

# Taking the Helmet of Salvation ■ Our Hope

by Tim Conway

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of putting on the 'helmet of salvation' in the spiritual battle we face, reminding believers to fix their gaze on the hope of future glory and salvation. It explores the concept of hope in the Christian context, highlighting the eternal weight of glory that awaits believers and the need to endure in faith despite difficulties and temptations.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 73:24, Hebrews 12:1, Romans 8:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:8, Romans 13:11, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Romans 5:2, Revelation 2:10, Philippians 3:14, Hebrews 10:36

**Topics:** "Hope in Salvation", "Endurance in Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Ephesians 6.17, And take the helmet of salvation. And take the helmet of salvation. Now you think with me.

That's God's word. Let's pray. Father being your word, Not just the words of mere men.

Lord you've given us, many of us, a conviction. That the book that we have in our hands is indeed the word of God. Not just the mere writings and opinions of men.

Not just the traditions of men. But this is indeed heaven sent. The spirit of God.

Yes, used men. But carried those men along. And put the thoughts in their heads.

And have them write the words that have been written and preserved through all these thousands of years even. We pray that the ink that's on these pages. As they hold letters and words and paragraphs.

That actually express the thoughts of the very mind of God. We pray that those thoughts would be communicated to us in a way that is indeed able to equip us for the battle that rages. And for the battle that we face.

Please help us Father. In Christ's name we ask you to do that. Amen.

So here's a Roman soldier. These are Ephesians. Now I haven't actually been to Ephesus.

But I was in Smyrna. And it's just up the coast. And these were areas that were controlled by Rome.

Roman soldiers very much would have been an image in their minds. When Paul comes along and he starts talking about loins, girt. And the fact that they needed to have a breastplate on.

The fact that they needed to have shoes on their feet. This was imagery that wouldn't have been difficult for them. Think about it.

A soldier. He's going to have his loins girt. He's going to have his breastplate on.

He's going to have his shoes on his feet all laced up. And he walks around like that. He can do the chores.

He can take care of his responsibilities. He can sit down in the mess hall. And he can eat like that.

But what happens? The alarm goes out. The enemy's at hand. And what are you going to do? You're going to grab your shield.

You put the helmet on your head. And grip that sword. And now you rush into battle.

And that's basically the picture. And where we're at right now is we've got the helmet of salvation. And you know what? The truth is not much is said.

You see what's said. Take the helmet of salvation. That's it.

Now here. If I was there in that church. You know there was a day when this letter reached the Christians at Ephesus for the first time.

And you know what? They were people just like us. Made of flesh and blood just like us. They would have been sitting somewhere in a building probably.

Could have been somebody's home. Could have been a barn. Could have been a building.

It could have been a church building. But here they are. They're meeting together.

And guess what? One of the leaders there is going to stand up and say, We received a letter from Paul. And here it's being said. Now you know what? When the whole letter is being read, you can get hung up on certain things that are said.

Your mind. You know how it is. You read a letter.

If somebody is reading a letter to you, it's kind of like hearing preaching. You can all of a sudden stop at a certain place because there was a thought said that your mind begins to think about. And you're kind of losing some of the things.

But I'll tell you this. If I was listening and my ear caught that admonition to put on the helmet of salvation, I can just tell you, speaking for myself, I probably would have been at a loss for what Paul meant by that little admonition. Take the helmet of salvation.

I doubt I would have caught the meaning. I would have wondered, Paul, what do you mean? The helmet of salvation. Let's think about salvation for a second.

Salvation. You know the truth is? That's a word that probably doesn't get a lot of mileage outside of the Christian context. Probably not.

Does that word get used in the world? Probably not a whole lot. I mean, somebody might talk about the Salvation Army at Christmas, and I don't know if you have the same thing over here. You've got Santa Claus standing next to the thing.

But you know, for the most part, salvation. That is a term that we use in the church, but it doesn't get used a whole lot more than that. The word itself is actually Soterion.

Now, you might recognize that word. We know Soteriology. Yeah, it's basically the same Greek root there.

Soteriology is the doctrine of salvation. Now, when we think about the doctrine of salvation, we can think about the different components. If we were going to... Here's the thing.

Could Paul mean that what I'm to put on my head is the doctrine of salvation? It could mean that. What's the doctrine of salvation? I mean, if you were going to look at a systematic theology, and you were going to look at the different pieces and portions, do you know what the Ordo Salutis is? It's basically the order of salvation. In fact, right there in Romans 8, where we had our brother read, it's probably the greatest single text that gives us some order.

