

**Say It With Your Hat**  
**May 16, 2010**  
**Ephesians 6:10 – 18**

**Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the Ephesians; Chapter 6 verses 10 through 18. Listen now for the reading of God's Word for the people of God.**

<sup>10</sup>Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup>Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup>Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup>Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup>and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. <sup>18</sup>And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

**This is the Word of God and It can be trusted. Thanks be to God.**

Let us pray:

*Today Heavenly Father, according to Your Word, we present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in Your sight. Because we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, world rulers of this present darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places, we take the whole armor of God so that we may be able to withstand in the evil day. So today we stand and gird our loins with truth. We put on the breastplate of righteousness. We cover our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all these, we take the shield of faith to quench ALL the flaming darts of the evil one. We take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. We pray at ALL times in the Spirit with ALL prayer and supplication for ALL God's family and for ourselves that we may open our mouths boldly TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL. Thank you, Father that according to Your Word the glory of the Lord is our rear guard. We praise You and thank You for the armor of light You've provided for us this day. We are completely covered now and upon Jesus we have built our lives. The gates of hell shall not prevail against us. Lord Jesus, let our meditations be sweet to You as we rejoice in You this day. Rise up and live big within each us. For we are Yours and You are ours in the Mighty Name of Jesus we pray. Amen.*

“That season, we were loaded with pizzazz; earrings of fuchsia and peach. Mind you, peach. And hats – hats, hats, hats – Hats for career girls.” (Shopkeeper, *To Wong Foo: Thanks for everything. Love, Julie Newmar*).

Who could possibly acknowledge a *Say Something Hat Day* without at least one direct reference to *To Wong Foo*? And I must say, you all look absolutely wonderful today in your hats. I wasn't exactly sure what to expect when we decided on whim to have a *Say Something Hat Day* and I most certainly didn't have in mind how in the world we were going to make this applicable to our daily lives, but as you heard in today's scripture reading, the items that we wear, even metaphorically speaking, say much about who we are and what we are called to do. Isn't God wonderful? To know that God had in plan all along and we just thought we would create a good excuse to go without fixing our hair today and wear a hat to church.

*There was a time when hats were more important than they seem to be now. Just mention the name of Davy Crockett or Minnie Pearl and a certain kind of hat will come to mind. Hats used to be worn by almost everyone. They were worn for warmth in the winter and to keep the hot sun off in the summer.*

*Women sometimes wore hats for beauty and fashion. There were milliner stores that offered hats of different shapes and sizes, complete with feathers, ribbons, and frills. There were specific hats worn according to a person's occupation and sometimes even their status or social significance in life could be determined from the hat that they wore. There was even an old saying, “If you want to get ahead and be noticed, get a hat!”*

*Hats are a way of dressing the head, like a crown, and a method of giving significance to an individual. Nearly everyone likes the idea of wearing a crown. We read of royal occasions in foreign countries but we only need look as far as our local festivals,*

*school homecomings, or simply attend a wedding to see a bride come down the aisle wearing a tiara at the top of her veil.*

*We are all familiar with a variety of hats worn according to a person's profession. We have the hard hats of construction workers, the fireman's hat, the policeman's hat, and the chef's hat that we still see used at times today. However, there are some hats that we only see in old photographs. For instance, nurses on duty used to wear hats. You would be able to tell at a glance which nurse was in authority by the stripe on the hat.*

*Even a small child who couldn't yet read would know who people were by the hat that they wore. Some professions had "capping" ceremonies that have now gone by the wayside for more convenient ways of handling ceremonies [but I believe it is safe to say that this sort of tradition is still carried out today when nurses are awarded their degrees.] [These] ceremonies can be very important, much like a rite of passage. The ceremony, itself, signifies the seriousness of the position being earned that sometimes took years of study. There was a certain [somberness] to the occasion for not everyone earns the right to wear the hat.*

[http://www.openwriting.com/archives/2005/04/say\\_it\\_with\\_you.php](http://www.openwriting.com/archives/2005/04/say_it_with_you.php)

In our scripture reading today there are many items that Paul instructs the Church of Ephesus to consider when clothing themselves for a life in Christ; the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and finally the sword of the spirit – which is the Word of God. What wonderful imagery Paul provides for us here as he describes clothing ourselves to be ready for battle against the evil we will encounter in our daily lives. Each of the elements have incredible application for our lives but I want to concentrate on

one particular element that before I did a little research was a little difficult for me to grasp and that is the *helmet of salvation*.

