

Battling the Mind Field

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I'm enjoying teaching this series, and we're learning so much about the battles of life and how God has equipped us with His armor to be able to be victorious in the battles that we face. And so essentially what we've done is just look at each piece of armor in detail, trying to unpack fully what that means in light of what the Scripture teaches. And so we're going to continue in that this evening as we look at the next piece of armor, which is found in verse 17. But each week we've kind of been going back and reading through the whole passage to keep in mind the full context, and so we'll do that again this evening. So if you're ready to get after it, now that you're comfortable, ruin that, and please stand if you're able to do so, and let's honor the reading of God's Word. Paul writes to the Ephesian church, and he's wrapping up this letter, bringing his final thoughts together, and he says, finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might, and put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. Because we don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers and authorities and cosmic powers over the present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness or the confidence that we have by the gospel of peace, and in all circumstances, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. And then here's our focus this evening, verse 17, and take the helmet of salvation. Let's pray together. Father, thank you for this time to gather to sing praises, to think about the truth that because you hold the future, life is worth living.

You are what gives us meaning and purpose in life. And Lord, we're so thankful tonight that we can learn again from your word, and we ask that your spirit would come and teach us what it means to be equipped with the helmet of salvation. And I pray this in Jesus' name, and all God's people said, amen. Amen. Amen. You can be seated. Brian Johnson has one goal in life, don't die. Brian is a tech entrepreneur who was the focus of a Netflix documentary. Some of you may have seen this somewhat recently, and the title of the documentary was Don't Die, The Man Who Wants to Live Forever.

Brian has spent the last four years of his life and millions of dollars on what's known as longevity science or reverse aging. His hope is to put all of his focus in on figuring out a way to not die.

According to the documentary, he has a very rigid routine that he calls, and I quote, the most significant revolution in the history of Homo sapiens. That's quite a statement, right?

[4 : 37] He takes over 111 pills a day. He wears a baseball cap device that shoots red light into his scalp. He collects and analyzes his own stool samples. Not making that up. Sleeps in a jet pack to monitor his hormones while he sleeps. He has even injected himself with his teenage son's plasma in hopes that it would make him younger. On top of all that, he has an extremely strict health diet, about 1900 calories a day, that consists of veggie bowls and nut pudding. And all God's people said, blah, right? That's gross. In fact, he thinks that anything that accelerates the aging process, like eating a cookie, is, quote, an act of violence to the body. Now, for all of his efforts,

Brian says that he's only aging eight months for every year that goes by. It's why he celebrates his birthday every 19 months rather than every year. As you can imagine, this pursuit of immortality has come at a very high cost. Get this. He spends \$2 million a year trying his best to not die.

Now, listen to me, faith family. I doubt there's anybody here this evening that would go to this extreme. I doubt there's very many people here that could go to that extreme. Who's got \$2 million a year to dedicate to this? Not to mention, most of us are not willing to give up cookies, right?

We're not ready to make that sacrifice yet. But listen, just because we don't go to these extremes doesn't mean that we don't do other things to keep death as far away as possible, right? It's why people will go to the gym and exercise to try to be healthy. It's why people will take their daily vitamins.

