

TAKING THE HELMET OF SALVATION AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Ephesians 6:17

The assurance of salvation and the Word of God are indispensable in our spiritual war.

1.RECEIVE AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION

- A helmet is necessary to protect your head in battle. After the enemy fired their flaming darts, they advanced for close combat. Now the battle becomes up close and personal. The helmet is of utmost importance. No soldier would go into battle without a helmet. A helmet gives us confidence to wage war. A Roman helmet was made of iron or bronze with cheek guards and neck protection. It had a lining of sponge to make it bearable to wear. Nothing short of a direct blow from an ax or hammer could penetrate the Roman helmet. The helmet of salvation is also found on God's armor in the Old Testament – Isaiah 59:17.
- Our helmet is salvation. It is a helmet of salvation because we must be assured of our salvation to stand against the devil and his forces. Knowing we are saved in Christ alone keeps us safe against the worst blows of the enemy. It guards our minds from the lies of the enemy. Salvation is the gift of God. It is not dependent on us at all, but on God's grace in Christ. We can know we have salvation – 1 John 5:11-13. Salvation in Christ has a past, present, and future aspect. All three aspects are needed for the complete helmet of salvation. By faith in Christ we already have salvation in Christ – having been saved from the penalty of sin – Ephesians 2:8,9. We are being saved now from the power of sin – Philippians 2:12,13. Someday we will be saved from the very presence of sin – Ephesians 1:13,14. The glory to come is our sure hope in Christ – 1 Thessalonians 5:8. God will save and deliver His people in the End. *“That which adorns and protects the Christian, which enables him to hold up his head with confidence and joy, is the fact that he is saved.” – Charles Hodge.*
- Put your helmet on daily, reminding yourself of your secure position in Jesus Christ: you are alive in Christ, redeemed, forgiven, reconciled, raised with Christ and seated with Christ – Ephesians 2:4-6. Put on your helmet and don't let the devil get into your head – Romans 13:11-14.

2.RECEIVE AND TAKE THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

- No soldier would go into battle without a sword. The final piece of God's armor He supplies for us in Christ is offensive as well as defensive. It is the sword of or from the Spirit, the Word of God. The word for sword here refers to the short double-edged Roman sword common to the legions, about 18-24 inches long. It was used for jabbing and striking down the enemy. This sword illustrates the Holy Spirit-given Word of God. God's word is from the Holy Spirit and has both defensive and offensive power to destroy the deceptions of the enemy – 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.
- Jesus Himself wields the sword which is the Word – Isaiah 11:4, 49:2; Revelation 1:16; 19:15. He spoke the universe into existence. He will bring the world to an end in victory with His sword-like Word. During His earthly life, Jesus wielded the sword against the devil in His own temptation. Three times the devil tempted Him and three times Jesus used the Word of God to counter Satan's attack – Matthew 4:4,7, 10. We are to follow Jesus' example, but also rejoice in His victory. He won the battle for us and went all the way to the cross for us. We stand in His

victory and His righteousness. Jesus not only wielded the Word of God, He is the Word of God – Revelation 19:13. The written Word of God reveals the Living Word of God, Jesus.

- Don't attempt to go against the devil and his forces without the Bible. Our warfare is hand to hand, close combat in our struggle to live a godly life for Christ's honor. You need God's Word. The Holy Spirit and the Word go hand in hand. His power rests on the Word. How can we wield this mighty weapon? Practice your sword drill. Read it. Get into God's Word daily. Study it. Rely on the Author, the Holy Spirit. Think about it. Memorize it. Pray it. Learn from others. Proclaim it. Share what you are learning with others. Let the Bible work first in your own heart and life – Hebrews 4:12,13. The Word of God not only is for battle with the enemy, it is also a scalpel that dissects our own hearts. *"God's Word penetrates to the deepest recesses of who we are. As we read the Bible and expose ourselves to it, it cuts us. It convicts of us sin. It points us to duties we'd rather not know about. It challenges us in areas where we are far too comfortable. It digs down into the hidden areas of our soul and lays them bare to God's scrutiny. As it does, it cleanses us and purifies us. In the presence of the Word of God, everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of the one to whom we must give account."* – Iain Duguid.
- We stand on the authority of the Word – 2 Timothy 4:2-4. Ask: "where is it written?" Truth matters. One of Satan's attacks is to cast doubt on God's Word – Genesis 3:1. Satan is still questioning God's Word in our culture on truth itself, the uniqueness of Jesus, sex outside of marriage, homosexuality, eternal hell, etc. Take all of the Bible as God's truth. Don't delete parts or cut out parts you don't like. *"A mutilated Bible is a broken sword."* – D.L. Moody. Stand firm in Christ's salvation upon His Word!

Concluding applications:

- How does your assurance of salvation and sure hope of heaven encourage you in the midst of trials?
- How is your mind and thinking shaped and protected by the gospel?
- How do you prepare for battle with your sword, the Word of God?
- Don't be ashamed of the gospel or the Bible. Trust God's truth and live it.