

Weapons of War - Salvation Part 2

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Date: 23 January 2022

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[0 : 0 0] ah what a good reminder i needed that oh i can hear my i can hear the saints singing that song we realize where our hell comes from i wish i could sing lord whoo wish you could heard it sung at my old church in west oak lane church of god now i tell you when i knocked your socks off what blew us out of this room thank you crazy thank you so much for singing that song sometimes i forget that's what i'm crazy but when i'm saying i realize where my help comes from our help comes from the lord father thank you that you are our ever-present help in the time of need you are our strength you are our rock you are our high tower standing on you nothing can harm us thank you we are your people and we are in need of your strength so oh lord pray that our worship has pleased you and even now i know you've already been working in people's hearts you've worked in mine and i thank you father as we come to hear your word we ask that you continue to work put your word to work by the power of your spirit and accomplish all your good ends glorify the name of your son strengthen your people reprove rebuke encourage strengthen save do all your holy will we submit to you may your word go forth with the power of your spirit and may jesus may jesus be seen we lift up our hearts our hands and our eyes to you for you are our help be my help now as i preach your word i can't do it unless you help me may jesus be glorified in his name we ask these things amen and amen ephesians chapter 6 i'm going to begin the reading in verse 14 our text is the beginning of course of verse 17 hear now the word of the living god stand therefore having fastened on the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and as shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace in all circumstances take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one and take the helmet of salvation amen that is the word of the lord you may be seated i will tell you this message has a bit of personal testimony in it so hope you will allow that and not be offended that i would it's not about me i just think that i want to share my testimony a little bit with you because this text brings that out i think uh when i was a child in the 60s my mom said i caught something called the hong kong flu

interesting um i had it several times and by the time the third time or so that i had it i came down with asthma and i want to tell you i spent many hours in er's throughout philadelphia for the next oh 10-11 years once i was hospitalized for an entire month in third grade with pneumonia secondary of course to the asthma and needless to say i mean being a kid you know i gotta tell you i thought about death a lot um especially when i couldn't breathe there's something about not being able to breathe that causes you to think about dying somebody knows what i'm talking about i hope not but i'm sorry but it's true but when jesus saved me when i was 17 he began to do something with my fear of death i'm not i don't have a death wish but i believe that he began to deal with the fear of death in me so that it has become less of a concern so to speak and i believe that theologically and i've said it even publicly on occasion that i'm not afraid to die but you know you never really know right until you're actually facing something like that well on vacation in jamaica this new year's i had a chance to kind of face that a bit now now i was wearing a life jacket um but my brother-in-law and i went out kayaking right off the coast there and um my kayak flipped over dumb kayak no one gave me permission to flip over by the way i told it not to do that i can swim okay but it flipped over and as i was in the water and i'm trying to get back in the kayak you know they never tell you never teach you how to get back in a floating kayak it didn't work if i fell out again but something weird happened and my brother-in-law and i've talked to a couple doctors including freeman and they said it's probably because of panic that set in i stopped i couldn't breathe so i'm floating in the water and i really can't breathe i mean really i mean it was like what's going on i mean i'm trying to get get do thing i'm trying to swim to my brother-in-law i'm trying to do this stuff but i can't breathe and you know what happens when you can't breathe right you lose energy so i'm floating in the water and i lost all i could i could really lift my arms the water is flashing into my mouth and my mouth i'm

choking because the waves are hitting me it's not big waves but little waves but they're hitting me and my jacket's holding me up but i can't breathe and i and i'm and all i and i right away i knew this is it i'm going to jesus i saw myself visualize i sinking under the water but the life jacket's gonna hold me up but in my panic i know i'm going down life jacket i know life jacket so i'm trying to catch my breath well the lord blessed and i didn't drown i know you need to know that the lord blessed a lady and her boyfriend came by in a kayak out of nowhere i don't know where they came from they must have been out there somewhere they saw me and rode over to me turns out she's a firefighter she had an accent so i think she was somewhere in europe and they they i held on to the they told me what to do

