

Lesson Nine— The Helmet of Salvation

Day One – The Helmet of Salvation

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We are nearing the end of our study on the full armor of God. This armor is a serious and necessary element in our individual, lifelong battle with our enemy, and no part of it is to be taken lightly. God has provided this means of defense for precisely the reason that we WILL need it—otherwise He would not have spoken about it. Think about that. YOU need the full armor of God to withstand in this evil day. *Every* piece of armor is crucial. You must know what it is, how it fits together, and how to know whether you have it on or not.

How would you describe your current state of preparedness?

If you feel as if you are falling short of being prepared, ask God to give you knowledge, desire, and *faith*. Ask Him with a pure heart. And be prepared to receive it.

Day One – The Helmet of Salvation

This week as we study the helmet of salvation we will need to focus primarily on a passage in Thessalonians, which is an excellent explanation for, and commentary on, this week's piece of armor.

Read through our foundational Ephesians passage, and then read the passage from Thessalonians. We'll briefly discuss how to compare them before looking deeper into the meaning behind the "helmet."

Ephesians 6:10-18

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our

struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of this wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints...

Paul's letter to the Church in Thessalonica—

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹ Now as to the times and the epochs [of the return of the Lord Jesus, *check context*], brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.

⁸ But 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.

⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

What does Paul call the helmet in Ephesian 6:17?

What does Paul call the helmet in I Thessalonians 5:8?

Which salvation is being referenced? How do you know?

As we've learned, the word *salvation* can mean different things in Scripture; it is not just a reference to deliverance from an eternity in hell, as we may have previously been taught. There is the salvation that pertains to our spiritual birth, a salvation that we currently possess. There is also the salvation of our soul, a salvation that will be revealed in a time yet future. One main difference between the two is that one is freely given by the work of Another, and the other is given based on our faithful works of obedience. So, in essence, determining which salvation the helmet is referring to in both passages is easy to ascertain—notice that Paul says in both letters that *we* put it on. This implies a work, and any type of work that is done *by us* has no place in the free gift of salvation.

It's extremely important to grasp the bigger picture of context when we compare like words, such as helmet, from separate books of the Bible. We need to make sure we are not just grabbing at words because we want to *make* them fit together. The only way we can properly make the words fit together is if the original writer(s) intended them to mean similar things. This is all part of hermeneutics, and all students of Scripture need to follow certain guidelines to make sure they are studying Scripture in the proper fashion. This particular example is an easy one, since the same writer wrote both letters, and the helmet in both cases is seen in terms of salvation and in conjunction with a breastplate; this, combined with the overall idea of battling in relation to the coming Day of the Lord makes the similarities obvious. Let's take a closer look at how we arrive at this—

- I. Paul writes to similar groups of people (to Thessalonica around 51 A.D. and to Ephesus around 60 A.D).
 - Paul calls the Church at Ephesus the “faithful in Christ Jesus” and says to them, “For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you...” (Eph. 1:15-16).
 - Paul writes to the Church at Thessalonica, “We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; constantly bearing in mind your *work of faith* and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ...you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.” (I Thess. 1:3-4,7)
- II. Paul exhorts both groups to behave in a manner worthy of the kingdom to which they have been called. (This is essentially the theme of all his letters.)
 - To the Church at Ephesus he writes, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love...do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” (Eph. 5:1,2,3,5)
 - To the Church at Thessalonica Paul writes, “...just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” (I Thess. 2:11-12)
- III. The Church in Thessalonica had undergone and was still encountering much tribulation and suffering, the Church at Ephesus was about to (primarily in regards to the destructive work of false teachers).
 - Paul told the elders of the Church at Ephesus (almost ten years prior to his writing the epistle of Ephesians) to “be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock...after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” (Acts 20:28-30) This can also be seen in Paul's letter to Timothy (who was in Ephesus at the time), which Paul wrote shortly *after* his letter to the Church at Ephesus, regarding the strange doctrines being taught there (I Tim. 1:1-7). Even Peter addresses the sufferings that believers were enduring in that area (*cf.* I Peter 1:1; 1:6; 3:14; 3:17; 5:10). This helps explain why Paul tells the Church at Ephesus to put on the whole armor in order that they may stand firm (Eph. 6:10-20).
 - Paul states that the Thessalonians “endured the same sufferings at the hands of [their] own countrymen,” and he had told them in advance that they were going to “suffer affliction,” which he said “came to pass.” He writes, “For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor should be in vain” (I Thess. 2:14; 3:4-5). In Paul's second letter to this church, written that same year, Paul references their present sufferings (II Thess. 1:4). Knowing this helps us see why Paul encourages them to wear the armor so that they will overcome.