If we were going to talk about it, we would think about the foreknowledge of God, election, predestination. We can think about God calling. We can think about atonement.

We can think about justification, which brings in the idea of repentance and faith. The idea of conversion, regeneration. I'm not giving these all in order, but the sanctification, and it wraps up with glorification.

I mean, could it be that? Is that what Paul is saying? Put that on your head? Now look, I'm not going to totally dismiss that, but I don't think that's what Paul primarily means. Now, a number of commentators, if you look, they're going to say, well no, it doesn't mean the doctrine of salvation so much as the assurance of salvation. You'll find a number of commentators believe that.

Good commentators. But you know what? I don't think that's what it means either. Not primarily.

Now, of course you don't want to reject the doctrine. That's the teaching of salvation. You wouldn't disconnect it from that.

You wouldn't disconnect it even from the idea of a present awareness of whether I'm saved or not. But I don't think that's what Paul has in mind primarily. Either of those things.

Not the doctrine or just the realization that I myself currently possess the truth and the reality of that doctrine. I believe it's something else. And the reason I believe it is because Paul tells us in another place what he has in mind.

Now I want you to turn over to 1 Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians chapter 5. 1 Thessalonians 5. I'm going to begin reading in verse 8. And remember, we're talking about spiritual warfare. You know what? We may smile at hobgoblins.

But be absolutely certain that behind those words Bunyan had in mind something that's very real. And very deadly to mankind. An enemy.

That's what we're talking about here. We're talking about the armor that we put on in order to confront cosmic powers. Demons.

The devil himself. The evil one. Okay.

Here, 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 8. Since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love. And here it is. And for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

Now, here it is. Here's our helmet of salvation. Only there's an additional word.

And I'm sure you all caught what that word is. It's a crucial word. The hope of salvation.

Now let's just think about hope. We talked a little bit about salvation. Salvation is the idea of rescuing.

Deliverance. It's the idea of being saved. Okay.

Hope. The hope of being delivered. The hope of being rescued.

The hope of salvation. Hope. Now, one of the reasons that I had Brother Tim read from Romans 8 today is because Romans 8 contains what I believe is one of the plainest, single references in our Bible where the idea of hope is developed for us by the Apostle.

Let's look there. Romans chapter 8. I want us to read verses 23 through 25. At least, we're going to pick up partway through verse 23.

We get the idea of hope here. See, I know this is going to move a little bit slow in the beginning here because I'm just wanting to... I know these are basic concepts, but we really need to be clear about these things. Are we clear about what hope means? You hear hope.

One of the things that's absolutely for certain is hope is not used in the world the same way that it's used in the Bible. We're going to talk a bit about that, but one of the most helpful verses I find is right here in Romans 8. Pick up right at the point where it says, we wait eagerly for the adoption as sons. Because I want you to notice that.

This portion of Scripture has a lot to do with hope. But notice how it starts, at least where I'm starting. We wait eagerly.

That's 8.23. We wait. Here's the thing about hope. Hope waits for something that it does not yet have.

That's what hope does. Notice. We wait eagerly for adoption as sons.

Now that's very interesting because, you know what, we could go to certain portions of our Bible and we could say, adoption seems, if I'm a Christian, it seems like I have the spirit of adoption already. In fact, that's found right here in Romans 8. So what is it saying? That I'm waiting for this adoption. Ah, well he clarifies himself.

The redemption of our bodies. Isn't that interesting? You ever put those two together? That our adoption and the redemption of our bodies actually has a connection? But look at this. For in this hope, we were saved.

Now wait a second. We have a hope of something even though we're already saved. Yeah, that's right.

And what he says is this. Hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? Or who hopes for what he has? The reality is, hope is an expectation for something future.

It's something we wait for. That's why it says, we wait eagerly. If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

You see, that's it. Hope is an expectation of something that we're waiting for. Hope is future.

We can talk about faith presently. I believe things now. But hope is future faith.

That's what it is. It's an expectation of something that I'm waiting eagerly for. That's what we see here.

Now get it. When I go to battle against the devil, what God himself is telling me, inspiring, carrying along Paul, give him these words, Paul. You go up against the devil, you need to have on your head the hope, the expectation of salvation.

That's what he's saying. Isn't that interesting? The hope of future salvation. That's how you're supposed to take the battlefield here.

