

Full Salvation

Christian Salvation is the work of Jesus Christ in a human life. It can only be worked by the Lord Jesus Himself, as there is “No other name under heaven by which a man can be saved”. (Acts 4.12)

“Salvation” is probably one of the most misunderstood truths of the Christian Faith, being much greater and more wonderful than most people consider.

We can look at the very famous verses in Ephesians 2, they are verses 8 and 9; “By grace you are saved, through faith, and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works in case any one should boast”.

The word saved is the perfect participle in the Greek language which means it has been done and it is still being done. There is a permanent result which means that our salvation has not only been worked in us once, but will continue to be ours forever.

The basis of Christian salvation is the Lord Jesus and His work alone for us on the cross. There can never be any thought that we can earn salvation ourselves, through our own works. This is wonderful, and yet humbling, as we need to admit to God that we can do nothing for ourselves, and are fully dependent upon Him for our salvation. Happily he has provided such a salvation for us through the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, after Peter preached, it says in the last verse, “The Lord added daily to the church as many as should be saved”. The word saved, means the saved ones, those who have been saved and continue to be saved throughout the whole of their lives, until they go to be with the Lord Jesus when they die. They of course will be saved at Jesus’ coming.

In some ways using the word saved, is not really the best way of explaining the experience that we have, when we receive the Lord Jesus Christ. New birth or being “born-again” would be a better way of describing what happens when we receive Him. When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, He told him of the need to be born again, and not the need to be saved. It was essential for Nicodemus that he should enter into the kingdom of God, a spiritual kingdom. To do this he needed to be changed in his nature, to be born of the Spirit of God, no longer flesh but spirit. The secret of the Lord Jesus’ own life was that he was a “spiritual man”; He was born of the Holy Ghost, even better He was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Spirit of God, so that all His spiritual nature was of God. Jesus was the first of a new generation of men. He was not born of Adam, and therefore not under the power of the principle of sin, to which all born naturally in this world are subject. Jesus was born “from above”, and therefore told Nicodemus that, if you want to be like me then you need to be of the same spiritual nature as me, “You must be born again”.

Jesus means Saviour, we are told in the book of Matthew that “He shall save his people from their sins”. So Jesus comes to save us from sin and the results of that sin. True salvation needs to deal with the results of sin in our spirits, our souls and our bodies. We

need to see how that applies in the work of the Lord Jesus in each soul that responds to Him.

Sin of course brings death, Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. "Salvation" brings that life to every aspect of human lives who receive Jesus Christ.

First how the salvation of God works in with our spirits, our hearts if you like, that is the place from where the "issues of our life" come from. It is the place where sin dwells and reigns and ruins the lives of those who do not belong to the Lord Jesus.

When people respond to become Christians they do so because they realise they are sinners. Without the conviction of sin it is impossible to become a Christian. John 16 tells us that when the Holy Spirit is come into the world, "He will convict of sin, righteousness and judgement", so in the life of any person who is to come to the Lord Jesus, the first place the Holy Spirit starts is with this conviction of sin. There's no point anyone realising that I want to be a Christian because it's good for me and I can get things from God as a result. The self centred motivation has to go; there is an absolute need to recognise that because of what I am and what I have done, I desperately need forgiveness and to be reconciled with God. At that point, there can repentance, that is "a recognition" before God, of my wrongdoing and yet at the same time the realisation that He who has provided a Saviour for me. It is the goodness of God to bring us to repentance and the realisation/revelation that all my sins have been put on to the Lord Jesus and He, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, has taken away **my** sin.

This is the basis of truth on which our initial "salvation" is based, when we become Christians, when we receive Jesus Christ, and have a life which then belongs to the Lord Jesus, to serve Him and glorify Him through all our days. The blood of the Lord Jesus cleanses us from all sin when we repent and ask for His forgiveness; Jesus shed His blood a ransom for many.

