



Being Prepared for Battle

Lesson #5 – Helmet of Salvation

Thursday, February 9, 2023 | MBC Men's Group



Series Overview

As in the battlefields of yesterday, there are winners and there are losers; those who survive and those who die. Often, those who won did so because they were better prepared than their enemy because they had the skills, know-how, passion, and tools to be victorious. In the battle for Christianity, we are offered a similar choice – to be prepared for battle or not.

In this series we'll explore Ephesians 6 where Paul does a masterful job laying out the elements of what we call **The Full Armor of God**. Nowhere in the New Testament does a writer so clearly outline the battle gear required for every Christian warrior, including the (1) belt of truth, (2) breastplate of righteousness, (3) feet fitted with readiness, (4) shield of faith, (5) helmet of salvation, and the (6) sword of the Spirit that is the Word of God. Ironically, of the six provided elements, only one was offensive (i.e., sword of the Spirit).

Tonight's Overview

Tonight, we're going to discuss the **fifth element** of The Full Armor of God – **the helmet of salvation**. I'll admit as I prepared for this lesson I struggled to fully understand what Paul meant. Of course, I understand the essential aspect of salvation for us as Believers and the importance in battle of protecting our head and mind. However, when I think of salvation I usually think of the heart, but Paul already assigned the breastplate to the heart.

After having spent some time praying and thinking through this, it seems to me that Paul is providing to us a framework for establishing our **confidence in battle**, a mindset. In our bodies, the greatest resource God has given us is our brain. The brain literally controls everything we do, both voluntary (i.e., speech, sight, motion, listening, etc.), and involuntary (i.e., heartbeat, central nervous system, etc.). If we protect our minds, we can prevent a myriad of bad things from happening, including but not limited to laziness, addictions, and anger.



The primary confidence you and I have as Believers is our salvation. If we have put our trust in Christ as Savior, you and I should never wonder about our eternal security. We should also not wonder about our purpose in life and if God has a plan for us. We must learn and identify what gifts, talents, and resources God has given us so that we can go do His work. Just like a soldier in battle who is confident in the battle plan to which he's been assigned, you and I should be confident in our standing with God through our salvation and pursue the work God has called us to do with confidence.



THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

In the lesson this week, I'd like to discuss two major topics. The first is fully understanding salvation, a topic most churches do not address very well. The second is protecting our minds to ensure we're ready for battle.

A Discussion on Salvation

Unfortunately, most churches don't teach salvation very well. At worst some churches teach a works-based salvation that is clearly against Biblical teaching (i.e., one can earn their salvation through good works). At the other extreme churches teach a simple salvation that only focuses on justification and the conversion process. Although not unbiblical in nature, this latter approach provides Christians with a simplistic view of salvation that limits their understanding of God and stunts their spiritual development.

I started to better understand salvation around 1996 when Dr. Joe Wall was pastor at Cypress Bible Church. He brought in a pastor and teacher named Dr. Earl Radmacher (1913 – 2014). Dr. Radmacher was the President of Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon for 25 years and impacted thousands of Bible teachers across the country (including me!). For the first time in my life Dr. Radmacher (and Joe) helped me understand the difference and connectedness between justification, sanctification, and glorification.

Provided in the figure below is a graphic showing the three facets of salvation. I want to be very clear – this is NOT a progressive salvation, or stages of salvation that we see in cults where people work to earn their salvation. Rather, there are three distinct facets of salvation we experience as Believers. Once we make a profession of faith and are **justified**, we are eternally secure. From that point forward until death (or Rapture of the Church), we are being **sanctified**, until we eventually receive our **glorified bodies** at the resurrection.

To better understand justification, sanctification, and glorification, consider the following:

- Justification – we are saved from the **PENALTY** of sin
- Sanctification – we are saved from the **POWER** of sin
- Glorification – we are saved from the **PRESENCE** of sin



I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:14

The following verses discuss how the three facets of salvation.

- Justification (Romans 5:1 and 8:33)
- Sanctification (2 Timothy 2:15-26)
- Glorification (John 12:12-16, Romans 8:30, 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12)

Most teaching on salvation does not distinguish between what can be called the *facets of salvation*; specifically, failing to distinguish between justification and sanctification. Failing to make a distinction between justification and sanctification at best results in confusion when discussing salvation, while at worst creates a works-based salvation that is common-place among the cults.





Protecting our Minds

As stated previously, our minds are the most powerful resource God has given us. As the writer of Proverbs (23:7) said, “As a man thinketh in his heart; so is he.” In many regards what you think of yourself and who you are comes from your mind. The mind can do many things for us and to us. Our mindset literally dictates the actions we take. Listed in the table below are a few things our minds can do that either glorify God or do not. Think about it – in every one of the topics below your mind determines what course of action you’ll take!

Topic	God Honoring	Selfish and Short-sighted
Interacting with others through speech	Be an encourager and show people the love of Jesus in how you speak and act towards them.	Being harsh, including store workers and customer support people on the phone/
What we choose to watch on TV	Limited TV time and make careful choices for yourself and for your family.	Too much TV, including sports and possibly sexually explicit shows.
What we do with our time	Have a plan for your time and ask for God’s guidance. Make church a priority, as well as personal growth time and time with family. Spend time reading and thinking.	Waste it! Do what we want, including a lot of watching TV and hanging out with friends neglecting the needs of your family and carer.
Money and finances	Work hard, save, give generously to God’s work and others who need help.	Never give to God’s work, waste it, hoard it, never look to help meet the needs of others.
The Bible	Study daily, teach children and youth, learn the Bible well enough to explain it to others with confidence.	Never study the Bible on your own.
Neighbors	Inviting them over for dinner, sharing the Gospel, inviting them to church.	Have nothing to do with them; don’t even know their name.
Being a Husband	Loving your wife as Jesus loved the Church, kind, selfless.	Forcing your wife to do what you want her to do, harsh when you don’t get your way, unloving.
Being a Father	Loving your children, modeling Godly leadership, being involved in church, and bringing them with you.	Being harsh and uncaring; having unrealistic expectations and forcing them to become who you want them to be.
What we do with our minds	It starts with studying the Bible and being knowledgeable about God, but developing our minds also includes being well read on a variety of subjects, learning new skills, and using our mind to develop ourselves.	Never reading or doing anything that causes you to think deeply; basically, wasting time not doing anything of significance or anything that helps others.





Listed below are the Bible passages for this week.

Ephesians 6:10-18: ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Proverbs 23:7 (KJV): "As a man thinketh in his heart; so is he."

2 Timothy 1:17 (NKJV): For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV): ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Questions

1. If you had an extra 12 hours in a day, what would you do with the time? Does anything in this lesson related to development of our minds interest you in terms of how you would use the extra time?
2. Explain the difference between the three following facets of salvation. Does this make sense?
Justification – we are saved from the _____ of sin
Sanctification – we are saved from the _____ of sin
Glorification – we are saved from the _____ of sin
3. As you think back over your life, when have you been most confident in your salvation and your relationship with the Lord?
4. In terms of your mindset, when do you find you are most **discouraged**? When are you most **encouraged**? Read Romans 12:1-2 and 2 Timothy 1:7 in developing your answers.
5. If you were to advise a young man in how he should develop his mind to honor God, what would you tell him?