Maybe not 111 a day, but you take your vitamins to be healthy. Or maybe you do certain surgeries or have certain procedures to keep your body as healthy as possible. But like Brian, all of us, in one way or another, is trying to keep death as far away as possible. We do have this fear, this avoidance of death, right? What are we to do with that? What are we to do with this fear and this anxiety that we all have when it comes to death? That is precisely what Paul is addressing here in the next piece of armor. Let's look at it. Verse 17. Paul says, take the, say it. Okay, we're going to try that again because y'all are being quiet Saturday night. Come on, here we go. Take the what? Helmet of salvation. That's the next piece of armor that Paul addresses here. And what we've done with every single piece of armor is we've tried to understand the significance of that piece of armor as it relates to the Roman soldier. Because that's clearly what Paul has in mind here in terms of this illustration. In fact, we actually have a picture of an actual Roman soldier. That guy is really, really intimidating. It's me. So some of you are like, I don't get it. In fact, he's even got his shield with him. You didn't know I used to be a Spartan in a former life, right? So this is actually what the helmet would look like. And you can see it gives a lot of protection. You've got protection both from the sides as well as from the back. It protects the head. Sometimes you'll even see a picture that looks more like this. Oftentimes, if you've got a soldier that has a particular rank, they're going to have more decoration on their helmet. But this is essentially what the helmet, of a Roman soldier looked like. Now, what was the significance in terms of the armor? Well, first of all, it was the last piece of armor that a soldier would put on. That's actually theologically significant, which we'll talk about here in just a little bit. But you don't put the helmet on first. The helmet goes on last. Now, you may say, wait a minute, what about the sword? But the sword is something that you're using offensively. You see, the helmet was the last piece of defensive armor that a soldier would put on. You've got the breastplate that's protecting the heart. You've got the shoes that are protecting the feet. You've got the shield that's protecting you against arrows. And now the last piece of defensive armor is the helmet used to protect the head.

[9 : 38] Obviously, this is a very important part of the armor. Amen? You're so quiet, right? Because you're protecting the brain. I mean, just like the breastplate is so important to protect the heart, you've got to have the helmet, right? I mean, listen, we all know this. If you take a sword to the head, you'll probably end up dead. Dr. Seuss taught me that, right? So that's just how it works.

You take a sword to the head, you're going to end up dead. So you've got to have the helmet on. It was a crucial piece and a significant part of the Roman soldier's armor. Everybody with me? Say amen.

All right. Now, right away, you're probably clearly able to make the connection that, in terms of what this would be spiritually. So notice this here on the screen, that protecting the head, in terms of the physical piece of armor, is the equivalent to the guarding of the mind. You got that?

The protecting of the head is the spiritual equivalent of the guarding of the mind. And you know this. This is something that the Bible puts so much emphasis on. Think, for example, here in Romans 12 too. Many of you probably have this verse memorized. Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your, say it, minds. Paul says this in Philippians chapter 4.

Don't be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard, say guard, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever's true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable. If there's anything of excellence, anything worthy of praise, what? Think on these things. So the protection of the mind is a spiritually important thing. Amen? In fact, wouldn't we all agree that much of the battle that we fight is fought in the mind? That the mind is the primary battlefield? I mean, think about all the doubts that you deal with or discouragements, depression, lust of the mind, your thought life, your worry and anxiety that you're constantly thinking about. The mind is constantly bombarded with all kinds of sinful thoughts.

[12 : 23] We must protect our minds. We must protect our minds. Just as the helmet is so significant to protect the head, we must protect our minds. That's why the one that's firmly grounded in Psalm 1 is the one who does what? Meditates on the law of God day and night. They've protected their mind. Now, while that's true, the question I want to ask is this. What's the context of the helmet in Ephesians 6? Are you with me, faith family? Is it just to protect our minds from bad and sinful thoughts? Is that the idea?

That Paul has here? Is that what he has in mind? Do you see what I did? Never mind. All right. So, but what's the actual point here of this armor? Is it, again, just like, okay, I'm going to guard my mind against bad thoughts. Let's go back to the verse. Take the helmet of what? The helmet of salvation.

So, the way my mind operates is I'm asking the question, okay, Paul, what's the relationship between the mind, which I'm clearly to protect, and salvation? What's the connection? How does salvation and the protecting of my mind work together? To better understand that, we've got to do some hard work. Don't worry. I've done the hard work for you. I trust you'll see the fruit of that, because we really need to understand what Paul means by salvation, or we're not going to be able to understand the relationship between the mind and salvation. Is everybody tracking with me?

What does Paul mean here by salvation? Is he talking about becoming a Christian? Is Paul talking about reminding yourself of your salvation when you're in doubt? You know, doubts come in, and you're just like, no, no, no, no. I'm a Christian. I'm a child of God. Is that what he means? Is he talking about some assurance of salvation? What does he mean by salvation? Well, part of the confusion over this is that the word salvation is a very broad term in Scripture.

