

Part 13: The Helmet of Salvation, The Sword of the Spirit, and All-Prayer

Introduction

Today marks the end of our study of *The Invisible War Against Satan*. By God's own self-disclosure through His Word, the curtain has been pulled back on this malevolent spirit. Though we have only been given a glimpse of Satan's hatred for the Triune God and for us as sons and daughters of the King, it is, nonetheless, true in every detail. We have a reliable portrait of his infernal character, proof of his role in the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (and, thus, of the entire creation), serious warnings about underestimating the prolific activity of his band of innumerable demons, and assurance of God's protection as we fight against these fiends of darkness. These evil principalities have targeted and wounded all of us in many and various ways – no one has been exempted – but "we overwhelmingly conqueror through Him who loved us" (Rom. 8:37). This is God's promise to us – and He is faithful.

Introduction

In the introduction to my first lecture in this series, I offered the following reason for entering into this study: "The Invisible War Against Satan is a series designed to address the questions that you may have been asking for years, to dispel ideas which have their roots in pagan myths and cultures, and to challenge popular and long-held beliefs about Satan, demonization, demon possession, and exorcisms which fail to take the Scriptures seriously." I pray that you have been helped and better equipped to "stand firm against the schemes of the devil." And I trust that you have grown in your understanding that the foe we face is not someone that we may "toy" with and that only God Himself is able to win this invisible war as we put on the full armor each day.

A Personal Note

I entered into this study at the suggestion of a good friend who felt that this subject is seldom taught today in our churches or in secular society. No one knew this, but I settled it in my heart, after much prayer, that if I accepted this assignment, I would investigate what the Scriptures said about Satan and spiritual warfare more thoroughly than I had ever done over the course of my life. And so, I pray that God has been glorified, that I have been faithful to the Scriptures, and that you and I have been better equipped to be watchful, to take great care to put on the armor each day, and to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Though my experience in engaging this topic could not have been the same, C.S. Lewis' own words, to some degree, echo mine.

C.S. Lewis: On Writing The Screwtape Letters



C.S. Lewis 1898-1963

"Though I had never written anything more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment...But though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had to project myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it."

The Armor of God

- The Belt of Truth
- The Breastplate of Righteousness
- The Sandals of Readiness
- The Shield of Faith
- The Helmet of Salvation
- The Sword of the Spirit
- All-Prayer



Ephesians 6:17

- "And take the helmet of salvation..." (NASV).
- "Take salvation as your helmet" (Markus Barth).



God's Helmet

- "The Lord looked and was displeased that there was no justice. He saw that there was no one, and he was appalled that there was no one to intercede; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him. He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the **helmet of salvation** on his head" (Is. 59:15-17).
- This refers to the Messiah's adornment when he will stand on a mountain and announce to Israel that salvation is nigh.

The Metaphor

- The Greeks did not use the word *helmet* in a figurative sense.
- We must interpret the phrase *helmet of salvation* in the light of its biblical background.
- Christ's victory over sin and death is passed down to all his children we share in his victory.
- Paul is drawing attention to the head the mind, the thinking of the Christian.
- What do I believe about my salvation?

The Problem

- Believers can face the temptation to give up when they feel weary, tired, or hopeless.
- There are five common reasons that may cause us to give up in the heat of battle:
 - The battle is too long and hard
 - Preoccupation with the details of the Christian life (forgetting the big picture)
 - Forgetting who we are (our identity) in Christ
 - Losing sight of our ultimate destiny
 - Our wounds are too great to keep fighting

Paul's Answer

- Paul speaks about the "Hope of Salvation."
- This is not so much the realization of my salvation at the present time, but the salvation to which I am going – something which is coming to me.
- There will be great trials and tribulations, wars and rumors of war, temptations – and I would not go on with this fight unless I knew what was coming.
- The ultimate victory is coming!

II Corinthians 4:7-11

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this allsurpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body."

II Corinthians 4:16-17

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

- "When you are attacked, besieged, tried, tempted, and the devil says, 'There is nothing in it, you might as well get out of it, Christianity makes false promises, it does not fulfill them – give up!', you answer by saying, 'No, I have not been led astray by this teaching. I have always known that there are steps and stages in salvation. I know that I am saved, I know that I am being saved, I know that, ultimately, I shall be completely saved.'"
- Jesus Christ: "No one can snatch them out of my hand" (Jn. 10:27).



Ephesians 6:17

"And take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (NASV).

The Scripture is God-Breathed

- "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16-17).
- "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Peter 1:20-21).
- "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26).

The Metaphor

In Ephesians 6:17, we find a figurative use of the word *sword* in the phrase *sword of the Spirit*, which means...

- Inspiration: The Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible.
- Illumination: The Holy Spirit alone enables us to understand the Word.
- Interpretation: The Holy Spirit alone enables us to correctly interpret the Word.
- **Application:** The Holy Spirit alone enables us to **use** the Word properly.

The Uniqueness of the Sword

- It is our only **offensive** weapon.
- It does not protect a **particular** part of the body like the defensive armor does.
- It holds back the enemy himself.

The Sword: Defensive Capabilities

- The Word is to be used to defend yourself against Satan's attacks.
- Christ defeated Satan's onslaught by quoting Scripture (Matt. 4:1-11).
- Christ used the Word in a precise way, choosing just the right passage to address the specific temptation.
- The word *rhema* is used (rather than *logos*), because it refers to a specific statement or saying (rather than a general word).
- We must know our Bibles so well that we are prepared to use specific passages against Satan and his demons.
- Knowing the Bible in general without paying attention to specific texts will not help us in the day of temptation.
- Hiding God's Word in our hearts (memorizing) and meditating on it day and night is the best remedy for conducting spiritual warfare.

The Sword: Offensive Capabilities

- Taking the gospel to the lost.
- Teaching your children and grandchildren the Word.
- Teaching the Word in Bible studies or discipleship groups with others.
- Sharing the truths of Scripture with friends or neighbors.
- Knowing the Word will enable us to be used by the Lord to expand and edify his church.

The Power of the Word of God

- "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12, ESV).
- "God means what he says. What he says goes. His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one is impervious to God's Word. We can't get away from it – no matter what" (Heb. 4:12, *The Message*).

Dr. Simon Kistemaker

"The Word is not a written document of past centuries. It is alive and current; it is powerful and effective; and it is undivided and unchanged. Written in times and cultures from which we are far removed, the Word of God nevertheless touches man today. God addresses man in the totality of his existence, and man is unable to escape the impact of God's Word."



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