

It's great to be with you again this afternoon. We're back again in Ephesians 6. If you would turn there in either your copy of the Word of God or in your bulletin, and we'll read together today the Word of God. With the scriptures open, let's

pray together. Father in heaven, we thank you for your word, its power, and its truth, to convict us and challenge us, and to encourage us and to comfort us. And this evening, our father, we pray that you would be gracious to us, and you would speak to our hearts, and enlighten our minds, and renew our wills, that we would lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles, that we'd run with endurance the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith. We offer these prayers in Jesus'

name. Amen. Let's pick up in verse 13. 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 firm, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on,

sorry, 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 and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak.

I must apologize. I realized this morning as I picked up the text that I picked the wrong article of armor. I have the helmet of salvation

for us this morning and my mind as I was working through the text should have read it first before I began writing the sermon. But I took the helmet of salvation, and it should be actually the footwear of the gospel. We'll come back to that next week, if you'll forgive me, and we'll deal today with the helmet of salvation. I can't believe, well, I can't

believe I did that, but there we have it. This morning, it's been a busy week or two, you'll forgive me. So much of the Christian life has to do with our minds. We've already seen the belt of truth, having the truth of the gospel front and center in our minds. The breastplate of righteousness involves being very confident in the gospel, the imputed righteousness of Christ as the shield for our conscience, And remember last time, I think I confused myself as I was speaking, maybe I confused you. I felt I wasn't being particularly clear. The shield around us is the gospel, that Christ has lived for us and died for us, and that his righteousness is now ours, the imputed righteousness of

Christ. But of course, the imputed righteousness of Christ, as Christ wires all of his righteousness into our spiritual bank accounts, and we are justified because of what he has done, that always leads to the imparted righteousness of Christ, or sanctification. And it's important that we hold both of those in one sense as the shield, because if we're not careful about our sanctification, if we just kind of presume that Christ has died for our sins and live like a spoilt rich kid with daddy's credit card, just swiping away and thinking, I don't care how I live, Christ has died for my sins, that will always undermine our assurance. And an undermined assurance is the last thing you want when you face the devil, who's the accuser of the brethren, right? So there's both senses there, I think, the justifying righteousness of Christ in the gospel, but also his sanctifying righteousness that flows from it and is founded upon that. Well, this morning, if you'll forgive me, we're gonna deal then with the helmet of salvation. What Paul is saying here in this particular piece of armor, he's emphasizing the importance of thinking like a saved man, the helmet of salvation, guarding your head, thinking like a saved man, like a saved woman. And you may remember Lloyd-Jones' famous description of the tenses of salvation. that we have been saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. That makes sense, right? We have been saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. Now, when it comes to thinking like a saved man, To do that, you've got to be very clear about exactly what or from what God has saved you from your sins. He saved you from three distinct enemies, and you've got to keep these front and center in your mind if you're going to think like a saved man. He saved us first from the world, secondly from the flesh, and thirdly from the devil. Firstly then, he has saved us from the world, right? And so if you're gonna think like a saved man, you've gotta live and think as one who's been saved from the world. Now when we speak about the world, what do we mean as Christians? The world isn't the physical world. When the Bible speaks of the world, it's not meaning the sky and the sun, the moon, the stars, and the dirt. The world in biblical terms, of course, is a spiritual reality and it describes mankind in rebellion against God. Mankind in rebellion against God. David F. Wells put it in one of his books that the world is a place where holiness looks weird and where sin looks normal. That's the world. The chair text in the Bible, we refer to it on Sunday, is 1 John 2, 15. Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