In fact, salvation can be used for physical salvation, right? The Israelites were saved from Egypt, right? Physically. David will talk about, he lifted me up out of the miry bog. He saved me from my physical situation. Sometimes salvation is used to refer as a spiritual salvation. We're saved spiritually.

[15 : 24] We're saved from the wrath of God. Another thing that complicates this is that a lot of you, like me, were taught not poorly. We just weren't taught holistically. And what I mean by that is that we were taught, and many of you still default to, that salvation is a thing of the past.

So it goes like this. Have you been saved? When were you saved? I was saved at age 18. Is everybody tracking with me? What is all of those examples? They're all past tense. At what point in the past were you saved? My dear friend, faith family, listen. The Bible does not talk about salvation purely as a past thing. In fact, for us to have a full, well-rounded, biblical understanding of salvation, we need to understand it in three categories. First, yeah, it includes the past. For example, look here at Ephesians 2.8. For by grace, say it with me, you have been saved. Is that past tense?

Yeah, that's past tense. I have been, I'm from Tennessee, so English is not my specialty, but I'm pretty sure that's past tense. I have been saved through faith. And by the way, it wasn't your doing, it was a gift of God. Amen? Your salvation in the past was of God. Now, for those of you that love theology and doctrine, this would be doctrines like the doctrine of justification or the doctrine of adoption. I was adopted into the family of God. Do you see? Everybody with me say yes. All right.

But not only is it past, it's also present. Look at what Paul says here in 1 Corinthians 1.8. For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who, say it, are being saved, it's the power of God. In other words, Paul says you not only are saved, but you are being saved.

Your salvation is continuing. It's an ongoing thing. He even says to the church at Philippi to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Again, for those of you that love doctrine, this would be the doctrine of sanctification or perseverance. That is, that yes, I was saved in the past, but I am continuing to be saved today. Amen? But here's the one we don't often think about frequently enough.

[18:14] Look at how it's described in 1 Peter 1. Praise God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that's imperishable and undefiled, unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through a faith for a, say it, come on, you can do better, for a, what? Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In other words, in other words, I am saved, I am being saved, and I will be saved. It is something that happened to me in the past. It is an ongoing reality in my life now, and that there is going to be a day of future salvation. Again, those of you that want to take doctrine notes, this would be the doctrine of glorification or of final resurrection. Is everybody with me tonight? Salvation is past.

Salvation is present. Salvation is future. So which one does Paul mean? And how do you know? Are you going to guess? You might be tempted to just go, well, it's all of them.

But even that, prove it. When Paul says, put on the helmet of salvation, what's he talking about? Past, present, or future? Now, I think the most common view, the majority of you, which again, as I've dug into Ephesians 6, I've seen a lot of common views, not be wrong, but be lazy.

Like, you haven't taken the time to do the hard work and actually see what does Paul mean. Because the majority of you would go like this. That the helmet of salvation is applying, putting on, the salvation you already have in Jesus. Is everybody tracking with me? So doubts come, discouragement comes, this warfare is raging, and I am a Christian. I'm guarding my mind with the fact that I am a Christian. Well, by the way, I think that's a helpful thing to do. There's nothing theologically wrong with that at all. The problem is, that's a guess. How do you know? And what we will discover is, if we actually take the time first to ask, how has Paul discussed salvation earlier in the book of Ephesians? And I'm getting so excited. This is so much fun. I'm happier, like, than all of you in the room combined. We also ask, has Paul ever used the helmet of salvation anywhere else that might help clue us into what he means. First, look at how he uses this earlier in Ephesians. Ephesians 1, 13. In him, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, that's the belt of truth, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance. What? Until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory. Paul here is talking about how our salvation in the past is a guarantee of a future salvation that is an inheritance we will receive in the last day. Are you with me? Okay. Has Paul anywhere else referenced something like this, in terms of the helmet of salvation, that would clue us in on what he means here? A look at 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 1. Now, concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that what? The day of the Lord will come like a thief. What's the context here? Past, present, or future? Future. We're talking about when Jesus comes, right? We're talking about the day of the Lord, how it will come like a thief in the night. Okay, keep reading.