i worked my way over got to the back of the kayak and i held on to this little rope but at the same time i didn't have any energy so i'm not gonna hold on to this rope much longer i'm like you better tell those guys to hurry with the boat because i'm going i'm gone and they got me in the boat and got me on the shore well so here's a funny thing i got on the shore i got out the boat i'm standing there going wow that was interesting and they said hey man sit down come on sit down man one guy said man you got some nice muscles there man i said yeah well you wrote up yeah i've been working on that bro but you you know they were trying to you know smooth me i guess he said sit down i said i feel fine i feel fine he was like you know i feel fine and i realized didn't you just have a near death experience dummy and it hit me i wasn't afraid i was like lord i was coming to be with you and i was okay with that i was okay with that that was deep doesn't mean i'm okay with suffering and pain but death doesn't haunt me the risen one has given me assurance of my salvation and it's not just for messed up christians like me it's for all of us who name the name of jesus as lord and savior the bible says the fear of death holds us in bondage to the evil one one philosopher french philosopher named luke perry luke ferry excuse me has written that the quest he's a non-christian that the quest for salvation without god is at the heart of every great philosophical system and that is its essential and ultimate objective i just don't have time immersing myself in a little bit of some some philosopher's thought and you begin to see that so much of philosophy is designed to help people cope with death all people therefore are looking for salvation it's about death all religions are about salvation especially from the awful darkness of death and jesus has come not only to grant us the salvation we didn't think we needed that's from our sins he grants us the salvation we all want and that's from death and he gives us the assurance of these things right now the assurance that our sins are forgiven and the assurance that there's life after death he wants you to know it he wants you to feel it in your gut he wants you to know it in your soul that you are saved so do you have the helmet of salvation and if you do are you relying on it are you relying on the helmet of salvation every day as you face joy and sorrow in this life now by way of review and looking at the context once again it's significant that Paul mentions the breastplate of righteousness before he mentions the helmet of salvation it hit me because i'm sure the Roman soldier ordinarily put his armor on in probably that order the breastplate probably came before the helmet this point

is Paul is making a point that without having been given the righteousness of Christ by faith meaning you're saved there could be no assurance of salvation with the helmet makes sense you can't have assurance of something you don't have so it's essential that we be clear about what the gospel is when we end up giving ourselves and others a false assurance of salvation and sadly i think this is done quite a bit for many of us there's a moment in time where we put a stake in the ground as it were we here i raise my Ebenezer you know this alright we put a stake in the ground a stone of remembrance you remember the day where Jesus became real to you a lot of us do you know when you came to a living faith in Jesus you've gone and you've gone forward in life because of that with bumps in the road yes you've messed up you've failed you've sinned sometimes royally but you know as in my case

Easter of 1981 Jesus became real and took over your life some of us grew up in Christian homes and prayed to follow Jesus at an early age but even you will probably remember a time when your family's faith in Jesus really became yours i've talked to so many of you and so many testimonies on the east coast of this country and listened to people and those who grew up in Christian homes often say i prayed to receive Christ at five but when i was 13 when i was 14 you know he really became real to me amen maybe that's where you placed your Ebenezer i don't know last time we looked at the helmet of salvation we looked at it as i present assurance right we know that right now we are saved meaning we are certain that we've been forgiven of our sins by the sacrifice of

[14 : 43] Christ we know that we're no longer slaves to the spiritual forces of darkness that war against God and we know that we are seated with Christ right now we have confidence and certainty that we belong to Jesus that was last week and we know we have been saved from the penalty of sin and are being saved right now from the power of sin we're watching God do stuff in our lives we'll come back to that maybe next week believers right now you know that you share in Christ's power and authority over the devil and his domain right now you know that you have a new identity in Christ and you are seeking to live that that's your present assurance of salvation but assurance also has a future reality we're not only sure we're saved now but we're also sure we're going to be we're going to heaven we're going to be saved when we die or the