And this world is passing away, John says, and its lusts, But he who does the will of God abides forever. And John there is telling us that the world, we said this on Sunday in our morning sermon, I think, the world is driven by lust and is defined by pride. That's what the world is. It's a place, it's human society driven by lust and defined by pride. Driven by the lust of the flesh, what feels good to the body, Pleasure, you might say, and the lust of the eyes, what looks good to the eye, appearance. And so you become worldly in your thinking when you allow yourself to be driven by pleasure, feeling good, that becomes the number one thing. And you become worldly in your thinking when you allow yourself to be driven by the appearance of things. Right? So you're driving down the road in your kind of older car and you see your neighbor drive back in their new, you know, bougie Land Rover. \$180,000, this checked, the Land Rover, whatever, Range Rover Sport is really, really cool. The color is just, oh my word, the paint is amazing. And you think, oh wow, if I drove a car like that, I'd really be something. And you start thinking, okay, let's get all the pennies together. Let's sell the dog to a Korean restaurant. Let's kind of do all the, let's see if we can marshal the pennies to buy, and you think, and why do you want the car? Now it's not wrong, if you own a Range Rover, you're not a sinner, right? You are a sinner, but not because you own a Range Rover. But if you start thinking, if I had that, I'd be something, that's the essence of worldliness. It's not wrong to enjoy a nice car, to enjoy its engineering, its appearance, and to be in it and enjoy it, but if you allow the car that you drive to define the man or the woman that you are, that's the essence of worldliness, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life, that which makes me, myself, and I the center of everything. That's the essence of worldliness. When you put the helmet of salvation on, you gotta remind yourself not to think that way. That's not the way a saved person thinks. And so one of the applications for this is that you gotta be very careful around friends, around TV shows, around literature that makes the darkness of that worldview look bright. Like when you're a younger man, you might have looked at James Bond and thought, oh, I'd love to be like him, because James Bond is the guy, right? He looks really cool in a suit, it's all very tailored, and he drives a flashy car, and he can kill any enemy, overcome any problem, and pull any girl, right? And you think, that's what a man is. And when you watch James Bond, you have to be very careful that you don't allow that lifestyle to define the way you think about yourself and the way you think about manliness. It's a silly illustration, but it's a picture. And there are some friends like that that you have, that when you're with those

friends, they start pulling your mind away from God and toward the world, away from eternity and toward time. They make the darkness look bright, and I'm not saying you shouldn't be their friend, but you've got to be very careful when you're around them if you're going to think like a saved man or a saved woman. Think about marriage, too. I heard a comedian say recently, I was sharing this last night with a couple of friends, and the men all laughed, and the women looked angry. But it was a comedian, and the comedian said when he got married, his dad pulled him aside on his wedding day and said, son, it's really important. When you're married, you've got a choice. Now listen, son, this is really important. You've got a choice. Do you want to be right, or do you want to be happy? And it's funny, and we laugh, because we all can recognize that, right? But that's actually a very selfish way to think about marriage, what I want. That's a very worldly way. Do I want to be right? And some of us are so prideful, we want to be right all the time. And some of us are more realistic, we want to be happy all the time. But that's me, that's what I want. But that's a worldly way to think of marriage. The Christian way, it's not what do I want, what does God want? Because it's those who do the will of God abide forever and To have a marriage where you do what God wants, sometimes you'd have to admit that you were wrong. I was wrong, will you please forgive me, are the eight most important words in marriage sometimes. I was wrong. And sometimes you have to risk making your spouse unhappy by telling them that they're wrong and that the way they're living and thinking and speaking is ungodly. And if you focus on what you want, I wanna be happy, you'll never have that conversation. But if you focus on what God wants, you will, right? So you gotta think like a saved man, marriage. Also money, the way you spend your money. I love this quote from Stephen King, and the idea is no man can serve two masters. He's not thinking spiritually, but that's where I'm going with this. But Stephen King tells the story, A couple of years ago he said, I found out what you can't take it with you means. I found out while I was lying in a ditch at the side of a country road covered with mud and blood and with the tibia of my right leg poking out of the side of my jeans like a branch of a tree taken down in a thunderstorm. I had a MasterCard in my wallet, but when you're lying in a ditch with broken glass in your hair, no one accepts MasterCard. We all knew that life is ephemeral, but on that particular day and in that month, I got a painful but extremely valuable look at life's simple backstage truth. We come in naked and broke, and we may be dressed when we go out, but we're just as broke. Warren Buffett, going to go out broke. Bill Gates, going out broke. Tom Hanks, going out broke. Steve King, broke. Not a crying dime. All the money you earn, all the stocks you buy, all the mutual funds you trade, all that is

mostly smoke and mirrors. It's still going to be a quarter past getting too late when you tell time, sorry, it's going to be a quarter past getting late whether you tell time on a Timex or a Rolex. No matter how large your bank account, no matter how many credit cards you have, sooner or later things will begin to go wrong with the only three things you have that you can really call your own, your body, your spirit, and your mind. And how you think about money will tell you whether you're thinking about time or eternity, whether you're thinking about yourself or thinking about God. Because what is money but a tool for buying treasure? The question is, what are the things you're treasuring? There's a great book by Randy Alcorn called The Treasure Principle. It's tiny, but it's huge. And he says there are a number of money rules he puts out, or treasure rules. The first is God owns everything, and I'm his money manager. God owns everything, and I am his money manager. Secondly, your heart always goes where you put God's money. Well, that's convicting. And thirdly, heaven, not the present earth as it is now, is my home. And you gotta think like a saved man. One of the ways to ask, are you doing that right now, is the way you think about money. What treasure are you trying to buy? Are you investing in time or eternity? Are you investing treasures above where neither moth nor rust destroy and where thieves cannot come in and steal? Are you investing treasures on earth where all those things will take away all that you have? And sooner than you might like to think. So you've got to identify your enemies. The first is the world. The second enemy to think about when you're fighting against the, thinking like a saved man, is the flesh, the world and the flesh. What is the flesh? The flesh is unredeemed and even unredeemable human nature. John Owen in his famous volume six says this. "'Against God we carry about us an enmity all our days, "'an enmity that hath this from its nature, "'that it is incapable of cure or reconciliation. "'Destroyed it may be and shall be, but cured it cannot be.'" Or as he famously said, "'Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you.'" Very good. So the flesh is our enemy, and we're being saved from the flesh. What is the flesh? In Galatians 5, Paul says, I say, walk by the spirit, and you'll not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the spirit, and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these, I warn you, as I warned you before,