And I wonder, does that sound curious to anybody? Does that sound strange? Future salvation? I mean, look, we can imagine this. If somebody's lost, somebody's not a Christian, and they have this expectation of being saved in the future, we could look at that and say, yeah, okay, that makes sense. Future salvation.

You know, that's not who he's talking to. He's talking to us Christians. And he's saying, Christian, when you do battle against these spiritual forces, you need to put on your head the hope of salvation.

Your salvation. The hope of it. Hmm.

We need the hope of a future salvation on our heads? Doesn't that seem odd? Okay. Turn now to Romans 13. Let's develop this even further.

Romans 13, verse 11. Again, the Apostle Paul is speaking to people who are Christians. These people have been saved.

But notice what he says. Romans 13, verse 11. The hour has come for you to wake from sleep, for salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

What do you make of that? And you know what Paul's doing here? He's including himself. He's including himself with the Roman Christians. And he's saying, hey Christian, you and I, together, we, us, our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

You see, when we first believed, our salvation was out there in the future. But now days, months, for some years, for some decades have gone by, and he's saying, now we're that much nearer to it. And it's the hope of this salvation right here, that you need on your head, if you're going to fight this battle well.

That's the issue. You know what this is saying? If I'm near to a salvation that's future, it means that he's talking about a salvation that I do not currently possess. You do have to wrestle with that.

But that's a reality here. That's the way he's talking. It's something out there in the future.

Something I'm closer to now than when I first believed. But isn't that interesting? I believed, past tense, so I'm a believer. That's what he says.

When we first believed, we're believers. Wait, I thought when you believed, don't we get justified value of faith? Yep, Paul would not deny that. And yet, there's a salvation that's future.

That's it. Whatever might be true of us now, whatever might be true, we don't possess salvation yet. Not the salvation that's being talked about right here in Romans 13.

There's a certain sense. You see, what it is, is this. There's something coming that we don't yet possess.

And it's the hope of that, that keeps us going in the battle. That's the thing. It's the hope of salvation.

Now I want to just emphasize something about the verb tenses. I'm sure most of you are aware of this. But let's just refresh our minds with it.

There are verb tenses in our Bibles, attached to salvation. And undoubtedly, you got it right there in Romans 13. When we first believed.

Well when was that? Well that was in the past. When we first believed. That's how you talk about something that already has occurred.

But you know, Scripture also speaks in other ways. Listen to this. Even when we were dead in our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ.

God, when we were, that's past, God did back there. And you see what happens is this. The Greek doesn't actually have a past tense.

English does. The Greek doesn't. But you can tell past tense in the Greek a certain way.

I mean you basically get indicative moods, and you get aorist tenses. And it's basically like the English past. Well you get that.

But you know what you also get in Scripture? You also get the present reality. How about this? You don't need to turn to it, but listen to it. 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 18.

The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing. But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. How did you get that? We're being saved.

See, were we justified? Yes. Were we raised from the dead? Past tense. All past tense.

Did we believe in the past? Yes. The Bible talks that way. But does the Bible also talk about presently being saved? Now see, that's interesting.

Because if I'm being saved, and saved means somehow being rescued, somehow being delivered. Well then what it means is I am presently, there is a reality to which that is happening. And the Bible talks that way.

Sometimes we find them just mixed together. Listen to this. Romans 5 verses 9 and 10.

Since we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved. Have you ever picked that up? Seriously, we have been justified by His blood, but how much more that that's happened, will we be saved from the wrath of God? Well that's how the Bible talks. For while we were enemies, we were reconciled, it's past, to God by the death of His Son.

Much more now that we are reconciled, it's a present reality, shall we be saved by His life? This is the way the Bible talks. Salvation is nearer than when I first believed. The Bible talks this way.

And so we just need to recognize that salvation has a past tense, salvation has a present tense, salvation has a future tense, and when we talk about the hope of salvation, that's always future. That's something that's out there, that's something we don't... What this is saying is that the Christian has yet to experience the final, full totality of what salvation is. It means that there's a day coming when we'll be saved in a way that we're not presently saved.

And Paul wants us to put this hat on our head in this battle, the helmet of the hope of this ultimate, final, future, absolute salvation to the uttermost. It's the hope of this that we need to take out on the battlefield with us. Now, let me just talk a little bit about hope.