Lord comes to collect we look forward to the new heavens and new earth where in our complete humanity we are fully saved from the very presence of sin oh looking forward to that to be to be standing in our bodies our resurrected bodies with our reunited with our spirits to be standing on the new heavens and new earth to be standing on a place that is eaten on steroids God is going to eat it is going to be nothing compared to the new heavens and earth wherein there is no unrighteousness there is no sin and the glory and majesty of God put the sun and the moon to shame according to Revelation no sun because the glory of God will light the heavens eaten on steroids y'all this is better than eaten we're destined for that now some some call that assurance eternal security some in a reformed camp like this church is and certainly

I am we refer to it as the perseverance or the preservation of the saints we recognize that God is holding on to us and he will not let us go and we will not miss our connection you ever miss a connection connecting flight that's a horrible thing I mean you get to the airport you're finally there and they put your plane when you come in on the other side of the airport from the next plane you're trying to catch and guess what you've got ten minutes and you're running through the airport breathing hard jumping over old ladies and dodging around kids and you know carts coming at you and you get to the gate and you missed it that door is closed you can't catch this flight we don't have that problem saints when it comes to our spiritual reality you will not miss your flight no matter what time you get there you're on time you're on time but I didn't always believe that

I didn't always believe that was true this sense of assurance of salvation was absent from my Christian life and my wife's too we both grew up in a Pentecostal church that's where God saved us and I love my Pentecostal brethren they are brethren in the faith but I disagree with them on this particular topic severely disagree with them on this topic I never forget we were taught that you could sin so much that you could lose your salvation one of my best friends thought that if he was caught sinning when the rapture came that he would be lost he even thought that if he was in a movie theater watching a movie when the rapture came he would be lost I'm not making this up y'all some now I didn't think a lot about losing my salvation I have to admit that and not all Pentecostals or people who believe they can lose their salvation do but many of them do think about it a lot you can't help it have I sinned have I committed the unpardonable sin right have I sinned enough have I slipped up

I did it again oh lord I didn't mean but I did it again am I really still saved come on I think even people who know who believe in eternal security have felt that way you felt that way where you felt like man I did it again and you just have to wonder am I really in the kingdom that's a horrible sense of fear that can grip you and the devil will play up on that he will help you in that feeling and the worse the sin the greater your fear of losing your salvation and you might miss heaven as one preacher told me I never forget at Temple University a dear brother well I think he was a dear brother he was a little different but anyway Sandy remembers him and but he told me carte blanche right in my face he said listen we're saved by grace but kept by works and I was like you know back then

[20 : 56] I was like oh yeah that sounds cool that's it here's what I realized later he could have said it this way he could have said two ways he could have said that thing two ways that would have made sense in biblical sense he could have said we're saved by works and kept by works but not our works we're saved by the work of Christ and kept by the work of Christ he would have been on yeah brother but what he could have and should have said also is we're saved by grace and kept by grace we're never run out of grace but that's not what he believed and what I believed at that time either because we were taught there was something called the carnal Christian anybody ever hear of the carnal Christian just want to get the hands because that's not popular today it's still taught but it's not popular as it used to be being a carnal Christian means people who believe they are

Christians

Jesus was their savior but he's not their lord in other words they're not walking in obedience to him he's not their lord but he is their savior you say how did they get there well the idea was they walked an aisle they raised their hand they prayed a prayer to receive Christ when they were 10 14 whatever and though they walked away and lived a life like Jesus doesn't even exist because they prayed that prayer 10 years 20 years ago that means they're saved eternally saved there's no such thing as a carnal Christian because Jesus is always savior and lord you can't take half of Jesus follow me right what he told the disciples follow me that's what it means to have Jesus as savior and lord you're following there are no carnal Christians Paul didn't mean that it's a King James word by the way those who are carnal he says are in the flesh they can't please God so no there's no such thing as a carnal Christian Jesus is lord and savior and I believe and I but I believed it and I never forget you know what turned me around God did it

