in another letter, the salvation is future: “...since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and **as a helmet, the hope of salvation**” (1 Thessalonians 5:8).
- Biblical hope is far more than wishful thinking. It is a settled conviction. Biblical hope may defy present visible evidence (Romans 4:18-21), but it is based on reason and proof given in the Word of God (1 Peter 3:15).
- Are you wearing this “helmet” which is “the hope of salvation”? The tried-and-true diagnostic question helps us find the answer: if you were to die right now, and, standing before God, He asked you, ‘why should I let you into My heaven?’, what would your answer be? There is only one God-given, biblical answer. Only one.
- This “helmet” is a “hope of salvation.” In opposition to the faith inside and out, struggles, depression, discouragement, lies, spiritual dryness, etc., the believer’s defense of mind is a forward-looking hope in the work of Christ completed.

Being Active – Together - in Our Defense (“take”)

Isaiah’s Vision

- We’ve seen a piece of armor from Isaiah 59 before, and today we see another in the same passage: 59:16b-17. It’s Jesus’ armor, shared with us.

Grammar and the Church

- The verb take is not singular, but plural.
- “Are You Washed in the Blood?” is a hymn that comes to mind with this idea. We are together as a church, in part, to make sure that our fellow believers are remaining in the faith.
 - Hebrews 3:12-15.
 - Hebrews 10:24-25.