Because it's... Here's the thing. We can say something like this, you know, I hope I still have some double cream left in the refrigerator when I get home for my coffee. Or like Dale, he won't even have his coffee if he doesn't have it.

Or we could say, I hope these COVID restrictions get lifted. But you see, the thing is, a lot of times when we use the term hope, we mean like this casual feeling that what we want might happen. I mean, I hope for an early spring.

You know we talk that way. To the world, and often to us as Christians, because we use the term too in that frivolous way, where it doesn't mean anything more than just wishful thinking. And you know what? I pulled up an online thesaurus, which I use a lot.

But you know one of the interesting things is, I searched out just synonyms for hope. Do you know what some of them are? Pipe dream. Daydream.

Even fool's paradise is a synonym of hope. You see, the world uses hope as a synonym for something that they want when there actually is no reason or proof or evidence whatsoever that the thing that they want might even in reality be something that they'll get. In fact, a lot of times, people hope for things that when you actually look at the evidence, it would seem to indicate that you'll never get that.

That is not the kind of hope that we find in Scripture. That's entirely not the thing. Just listen to this.

I just very quickly did a survey through the New Testament. Listen to the kind of things that you get on hope. Matthew 12, 21.

In His name, the Gentiles will hope. Now here's the thing I want you to recognize, that when the New Testament talks about hope, it so often connects with the person of God, the person of Christ, and with the promises that have been given to us by God. Listen to these.

I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers. That's what Paul said in the book of Acts. Or Romans 4. In hope, Abraham believed against hope.

No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. Go to 1 Timothy 1.1. Christ Jesus, our hope. See, the Christian hope is no delusion.

It's no pipe dream. It's no whimsical desire. It's no wishful thinking.

You have to recognize this. Hope has... Look, you can basically size up hope based on what the hope finds its foundation in. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

You see, what that hope is founded on says everything about the hope. And when you come to Scripture, that hope is built on Christ. The hope of salvation is not some wishful thinking.

Now it is if you have some wishful thinking of obtaining heaven and salvation without Christ being the object of your hope. That is wishful thinking and that is a pipe dream. I hope to not go to hell, but I'm going to reject Christ.

Yes, that is a hope that is built on sand. But this Christian hope is no delusion. It's built on the promise of God.

It's built on the person of God. Now, what is the Christian hope? What is our hope? You see, now listen, this is key. We're just leading up to the battle.

I haven't even talked about how this works when we're out on the battlefield. But listen, what is our hope? You've got to know what it is. You just don't talk about the Christian hope and you don't know what you hope for.

Folks, I would just ask you this. What do you hope for? I mean, just step back for a second. Just right now, in your own mind, between you and the Lord, in all honesty, you don't want to play games with Him.

There's no sense posturing yourself in a certain way. He knows. What do you hope for? Whether you really have a basis for it or not.

What do you hope for more than anything else? You know what? If you ask me, I'm just going to be honest with you. Do I hope there is double cream in the refrigerator when I get home? I do. Do I hope that a certain football team in the United States might win this weekend? Yeah, I do.

Do I hope that the Lord gives Ruby and myself an enjoyable time on my day off tomorrow? I do. I do. But if I shoot straight with you, I would give up all those things in a second.

But there are some things that I hope for that I would never give up the hope for. I want to see Christ. I want to behold the glory of God.

I don't know what we might or might not see of the Father. I want to see God. And I want to dwell with Him.

And I want to be sinless. I want that. And I hope for it.

Brethren, when you think about the Christian hope, you just think about 2 Corinthians. To be absent from the body is to be what? Can you imagine the moment you see Him? It's not going to be like Isaiah 53. When you say, oh there's no form, there's no comeliness.

You're going to be floored. There is going to be such beauty that it will suck the breath out of you. Do you know what Scripture says? Scripture says, in your presence.

It's not just you're going to see Him. In your presence is the fullness of joy. Do you hope for joy? I do.

We all do. But it's the basis upon which that's hoped. People can hope for it in all the wrong places.

Here's the thing. Christ made me. And He made me to be this bundle of desires that we all are.

But do you do recognize? He's the one that designed us. He designed us to be ravished and overwhelmed and awed by Him more than anything else. You recognize that when we are glorified, we will be in such a state where we are designed to absolutely have our joy pushed to the outer thresholds by Christ, by the Triune God more than anything else.

There will be a satisfaction. In His presence there is a fullness of joy. And at His right hand, pleasure.