We each know that it is our salvation that gives us the promise of tomorrow, a hope, if you will that no matter what today offers us, there is and always will be tomorrow. Even little orphan Annie, in all her poverty, hunger, abandonment and pain, knew that there was hope in tomorrow. But it is not the word tomorrow that I want to draw attention to when regarding our salvation, because we do not live in the tomorrow, we live in the today. So for many of us tomorrow can seem so far away as we struggle in the now and it is not tomorrow that we should be looking to, but rather to the hope that salvation brings.

The imagery of the *helmet of salvation* given to us by Paul reminds each of us that we are given *supreme hope* as we do battle against the enemy in our daily lives. 1 Thessalonians 5:8 refers to the helmet as *the hope of salvation*. The word *hope* in the Bible refers to a *certain expectation* of a future blessing. The construct of hope as described in these terms provides us with a complete assurance of our future. There is no implication of doubt or uncertainty as there is in the current English connotation of the word *hope*. “I hope I get that promotion.” “I hope I find true love.” “I hope that my garden will produce a bountiful harvest this year.” All this *hopes* imply a possibility of disappointment and disillusion, but the *hope* that Paul speaks of, the *hope of our salvation* provides us with complete assurance.

We began a few weeks ago lighting a candle of hope on our altar, each Sunday. The candle is lit with the expectation that hope will be brought to the hopeless not only within our Community of Faith, but also to those within our community at large. How little did many of us recognize at the time that when we spoke of hope in this way, the word meant so much more than we at first may have realized. We light this candle each week by faith and as we are so

wisely reminded in Hebrews 11:1, *Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction [and certainty] of things not seen.*

The helmet of salvation enables us to take the long, Eternal, view of the warfare in our daily lives. Without it, we may be tempted by the Evil One to give up, quit and become discouraged. Without it, we may begin to hear the words, *“You’re having to wait too long! This fight is lasting too long! This just isn’t working; you might as well give up!”* The helmet of salvation enables us to maintain total confidence in victory, no matter how long the battle may seem to last here on earth. We have a salvation that is certain and eternal. We cannot be defeated and there is absolutely no room for discouragement in light of the helmet of salvation.

There may be a few here today who are finding themselves discouraged; loss of employment, loss of benefits; loss of loved one; loss of health; loss of empowerment. In the name of all that is Holy, it is time that we pick ourselves up, dust off our feet and take hold of the promises of God and the salvation that has been provided to each of us by the life, ministry, death and resurrection of our risen Savior, Jesus Christ. This, of course, is easier said than done for some. Of course it is. If it were easy then anyone could do it. We must put our whole faith and trust in Jesus Christ and set ourselves apart from the world by professing our faith in a God of love, hope and healing; not one of hate, separation and marginalization. So how exactly do we make this profession? We say it with our hat, our helmet of salvation, by living out our practical belief in the hope of our salvation.

Each week we lift up our voices with one another in a time of corporate confession; a time we set aside to confess our awareness that we are all sinners and undeserving of God’s love and forgiveness. I am going to ask that today, however, that we take some time to equally confess our awareness of the hope that is offered to each of us through our salvation in Christ

Jesus. If everyone would please stand as you are comfortable, I have just a little more before I close.

If you are here today and know that you are saved, then you should find comfort in the confession of your salvation this morning. However, if you are here today and you are not saved, you have never reconciled your relationship with your Creator through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, then know that it is not too late for you to do so. You may enter into that relationship today; no conditions, no cost to you and no questions asked. All you have to do is confess and believe that Christ died for you; that Christ paid the ultimate price to freely restore you back into relationship with our Creator, Our God.

Regardless of your present relationship today, I am going to ask that each of you confess the following with me today, believing in the promise of God's saving mercy and grace. If you would, please turn your attention to the screen at the front of the room and read each confession along with me, as you are comfortable.

- #1) I confess that *"in due season I shall reap if I do not faint."* (Galatians 6:9)
- #2) I confess that *"the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed to me."* (Romans 8:18)
- #3) I confess that *"our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."* (2 Corinthians 4:17)
- #4) I confess that *"Christ Jesus in me is the Hope of glory."* (Colossians 1:27)
- #5) I confess that *"those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."* (Romans 8:30)
- #6) I confess that *"now is my salvation nearer than when I first believed."* (Romans 13:11)

Find hope today in the promises of our salvation through the One who is the author of life and provides for us the hope of complete, eternal assurance. Amen!