***The Full Armor of God - The Helmet of Salvation

The Suffering of Spiritual Combat, No. 9 - PH33-01

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:28-30***

In this world, Satan has an army of demons who are engaged in a worldwide spiritual conflict whose purpose is to exalt Satan above God. So, each day that you awake, you relate to enter the angelic battle. This battle has risen to a maximum intensity and to extreme subtlety in our day. The objective of this war is to neutralize you, and to bring suffering into your life.

**The Helmet of Salvation**

So we now come to another item in the armor which God has provided for our protection for the spiritual combat. We have this in the Ephesians 6:17 where we read, "And take the helmet of salvation." We are dealing now with the soldier's headgear. It is self-evident that the head is a vital part of the body. It is the cradle of the brain. The brain is the control center of the body. A blow to the head can completely disable a soldier and put him out of action. The head is always a prime target of attack in battle. If you can hit the head, you have put the person completely out of action immediately in a moment of time. You can hit a person many other places in the body and not incapacitate him. You can even hit him mortally, and give him some moments in which to produce some final reaction that is destructive to you on the field of battle. However, a proper strike at the head drops everything immediately and slams the door shut. So the head in combat is obviously a very vital place on the body. For this reason, we are told to take the helmet of salvation.

The word "take" is a Greek word "dechomai." This word simply means to receive something. Here it means to receive a piece of combat equipment; namely, a helmet. This taking of this helmet is done initially, of course, at the point of believing the gospel. However, we must also view this as something that we take in terms of the consequences of our saved state. We can enter into this.

One of the things that happens when you enter the military service is that you are issued a helmet. That helmet is issued as a protective cover for your head. You may take that helmet, and not wear it. You have it, but you do not enter into the protective features that that helmet provides. In the same way, we may have salvation; we may have taken this helmet; and, we may have had it issued to us at the point of salvation, but not entered into the protective features that salvation implies. That's what I want to try to alert us to this morning. What protective features are there to me because I have this helmet?

The helmet of salvation is a fantastically protective element in our spiritual combat. However, if you are going to be sitting on a hill someplace with your helmet of salvation lying beside you on the ground, somebody in the angelic warfare may put a spiritual bullet right between your eyes, and you will drop as a casualty. You have to enter into the usefulness of this helmet. That's part of what it means when it says "take," to receive. You've had it issued to you. Now there's the problem of using it.

This is indicated by the aorist tense which means a point of time action. This aorist means at the point that you go into spiritual combat with the demon angels, have the helmet on your head where it belongs. It is in the middle voice which means that you personally benefit. Middle means that the person benefits by this action. Again, like all these other pieces of armor, it's imperative. It is God's command that you use this piece of equipment.

The piece of equipment that we are to use is the helmet. It's called the "perikephalaia." The first part of the word is "peri" which means "around," and the last part comes from the Greek word "kephalaia" which means "head." So, "perikephalaia" is the Greek word for helmet. It comes from the words for "around" and "head," so it means something to wrap around the head. It is an "around the head" thing. This very aptly describes the helmet.

In the Greek Bible, this word happens to stand first in the sentence. In Greek, that makes it emphatic. It is very bad, in other words, to be in the angelic warfare without the helmet of salvation. The stress is upon the fact that you must not enter this combat without this salvation and without entering into the implications of that salvation.

Again, Paul's analogy refers to the helmet of a Roman soldier. It was made of bronze, and we may find some analogies between this helmet that the soldier wore and, again, spiritual things. This bronze helmet enclosed the head of the soldier as the plan of God encloses the life of the believer here on earth, so that we may compare this to the doctrine of expiation. The doctrine of expiation has removed man's guilt of sin. It has covered his sin, and now he is protected within the helmet of salvation.

As you probably know, a helmet made of metal, is not worn directly on the head. The head would very soon become very bruised if that were the case. This is just as with military helmets in the United States which, of course, are of a totally different shape. But within it, there is what is called a helmet liner. Actually, this is where the soldier's head comes. His head goes up in there, and it is the liner, which is made of a fiber material and which has straps within it which are adjustable. On his head are the straps, and even the liner, sitting above his head, does not touch his head, and the metal helmet is sitting down upon this liner. This is where the metal is resting, right on the liner--his head supported by straps within. In this way, the head is protected so that it is not bruised. Plus, it gives an added area of absorbing blows to the head which may strike the helmet.