So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night. Those who get drunk are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love. And for a helmet, the what? Hope of salvation. For God has not destined us to wrath. By the way, that does not mean the tribulation. That is awful exegesis. Paul is not talking at all that he has not destined us to the tribulation. He hasn't destined us to eternal wrath. We will not face the wrath of God because Jesus has already faced that for us. But here's what we're going to obtain in that final day. It will not be wrath. It will be salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. So one more, one more to prove the point.

[24 : 09] Even though Paul does not use the word helmet here, he does talk about the armor in Romans as it relates to this future day of salvation. Look at Romans 13 verse 11. Besides this, you know the time. The hour has come for you to wake up from sleep. Very similar to 1 Thessalonians 5. For salvation is nearer to us.

That day is getting closer now that we first believe. The night is far gone. The day is at hand. For then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the what? The armor of light. So I am, listen, I am absolutely biblically convinced that the salvation Paul is talking about in Ephesians 6 is a future salvation. It is not a past. It is not a present. It's the future salvation that we have on the final day. So then what does the helmet of salvation mean? Notice it on the screen. The helmet of salvation is not applying the salvation you already have. It's setting your mind on the salvation to come.

Does everybody see that? Did you know that coming into tonight? Have you thought about salvation that way? That this is not applying the salvation I already have. It's guarding my mind. It's setting my mind on the salvation that will come on that final day in Jesus Christ. This, by the way, is so frequently commanded in Scripture. Notice in these verses, I could give you 15, but we don't have the time. I'm going to give you just a couple. And notice the relationship between the mind and the future.

Therefore, preparing your minds for action and being sober, what? Mindful. Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at what? The revelation of Jesus Christ. Set your mind, get your mind right. Namely, what? Fixed on the hope that's yours when Jesus comes. Next, look at this one.

Set your mind on the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you've died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Is everybody with me tonight? I think that's what the helmet of salvation means. It means I am setting my mind on that final and future day of salvation in Jesus Christ.

[27 : 02] And I think this makes total sense out of the order of the armor. Every single week I've showed you how each piece then builds on the next, right? That this is not a random piece of armor, and they're just all kind of individual pieces. No, they all fit together. So let's add this piece to the puzzle we've been putting together. Here it is. When I put on the belt of truth, which I argue is the gospel of your salvation, that is, when I'm clear about the gospel, I know who Jesus is, that He came, He was born, God became a man, He lived a perfect life, He died for my sins on the cross, He rose the third day, He ascended on high, He's my high priest, He's my high priest interceding for me now. I am clear on who Jesus is, and what Jesus has done for me. When I'm clear on that truth, then I'm also not doubting who I am.

My breastplate is secure. I realize that what I do is not who I am. Who I am is the very righteousness of Jesus Christ. For when I put my faith in Him, I received His life, and that is who I am.

Belt of truth, breastplate is now tight. Well, now I have security. My shoes are confident. Why? Because I understand the gospel of peace. I've got peace with God. Do you realize what this means in light of what Jesus has done and made me who I am? That there is nothing, neither life nor death, nor angels or principalities that could ever separate me from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus my Lord. I am secure. I am confident in my faith, not because of anything that I have done, but because of everything that He has done for me. And do you know what, somebody say, preach preacher. Do you know what that means? It means when the fiery arrows of life come, and they're going to come, the sufferings, the trials that are going to come my way, when I have that confidence, when I have that confidence, I am able to raise my shield of faith and be strong, trusting God and continuing to march forward. Doing what? Setting my mind on a final day of salvation that is to come. Listen to how Jesus puts all this together. I'm excited for you. Then they, listen, come on disciples, listen, followers of mine, I'm just going to tell you, they're going to deliver you up to, don't ever tell me God won't take His people through tribulation.

He will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death. And you're going to be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many are going to fall away and betray one another and hate one another.