Temple University I'm hanging out with these Baptist Baptist students Baptist hey Baptist I love you Baptist these Baptist students trans God used to transform my life me and Sandy would argue with them about the eternal security they believed in eternal security we would say nah we would show them bible verses that seemed to refute that doctrine and we were man we went toe to toe with these guys but then something happened you know what happened you see first of all we were told people believe eternal security so they can live anywhere they want and still go to heaven that's what we were told well these kids weren't like that they were on fire for Jesus I mean they were mission minded they loved the word of God they worshiped they were living lives to honor Jesus they weren't you know living in and just just just because I'm saved forever I can do whatever I want they weren't doing that they were living on fire and I kept looking at them going behold it my church said this but look at these folk as a matter of fact those of you who know the Hill sisters

Leslie Lana and Lisa who attend our church their mother was one of those Baptist students who impacted my life and Sandra's life God then brought me to understand the doctrine of eternal security because he kept I kept looking at them and then the word of God just blew up here's a passage he took me to John chapter 10 27 to 30 Jesus says my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand my father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand I and the father are one I read that and

I was like what you mean to tell me the Lord's sheep those who are truly Christian look at what it says they I know them and they follow me no carnal Christian here no I'm a Christian but I'm not following Jesus no Jesus says my sheep no I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life now here's the thing eternal life actually means eternal I wasn't clear about that it wasn't I got the possibility of eternal life he says no he says I give them eternal life eternal is forever that means if you have forever life by definition death is no longer a problem for you unless of course eternal doesn't mean eternal and we know the Bible is not like that and Jesus

[26 : 33] Jesus says just I was told but you can jump down Kevin I may have you in his hand but you can jump down but the texts say that no one can snatch them now the word no one actually imply actually should be applied to you when he says he didn't say no one but you can snatch you out of my hand no one that includes you if Jesus has snatched you up if he's taking you for himself I will not let you go here's the thing you don't want to leave either because you've been born again you are a sheep now a sheep you don't want to leave him oh yeah you screw up and sin and you mess up but you don't want to leave him you have we have our moments of insanity yes and I call it insanity because when you've been loved by God when you've been loved by Jesus to go against him it's kind of crazy when you've experienced his kindness to you when you've experienced his joy seeing over you when you've experienced his kindness and acceptance of you as you are but he won't leave you as you are but to go against that it's kind of crazy yeah so that's what I mean by insanity

I can't I can't escape I don't want to escape he won't let me go he says I got you and the father's got you well listen y'all when the trinity has you you are secure okay let's just get that the trinity the father's son and by the way keep reading we'll get there in John the Holy Spirit is in there too he lives in you he's called the Spirit of Christ in you the whole trinity understand this the entire blessed glorious trinity is involved in your salvation and therefore who what can take you away that's good news y'all cause man I blow it and the devil must have said to me you know you really you ain't really all that you don't you ever hear that voice anybody anybody hear that voice besides me you

don't really yeah I feel you man thank you for being honest but we don't have to listen do we because we know the truth we know the truth that the father and the son and the holy spirit are in us that's why we're following

Jesus now if that wasn't so you wouldn't follow Jesus at all but you're following him now and you're in love why because God himself has taken you in Ephesians 430 I don't have time to keep all the verses but Ephesians 430 he says and do not grieve here you go do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed he's in you wow how long were you sealed for the day of redemption eternally thank you the day of redemption the day God comes to collect he's put his mark on you you know Christians are worried about 666 and the mark of the beast listen you've already been a Christian with the seal of the Spirit you don't have to fear any 666 you've been marked by the living

God the Spirit of God has taken up residence and he says you're mine forever and unto you until the day Christ cracks the sky and the trumpet blows and he comes to get us woo ha ha now he said you can grieve the Holy Spirit in other words when we go against God's world when we sin we bring grief isn't it a tender picture of the Holy Spirit that he is grieved by us I don't want to grieve the Holy Spirit I don't want to grieve him but when I do I'm still sealed I'm still his and then and then and why that happened then God did something even crazier in my life he brought me to the doctrines of grace and reformed theology in particular the perseverance of the saints it's how I came to believe it's like being born again all over again when I recognize the sovereign grace grace and mercy of God that I wasn't saved by accident

