

Sunday School Lesson for the Month of August 2017

The Helmet of Salvation

(Ephesians 6:17a)

Sunday, August 6, 2017

Football players are required to wear helmets to protect their heads while playing. Motorcyclists are required to wear helmets to lessen the danger of damaging the brain in an accident. Construction workers are required to wear hard hats to protect themselves from falling objects. What is the purpose of the helmet of salvation to which the Apostle Paul refers? Surely it has to do with the head, the seat of our intellect, our personality and the source of our actions. “The helmet of salvation” emphasizes that genuine religion involves the intellect as well as the emotions. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to “love the Lord your God with all your mind” [Matt. 22:37]. We respond to God’s will with our emotions and our mind. Only as we respond totally, can we overcome the evil that would destroy us.

I. The helmet of salvation emphasizes the role of our heart in the conflict with evil.

It is God’s will that we be delivered from the oppressive power of Satan in our rational or intellectual life. God spoke through Isaiah, urging the people of that day to seek the Lord with all their being and to turn from their wicked ways. Their wicked ways are explained as being a result of their thoughts not conforming to God’s thoughts [Isa. 55:6-9]. People will be delivered from the destructiveness of evil only when they direct their minds toward the mind of God and let the thoughts of God become their way of thinking.

The call to repentance is basically the call for a deep, sincere and continuous turning from the mind of the flesh to the mind of God. John the Baptist appeared as the forerunner of Jesus, calling on people to repent. His message of repentance was not so much a threat as it was an invitation for them to change their thought patterns with reference to the nature of God and the program of God in the world. Only as they changed their attitude could they experience forgiveness and be prepared for the coming of the Messiah [Mark 1:4]. Jesus opened and closed his ministry by calling for repentance [Mark 1:14-15; Luke 24:46-47]. Jesus called on people to make a basic and fundamental

change or direction in their lives. They were to stop rebelling and come to God in an attitude of recognition, submission and trust.

The Apostle Paul urged Roman Christians to forsake their natural, fleshly, earthly ways of thinking and experience spiritual transformation that could come about only as they experienced a “renewal of the mind” [Rom. 12:1-2].

Paul encourages the believers in Corinth to bring every thought into captivity to the Lordship of Jesus Christ [2Cor. 10:3-5]. He reminded them that they were engaged in spiritual warfare, and in order to overcome, they must let Jesus Christ have control of their thoughts and attitudes.

The mind of Jesus Christ is said to be the goal for which all of us should seek if we would be true followers of our Lord [Phil. 2:5]. We will never be able to reflect and manifest true Christianity until we bring our intellect, our thought process, and our scale of values into conformity to the mind and the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

If we want to truly put on the helmet of salvation, we must let Jesus Christ be the Lord of our intellect. We must not live our lives subject to the moods and impulses of our emotions. We must bring our emotions under the control of an intellect that has been fashioned after the mind of Jesus Christ.

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II. The helmet of salvation emphasizes full Salvation.

One of the major reasons why so many of us are defeated in the struggle with evil is that we are uninformed concerning the nature of God’s great salvation, which is offered to us through Jesus Christ. We need to fill our intellect with an understanding of what God has done, what God is doing, and what God will do to accomplish his salvation within us. If we do not understand what God is doing with our intellect, then we will be open to many assaults by the devil as he tries to defeat us. Our salvation is indeed a great salvation including justification, sanctification and glorification.

- **Justification** – Salvation as a past accomplishment [Eph. 2:8-9]. Paul wrote to the Ephesian Christians on the basis that they were followers of Jesus Christ. They had experienced a spiritual resurrection from the deadness of sin and were now seated in heaven with Jesus Christ as far as their position with God was concerned. Paul saw their salvation from the penalty of sin as a past accomplishment of God.

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- **Sanctification** – Salvation as a present process [Phil. 2:12-13]. Paul wrote to the Philippian Christians about their persistent participation in the process of being saved from the power and practice of sin in their daily lives as the children of God. Paul urges all believers to work diligently with the Holy Spirit, whom God gave to them in the conversion experience [Gal. 4:6] so that they might experience the fruit of the Spirit [Gal. 5:22-23]. The fruit of the Spirit are the natural expressions of the work of the indwelling Spirit in the hearts of believers as they cooperate with God who is seeking to deliver them from the evil of this present world.

Sunday, August 27, 2017

- **Glorification** – Salvation as a future prospect [Phil. 3:20-21; Heb. 9:28]. Children of God who are saved from the penalty of sin because of their initial faith commitment to Jesus Christ and who are in a process of being saved from the power and practice of sin through cooperation with the Holy Spirit will not be saved from the presence of sin until the Lord Jesus Christ returns or until he calls them to heaven.

If we want to truly put on the helmet of salvation, we must understand and appreciate what God has done for us in the past. We must remind ourselves that when we trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, God accepted us and received us into his family declaring us acceptable to him on the basis of our faith commitment to Jesus Christ [Rom. 5:1]. We need to understand and respond to the present work of God as he works from the moment of conversion to the consummation of our life by means of the Holy Spirit who is seeking to reproduce within us the character and personality of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is engaged in an unending conflict with the evil that is within us and the evil that is about us. The Holy Spirit will deliver us from every assault of Satan. When we experience failure and defeat, the Holy Spirit comes to rescue us and to cheer us in a continuing struggle to become all that God desires us to be.

God wants to save everyone from the penalty of sin, which is spiritual death. He has made this possible for everyone through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To experience this salvation, we need to put faith in Jesus Christ.

Put on the helmet of salvation.