And there's going to be false prophets that will arise and lead people astray. And because of lawlessness will increase, the love of many is going to go cold. But here's what I want you to know, the one who endures these fiery arrows of life that endure in their faith, say it with me loudly, will be saved. That's the helmet of salvation. Don't you, four of you are excited. Like, we're going to, we're just going to open the cafe on Saturday night to wake you up. Come on. This is exciting truth. Amen. Like, like when, when I know who Jesus is, then I know who I am and I've got security as a believer. So when suffering comes, I'm moving forward until that final day when I see my Savior face to face, evil spiritual powers, bring it on. For God has built a soldier that can stand firm, strong in him.

[31 : 07] This is how Paul wants these Ephesian Christians to be. It's how he wants us to be. So what do you think the evil spiritual powers are going to go after? They're going to go after your mind. They're going to go after your head. And if you're not equipped with the helmet of salvation, it can be deadly blows, like, like discouraging blows to us when the evil powers come. And what I've tried to do each week in this is expose the different schemes and show you what this spiritual warfare looks like. I've told you this every week, like spiritual warfare isn't, again, like some demons just going to show up in your living room. No, it happens through things like, do you remember me telling you, they will try to convince you that what you do is who you are, rather than your identity is based on what Christ did for you. Or they'll come at you with, you know, God is really mad at you. I mean, you know what you did last night. You know what you did last week. You know what you've done. Like God, God is angry at you and you begin to feel all this guilt and shame. Listen, God is never mad at those he has redeemed in Jesus because Jesus has already taken the eternal, just wrath judgment I deserved upon himself at Calvary.

All, all I receive, yes, be it painful at times, all I receive is love. God has already poured out his wrath on Jesus, but they will try to come at you and say, do you know how God, how mad God is at you?

This is the real life of spiritual warfare or things like we talked about last week, the discouragement of if I take one more arrow, if one more flaming arrow comes at me, I'm done. I quit. I'm out. I mean, so many Christians lose heart. They just want to quit. And that's how evil spiritual powers come at you is they try to throw arrows to get you so discouraged rather than trusting by faith in God. Are you with me? Are you with me? So each piece of armor has exposed a scheme of the evil ones. What about this one? Well, what does the helmet of salvation reveal as it relates to the schemes of the devil, the scheme of the spiritual forces? And what I've asked, again, it's been my biggest complaint of what most teaching on Ephesians 6 leaves out is, I don't know, the rest of Ephesians.

We teach this in isolation rather than, has Paul given me any clue elsewhere in this book that might help me understand how the helmet of salvation relates to the schemes that the evil spiritual powers use. Let's look at Ephesians 4 quickly. Paul says this, Now this I say and testify in the Lord that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their their darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart. They've become callous. They've given themselves to sensuality, greed, practice every kind of impurity. But that's not the way you learned Christ, assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus, to put off, listen closely, to put off your old self which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires and to be, this is important, to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Now what does that mean?

Lord help me in this moment teach this with clarity. How does this apply? Let me set the stage so lean in closely. If you've zoned out, what do you do? You've been taught well. Zone back in. Okay, listen closely. Paul is urging the Ephesians, listen, not to fall back to old patterns of thinking. Why? Because old patterns of thinking lead to sinful behaviors associated with the world. Is everybody with me so far? You go back to old ways of thinking. You slip back into old behaviors. That's of the world. That's what he means by Gentiles. You're not Gentiles anymore. He's not saying ethnically you're no longer a Gentile.

[36 : 13] You're not an unbeliever anymore. You don't think like that. And that thinking that leads to behavior, that's not who you are. Instead, through the renewing of their minds, that's very important, through the renewing of their minds. They are to grow in the likeness of God, which is what our future salvation is about, right? It's the whole doctrine of glorification when one day we, along with all of creation, will be fully redeemed and restored and conformed to the image of Christ.

So Paul's saying, like, be careful with your thinking. That's going to lead to behavior that is either, listen, consistent with this world or consistent with the one that is to come.

Let me give an illustration that might help with this. If you have a future goal of body transformation, let's say you want to get fit, you want to get in shape. Listen, this is so helpful.