that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. And if you notice, the flesh is all about self, pleasing self, sexual immorality, drunkenness, orgies, and so forth. Fighting for yourself, striving, striving, envies, jealousies, bitterness, fighting. And then worshiping yourself and your own idea of God, idolatry and sorcery. It's all about me and how I define my pleasures in my life and my right to get what I want in my relationships and my right to worship God my way. That's all the flesh. And the flesh must be killed.

You gotta think like a saved man, because the flesh whispers in your ear, you're significant. You deserve to have all these things that you want. If you start listening to him, you'll not be thinking like a saved man or a saved woman. You've got to kill the flesh, and it's a battle you win and lose in the mind. Reckon yourselves. It's an accountancy word. Reckon yourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus, Paul says in Romans 6. Do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies. When I was very much younger, I changed schools when I was seven years of age. And I fell out with the bully on the first day in school. He punched me in the nose. I'd never been in a fist fight in my life. I had an older sister. I couldn't fight her. I wanted to, but couldn't. And so I'd never even made a fist when I was seven years of age. And this big He was in the happy side of thin. He was a well-upholstered chap. He punched me in the nose. And it was sore. And I thought, wow. And then from that day on, to be his friend, you couldn't be mine. And I was kind of alienated by it. When I was about 11 years of age, I took up jujitsu, which was a good thing and a bad thing. It was a bad thing because one of my friends told all the bullies in the school that I was taking it up. And they just doubled down on me and beat me up. And so for the next five or six years, when I was in school, it was funny because it's like a tree. Over five or six years, you get pretty good at jujitsu, right? But you don't think when I was on the mat in the dojo, I was fighting these tough guys from bad areas of Belfast and doing fairly well. When I went to school, these guys had bullied me since I was seven. Now by that stage, I'm now 16, it wasn't fists anymore, it was just basically crushing you and pushing you down all the time. But it was in my mind, it was like Clark Kent, I was sitting, I was just, you know, oh no. So, 16 years of age, I'm going to the, I'm going to army camp one day, it was an army school I was going to, I went to army camp in Scotland. And with my dress uniform we were parading and it's the heavens open, it's bucketing and I run into one of the Nissan huts, one of those kind of like semi-circular huts that they had in the Second World War. I ran into one of those huts to shelter from the rain and all the big boys were in there, the seniors. And one of

the guys who bullied me was there, and he had a lot of big, tough friends who protected him. And so I ran in, he goes, out of there, Stuart. And I said, it's raining, I'm gonna get soaked. I don't care, get out. So I turned and I walked out, and as I was walking out, I said under my breath, I called him a stumpy little runt. That was very bad of me, I'm sorry. Well, one of the big guys said to me, did you call me a stumpy little runt? And I said, no, I called him that. And he goes, well, you go and tell him that then. I thought, oh no, this is gonna end really badly. So I walked across to him and I said, I don't think you heard me actually, I called you a stumpy little runt. And then he slapped me in the face. Now what shocked me was, I'd lived in fear of this guy for years, it was like his hand was moving in slow motion. and hit me in the face, and I thought, you know, you are. So I hit him with a left cross. He almost fell over, and then he put his head down, ran into me, and I put him in a headlock and was choking him out, and then I said to him, I'm gonna count very slowly to 10, and you're gonna calm down, and when you calm down, we'll forget this ever happened, right? And he's choking and gasping, and after a few seconds, I count to 10, let him go, and he puts his face in mine and says, You do that again, I'll knock your head off. And I looked at him and said, of course you will, and walked out. But in that day, the universe changed color. I realized who I was. Up to that day, I felt like a little weakling being bullied for seven, eight years. But in that day, I realized I'd learned a thing or two over the time, and I had power I'd forgotten. And the bullies never bothered me again. And Christians, you need to think like a saved man, like a saved woman. You have the power of God the Holy Spirit on your side, and you do not have to obey your lusts. When they bang on the doors of your soul, and you find yourself wanting to let them in, which is the problem, you can say no. But it's a battle you win in your mind. Reckon yourself dead to sin in here, and you'll find the power of God flowing through you as you resist the flesh. You gotta think like a saved man when it comes to dealing with the world, when it comes to dealing with your flesh. And lastly, and very briefly, you gotta think like a saved man when it comes to dealing with the devil, with the devil. 1 Peter 5, 5 to 11. Now, we're getting to the place where he says, resist the devil, but let me read first of all. Verse five, likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to the elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time. He's getting to the devil, but notice how he begins with humility. Remember, the world runs by pride.

