

THE HELMET OF SALVATION

Ephesians 6.17a: Let salvation protect your mind and thoughts!

Theme: Put salvation on your head like a helmet, to protect your mind from the attacks of the enemy.

The next piece of armour we see Paul mention in Ephesians 6 is a helmet: (v17a) Protection for the head.

- A lot is said these days about having an “open mind,” and it usually comes from the post-modern, “everyone is right” crowd.
- I don't think we have to be intimidated by any concept, idea, or teaching (false religious systems, evolution, philosophy, etc.). I think we can “openly” evaluate anything, and that we should do so.
- But, to say that an “open mind” is a good thing is like saying an “open house” in the inner city is a good thing. We are in a spiritual warfare; we live on a spiritual battlefield. And your *mind* is where the battles take place (your thoughts, your emotions, you will to choose one thing over another).
- If you simply “open your mind” to anything and everything, with no effort to judge and evaluate what you allow “in,” you find yourself with a head full of garbage, trash, and lies.
- We put doors on our houses and locks on our doors so we can keep the good people in and the bad people out. And it is no different with your mind: *You need to protect your mind!*
- And the “helmet” that God gave you to protect your mind and thoughts is... *salvation* (and I just love that... because I think I could preach and teach on the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ every day for the rest of my life! ...there is no full comprehension of it... there is no end to its ramifications...!).

I. The enemy will attack our minds.

A. The mind of the lost is held captive by the enemy.

1. (2Cor 4.3-4) Satan has blinded the *minds* of every person who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ. He holds their minds captive in darkness.
2. (Gen 6.5) The fall affected man's mind. The wickedness in man that resulted from the fall has affected every imagination of the thoughts of his heart. His mind is completely captive to sin.
 - a) This verse also helps us understand the relationship of the “heart” to the “mind” in the Bible.
 - b) Often we think of the heart has the seat of our emotions (and it is tied to the emotions).
 - c) However in the Bible the heart is better understood as the origin of our thoughts:
 - (1) (Mat 15.19) Out of the *heart* proceed *thoughts*...
 - (2) (Mat 12.35) Out of the *heart*, proceed evil *deeds* (thoughts soon become actions when not held in check by something other than the “heart and conscience” of wicked man).
 - d) Lost man *thinks* about sin all day long. Every imagination that proceeds from his heart (the origin of his thoughts) is only evil continually. Why...?
3. (Jer 17.9) Because his heart is desperately wicked, unknowably wicked (even by the sinner himself).
 - a) (Jer 16.12) Adam rebelled against God (he chose to not hearken unto Him), and now the heart of every man and woman born from Adam is the same.
 - (1) His heart is wicked and evil. Every imagination that comes from his heart (the origin of the thoughts in his mind) is only evil continually.
 - (2) Lost man lives in rebellion against God; down to his *thoughts*, he refuses to hearken/obey.
 - b) (Prov 28.26) That's why lost people are foolish: “Follow your heart...” (and they do!).
4. Satan has blinded the *mind* of the lost. He hold their *minds* captive in darkness (evil, sin, rebellion).

B. The mind of the saved is constantly attacked by the enemy.

1. Don't think that just because you're saved, that your heart and mind are automatically "safe."
2. (2Cor 10.3-6) Speaking of our spiritual warfare (v3-4a), Paul address the *mind* of the saved.
 - a) (v5) You still have to battle wicked imaginations that come up from your heart! You still have to battle thoughts that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God!
 - b) (v6) You still have to struggle with thoughts of disobedience.
 - c) And that's only the battle "from within." There is also a battle that comes from outside...
3. (2Cor 11.3-4) Satan will attack your mind!
 - a) (v3) His attacks will be subtle and they will be attempts to *corrupt your mind*.
 - b) (v4) His attacks will take the form of false teaching and preaching (everything from bad religious doctrine, to science falsely so called... to marketing and advertisements).
4. (2Cor 10.5) Your protection against Satan's attacks is... *knowledge of God*.
 - a) (Mat 22.29) God's people are led away into error (Satan corrupts their minds) when they do not know the Scripture.
 - b) (Hos 4.6) God's people are destroyed by the enemy when they reject the knowledge of God.
 - c) And this leads to our second point of study this morning: Knowing that the enemy will attack our minds (both lost and saved)... we need protection for our heads: *Salvation*.

II. Salvation is the protection for our minds.

A. Salvation is the only way the lost mind can be freed from captivity: He must know God!

1. (John 17.3) Salvation begins with *knowing* God in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. (2Cor 4.3-4) Satan has blinded the mind of the lost person (he holds that mind in the captivity of darkness) and the only way to free that mind is *by the light of the gospel*. *Salvation*.
3. (Mat 28.19) That is why we should *not* change the Great Commission as stated in Matthew: We are to *go* out to the lost people and *teach* them. We are to shine God's light into their *minds*...
 - a) They need to learn about God (Who He is... His character, attributes, Law...)
 - b) They need to learn about man (who we are... our sinfulness and rebellion...)
 - c) They need to learn about the gospel (Christ's substitutionary sacrifice and subsequent resurrection, and God's offer of forgiveness and eternal life to every repentant sinner).
4. Salvation is the only protection for the mind... and it starts with knowing God in Jesus Christ.
 - But it doesn't stop there... because the enemy's attacks in our thought-life don't stop there...