The more, and the reason why I think it's so helpful is because I don't know how frequently we do this as Christians. So lean in. Listen, if I want to, if my goal is body transformation, I'm going to get in shape. The more you think about where you're going to be next year, what you'll look like next year or whatever that may be, listen, it will help you make better decisions now. But if you're only consumed with how you look now, it's totally easy to give in to the giant tub of ice cream. Do you see? But if, but if I, if I've got an objective, like I know, like that's where I'm going, that's where I want to be. And I'm fixed on that. My mind is dedicated to that. Then that helps me make decisions. Now I'm not going to eat the cookie. I'm going to eat clean because that's listen where I'm going. And so I'm renewing my mind. I'm focusing my mind in light of where I'm going to be. In other words, there is a direct connection between the decisions you make now and what you believe about your future. And what does all this have to do with evil spiritual forces?

Lord, please help us get this. Notice it on the screen. Evil spiritual powers achieve defeat through temporary distractions. Let me say it a different way. Notice this on the screen.

[39 : 06] It's easy to lead people astray when they don't know where they're going. Would you think on that? Pun intended? Think on that. It's easy to lead people astray through all kinds of worldly distractions when they don't know where they're going.

When your mind becomes so, somebody say preach preacher, come on, listen. When your mind becomes so preoccupied with this life that you seldom think about the life to come, it's easy to slip back.

As though you belong to this world, Gentiles, than the world that is to come, than the world in which you belong. Listen, it's why we spend, this is going to hurt, but you're seated, so here we go.

It's why we spend more time making money than we do on spiritual maturity. Because we don't know where we're going.

It's why we work extra hours, even if it means missing weekend worship. Because we don't know where we're going.

[40 : 32] It's why we invest a lot more money in the stock market than we do the kingdom of God. Because we've lost our spiritual minds.

We don't have on the helmet of salvation. We are not a people fixed on a future salvation when we see Jesus.

So do you know what it's easy to do? Settle for the now. And evil spiritual powers have won many a battle through distracting you by this world from the one that is to come.

Amen? So do not be conformed to this world.

It's a Gentile world, to use Paul's language. But be transformed by the renewal of your minds.

[41 : 46] Paul says it this way to Timothy in this whole warfare metaphor. No what? No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits.

Since his aim is to please the one who enlisted them. Here's what this means for us practically.

And I hope I haven't lost you. And as I said a few moments ago, I just don't really know how much. I don't know that we talk about this enough when it comes to our Christian walk, our Christian faith.

And it's this. You need and I need to spend a whole lot more time thinking about your future. And I ain't talking about retirement.

I'm talking about glory. When is the last time you took your mind off the things of the world and put them on the things above?

[42 : 54] You do this already? You do this with other things? Here's what I mean. When you're excited about a future vacation, do you ever find yourself just stopping and daydreaming about, Man, I can't wait.

I can't wait. Six months. I'm going to be at the beach. Yes. I think about that every December in Minnesota. Right? Get me out of here. Like, let's go somewhere warm.

You do that. You've got something coming up that you are so excited about, you stop in the middle of your day and you set your mind on it. Or, you're dreaming of retirement.

And you're getting closer. You're 10 years away and you find yourself stopping in a coffee shop thinking about, Here's what I'm going to do with my grandkids. And here are the places that my husband and I are going to go try.

What are you doing? You're setting your mind on something that's to come and it's impacting your now. Or, you're anticipating a wedding. And you're so excited for that wedding day to come and you find yourself just getting, while you're driving down the street or while you're at work, getting all caught up in the excitement of that day.

[44 : 13] Is everybody with me? Say yes. Here's what I mean. We think on what we long for. And if you do that with vacation, why aren't you doing that with heaven?

Put on the helmet of salvation. Protect your mind with the salvation you know is yours and will be revealed in that final day.

Get caught up in glory. Getting a little intense. Getting a little fired up.

Like, I'm passionate about it because we just don't do it enough. Intentionally look at your schedule and look at your day and ask yourself, what am I doing at any point in the day where I'm just stopping and thinking about what my eternal future is going to be like?

You want the things of this world to grow strangely dim? Get caught up in the light of His glory and grace.

[45 : 27] Because when you do, guess what you got on? The helmet of salvation. I've probably given this illustration so many times.

You could tell it, but I'm going to give it again and I'm wrapping it up. It is one of my favorite stories. John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. You know this story.

