

So Great Salvation

by J.F. Strombeck

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Chapter One

THE IMPORTANCE OF SALVATION

GOD is eternal, in Him are eternal values and apart from Him there are no such values. All that is of man, all that he produces and possesses, is temporal. Most human values are not only temporal, they are ephemeral. Some last a few years and others even remain for centuries for a future society to enjoy, but as for each individual no temporal values follow him beyond the portals of the grave.

As there are no eternal values apart from GOD, man can come into possession of these values only as he becomes related to GOD. Through sin, not primarily the sins of each individual, but the original sin committed by Adam, the whole human race became separated from GOD. Man cannot of himself through any reformation that he might bring about or by any of his own good works return to GOD. There is but one way for man to come to GOD and that is through Him Who came down from heaven and into the world as the SAVIOUR of men. It is through the salvation that GOD offers in JESUS CHRIST, and only so, that man may become related to Him and thereby partake of His eternal values. JESUS said, "**I am come that they** (who will hear Him) **might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly**" (John 10:10). This life that JESUS came to give to man is eternal and the abundance of it is eternal in its values.

There is an abundant life, widely advocated these days, but that is restricted entirely to the material and temporal. A large part of the professing Christian church has, to an amazing extent, become

concerned about the abundance of the material and temporal to the exclusion of the spiritual and eternal. Moral reform, social uplift and economic problems have taken the place of the proclamation of a salvation that GOD freely offers to a sin-cursed human race that is traveling at a terrific speed toward an everlasting separation from Him and all that flows from Him.

Even where the need for salvation is seen and faithfully presented, very often the temporal values derived therefrom, in the form of reformed lives and remade homes, are the most loudly acclaimed, while the spiritual and eternal values that come to the individual are in many, yes, very many, instances seldom mentioned and much less given their primary importance.

The present day emphasis upon lifting the human race out of its low state has largely become one of dealing with temporal values. GOD's emphasis, on the other hand, as found in the Bible, is to deal with the problem of human sin and all its consequences on the basis of eternal values. This is thorough salvation.

Social welfare work and all moral reform, however good for the present, do not help men and women beyond the grave, and the grave is not the end of man. He has an undying soul that goes on and on into eternity. The salvation that GOD, and He alone, has accomplished through JESUS CHRIST provides for that undying soul of man and brings it into an unending infinitely glorious and blissful state.

In all periods of human history has been found a recognition that there is an existence beyond the grave in which man either enjoys the pleasure of a Higher Being or suffers His wrath. Mythology is full of this concept. The American Indians looked forward to their happy hunting grounds. The Norsemen hoped to go to Valhalla. The Chinese worship the spirits of their ancestors and Hindus believe in transmigration of the soul, thinking that after death man's soul still exists, but in the body of some animal until it is cleansed and returns to GOD, the source of all things. Scarcely a man or woman now living does not, deep down in the heart, at some time or other contemplate a future existence.

There is also agreement that the future eternal state is determined for each individual while in the present life. When it comes to the question as to what determines the future state of each individual there is, however, the widest possible difference. On the one hand all world religions, with no exception, offer man a state of eternal bliss or relief

from suffering, as a reward for something that he does. Even much of that which is called Christianity is included in this group. Directly opposed to this GOD offers, for the mere acceptance thereof, a free, unearned salvation irrespective of what man's sins and failures might be. He who accepts this salvation is assured eternal joy in an unbreakable union with GOD.

To substitute temporal values for the eternal values of GOD's great salvation is to miss the greatest thing that has ever been offered to man. Because a large part of the professing church leadership is doing that very thing, those outside the church, not to mention most of those inside, never hear of the eternal things which GOD offers freely to man, nor how these may be acquired.

Men everywhere now realize as never before the instability of temporal and material values and long for something with stability in which to trust. The only answer to this longing is found in absolute spiritual values; in the eternal values of GOD.

Because it is only through salvation that man can become related to GOD and thereby partake of eternal values, salvation must be the most important subject for man to consider.

All that is known about salvation is learned directly, or indirectly from the Bible. There is no other source for this great theme. That which the Bible teaches must, therefore, be accepted as revealing to man the meaning of salvation and how it may be acquired. In this matter man's opinions have no value. For that reason, all that is here presented closely follows the Bible's teachings.

The purpose of this book is to gather into a small volume the salient truths concerning salvation and present them in the language of the layman.

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