This is the Christian hope. Scripture says to us that... Have you ever read? Well done, good and faithful servant. You've been faithful over a little? I'm going to set you over much.

Enter into the joy of your master. I mean if there was a way to describe heaven. We have a track on death.

You probably, you that have tried to hand that out. No, I don't want to think about that. No, I'm not ready for that.

Well, it's not just death. It's what comes after. There's horrors of hell out there.

But on the other hand, there is a richness of pleasure and there is a joy of the master. I mean, if you wanted to just define heaven, it's the joy of the master. This is what Scripture is talking about.

He said to His disciples, Look, I'm going to prepare a place for you. Can you imagine? Christ told them that 2,000 years ago. I mean, He can create the universe in a moment.

And He says, I'm going to prepare a place for you. I mean, look. You've walked in a garden.

The most beautiful of gardens. You have some of the most beautiful gardens I've ever seen in my life here. And you can walk out in the most beautiful garden.

And what is this place? This is a fallen earth. There's a new heaven and a new earth that He's gone to prepare and He's going to take us. And you know what He said? He said, Father, my desire is that they may be where I am to behold my glory.

That's the hope. This is the hope of salvation. This is me being rescued and delivered from something that I'm not yet rescued and delivered from.

You do recognize there are things in this world that we have not been fully rescued from. We have not been fully delivered from. You just go to Romans 7. Who is going to deliver me from this body of death? And the reality is we're all connected to it.

And Peter, he talks about the passions of the flesh. And what do they do? They wage war against our souls. Anybody been fully delivered from that? Not me.

Isn't there a longing, a hope of that kind of salvation? To be freed from all of that? Jesus said, because you're not of the world, I've chosen you out of the world. The world's going to hate you. Did anybody feel that? Anybody who desires to live godly in this present generation, in this time, they're going to suffer persecution.

We haven't been fully delivered from that. Jesus was a man of sorrows. He said, follow me.

Do we have this guarantee? No, it's through much tribulation. No, it's at the end when we get our tears wiped away. Why do the tears get wiped away? Because there's still tears now.

One of the things, there's still death now. Because the last enemy that's going to be defeated, we've all got to pass through death. We haven't been freed from that.

And we won't be unless Christ comes before we die. And then the thing is, it's not just being freed from our having to go through it. I remember my grandmother weeping when my Aunt Barb died.

She said, no parent should have to deal with losing a child. But you know what? That's what this world is filled with. The sorrows.

And then we've got this very dragon that we wage war with. This evil one that Scripture talks about. This ancient serpent, who has specifically is furious, and he set his sights on fighting against the offspring of the woman who happens to be those who keep the commandments of God, and they hold to the testimony of Christ.

That's us. He's waging war. Anybody feel something of the heat of that battle? See, we have not been fully delivered from this yet.

Brethren, hear me. One of the things that we have not been delivered from is the absence of glory. See, what do you mean? Maybe you didn't pick up on this verse.

This comes from Romans 8 as well. It says that the creation is groaning. The whole creation.

Why? Because they're subjected to this decay. The whole creation is subjected to the second law of thermodynamics. The whole thing is breaking down.

The decay is here. This thing is winding down. And it says that the creation groans.

You know what it's looking for? You know what it's expectation is? It says the revealing of the sons of God. You say, what's that? I mean, come on, we're here. I see marching sitting right there.

Are we not revealed? No, no. We are not revealed. Because you have no idea what we will be.

Do you realize the Ordo Salutis ends with glorification? You see, we need to be delivered from a lacklusteriness. From a lack of beauty and a lack of majesty and a lack of glory. If you simply look through your New Testament for the word hope and glory in the same passage, you know what? It actually exists quite a bit.

Listen to this. This light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. And I know hope isn't found there, but don't you hope for that? Listen, we've got light momentary affliction.

You see, this is the thing. When you come up against the devil on the battlefield, and this thing is difficult, and there's blood and there's sweat and there's tears and this thing, and there's anguish and you're fighting, and it's through much violence that we're taking this kingdom, and the thing is difficult, the voice of God rings out. It's momentary.

And it's like, Oh Lord, it feels like it's going on forever and it doesn't feel light. There's momentary light affliction that's replaced by an eternal weight of glory. You see, that's the hope.

That is the hope of salvation. The hope of salvation is the glory of salvation. Or you get this.

We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. That's Romans 5. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And here's the thing.