In the Roman soldier's helmet, there was also a liner. It was made of leather, and it was for the same purpose. It was to give a protective covering on the head in order to bear the weight of the helmet itself. This again has an analogy. It's made of leather. Therefore, it's the skin of an animal. Therefore, it is comparable to what we read of in Genesis 3:21 where God used the skins of animals to make a covering for the nakedness of Adam and Eve after they sinned, and which act signified the death of an animal, the shedding of blood, and thus the analogy of the future provision of the death of Christ upon the cross for the sins of the world. So, it speaks of the doctrine of imputed righteousness--that an innocent life is given for their guilty life.

The Roman soldier's helmet also had a chin strap which went under the chin, just as American helmets have a chin strap which swings underneath the chin. Of course, the purpose of that is to keep the helmet in place particularly in battle and in actions of violent movements so that it will not fly off. This is comparable to the fact that salvation provides a security forever--the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer.

On top of the Roman helmet was a decorative element. There was this ridge that came on the top of the helmet, and on it was a plume of various colors. The plume actually served the purpose of marking rank. This is suggestive of the uniqueness of the rank of the person of Jesus Christ as the God man, or what we call the doctrine of the hypostatic union.

So, as Paul thought to himself concerning the helmet of the soldier, he thought, "Now, what would that helmet be comparable to in spiritual things? He looked at the fact that it played such a vital role in protecting such a key part of the body that controlled everything else. In his mind, immediately, it was comparable to salvation itself. So, he calls it the helmet of salvation which in the Greek is "soterion." "Soterion" means "salvation." It is in what we call the genitive case, and here it indicates what grammatically is called "apposition." That is, the helmet is equal to salvation. So, it is very clear what he has in mind when he looks at the helmet and says, "What would that represent in spiritual things?" Paul says, "It represents personal regeneration through faith in Christ in His work on the cross. The helmet is the whole work of God through Jesus Christ by which the Father rescues sinful man from eternal doom in hell, and through grace gives him eternal life in heaven. So salvation here is viewed as the protection against that eternal destruction that Satan seeks to impose on every human being.

**Salvation**

So, let's take a look at the nature of this helmet in the form of salvation. It is obvious that no one who does not have personal salvation can meet Satan and resist him. If you are not a believer, you are completely under the domination of Satan. He is your father; he is your ruler; he is your commander-in-chief; and you cannot do one single thing that is not the result of his working through you--even the things that we would consider to be human good. A great deal of the do-good-ism in the world is done by people who do not have the helmet of salvation, and yet who try to perform good things. No one can resist Satan without this helmet. This helmet, however, provides monumental protection because it represents not only salvation, but a number of doctrines that are associated with salvation and that are implied in salvation. Basically, the problem is this:

**The Wall between God and Man**

Here you are as a human being, and here is the Triune God: Father; Son; and, Holy Spirit. Between the two of you there has arisen, because of what happened in the Garden of Eden, a certain barrier. We may think about it specifically in terms of certain blocks:

1. **Sin**

The first one is the block of sin. The Bible tells us that everybody is born as a slave to sin. He is born into a market of which Satan is the master. Therefore, we are born into a slave market which he controls (Romans 3:23, John 8:43-44). Satan is the father and the master of those who are in this slave market. The only way a person can get out of this slave market is by being redeemed. This has to be done by someone who is a free man, who himself is not guilty of sin nor has an old sin nature. That person, of course, was the Lord Jesus Christ. When you have the helmet of salvation, you have protection against Satan's control as your master. This is the doctrine of redemption. So, the first problem separating us from God is this matter of sin. Because we are sinners, we are in a slave market; Satan is our master; and, we have no way of buying our way out of that market. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who came along and removed this block through redemption.