- IV. Both churches are told to overcome now, with the armor on, in light of the coming Day of the Lord.
- To Ephesus, Paul writes, “take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day (this present day), and having done everything, to stand firm.” (Eph. 6:13). He had earlier stated that the mystery (which has to do with Christ and His bride, the spotless and unblemished Church, to be determined in that coming day) was to be made known “through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 3:10)
 - To Thessalonica, Paul writes that the Day of the Lord will “come just like a thief in the night,” but “we (*the faithful*—check context) are of the day” and we need to be “sober” with this armor on in order to escape through the destruction of this day.

Do you see the similarities? For the most thorough understanding, you should read both epistles in one sitting and compare the overall subject matter of each. I have pointed out some of the highlights in order to show the thought process that must happen each time we connect the dots. When you study each book, you must keep all of these things in perspective, all the while keeping the overall perspective of the central theme of the Big Book. Sometimes it’s easy to see the connections—like the helmet—other times it is not so easy.

This was a short day of study, so spend some time becoming familiar with both passages concerning the helmet. If you still have some time today, read the entire Book of I Thessalonians. It’s short, but packed with information.

We’ll pick up again tomorrow.

Day Two – The Hope of Salvation

Don’t forget to pray.

We’ve established that the part of our armor Paul calls the helmet of salvation can also be described as the *hope* of salvation. It is stated like this—

I Thessalonians 5:8-11

⁸ But 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. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

We have already covered in past lessons what our “hope” is as Christians. This is a crucial part of what we believe, so let’s review a few verses again concerning hope—

I Peter 1:3-5, 9

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials. ⁹...obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

Understanding Spiritual Warfare— Standing Firm in the Battle

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What are we born again to (v. 3)?

This living hope is explained in v. 4. What is it?

This hope is connected to a salvation (v. 5). When will that salvation be revealed? What salvation must it be referring to (v. 9)?

More from Paul—

Titus 2:11-13

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;

When do we realize the blessed hope (v. 13)?

Continuing in Titus—

Titus 3:5-7

⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal [age-lasting] life.

What does this hope have to do with (v. 7)?

More on hope from Paul—

Colossians 1:27

...to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in [or “among”] you, the hope of glory.

What else does this hope have to do with?

Glory, the salvation of the soul, life for the age to come, the inheritance reserved in heaven are all facets of the *complete picture of the hope* that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ made possible. This hope is

to encourage us, to strengthen us, to help us to stand firm in the battle against the heavenly forces. It is to be our focus; it is to be our anchor—

Hebrews 6:18-19

¹⁸...in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil...

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul! Think about that phrase, and then personalize it—

This hope I have as an anchor of my soul!

Is that a true statement? Do you have *this hope* as an anchor of your soul? If not, then how can you expect to wear the helmet that's comprised of it?

Notice what the author of Hebrews says about laying hold of the hope, "we who have fled for refuge..." What do we need to flee and seek refuge *from*? (Think about David escaping from Saul's kingdom, and the typology in that word picture.)

We must not move away from this hope! Because hope, being what it is, sometimes is realized, and sometimes *is not* realized.

We can see hope in a general sense being played out in an *unrealized* fashion in Scripture—

Luke 23:8-9

⁸ Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. ⁹ And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing.

What was Herod hoping to see?

Did he see it?

Even though the Scriptures don't record it, do you think that Herod still had hope after he realized that Jesus was not going to perform a sign?

More about hope—

Acts 16:16-19

¹⁶ And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortunetelling. ¹⁷ Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bondservants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸

And she continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!” And it came out at that very moment.¹⁹ But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities.

What was the slave-girl doing that was bringing her master profit (v. 16)?

What did Paul do to her?

With the spirit gone, could she perform this work anymore?

Since there would be no more profit, her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone. Hope remains hope until some termination point. Do you see that?

The Scriptures also present hope as *conditional*—

Hebrews 3:5-6

⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; ⁶ but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

Colossians 1:22-23

²² ...yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—²³ if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

These two passages place the idea of hope within an “if”, “then” sentence structure. What are the conditions surrounding hope?