We stand against the world, but also the devil by remembering to be humble. Verse seven, casting all your care upon him, God, for he cares for you. The importance of prayer. The devil, remember, loves to paint God as one who's not really kind, doesn't have your best interest at heart. Remember Genesis three, God knows the day you eat the tree, you'll become like God. He doesn't really want your flourishing. No, you've got to remember that God cares for you. And then he goes, be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace who called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. a number of take homes for you. When it comes to thinking like a saved man against the devil, gotta be watchful. Be watchful. Be sober, be vigilant. Like the secret service agents when they're protecting the president. Their heads are on a swivel. Someone's reaching into their pocket. Are they going for a cell phone or are they reaching for a pistol or a detonator? They're always watching. And as Christians, the devil is out to get you and you must be sober, you must be vigilant, and you must be aware. Secondly, be purposeful. Resist him, steadfast in the faith. You gotta resist him, you gotta purpose. This day, I'm not going to give the devil a quarter. I'm gonna resist him, I'm gonna hold the line. Because he's gonna come along like the fisherman and hold up the bait, hiding the hook. And you and I are stupid enough to go, that looks really sweet. You gotta say, you gotta be purposeful. Be watchful. And thirdly, be mindful. Resist the devil. Steadfast in the faith, knowing. Notice it's knowing. So much of the Christian life is about knowing. Knowing. that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. Every Christian faces these kind of temptations. You're not unique, you're not alone. Lots of Christians go through these temptations, these trials, these tribulations. You gotta know that, mindful. And know that every Christian has a God who will deliver us from the devil and deliver us to his glory. Resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace who called us to the eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. God won't leave you suffering forever. You'll have to suffer for a while. But you'll not suffer forever. When I was much younger, when I was seven or eight, and the bullies were beating me up, my dad would say, what you do, son, is, right, kick him in the shin,

punch him in the nose, and he may beat you up afterwards, but he'll never bother you again. Well, when I was seven, I'd say, Dad, I love the beginning and the end of that. I love the kicking him in the shin, punching him in the nose, and I love never getting beaten up again. It's the in-between bit where he knocks the steel out of me. I've got a bit of a problem with that bit, right? Because nobody wants to suffer in the here and now. And Peter's saying to you, You will suffer in the here and now. The devil's gonna be on your heels, fighting at you, tempting you, scrabbling at you, enticing you. But it's not gonna go on forever. And you need to fight him today the way you will wish you had fought him. When the man comes around and you see Christ standing in glory. And to do that, you gotta have your head on straight. You gotta think like a saved man and a saved woman in respect to the world and the flesh and the devil. It's a battle we win or lose up here. Even think of the term repentance, metanoia. It means in the Greek a change of mind. You gotta think a way you've never thought before if you're going to live a way you've never lived before. And Jesus Christ is just the one to teach you and to help you. That's why we've got to be in his word, having his thoughts, so we're not left with our own thoughts and the world's thoughts and the devil's thoughts. We've got to fill our mind with his word. and you'll have the mind of God and the mind of Christ in your head as you do battle against the devil. And that's how we stand and not fall. Amen. Let's pray together. Father in heaven, we thank you for your grace and your mercy. And somehow, Father, in your wisdom and purpose, you had me get the wrong thing in the wrong order this morning, but we believe there was a purpose for it, that the saints here this morning needed to hear the helmet of salvation more than the gospel footwear, which we'll deal with next week. And we pray, Lord, that you will help us, help me, Help us all think like saved men, that we might stand, not as weak Clark Kent outside of Christ, but as supermen in Christ, not because we are strong, but because he is, and we have all his strength through the spirit, and all his wisdom in the word. If only it would open our ears to hear, and our hearts to believe. In Jesus' name, amen.