1. **The Penalty of Sin**

However, there was another problem. There is another block, and this is the block of the penalty of sin. This block has to do with the fact that Adam's sin caused death for all. It caused spiritual death; it caused physical death; and, if you die it that condition, it will cause eternal death. We have this explained in Genesis 2:17 where God warned Adam and Eve that they would die if they sinned. The debt for man's sin was paid by Jesus Christ. What was the price? The price was spiritual death. Since we already are spiritually dead (we are born spiritually dead), we obviously don't have the revenue with which to pay this. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ paid it for us. So, He removes the penalty, though this is part of the wall that once separated God from man. The helmet protects us against the demand to pay against sin. When you have the helmet of salvation on, one of the things it implies is that Satan can never call upon you to pay for sin. That's the problem with these people who think they can lose their salvation. They don't understand the helmet of salvation and its protection. They think that it's as long as you behave yourself that you are saved, then God expects you to pay for what you do beyond that.

1. **The Old Sin Nature**

There's another block, and that's the block of the old sin nature. The old sin nature is inherited from our human fathers, and it results in spiritual death in each person. Because you have an old sin nature, you are spiritually dead. You cannot go to heaven with a dead human spirit. In order to go to heaven, as God ultimately wants you to go to heaven, you have to have a living body; you have to have a living soul; and, you have to have a living human spirit. Unless you have all three of these, you cannot go to heaven for all eternity. God is going to resurrect everybody whether you're saved or unsaved. The soul never dies. The spirit dies because we have the old sin nature within our being. Therefore we are spiritually dead.

What Jesus Christ did was made His spiritual life available to us at the cross. By dying spiritually for sinners on the cross, He paid for the sins of the world, and He made spiritual life possible for each of us. In other words, when you believe in Christ the Savior, your human spirit is reactivated. You come to life. So, the helmet of salvation protects you against the dead human spirit, and thus you have a line of communication with God. This is the doctrine of regeneration. You have been regenerated.

1. **God's Holiness**

Well, the thing is even worse than that because the wall builds up, and we face another block, and that is God's holiness. God is absolute justice. He will not do what is unfair. Therefore, if you deserve to go to hell, that's where you will go. If you deserve to go to heaven, which nobody does, you will go to heaven. God is also absolute righteousness. How good do you have to be to go to heaven? Well, you have to be absolutely righteous. You have to be just as good as Jesus Christ or you cannot go to heaven. In order to solve this problem, which is indeed a major problem, God could not just say, "Well, let's just forget it," because the character of God cannot be compromised in any way. Therefore, the death of Christ met the justice of God. The justice of God says you're a sinner; the wages of sin is death (you pay for death); and, Christ paid that death for us. That took care of one part of the holiness problem--the justice.

On the other hand, God says, "You need to have my righteousness to live in heaven. Therefore, I give it to you," and that satisfies the righteousness of God. Everybody in heaven will be absolutely righteous. Therefore, you can go to heaven. This block has been crumbled just as have been the others.

The helmet of salvation protects us against Satan's challenge to God's righteousness and justice. Satan has not given this up. This is why he accuses us. As we shall see in a moment, Satan is keeping a service record on each of us. Periodically, he reports into heaven, and some of you may have been on the docket this week as being thrown up to God by Satan concerning your performance; your conduct; your actions; and, your thinking as a Christian. The reason he is doing this is because what he is doing is trying to snarl in the face of God concerning God's justice.

He says, "Now here's Sam Brown. You're going to let him go to heaven? I just want to show you how he's been acting this week. Do you call that fair, God? Do you call that righteous? This is going to be in heaven, but you won't let me and my angels be in heaven because we rebelled against you?" How are you going to answer that? If you stay awake until the end of this session, we're going to tell you. But there is a very important answer that you need to know about that. The devil is doing it all the time. Maybe you think you're a nice enough person that you never come up for examination. But, believe me, you're up there. They're looking you over. They're scrutinizing you, and your name comes up in heaven. It's like Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer used to say, "Satan likes to make things that are secrets here on earth open scandal in heaven."