Lot’s wife is an example of someone who did not (figuratively) have on the helmet of the hope of salvation. Do you remember her? You should, for we are told to by Jesus Himself:

Luke 17:32

Remember Lot’s wife.

You can read her story in Genesis 19:1-29. She started out all right; she was moving in the right direction and knew exactly where she was going. She was told to “escape for your life!” to the mountains, and specifically to NOT look back, *but she looked back anyway*. She thought that what she was leaving behind was much more important than what lay ahead of her.

She did not have on her helmet of the hope of salvation; if she had had it on, she would have been in the front of the pack running toward that mountain, not in the back, wishing she could stay in the valley.

Understanding Spiritual Warfare— Standing Firm in the Battle

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Jesus says something similar during His earthly ministry—

Luke 9:61-61

⁶¹ And another also said, “I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say goodbye to those at home.” ⁶² But Jesus said to him, “No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

What does “putting your hand to the plow” represent?

What does “looking back” represent?

If one does look back after putting his hand to the plow, how are they described?

And notice what we are to look to—

Hebrews 12:1-2

¹ Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Who are we to fix our eyes on?

Underline the second half of v. 1.

Rewrite this passage in your own words.

Describe what it looks like to have on the helmet of salvation.

And to sum it all up—

Psalm 71:5

For Thou art my hope, O Lord God...

Isn't God's Word awesome!?

See you tomorrow.

Day Three – Sons of Day

In the Book of Thessalonians, Paul makes a connection between wearing the helmet and being “of the day” and being “sober.” Today we’ll look at the former phrase, and the latter tomorrow. Paul, you remember, is writing to a faithful group of Christians that he has no doubt will enter into the kingdom of their Lord—

I Thessalonians 4:17-18

¹⁷ **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them** [the dead in Christ] **in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.** ¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

Note: If you were to take this previous passage out of context, you could question whether there really is a separation of Christians at the judgment seat, as we have been studying. Again, you must go back to context of the entire letter and note the numerous times that Paul describes the Thessalonian Church in an *extremely positive and faithfully obedient way* (see vv. 1:3; 1:6-8; 2:13-14; 2:17-20; 3:5-7; 4:1; 5:4-5). Therefore, because of what Paul has seen in them, he is able to say confidently that they will *always* be with the Lord in that Coming Day.

Now read the whole passage again—

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹ **Now as to the times and the epochs** [of the return of the Lord Jesus, check context], **brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you.** ² **For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.** ³ **While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.** ⁴ **But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief;** ⁵ **for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;** ⁶ **so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.** ⁷ **For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.**

⁸ **But since we are of the day** [Lit., we are of day], **let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.**

⁹ **For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,** ¹⁰ **who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him.** ¹¹ **Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.**

According to v. 4, what does the Day of the Lord do to the one who is in darkness?

Do you remember what the Day of the Lord is?

Paul describes this faithful group as being “sons of day” and accordingly they will not be overtaken “like a thief” when the Day of the Lord comes. They will not be like the others he describes, the ones “in darkness,” who do *not* escape. It is important for us to understand what the phrase “of day” means, and even more importantly, how to emulate it. We’ll spend the rest of today’s study time doing just that.

The Greek translation for “the day of the Lord” is comprised of two definite articles that precede both nouns, which means that it is referring to *the* Day of *the* Lord. Remember, in the Greek language, the use of a definite article emphasizes the person or thing it is used with. Notice that Paul calls them “sons of day” and not “sons of *the* day”; there is no definite article. Based on this we can see that being a “son of day” isn’t referencing being a son of “the day of the Lord.” This, then, puts these actions in the *present*, implying *future* ramifications. Do you see that?

In this passage, we do see the phrase “sons of day” written in such a way as to put it on equal ground as “sons of light.” Paul juxtaposes these two phrases with *not* being “of night nor of darkness.” This gives us some direction to go in understanding *light* and *day* in a similar sense. Let’s see what other Scriptures say about this—

Genesis 1:4-5

⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.⁵ And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

What is the light called?

What is the darkness called?

Do you remember the connection with this restoration account and the restoration of fallen man’s spirit? This was in Day One of Lesson Three. Go back and review this part, if necessary.

We read more about *day* in the following passage—

John 11:9-10

⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

If anyone walks in the day, does he stumble?