You say, What is that? Is that the glory that God gives us, or is that the glory of God Himself? Brethren, these two things kind of merge together. We have a hope of beholding Him in all of His glory, but the thing is, Scripture says that when we behold Christ as He is, we are going to become like Him. You see, there's a sense in which we behold that glory, and that glory reaches out and pulls us in.

One of the things we need to be delivered from is the glorylessness that we still experience. Yes, there are some glorious realities about us, but there's also a lot that we still are looking future. Christ in you.

The hope of glory. You see, the hope of glory. The hope of salvation.

The hope that there's something that's coming. Waiting for our blessed... That's what you do when you hope for something. You wait.

Waiting for our blessed hope. The appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. And we know this.

Those who He predestined, He also called. Those He called, He justified. Those He justified, He glorified.

And it's all together. I mean, if there's any verse in the Bible that ought to convince us that we can never lose our salvation, but listen, glorification is something that is... It's like it's already been done. It's so certain.

And yet we haven't experienced the fullness of this. Here it is. These are the facts.

In some way, that's the introduction. But listen. What Paul is saying is, you need to have this on your head in this battle.

This is the reality. How does this affect the way that you fight against the devil? I remember a preacher one time. A man that I really admire.

He's on the foreign mission field. He was back in the United States, and he was preaching on the spiritual warfare. And he said this.

He said, you get out there on the foreign mission field, and here's the devil, and he's whispering in your ear, look, there's no fruit. You're useless. The people don't want you here.

You need to give this up. Go home and sell shoes. But I'll tell you this.

The same thing can happen to the mother who's trying to homeschool her children. It's not just out on the foreign mission field. Look at this.

Look at all your efforts. Your children aren't learning. You're spanking them.

There's no fruit there. This just seems like it's going nowhere. The neighbors are probably going to call child protective services on you.

You're pouring it. You're no teacher. You can't do half as well as out there in the public school system.

You hardly know that math yourself. Look at this. The house is a mess.

You can't hardly take care of the children and teach them, let alone keep your house in order. The whole thing's just a failure. I mean, look at that.

And see, what the devil can do is get us to the place where we feel like the whole thing is just in vain. The whole thing. You're single.

You're trying to be pure. And you can feel like, wow, I just don't feel like I'm getting any victory in this. I feel like I'm in the same place that I was a year ago or five years ago or 20 years ago.

You can just feel like all you're working for is sanctification. It's like I'm trying to work. I want purest thoughts.

I want a life devoted to Christ. I want that. I want to pray like I ought to.

I want these things. And here's the devil. He's upon you and he's screaming.

And he's saying, look, this whole thing is impossible. Nothing works. These difficulties aren't worth it.

Hasn't Christianity just promised you so much? And look, what has it really delivered? Sanctification. Seriously? Sanctification? Where are you at? Look at the thoughts you had run through your head just this morning. Sanctification.

Sanctification. Where has all this really gotten you to? You get a poor brother, a poor sister, and they can feel so wounded, and they can feel that everything is uphill, the striving, the struggling. You can start feeling like, what's the use? What's the point of it all? It seems like nothing's changing.

It seems like I'm already at the same place. The Bible says resist the devil and he'll flee from you. But I feel like the devil is just as entrenched and standing as strong as ever.

I'm the one that feels like I'm going to give way. I'm the one that feels like I'm going to depart and run. It feels like he's stronger.

It's right here that Scripture says, Christian, on with the helmet of salvation. Your redemption is at hand. Lift your head and look.

And you see, you've got to look at the hope of glory. You've got to look up at the reality that there is an eternal weight of glory. That all these coming ages, there really is God there to show kindness and mercy and just lavish it upon us.

There is the joy of the Master. This is there. There is a full salvation.

You're going to be like Him. Just look up. You see, Scripture tells us, Christian, don't get weary.

Don't let that happen. Don't become weary in doing good. Why? Because you are going to reap if you keep going.

And listen, this is a common note in Scripture. Why? Because we get weary. We ought to always pray and not think.

Why do you need to pray? Brethren, this becomes difficult. And you can run out of steam. The one who endures to the end will be saved.

Isn't that interesting? Jesus Christ Himself says to His own disciples, if you endure to the end, you'll be saved. You know, some of you say, but I thought I was already saved. No, but see, this is the way Scripture talks.

We've got to endure. And you've got to make it. Brethren, listen to me.