Salvation is a work of grace, God's unmerited kindness towards us. In the book of Romans chapter five we read, "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us". God's mercy and love abounds towards us. Paul in the first chapter of the first book of Timothy tells us that "The grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus". Paul had experienced such mercy in his own life. He had been a persecutor of the Church, and yet finding himself saved and wonderfully forgiven and then belonging to the Lord Jesus writes those words. It is thought likely that the three days Paul spent in Damascus before Ananias came to him, was spent seeking the Lord and repenting of his sin. Only then was Paul in a place where he could receive the Holy Spirit and truly become a Christian. The book of Romans in chapter eight tells us "If we have not the spirit of Christ we are not of His". It was when Paul received the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, as Ananias prayed for him, he really became a Christian. He could then go out and witness that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

We are told what is required is true faith; there is a necessity to believe, to trust on the Lord Jesus and what He has done for us. That faith comes by hearing the word of God. God speaks to our hearts and makes us aware of our need of Him and yet at the same time, that He is provided all that we need. We have seen how the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, but also of righteousness, He shows us that the right standing we need before God, is provided for us by God's own righteousness, declared to us through the Lord Jesus, that God might be just and the justifier of him/her who believes in the Lord Jesus.

When we believe we operate in the "Obedience of faith" and find that even though our lives have been lived in disobedience to God, that we are able to obey Him, as we believe Him and thereby receive from Him forgiveness, cleansing, deliverance and the love of God to be shed abroad in our hearts, as we receive the Lord Jesus.

So we see believing, trusting, takes us to a place that our own works could never do. We have become those who belong to the Lord, and contented with the salvation that He has provided for us, delivering us from our sins. Paul tells us in Romans chapter 8 that the "Law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death". The receiving of the Spirit of Christ brings a new spiritual law into our lives. This is a making free, not just a setting free, but a real work which re-makes us (re-creates us, therefore born again) in our spiritual nature, free from the old principal of sin and death which formerly dominated our lives. That is how salvation works to deal with our spiritual needs and makes us whole, new in our spirits, out of which comes with the issues of life. Truly out of us will flow rivers of living water.

It will be clear that someone has received the Lord Jesus, as their lives will, indeed must, change. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 17 that we are now "New creations", the old has passed away, all things have become new, and all things are of God. It is impossible to become a real Christian and not change. If there is no change in a person's life, it is clear there has been no work of grace. "By their fruits you shall know them" is the truth. In the first letter of John chapter three we are told that someone who is born again does not continue to sin. In other words, the principle of sin has been broken in their life, and they now serve a righteous God, in a holy life. That does not make us perfect, and it does not make it impossible for us to sin. We can make mistakes, of course we can, but it does mean that the whole direction and basis of our lives is different, we have been made free from the law of sin and death.

Too often we allow the standard of Christianity to drop, and allow all sorts of behaviour which is contrary to the will of God. The Lord Jesus never drops His standards, and He alone is the judge in the last day. The truth therefore must be preached to make those who receive the Lord Jesus aware of their responsibilities. In fact, if the gospel is preached in

the power of God, and people truly receive the Jesus, they will want to be holy, they will want to serve the Lord, they will want to please him and not themselves. These are the signs that someone really has been born again (has been "saved"), and that they have been made free from the law of sin and death.

It is easier now to look salvation for our bodies. It's quite clear that we need new bodies in the day when the Lord Jesus comes again. Our bodies will die. For some it will be sooner rather than later, but it comes to all of us in the end. Corruption in our bodies can be seen by the aging process, that takes place in those bodies. Of course by the Lord Jesus' stripes we are healed, so there is in our salvation the power to heal us from our sicknesses. The word salvation can also be translated wholeness. The Lord Jesus made people whole when He walked the earth, and can do the same too in these days. The healings Jesus worked on the earth were based on "His stripes" (Matthew 8.17) and His work on the cross is still just as powerful today.