Why?

If anyone walks in the night, does he stumble?

Why?

Continuing in the Gospel of John—

John 12:35-36

³⁵ Jesus therefore said to them, “For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light.”

Jesus says this immediately after saying to His disciples that the “Son of Man must be lifted up” (John 12:32-34). What does He say they must do to become “sons of light” (v. 36)?

Would He be referring to belief that brings about spiritual birth, or a belief subsequent to that? How do you know?

Keeping in mind that the disciples were born again individuals, what was it that they were to “believe” about Jesus? (You need to really think about this one. Refer to Matthew 16:13-20 if necessary.)

What doesn’t the one who “walks in the darkness” know (v.35)?

And from the same book—

John 8:12

Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

He who follows Jesus will not walk in the darkness. What will he have?

According to John 8:12, if one wants to *not* walk in darkness, he must follow Jesus. Read what it takes to follow Jesus—

Luke 9:23-26

²³ And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” ²⁴ For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. ²⁵ For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

According to Jesus' Own words, what does it take to follow Him, and why?

With this in mind (noting especially that the one in darkness does *not* know where he is going), why does Paul write in the I Thessalonians chapter 5 passage that a “son of day” and “son of light” will NOT be overtaken by the Coming Day of the Lord?

I hope this encourages you to be sure you are wearing the armor of God, so you too can be a “son of day” and “son of light.” I imagine that none of us wants to be caught unaware and unprepared when the Day of the Lord comes!

See you tomorrow.

Day Four – Be Alert and Sober

Begin with prayer.

The second part of Paul's description regarding *not* being in darkness and *not* being overtaken by the Day of the Lord is what he describes as being “alert and sober”—

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹ Now as to the times and the epochs [of the return of the Lord Jesus], brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³ While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.

⁸ But since we are of the day [Lit., “we are of day”], let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Paul commands the Church at Thessalonica, and himself, to “not sleep” as others do, and to be “alert and sober” (v. 6). When do sleepers sleep and drunks get drunk (v. 7)?

What is *night* associated with?

NOTE: Paul begins this thought about being prepared for the coming of the Day of the Lord by addressing a specific concern that the Church had about “those who have fallen asleep in Jesus” (vv. 4:13-16). Verse 16 is obviously referencing Christians who have died physically with the term “fallen asleep.” However, when Paul starts talking about letting *us* not “sleep” because “those who sleep do their sleeping at night,” he is not referencing this same idea. The word for “asleep” in v. 13 is the Greek word *koimao* (2837), which means to put to sleep or to be dead. The word for “sleep” in v. 6 is the Greek word *katheudo* (2518), which means to lie down to rest. He is speaking of our *spiritual life*, not our *physical life*. Thus, with Paul stating not to “sleep,” he is not saying anything about being *physically* dead, but rather admonishing them, and himself, to “be alert” and “be sober” *spiritually*.

Let’s look at couple of instances in Scripture where we see sleeping portrayed in the manner of not being alert. Here the physical would reflect the spiritual—

Matthew 26:37-41

³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. ³⁸ Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.” ³⁹ And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” ⁴⁰ And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? ⁴¹ Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Jesus admonishes His disciples for sleeping while they should have been keeping watch with Him. Why does Jesus say they need to keep watch (v. 41)?

And another passage—

Mark 13:32-37

³² [Jesus speaking] “But of the day or hour [of the Lord’s return] no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son but the Father alone. ³³ Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is. ³⁴ It is like a man, away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. ³⁵ Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrow, or in the morning—³⁶ lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’”

According to Jesus, being *asleep* means *not being alert*. What does Jesus say in v. 37?

His admonition to stay alert is in view of what (vv. 32 and 33)?

The idea of being “sober” is also connected with the idea of being “alert” in Peter’s epistle:

I Peter 5:8

Be sober, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Why do we need to be alert?

What happens if our adversary devours us? What do we Christians have to lose?

Paul commanded the Thessalonians, and himself, to “be sober” with the armor on (I Thess. 5:8). Why does he say they need to “be sober” and “of day” (I Thess. 5:9)?

Now going back to the helmet, and the idea of being sober, note the following passage from Peter’s first epistle (which was written to the general area where you’ll find Ephesus, just a year or two after Paul wrote his letter)—

I Peter 1:10-13

¹⁰ **As to this salvation** [of the soul, see v. 9], **the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry,** ¹¹ **seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.** ¹² **It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.** ¹³ **Therefore, gird [Lit., bind] your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

What part of the body does the helmet go on?