B. The saved must "work out" their salvation: He must grow in grace and knowledge always!

1. Let's review what the Scripture says about Satan's attacks on our minds...
 - a) (2Cor 10.3-6) There is plenty of ammunition for Satan to use from our own filthy, fleshly imaginations (and we must battle the evil that still comes forth from our wicked hearts).
 - b) (2Cor 11.3-4; 13-15 cf. 2Cor 2.17; 4.2) Satan will attack our minds through false teaching.
 - (Col 2.8; 1Tim 6.20) That false teaching can be religious or secular.
 - c) (2Tim 3.13-17) Your protection against Satan's attacks in your mind is the knowledge of God in the Lord the Jesus Christ... the knowledge of Scripture.
2. (Php 2.12) We are told to "work out" the salvation we have been given freely in Christ.
 - a) Salvation is free (Christ paid the price; God offered it to us as a free gift). So, even if you don't "work it out" in your life, you still have salvation. You can't lose it.

- b) But we are told to “work out” salvation because we need to grow in Christ, grow in holiness, grow in godliness... until salvation is “worked out” in every area of our lives.
- c) (1Tim 4.6-8) Growing in godliness (just like the “working out” of an exercise program) requires proper nutrition and consistent exercise.
- (1) Proper Nutrition: Scripture. Satan will attack your thoughts with false teaching (just look how lost people are led like cattle to the slaughter by marketing campaigns! just look at how church-goers are led like cattle to the slaughter by slick programs!).
- (a) We need a proper, balanced, healthy spiritual diet for our mind! And often that kind of diet is not the “feel good, taste good” diet of Twinkies and donuts!
- (b) (1Pet 2.2) We need to “drink our milk” (basic, beginning doctrine).
- (c) (Heb 4.11-14) But we need to grow and add to that the “meat” of the Word (stronger, deeper doctrines).
- (d) (Acts 20.27; Col 1.28) We need a sound, balanced, and complete diet of Scripture.
- (2) Consistent Exercise: **You** need to work out **your** salvation.
- (a) You need to learn how to feed yourself (proper diet, not Twinkies and donuts).
- (b) You need to learn how to prepare your own meals (proper hermeneutics: how to study the Bible; how to properly study and rightly divide the Word of truth).
- (c) You need to choose to do what the Bible says—apply the Word you're learning. And, like exercise, that is usually something that goes against our “nature” (i.e., the flesh).
- d) (2Pet 3.18 cf. 1.5-8) To put it simply: To grow in Christ (godliness) requires that we learn of Him first and the follow Him in obedience to what we are learning.
- (1) (Eph 4.22-24) That learning is the renewing of our minds.
- (2) (Rom 12.1-2) That renewing of our minds is essential to grow in Christ and “work out” our salvation.
- (a) And Paul likens this renewing of our minds in our salvation (both the salvation of knowing God in Christ and the working out of our salvation through learning of and following Christ)... as a helmet.
- (b) (Rom 12.2) Without it, you cannot prove God's good, perfect, and acceptable will.
- (c) (2Cor 11.3-4) Without it, you are like a soldier going off to war without a helmet.

Conclusion:

(1Pet 2.11) The battleground in our spiritual warfare is soul—specifically: your mind.

- All your battles will ultimately be fought in your mind:
 - ✓ Satan will influence our thoughts (and choices!) directly, or through the world and the flesh.
 - ✓ The Spirit of God will influence our thoughts (and choices!) from the inside—from our spirit.
 - ✓ The battle is waged in our souls—in our minds, and then ultimate in our freewill that chooses.
- The more knowledge we have, the more “ammunition” we give the Spirit in these battles.

And that knowledge is principally the knowledge of salvation that will protect our minds...

- We need to desire and strive for (exercise, work for) a comprehensive knowledge and understanding (a biblical understanding) of salvation.
 - ✓ *Theology*: Who is God and what is He like?
 - ✓ *Anthropology*: Who is man and what is he like?

- ✓ *Soteriology*: What has God done to provide salvation to man and what is man's part in that?
- ✓ *Pneumatology*: What part does the Spirit of God play in salvation and the working out of salvation?
- ✓ *Eccelesiology*: What part does the church play in salvation and the working out of salvation?
- ✓ *Eschatology*: What are the ramifications of our salvation in the future plan of God?
- ✓ Don't be scared or intimidated by big words or profound concepts! Exercise yourself little by little; grow in the knowledge of God... of salvation... *of the gospel!*
- Salvation becomes a helmet to protect your mind from the attacks of the enemy!
 - ✓ As we learn more of our salvation... as we dwell and meditate on our salvation... as we grow in our appreciation for our salvation and what it cost our Lord...
 - ✓ We be less and less susceptible to Satan's influence in our thought life.
- Think about it...
 - ✓ How could you even think of committing adultery (a cheap, fleshly entertainment that lasts only minutes) when Christ paid such a high price for your sins—He suffered all your sin debt!?
 - ✓ How could you think you could buy God's love and salvation by works when He has already paid it all?
 - ✓ How could you believe you have to do something to keep your salvation (and God's love) when Jesus Christ is final and full payment, sacrifice, and propitiation?
- Know God! Know salvation! Grow in that knowledge!
 - ✓ It will be as an helmet for your head—protection for your mind and thoughts (protection from Satanic influence and deception).