1. **Position**

There's one other block that really makes the wall, and this wall is impossible to go up, over, under, or around. It is there. There is also the block of position. We are born in a position of death. Of course, these are all interrelated. We're just thinking of these in these separate blocks in order to see what the huge problem is in this matter of salvation which this helmet represents in the way of protection. The Bible says that we are born in Adam, so we're under God's wrath and under divine condemnation. When we receive Christ as Savior, we are baptized in union with Christ. Therefore, we have a new position which is in Christ, and that takes care of that block. That crumbles it to pieces. In other words, now when God looks at you, He no longer sees us in the place of death in Adam. He sees us in the place of eternal life in His Son Jesus Christ. So, the helmet of salvation protects us from any condemnation because we are now under the headship of Jesus Christ rather than the headship of the old Adam.

Jesus Christ has now removed all of this. Now, between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, there is only a line, and this line is faith in Jesus Christ. Your sins which have separated you from God, and which place you under the wrath of God, will continue to keep you under the wrath of God unless you step across this line and meet God in salvation--in other words, that is, unless you put on the helmet of salvation. All that's necessary now is for you to step across the line.

So now we're going to put on the helmet of salvation. Satan's club against humanity has been shattered. We can cross over. This is a very great salvation that we have. Consequently, it is a very great protection against Satan. However, Satan is not going to let up on you. You not only put on the helmet by simply walking across and accepting by grace what God has provided, but there are also implications to this helmet because you are going to have to keep this helmet on, and you are going to have to be aware of what this helmet implies because Satan is going to keep striking at your salvation. He is going to strike at your head again and again. Unless the helmet of salvation is in place and the chin strap is under there where it belongs so that you are well confident in that which is around your head protecting you, you will become a victim in the spiritual conflict even though you are born again. 2 Corinthians 2:11 says, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us for we are not ignorant of his devices."

**Satan Accuses Believers**

Well, here is one of his devices. One of his devices is to accuse believers. He accuses believers. This is what we were referring to a moment ago. You can read about this in Revelation 12:9-10. You can compare this with Job 1:6-11 where we have Satan actually coming to heaven, and he is accusing Job and challenging Job's real affection for the Lord. The demons are collecting information on each of us all the time. They mention our performance openly in heaven in order to cast discredit upon the character of God--that He would let people in our conduct actually be headed for heaven.

The helmet of salvation will deflect this blow. 1 John's 2:1-2 tell us what happens when Satan does that in heaven, and he's doing it all the time. John says, "My little children, I write these things unto you that you sin not," speaking to Christians. "And if any man (any Christian) sins, we have an advocate (a lawyer) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Now why do we need a lawyer in heaven? Well, when you match what Satan is doing in Revelation 12:9-10 where it says he accuses the brethren day and night, that's why we need someone in heaven to act as our advocate or as our lawyer. One of the things that I'm happy to say about the Lord Jesus Christ as a lawyer is that He always wins His case. That's not always true of lawyers, but that is true of Him. He always wins His case because His evidence is irrefutable. Satan never learns his lesson. He keeps coming back, trying again with a new slant. If we forget the protection which we have in 1 John 1:9 for the confession of sin, Satan will bring pressures to bear upon us, and we will begin collapsing under those pressures. The helmet of salvation makes it impossible for God ever to repudiate us no matter what Satan brings against us because that salvation covers all of our past, present, and future sins. That's in salvation. Otherwise, Satan could expose a person's sins, theoretically; that person would be lost again; and, God would have nothing that He could argue. God could not answer Satan because the sins are there. He'd have to say, "Yes, I'll have to scratch his name off the list after all." But that is not the way it works. The accuser cannot get past the helmet. You remember that. The helmet says, "He can't hit me. He can't get to me. He can't knock me out."

**Neglecting the Word**

Another thing that he does is he encourages believers to neglect the Word. He offers them all kinds of lures which appeal to each of our particular old sin natures. Well, with this helmet of salvation, remember that this represents the fact that you are now capable of learning the Word of God. If it were not for salvation, you wouldn't understand anything about what God is saying. It is this helmet that makes it possible for you because you have a living human spirit and you have the indwelling God the Holy Spirit. Every situation of our lives can be met with the promises, the doctrines, and the prophecies which are flowing from the Word of God. The basic goal of the Christian life, therefore, is to learn the Word. As you apply this Word and as it is represented by your capacity to learn in the helmet of salvation, Satan is frustrated.