They're in Texas. During the summer, it'll be 140 Celsius. 40 degrees.

And you know what? That sun's above you. It's August. It literally turned an asphalt parking lot into an oven.

I've seen pictures where they cook eggs. On the asphalt. If somebody showed you a great big parking lot, several hundred yards across, but they put a million pounds sterling on the other side, they said, you just run across this hot, and you're bare feet.

You run across this parking lot. To that money on the other side, you can have it. What do you think? 300 yards.

It's going to fry the bottom of your feet. You're going to have blisters. You probably won't walk for a week.

You run in the parking lot. You see, the thing is, we look at something like that and we say, I mean, I can tell you, I would. I would do that.

Why? I could buy a house over here. There's a lot of things we could do. We could start an orphanage over here.

But you see, why would you do that? Why would somebody do that? Well, because you know what you do? You calculate. Well, the short-term risk, the short-term cost, the long-term benefit far outweighs it. Isn't that why you would do it? That's exactly the kind of thing that the Scripture is saying.

It's, Christian, you need to hang in there. I mean, look up. Your redemption is at hand.

I mean, for the joy of it all. This is the thing. And you know, this is exactly the Hebrews.

Think about the Hebrews. Their arms hung down. This is what it says.

They were drooping. That's what Hebrews 12. The whole book of Hebrews is basically this note.

It's these people. You know what? They had their goods plundered. They were facing persecution.

They're hanging down. They've been disciplined. The chastening of the Lord.

Life had become really difficult. And do you know what that book is basically about? It's to encourage them. That you don't want to fall out of this race.

Because that's what they were feeling like doing. And you know what the author does? He brings Jesus in. And he says, have you ever considered Him? Do you know what He had before Him? He had the cross.

He was going to take the wrath of God upon Himself. For all the people of God. Who would ever live.

He was going to so suffer on that cross. But do you know why He endured it? What does it say? For the joy set before Him. You see, that's the thing.

You get in the midst of this. And there it is. I mean, you start to feel beat down.

You feel like there's no end to this. You get to the place where you feel like you've been fighting for years. It's like, it's wearing you out.

It doesn't let up. I mean, the world comes at you. It's throwing stuff at you.

There's bombardments of thought. The battles with the devil are real. He's attacking.

He's trying to make you feel like the whole thing is useless. And just to give this whole thing up. But here it is.

Putting on the helmet of salvation. Putting on the helmet of the hope of salvation. What does that mean? It means that you're being attacked.

You're being besieged. You're being tried and tempted and beat down. The devil's telling you, You know what? It was better before you were a Christian.

Wasn't it? You had all these friends. You had fun. I mean, look what this thing looked like now.

It was easier. And you've been led astray by these Christians. That's all it is.

It made a bunch of false promises to you. You know what? We can put on that helmet and we can shout, No! I've not been led astray by the Lord Jesus Christ or by His apostles. Didn't they tell me it was through much tribulation that I was going to make it? Didn't Jesus say to follow me? And He endured these things.

And it was for the joy that was set before Him. I've never been promised that it's going to be easy in this life. But an eternal weight of glory is at the end.

Devil, you're going to be in the lake of fire. But what I hear is that at His right hand are pleasures forevermore. That's what awaits me.

I'm going on. I'm pressing through this thing. You may want me to give up.

You give up. Because He's on my side. And if He's for me, who can be against me? I mean, this may be hard.

But I haven't suffered yet even to the shedding of my blood in resisting sin. And some have. I mean, it could get harder.

You're telling me it's so hard I need to bail out now. I don't have any promise from Scripture that it may not get harder. But I also have this promise that He'll never leave me or forsake me.

So no matter what He calls me to go through, He's going to be there at my side. And in the end, He's going to receive me. And there's going to be joy and there's going to be pleasures.

And that's what I've been promised. The Lord called me to follow. And His path wasn't easy.

And He was a man of sorrows. Brethren, there is such a joy. You know what? Peter comes along and he basically tells us exactly the same truth.

Listen to this. Preparing your minds for action. Action.

For the battle. How do you do that? It's the helmet. Your mind.

Your head. Here it is. Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Brethren, we're not in the promised land yet. But when this thing gets really tough, put on that helmet of the hope of what is out there. And you know what? Just because we aren't there yet doesn't mean that it doesn't exist.

I mean, you have to remember Pilgrim's Progress. Didn't they get to the top of the delectable mountains so they could see the city? They looked through it. It wasn't clear, but it was there.

