

Hurst Green
23rd Sep 2018

Eph 6 17

The helmet of salvation

So I hope you have remembered the shield of faith during your walk this week.

Consciously picking it up daily and going for the big one.

Has it made difference – practice makes perfect – do not give up on it. As I emphasised last week although it is part of the whole armour and we need it all it is probably the most important part since it is your primary defence.

With Margaret and I away next week and the Methodist anniversary on the 8th it will be the 15th before we can return to the offensive and the sword of the spirit but for this week we have the helmet of salvation.

Ephesians 6:17 (ANIV)

¹⁷ *Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

Again much has been written about this with regard to the roman soldiers who were guarding Paul and were probably chained to him to ensure he would not escape. This has led to some excellent descriptions of the roman helmets and how that inspired Paul.

Paul had been a first class rabbi and knew his scriptures and now knew how they had been fulfilled in his sight and here is encouraging the Ephesians to stand even as he himself was standing and so encouraging us down the years to also stand.

As I started this series the whole point is to get us to stand – to stand in every aspect of our life – in big things and in small things.

V13 after you have done everything to stand.

I hope these weeks are encouraging you to stand – to stand whatever the cost.

The roman helmet has been used by so many as the illustration of this verse but God is much bigger than that and Paul knew it because he would have known the verses in Isaiah speaking of God himself

Isaiah 59:17 (ANIV)

¹⁷ *He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.*

If you go back and look at the chapter in Isaiah it is on one of his favourite subjects – Sin and repentance and for these particular verses it follows a statement

Isaiah 59:15-16 (ANIV)

¹⁵ *Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The LORD looked*

and was displeased that there was no justice. ¹⁶ He saw that there was no-one, he was appalled that there was no-one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him.

God as always seeks justice and looks for us to seek justice in our world – to do the right things regardless of consequence. All part of that command to stand.

But back in Isaiah we have the helmet of salvation but our God putting it on his head – now under the new covenant we are all part of the body of Christ and so the helmet of salvation is for all of us and a very important part of our equipment it is.

Today helmets are not only for soldiers – we have helmets for all types of activity – Skiing, boarding . Motorbikes, worksite and cycling spring instantly to mind.

If you look up some news articles you find some amazing stories – true stories of how helmets have saved people.

One struck me where a young girl was knocked off her bike and the wheel of the car ran over her head. You would not expect a pretty outcome but she was wearing a helmet and had no damage – apart from remembering a wheel running her over of course.

Cycle helmets make look fairly flimsy but they save lives!

And so we have the helmet of salvation to put on as part of our armour of God. Take whatever analogy of a helmet you like or consider all of them this is not a lesson on roman helmets but a lesson on salvation and be sure you understand it.

The first error we can make is assuming this is about our initial salvation. There is no way that our initial salvation can be item five on putting on the armour of God – that is just the wrong order!

Salvation is dealt with in Chapter 2 of this great book which of course you have taken advantage of these weeks of focus to look at how the whole book hangs together for after all it is one letter.

Now I could read the whole of the first part of chapter 2 to you because it is so full of exciting words and promises that are the things we should be taking a stand on and things that show the great glory of our God and his tremendous mercy and his incomparable glories but I only want to show that your salvation is not achieved through the helmet but that the helmet is achieved through your salvation.

So if you have not done so turn back to Chapter 2 and let's pick out a few verses and phrases to encourage you to remember your salvation this morning.

In fact I am going to start in Chapter 1

Ephesians 1:18 (ANIV)

¹⁸ *I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,*

Do you remember you have a glorious inheritance? The bible is full of these words such as glorious which just form part of the pattern as we rush over them when we read them but we need to slow down and consider what God is saying in this.

This is no ordinary inheritance – here is a few things and some money that great aunt Agatha has left behind as she has passed away.

This is a glorious inheritance that awaits you when you pass away – the glorious inheritance of the New Jerusalem. I am not going to revelation to show you have glorious it is because you can do that yourself.

But in chapter 2 we have this section – made alive in Christ and that in itself should thrill us. Sin leads to death although that is not a popular subject but it is a very simple one because sin is being apart from God and too many people are deciding they do not need a God and use the title of a song that is too familiar at funerals – I’ll do it my way.

My way leads to Revelation 20 and not being found in the book of life and so heading for the lake of fire!

But the salavation of Ephesians 2 comes by grace and faith (v8) – a gift of God.

Gift

And look at verse 7 – that he might show the incomparable riches of hid Grace

That he expresses his kindness to us because he is rich in mercy.

That is your point of salvation – when you accepted Christ and all his promises.

Then you put on the armour – you only get the issue once you have joined the army! The army did not start sending me bits of uniform when I was considering joining. Once I joined I was issued the full set of uniform.

So you get saved and you get the full armour of God and of course this passage; this series is trying to get you to put on the full armour for your own protect so that you may stand in all things.

So why the helmet of salvation? Well salvation is a strange thing since the New Testament describes it in different ways

- That we have been saved is in Eph 2:5
- That we are being saved is in 1 Cor 1:18
- And we will be saved is in Matthew 10:22

We have looked at the fact that we have been saved already.

That we are being saved is important because we have that verse from 1 Tim

1 Timothy 4:1 (ANIV)

¹ *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.*

Your salvation is secure because God keeps his promises and the only way you can miss out is if you decide to put it to one side.

John 10:27-30 (ANIV)

²⁷ *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.* ²⁸ *I give them eternal life,*

and they shall never perish; no-one can snatch them out of my hand.²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Nothing can snatch you from God – always remember that.

But as I said last week why would anyone do that but we are warned that many will turn away – turn away from the greatest gift you could possibly have – sounds crazy but there are many that will.

In deed there are many that have and need to be called back by those who are still prepared to stand – to stand in the full armour extinguishing all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

So that is why being saved is there – our salvation is an ongoing thing that we can lay down; we can choose to do avail ourselves of it and so loose it but be assured that God will never take it from us – it is something we take from ourselves. Please do not do that.

Elsewhere we are encouraged to work out our salvation – keep this an active process by putting on the helmet of salvation daily

And remember that bike helmet – it may save you any day!!

And then will be saved

Remember

1 Corinthians 1:18 (ANIV)

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

We know where our power comes from and we know who has given us this great gift and so we are left with only one thing

Matthew 10:22 (ANIV)

²² All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

And so we come back to standing – standing firm to claim that great prize and our glorious inheritance that is ours when the race has been run; when the final whistle blows when we hear those word “well done my good and faithful servant”

So that is how salvation works out and you have the helmet of salvation that you must be putting on daily to ensure that you never lay aside the gift of salvation.

Put in on to guard your mind that you may be secure and confident in the promises your God has given you.

Then you can say with Paul

2 Timothy 4:7-8 (ANIV)

⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Let make sure we see each other on that day as we collect those crowns and are let into the New Jerusalem by our great and merciful God because we have stood only in his power but wearing his full armour.