**False Doctrine**

Also, Satan tries to attack with false doctrine to get you to believe what is not true. This is not only what is grossly, obviously, and openly false, but he tries to get you to believe things that are just dumb about how God works, and to lead you astray that way. One of the worst things that Satan leads you to do is to forget who Jesus Christ really is. He leads you to cause you to forget the Lord Jesus Christ. In Colossians 1:14, the apostle Paul speaks of the Lord in these terms: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Jesus Christ is the last Adam. He's born without an old sin nature. The last Adam is just like the first Adam was at first--without a sin nature. Jesus Christ, as the God man, is the one who has redeemed us from the slave market of sin. We are now free men, and the price of the helmet of salvation was sufficient for all and forever (1 Peter 1:18-19). Verse 15 says of Him that, "He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation."

In other words, he is the unique God man. He is the image of the invisible God. He is pure humanity, and He is the first born. He is the sovereign head of a new creation. That's who Jesus Christ is. He goes on in verse 16 and says, "For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible (material and spiritual), whether they be thrones, or dominions (human authorities), or principalities, or powers (divine authorities), all things were created by Him and for Him." Who is this person that Satan wants you to forget? He wants you to forget that Jesus Christ is the person who created the universe; who put it all together; and, who is the one that actually makes it all work.

It's the helmet of salvation that'll protect you from the inane idea of evolution because the Bible makes it clear it all came by the creation of this Man. Verse 17 says, "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." In other words, He existed before the universe was created, and He keeps the universe together. It is He who produced the universe, and the helmet of salvation reminds us that it is He who holds it all together. What we call the laws of science are simply the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. While He was on the cross, He made the helmet of salvation possible, but at the same time, He was even then sustaining and keeping the universe together. That's who Satan wants you to forget about.

Verse 18 says, "He is the head of the body the church." That's who Satan wants you to forget about. "Who is the beginning?" That is, the origin of the church, through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. "The first born from the dead." That is, the one who is to be the leader of a new creation. "That in all things he might have the preeminence." The helmet of salvation should remind you that Satan wants you to forget the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ should really have the preeminence in your life, and you are not to be occupied with yourself and other things. Satan promotes self--preeminence of self. This results in our doing things for credit. The local church is filled many times with people who are on an ego trip. What they are doing is that, because of their pride, they're hustling in some way to produce something which God actually rejects. They love praise. If you are living for praise, you are exposing your head to Satan's blows. You have not entered into the use of the helmet of your salvation.

I know that preachers are often responsible for helping to contribute to this because preachers like to go around patting people on the head when they ought to be banging them on their helmets and telling them to get with it. Because they go around patting people on the head and cooing to them in order to get them hustling for the Lord, people get the idea that this is the way they should do it. When you quit patting them on the head, then they quit functioning for the Lord. I am well aware of this. I didn't have to get out of seminary very long before I discovered this quirk in human nature, and I have not made it a practice to go patting people on the head in order to get them to function in their Christian lives. If you can't serve as unto the Lord, and do it whether people appreciate it or not, then don't do it.

If you want to be appreciated, then get out in the world. The world knows how to appreciate. All you have to do is go up to a grocery store clerk and pay for your groceries, and the clerk will say, "Thank you. Have a nice day." And you'll say, "Isn't that kind of her? She really appreciated my coming here and buying, and she wants me to have a nice day." You'll get plenty of that. If you want the Lord's blessing, and if you're wearing the helmet of salvation, then don't look for preeminence. When you give Christ the preeminence, it will deflect Satan's blows to your head.

**Acceptance**

And don't look for acceptance either. If you're going into the ministry, this is a keyword. They don't happen to have the kind of courses; the kind of orientation; and, the kind of training at seminary that they should have upon acceptance. Instead, the implication that you get in seminary is to seek to be accepted. I can guarantee you that if you go out into your ministry and seek to be accepted by people; by the congregation; by the community; and, by other preachers, you will be out of the will of God. When we can see that men who are being used of the Lord in some area suddenly are actually serving Satan's cause in other areas, you can always attribute it to the fact that this man wanted to be accepted. When you get a little fame, and people begin to tell you how much they're being blessed by your ministry; people begin to tell you how much good you're doing for them; and, you begin to find that you have a broader and broader call and appeal, then it becomes very tempting to maintain acceptance. Then you don't want to make issues over things that should be made issues about--things that are wrong and things that are out of line with the Word of God. You don't want to bring those things up.