The book of Hebrews in chapter nine tells us that "The Lord Jesus will appear a second time without sin unto to salvation". At His second coming Jesus will, having dealt with sin, will come to take us to be with Him forever. And that day we are told we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3.2). Philippians chapter three tells us that "The Lord Jesus will change our vile bodies so that they will be like unto His glorious body, even as He is able to subdue all things unto Himself". We therefore see that when Jesus comes again seeing Him and becoming like Him, involves the change of our bodies, so that our bodies are like His body. One Corinthians chapter 15 tells us that Jesus rose bodily from the dead, He is the first fruits from the dead, and we shall also be also raised up at His is coming. Simply then we see that as our Lord Jesus has been raised bodily from the dead, so will all those who are His when He comes again. That provides salvation for our bodies. Corruption shall put on a corruption, and a mortal shall put on immortality; then shall be death swallowed up in victory. It will happen in the twinkling of an eye, in others words it will be so quick that we will not see the death or the corruption but only the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the wonderful, and is the final act in God's salvation for His people through the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lastly we need to look and the salvation of our souls. The soul is the unique part of each person which makes them what they are. It is the "God breathed" part of us, in which makes us different from other parts of God's creation. That is why God made man in His own image, with a capacity to have eternal life and to be able to fellowship with God himself. God made man with free will, the option to choose for himself; to obey or disobey.

Every one of us is different and yet the salvation which God has provided is suitable for all. Peter in the first chapter of his first letter says this "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls". We therefore understand that when faith is completed we receive

the salvation of our souls. Jesus tells us “Those who endure to the end shall be saved.” It is clear therefore that salvation of the soul is an ongoing process. It is important for Christians to realise this, so that they don’t think that once they have responded in a meeting, that that is the end of the matter, and they can do what they like. There is a need therefore to go on trusting and relying on the Lord Jesus throughout the whole of our Christian lives.

The same principles apply, as with our initial experience of the Lord Jesus. It is by grace that we are saved through faith and not ourselves. The Christian is not to go back to his own efforts and works to try and live the Christian life, but rather, realising that in himself/herself dwells nothing that is any good, he or she should rely on the Lord Jesus, Paul writes “I am crucified with Christ but nevertheless I live, yet not I but **“Christ lives in me”**”.

Therefore the salvation of our souls depends on Christ being “My life”, of “Christ living in me”. Jesus of course has come to dwell in the heart of every Christian but His life only becomes operational and functional when we trust Him, when we yield our members to God and allow His authority to reign in every part of my life. Paul continues “The life which I now live in the flesh, I now live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me”. Here is the faith to live by, not mine but His, the faith of our Lord Jesus, who loved me and gave Himself for me. The faith of Jesus proved and perfected in His own life on the earth, even unto resurrection. It is of grace through faith. So here is the faith we need so that the grace of God might operate in Christian lives, saving them as they trust in the Lord Jesus and His work for them.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, talks of “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in his body”. Here is the secret of not I but Christ, it is **always** living on the basis of “Jesus died for me”. I am joined with Jesus in His death that I might be in His resurrection and walk in newness of life (Romans 6)

Paul continues “We which live (i.e. are alive in God, have been born again, have received the Lord Jesus) are always delivered to death for Jesus sake that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh”. This is the final part, faith takes us to laying down our lives continually for the Lord Jesus. The new life we have received from Him, we lay it down for Him. **It is all for His sake, for His glory. His life** is manifest in **our mortal flesh**, and that keeps us in the will of God in this life, unto life eternal.

Every time I believe with His faith, my life is laid down for Jesus sake and so I am kept from sin and selfishness and my soul, rather than being damaged by fleshly lusts, is saved and kept. “Even though the outward man perishes the inward man is renewed day by day”. In Romans 8 Paul explains it another way. He says “If Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness”. Life comes to our spirits because of God’s gift of His righteousness but Paul goes on to say that “If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you He will quicken (make alive) even your mortal

bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you". Life, the very life of God manifest in our mortal bodies. We are no longer then those who owe our flesh anything but if we through the Spirit put to death the deeds of the flesh we will live. Here is life in us, here is the end of our faith "The salvation of our souls". Our souls are kept, having been rescued from sin and made whole through the grace of God, ready for the appearing of the Lord Jesus and our the receiving of our new bodies. If we die before Jesus comes then our souls being right with God, through the grace of God in the experiences of God, go straight into the Lord's presence and hear His welcome, "Well done you good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord". Amen.