What are the commands in v. 13?

Verse 13 begins with the word “therefore.” What are the thoughts that the “therefore” connects?

With all of these thoughts in mind, summarize what is meant by the helmet of salvation.

Paul has an excellent summation of this whole thought surrounding the helmet of salvation in his letter to the Church in Rome—

Romans 13:10-14

¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law. ¹¹ And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. ¹² The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

This all has to do with obtaining salvation, doesn't it? We need to heed the words from the author of Hebrews—

Hebrews 2:3

...how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

Think on these things and we'll meet again tomorrow.

Day Five – More Encouragement

I have heard it said by some that this kingdom teaching is an impossible expectation for Christians, that entrance into the kingdom is too hard to “earn” and no one can ever measure up. I have heard by some Christians that the immensity of guilt over *confessed* sin, coupled with the lack of some tangible work to proclaim, is keeping them from enjoying the hope that is set before them. I have even heard from some who have said that they don't expect to receive their inheritance, no matter how much they try. Wow, there is a very definite lack of faith in these statements.

I imagine that if you are a “glass is half empty” kind of person this might be your initial response to the calling that God has for you. If so, you may be the kind of person who thinks negatively about most things so that when things turn out positively, you can be pleasantly surprised and not have to suffer from

disappointment. However, this is *not* how God expects us to respond to the offer He has for us, nor the attitude that pleases Him in regards to His promises. One could even say this attitude is self-centered and *faith-less*. Let's note what God has said concerning His promise to His children, and how it contradicts the mindset I've just described.

Romans 4:13-16

¹³ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; ¹⁵ for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶ For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

The inheritance is a promise to the descendants of Abraham, which all Christians are. Therefore... (Perhaps you may want to say this aloud.)

The inheritance is a promise to me because I am a descendant of Abraham.

Ephesians 1:14

[The Holy Spirit of promise] is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

II Peter 1: 3-4

³ ...seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. ⁴ For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises...

The inheritance is yours to attain. You need to stay faithful to what God has said. He has given you *everything* you need to do so. Therefore...

The inheritance is mine to attain. I need to stay faithful to what God has said. He has given me everything I need to do so.

Philippians 3:20

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

Colossians 1:13-14

¹³ For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

All Christians have been delivered out of the kingdom of Satan (this present world system) and into the kingdom of God's Son. Our citizenship is *there*, not here. Therefore...

I have been delivered out of the kingdom of Satan, this present world system. My citizenship is in the kingdom of God's Son.

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ **Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.**
⁶ **In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.**

The Lord will direct you and bring you into His kingdom, *if you let Him*. Therefore....

The Lord will direct me and bring me into His kingdom, if I let Him.

John 15:7-11

⁷ **“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. ⁹ Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”**

Abide in the Lord. Let His words abide in you. Keep His commandments. He wants His joy to be your joy, and for *your joy to be made full*. Therefore...

I must abide in the Lord. I must let His words abide in me. I must keep His commandments. He wants His joy to be my joy and for my joy to be made full.

Hebrews 9:11-12,16,22

¹¹ **But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹⁶ For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. ²² And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.**

It took the death of *God Himself* to make this possible. Do not make light of it or consider it unimportant. God shed His blood—for you—to give you the Kingdom. Say it aloud...

It took the death of God *Himself* to make this possible for me. It is of utmost importance. God shed His blood to give me the kingdom.

Deuteronomy 30:11,14

¹¹ **For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. ¹⁴ But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.**

You CAN be obedient. It is not too difficult. Therefore...

I CAN be obedient. It is not too difficult for me.

Luke 10:25-28

²⁵ And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal [age-lasting] life?” ²⁶ And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” ²⁷ And he answered and said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; Do this, and you will live.”

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.

Do this, and you will live...

...If I do this, I will live.

Don't listen to the naysayers, don't listen to the voice of guilt, and don't listen to the enemy. Listen to the Spirit and He will guide you into all truth.

I Thessalonians 5:11, 13-17

¹¹ Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing. ¹³ ...Live in peace with one another. ¹⁴ And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men. ¹⁵ See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men. ¹⁶ Rejoice always; ¹⁷ pray without ceasing; ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

AMEN!

See you next time.