You don't yourself go in for the wrong things. You yourself will even publicly say, "Well I don't do this. I don't speak in tongues." But, you want acceptance. So, you don't say, "I don't speak in tongues, and I'll tell you that anybody who does is operating under the devil's directions." When you don't want acceptance, that's what you say. When you want acceptance, you just say, "I don't look for an experience I don't encourage people to look for an experience. Just love the Lord; fill the offering box; and, hang in there somehow." You just want to leave things open for people to pursue what they want to do. So, if you're going into the ministry, you're going to find it's a lonely trail if you refuse to be accepted or if you refuse to play ball.

You will find that in your congregation there will be people who come along here, and they're poor as church mice; they have tattered clothes; they love the Lord; they serve; and, they're great. Then they begin to get money. It falls all over them. Then they begin to look like princesses and kings, and they have crowns on their heads and jewels all over their fingers and on their toes. They just look so magnificent now. Pretty soon, you discover that along with all the jewels, they want status. They think that now they should be people of power and of influence. If you don't accept them when they get to their pushy, moneyed, status-seeking stage, they will desert. It will be just like it happens when the boy goes out to the barn with the lantern at night; he flings the doors of the barn open; and, he illuminates the darkness of that barn with the lantern, then the birds begin to chirp, and the rats begin to run. So, if you want to be accepted, he'll keep the rats with you. But, if you refuse to be accepted and to be any man's patsy except God's man, you will find that the birds will chirp and the beautiful music of God will be there. It will not be quite as powerful as the screeching of the rats as they run from the light.

This is something the helmet of salvation implies. When you get hold of that, you'll know that Jesus Christ gets the preeminence because He gave you the helmet. That implies that He should be number one with you--nothing else, and nobody else.

Verse 19 says, "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." The Father is happy with the Son. And when we are happy with the Son and give Him preeminence, we too are happy. So, in verses 20-21 we read, "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wickedness, yet now has He reconciled." So the Lord Jesus Christ is the one in whom God has brought all this together. He made peace between us, and this is now our heritage.

**Fearing Death**

Well, the helmet of salvation will protect our minds so that we are sympathetic to God; or, without it, Satan can strike us and make us hostile to God. Another thing that he does is he causes Christians to fear death. It is the helmet of salvation that will protect you from fearing death. Hebrews 2:14-15 and Job 5:21 tell us that God will provide grace for us when the time comes to die. The helmet of salvation will protect you from being afraid of dying, so that it will free you for spiritual combat. If a soldier could wear something; have something; or, take something so that he is invulnerable to wounding in battle, you can imagine indeed how courageous it would make him. The courage that we have should be there because we have a helmet that does just that. You cannot be struck down by death with the helmet of salvation. Death simply transports you into a better place--a place of joy which God has prepared for you (Revelation 21:4, 2 Corinthians 5:8, John 14:2-3).

**Grace vs. Works**

There is one thing more. We're putting on this helmet. It's a decision of faith. We indicated that there is just a line that you walk across. God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, has made it possible for us to put on the helmet, and then to live in the implications of that helmet. Ephesians 2:8-9 tell us, "For by grace are you saved through faith. And that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Therefore, it makes it very clear that God's way is grace. But, it is more than just that. Here's where it becomes dangerous to give people misinformation or misdirection concerning how they can get to heaven. In Romans 11:6 we read, "And if by grace, then it is no more works." This is antithesis. Grace is here, and works is here. "Then it is no more of works. Otherwise grace is no more grace. But, if it could be of works, then it is no more grace. Otherwise work is no more work."