They caught glimpses of it. Brethren, what Peter tells us is to fix our gaze upon it. You know what Scripture says? The one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God.

Paradise. Isn't there a sweet sound to that? Think about the thief on the cross. Paradise.

See, he didn't give it to him in a moment. Nope, you've got to hang there on that cross. In fact, you've got to hang there on that cross and defend me in front of this other guy.

And by the way, you've got to get your legs smashed before it's all over. Not paradise yet. I know the time was short for him.

For us it may be longer. And we may not get our legs smashed. Or we may.

And you know what happens if you don't have this helmet on? I'll tell you what happens. You will stumble and you will fall. Listen.

As for me, my feet had almost stumbled. My steps had nearly slipped. Who is this? I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

They have no pangs until death. Their bodies are fat and sleek. They're not in trouble as others are.

They're not stricken like the rest of mankind. Always at ease. Increase in riches.

All in vain have I kept my heart clean. And washed my hands in innocence. For all the day long I've been stricken and rebuked every morning.

But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task. Until I went into the sanctuary of God. Then I discerned their end.

Truly you set them in slippery places. You make them fall to ruin. How they're destroyed in a moment.

Swept away utterly by terrors. Nevertheless, I am continually with you. You hold my right hand.

And listen to this. You guide me with your counsel. And afterward you will receive me to glory.

You see there it is. That is the absolute perfect expression. Psalm 73.

What's his hope? It's glory. But you know what? He lost sight of it. Because he said, Lord, You don't answer my prayers like I often want.

You don't give a lot of the things that I desire for. That I seek after. Lord, It just seems like things get tough.

Things get difficult. The battle gets so fierce and so hot. And I'm looking over here at this guy.

These guys say they don't seem to have any problems in their life. I see you can start to feel like, The devil's right there. Just lay down.

Enjoy yourself. I mean after all, You thought things were going to get better when you were a Christian. Have they really gotten better? Have you even gained an inch? Have you done anything at all? How fruitful has your life been? You see he likes to just whisper.

The interpreter in Pilgrim's Progress. Listen to this. I'm going to wrap things up with this.

He took Christian. You may remember this. The Interpreter's House.

This is probably one of the lesser remembered accounts in the Interpreter's House. But it's always left an indelible image in my mind. The interpreter brings Christian over.

And you may remember it. There's a man sitting at a table with an inkwell and a pen. And the interpreter shows Christian this palace.

It's absolutely glorious. And up on the ramparts are walking people in gold. Christian says, Can we go in? Can we go in? And the interpreter says, Look there.

There were armed men. In armor. With swords.

Standing there. Seeking to reject and defeat anybody that tried to get into that palace. The interpreter showed Christian a line of men who were too afraid to go.

And one man comes up and says, Put down my name. And he took up his sword and his helmet. And he went to fighting.

Set down my name, sir. The witch, when he had done, he saw the man draw his sword, put a helmet upon his head, and rushed toward the door upon the armed men, who laid upon him with deadly force. But the man, not at all discouraged, fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely.

So after he had received and given many wounds to those that attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all and pressed forward into the palace, at which there was a pleasant voice heard from

there. From those who walked upon the top of the palace. And they cried out, come in, come in.

Eternal glory. Thou shall win. And I love that because there's the glory again.

We're wired for glory. I want it. Set down my name.

Can you say that? Set down my name. So he went in and was clothed with such garments as they were. Then Christian smiled and said, I think verily I know the meaning of this.

Do we know the meaning? That's the thing. They that will have heaven must not hesitate at any difficulties that may stand in our way. Let us take the kingdom of heaven by violence.

Let us press in, no matter what the cost. So run. So run that you may obtain.

And you've got to have this helmet of the hope of salvation upon your head. Amen. Father, may it be so.

May you help us to be victorious. That we may eat in that place that is the paradise of God. Lord, I pray that none would be so faint, so easily give up glory for the sake of the trifles in this world.

I pray that there would be none among us that would be so willing, because of a little difficulty, to drop out and seek the ease of this world and this place. Father, I trust that the day is at hand. That we can look up, our redemption is closer to us than when we first believed.

The day when many in this room, we will be robed with glory. And together, shoulder to shoulder, we will fall down on our faces before the Savior who's redeemed us. May you hasten that day.

When the straight betwixt the two, to remain and do the work of our God, or to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Amen. You're dismissed.

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