I didn't happen to get saved do you understand you didn't happen to get saved you didn't happen to wake up one day and decide on your own that I think I want to follow Jesus that's not what happened I've shown this already before in Ephesians 1 but the idea is that God set his love upon you before the world began and in the fullness of time he drew you to faith in Jesus listen if God went through all that trouble as it were he's not going to let you skip out now he didn't make a mistake by choosing you choosing you did not mean I chose you kind of he set his love upon you and because he's done it you will persevere to the end you will last you may hit some bumps in the road but your general disposition will always be towards Christ I saw this and my life was once again transformed again but I came to here's the thing

[32 : 50] I came to the understanding in a church that didn't teach it it was a Pentecostal church they didn't teach it as a matter of fact they taught the very opposite so I'm in this class I'm in a class on the pastor teaching on eternal security and predestination I don't even know why he did it I'm not sure he understands why he did it he did it for me and my best friend my buddy Lance who's also a PCA pastor now we were in that class and I was studying eternal security he was studying predestination we didn't tell each other because we thought we were crazy so to have a class on the two doctrines we're studying huh well what a Christ and to die is gain if I'm to live in the flesh that means fruitful labor for me yet which shall I choose

I cannot tell I am hard pressed between the two my desire is to depart and be with Christ for that is far better you can't say that with Paul Paul couldn't say that unless he understood he was secure in his salvation and that as Lord Joseph said and that the glory was waiting for him the glory but I'm praying with people in their last hours I've done it many times in many different states you're sitting beside their bedside and they're Christian and I know they belong to Jesus and I'll read a passage that reminds them of the glory the glory the glory to come the glory for which you have been saved to which you are going the glory the majesty of Christ exploding into your very being as you close your eyes in this life and open them on the other side and it's not darkness it's light because Jesus is waiting for you

I hope grandma and grandpa and uncle so and so are waiting for you too I hope so but that's not the point the real issue is Jesus waiting for us is he going to stand up remember when Stephen was being stoned one of the first deacons he was being stoned to death and the bible says Stephen looked up and he saw heaven open and he saw the son of man standing on the right hand of the father Jesus stood up to receive him into glory family do you understand that's where we're destined the son of man will receive us standing up or sitting down it don't matter he will receive us into his presence are you certain of that this is the security that we must depend on and rejoice in nothing can keep us from the glory the father and the son will not let us go something an African-American theologian named Cornell West said that was pretty striking he said this to be a Christian to have a joyful attitude is to have a joyful attitude toward the resurrection claim to stake

one's life on it and to rest one's hope upon its promise the promise of a new heaven and new earth is that you are you staking your life and your hope on the resurrection of Jesus and therefore your resurrection in him family we don't have to live in the fear of death or the fear of hell we have been given the helmet of salvation every Christian has it the only if you have it then my question is are you relying on it that's what

Paul has told us to do rely rest secure don't let the devil torment you with your past sins and guilt and shame yeah you did it but you've been forgiven and you wound and heaven's doors are open to you you don't have to talk to Peter you ain't got to talk to Michael the archangel you ain't got to talk to Mary the heaven's doors were opened for you by Jesus himself and no one can keep you out so live like it we're gonna talk more about it next week live like it live in the assurance live in the certainty that you know you're saved now and you will be saved when Jesus comes or you go to be with Jesus live in the power and the confidence of that reality it will transform how you live

[38 : 23] I'll show you more next week about that but it will transform how you live I'm afraid too many of us are living like we're just citizens of this earth we're just citizens of the United States of America we're living way below our privilege you are a citizen of heaven you have a greater kingdom and a greater king you have a greater responsibility too you have a greater message you have a greater hope when you die you will not be saying I voted Republican hallelujah I voted Democrat hallelujah you will not be saying I'm a US citizen when you close your eyes your hope had better be in nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness you dare not trust us read this thing but wholly lean on Jesus name your song better be on Christ the solid rock

I stand all of the ground all of the ground all of the ground amen father thank you for this the rock of your salvation in Jesus thank you that we are safe and secure you will not let us go help us to live it help us to live like that help us to even think about the brave in this week what does that mean for my living what does it mean oh show us Lord in your word next week but even this week begin to show your people what it means to live in the security of their salvation even now in Jesus name amen Micah this r