Do you remember when Christian and Hopeful are imprisoned in Doubting Castle? And they are bombarded with all of these trials. And they're starved by the tyrant of giant despair.

In fact, Christian is so despairing, he wants to take his life. And then he remembers one Sunday that he's got a key.

And this key is called the key of promise. It's rusty through lack of use. That'll preach. He hasn't used it.

[46 : 32] And then he decides maybe this key will help. And so he uses it to unshackle the chains and he escapes from Doubting Castle. He and Hopeful soon arrive to the delectable mountains where they meet four shepherds.

And one of them asks Christian if he would like to look through the perspective glass to the celestial city. And Christian looks through it.

And this is what he says. It's glorious. How I long to be there. Hopeful asks, how soon?

Until we arrive. And the shepherd replies, sooner than you think. But longer than you wish. And the two Bunyanites went away singing.

Singing. Because they put on the helmet of salvation and for just a moment caught a glimpse of the glory that will one day be theirs in Christ Jesus.

[47 : 45] Jesus. I plead with you, church. I plead with you. Put on your helmet. Put on the helmet of salvation.

Set your mind on the things above. Notice this on the screen. One thing that will help your battle wounds heal is setting your mind on heaven.

Close with this. What does it mean to set your mind on heaven? What does it mean? Does it just mean we think about, you know, golden streets and pearly gates, however inaccurate that might be?

But just, is that what we think about? No. What is, or rather should I say, who is the helmet of salvation? And as we've seen every single week, I've shown you that the way you put the armor on is that you focus on Jesus because Jesus is the armor.

And if you need the background of that, there's past sermons where I've laid out in previous weeks how Jesus is the armor. So you might ask tonight, okay, I'm wrapping it up. Okay, listen, listen, here we go.

[49 : 00] Do I set my mind on that future day or do I set my mind on Jesus? And the answer to that is yes.

Because that future day is Jesus. Prove it.

Okay. John 11. Lazarus dies. Jesus shows up late by all appearances.

Everybody's weeping. Mary won't even come out and talk to him. And Jesus has a very interesting conversation with Martha that goes something like this.

Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you'd been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.

[50 : 02] And Jesus said to her, your brother will rise again. And Martha said, I know, I know. He'll rise again in what?

The resurrection on the last day. Future salvation. You know what's coming next, right? Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. That future day is only a future day.

Because on that day, we will see Jesus. So, set your mind on him, faith family.

Listen, there is a way to live forever. There is a way that no matter what happens to you in the battlefield of life, you can be saved.

[51 : 12] But let me be very clear. It is not through rigid health routines and longevity science. It is not through surgical procedures or doing a little bit of extra cardio at the gym.

The promise of a future salvation comes only through a relationship with Jesus Christ. He is the one who faced our enemy of sin and death for us.

And three days later, he demonstrated that he is the one who lives forever. Amen. He is our helmet of salvation.

And if we are going to survive this war, we better set our minds on him. And all God's people said, amen.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, thank you again for what you're teaching us through this series. And all the truth that you have equipped us with.

[52 : 16] This is so practical and helpful because we're facing battles every day. We will leave in a few moments and be bombarded with temporary things.

Everything is this life, this life, this life, this life. And this life is a gift of your grace. But how often are we putting on the helmet of salvation and thinking about what is to come?

That this light momentary affliction doesn't even compare to a weight of glory. I wonder when the last time it's been that we got just caught up in the glorious truth of eternal life with you.

I'm praying in these few moments as we remember through communion that people that came here tonight heavy hearted, bombarded with the arrows of this life, feeling like if they take one more arrow, they've lost all heart.

I pray that as we think upon the cross, we will remember something very important. That Jesus, when you broke that bread with your disciples, you said, I will not eat of this with you until the kingdom of God.

[53 : 58] Lord, this act of remembrance, this act of the word supper, is not just pointing us to the past death of Jesus.

It is pointing us to a future feast in glory with God and your people forever.

Lord, may this be a beautiful and sweet time of worship as we remember and as we look forward in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen.

Thank you.