You couldn't have a verse in the Bible that says it any clearer than that. Grace is one thing; works is another thing; and, there is no way that you can mix it. You can't have part grace and part works. These just do not mix. They're absolutely mutually exclusive. When you get that, you can realize that there is a dangerous ground to ever suggest to a person that he may have faith in Christ and add something to that of his own and still get in. If you say, "I'm going to trust in Christ as Savior, but I'm going to have water baptism. I'm not going to take any chances," then you have added a work, and I'm almost afraid you're not saved. On the basis of this Scripture, you cannot mix grace and faith. You haven't put on the helmet of salvation. There is no way that you can mix the two. Mind you what this means. How many churches are there, and how many Christians are there who believe in Christ as Savior and they're adding their own good works: they're adding repentance; they're adding water baptism; they're adding their church membership; or, they're adding something else. They are not saved.

Romans 4:4-5 says, "Now to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But, to him that does not work but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." What does it say? It says, "If you work, then what you get, you deserve. That's not grace. Your paycheck you deserve. But, if you didn't work, and your employer hands you your paycheck (maybe you were sick), now that's grace." It's something you didn't have coming, and that's something which is indeed an act of grace. But, it's one way or the other. It cannot be both.

Here's the situation: God says, "There's only one way to be saved. That's by grace. You've got to take it as a gift. It's a faith operation from start to finish. The works that come along are the external evidences of it. But people who seek salvation through the death of Christ plus their own contributions have thus neutralized grace, and they are probably not saved, because God gives eternal life only by grace.

So along comes somebody and says, "Well you have to have faith plus repentance." Repentance means to change your mind about something. The only way you can put on the helmet of salvation is by grace plus nothing. So, you believe God. However, when you believe God, you have changed your mind about Jesus Christ, whom you rejected before; you have changed your mind about your sin; and, you have changed your mind about what you're going to face with God. So, you have repented. You cannot repent apart from believing in Christ as Savior. That's what repentance is. You cannot believe and not repent.

Someone comes along and says, "Faith? Yes, but you have to make Christ Lord." That's a favorite one, boy: "Now, friend, if you want to go to heaven, you will now make Christ Lord and savior of your life." Do you know what it means to male Christ Lord of your life? This again is trying to mix spiritual maturity with salvation. Maturity flows from salvation. The way you make Christ Lord of your life is by being filled with the Spirit. If you are filled with the Spirit, He is lord of your life right now. So, don't get hung up on those tricky little phrases, "If he is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all." Boy, that's really good high-powered preacher stuff. That's baloney sliced thick. If you are filled with the Spirit, He is Lord of all in that moment. And don't you doubt it for one minute.

It's only the helmet of salvation that's going to give you the confidence to enter that implication concerning the Lordship of Christ and your spiritual maturity that is possible now that you have that helmet. Recognizing Jesus as Lord from heaven is indeed one thing, but trusting Him as Savior is another thing.

What about faith plus water baptism? Hundreds and hundreds of people are going to be told, "Christ has died for your sins. If you will believe in Him and come forward to experience water baptism, you will be saved." People are going to be told to have faith in Christ plus a work. Therefore, that cannot be of grace, and you're going to have people who are headed for hell who think they're headed for heaven. That's horrifying. It is the helmet of salvation, if you understand the doctrine of salvation, that will protect you from that implication and that deceit. That's a ritual. Satan cleverly says, "Yes, that's how you should be saved." Satan knows that it's this principle here--that if it's not of grace, it's not real. If it isn't grace, it's not salvation. If you interject a work (this little piece of work), that's it. Bang. Grace is gone. You are off this path. If you step off this path (that straight and narrow path), you're not going to heaven. The way you cross that line is on that path, and that path alone.

So water baptism is an identification with Christ. It explains something that's already happened to you relative to salvation. So, if your faith in Christ is faith in Christ plus water baptism, I'd suggest you check your helmet real quick, because you may find that it isn't there. The gospel of John tells us 100 times how to be saved. The whole book was written for that purpose, and never once does it suggest water baptism. The apostle Paul was a great evangelist, and he said that he didn't even make a big issue about baptizing people (1 Corinthians 1:14-17). The real issue is putting on the helmet of salvation. How to get across this line is very important because God says it has to be done on a certain path, and this path is called grace.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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