

So Great Salvation

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Chapter Fourteen

SALVATION IS OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

Because of man's inborn sinful nature causing him to depend upon himself, he insists upon contributing something to his own salvation. It is the hardest thing for man to learn that he cannot do so. That is undoubtedly why the Bible at every point, reiterates the fact that that which is done in salvation is of GOD -- GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON and GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. It, therefore, seems needful to point out still further GOD's own emphasis upon the fact that salvation is of Him and Him alone.

To think that man can be brought back into fellowship with GOD and into union with Him by anything that man can do or that man can contribute is to fail to realize the awful gulf of separation between man and GOD that was caused by sin. Nothing less than GOD's work can span that chasm.

To hold that man can contribute anything toward being saved is to fail to understand that the finite cannot contribute to the infinite. It is to fail to realize the utter helpless and sinful condition of fallen man.

It is necessary for all to realize with David, the Psalmist, that "**Salvation belongeth unto the Lord**" (Psalm 3:8); that "**The Lord is . . . my salvation**" (Psalm 27:1), and that, "**He only is . . . my salvation**" (Psalm 62:2).

Salvation Has Its Source in the Love of GOD

GOD does not only love man. He is love (I John 4:8). It is by such a One

that salvation is wrought. That salvation is the expression of GOD's love is repeated over and over again in the Bible.

"For God so loved the world (i.e. mankind), that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). As the measure of GOD's love is here said to be His SON, and He is infinite, so GOD's love for mankind is infinite and cannot be limited by man's sin. **"But where sin abounded, grace (GOD's love) did much more abound"** (Romans 5:20).

The following passages declare that salvation is because of GOD's love. **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"** (Romans 5:8). **"In this was manifested the love of GOD toward us, because that GOD sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins"** (I John 4:9-10). **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, . . . hath quickened us (made alive) together with Christ"** (Ephesians 2:4-5).

It is an expression of GOD's love that those who are saved are called the children of GOD **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not"** (I John 3:1) and His correction, or chastening, of His children, as was seen in **XII. Objects of GOD's Unfailing Love**, is also because of His love for them: **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth"** (Hebrews 12:6). It is GOD's purpose that they shall throughout eternity be before Him in love: **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"** (Ephesians 1:4). And Paul declares in the most emphatic terms that nothing can separate those who have been justified, from the love of GOD which is in CHRIST JESUS.

Salvation, then, is a work of GOD alone apart from any contribution by man is evident from the source and the execution of GOD's plan of salvation.

Salvation was planned and purposed before the earth was created and that was long before GOD brought man into being. Believers were chosen in CHRIST before the foundation of the earth (Ephesians 1:4). Eternal life was **"promised before the world began"** (Titus 1:2). The death of CHRIST on the Cross as **"the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29) was **"foreordained before the foundation of the world"** (I Peter 1:20). Salvation was decided upon in the councils of GOD

long before man came into existence. Surely man had nothing to do with those plans.

Regeneration, or being born again, by which man receives eternal life and enters the kingdom of GOD (John 3:3, 5) is of GOD. It is expressly said to be, "**not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man**" (John 1:13). As no man ever contributed to his physical birth so can no man contribute to his spiritual birth. When he is so born he is saved for all eternity because he has eternal life.

The HOLY SPIRIT reproves the unsaved world of sin: "**And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me**" (John 16:8-9). CHRIST has redeemed by His Own blood unto GOD: "**And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by the blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation**" (Revelation 5:9). "**God was in Christ (on the Cross), reconciling the world unto Himself**" (II Corinthians 5:19). It is GOD that justifieth "**Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth**" (Romans 8:33). The just shall live by faith (Romans 1:17) but JESUS is the Author and Finisher of that faith (Hebrews 12:2) and it is GOD Who works in believers "**both to will and to do of his good pleasure**" (Philippians 2:13). Believers are kept safe by the power of GOD and that through His Own name "**Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time**" (I Peter 1:5) and "**And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are**" (John 17:11). And finally, the LORD JESUS CHRIST shall change the bodies of all believers so that they "**may be fashioned like unto His glorious body**" (Philippians 3:21). Many more passages might be quoted, but these are sufficient to show GOD's own emphasis upon the fact that it is He Who saves man. Where in all this is there room for man to contribute anything? By the very nature of the things that are done that is impossible.

**"The Lord is . . . my salvation."
"He only is . . . my salvation."**

Through JESUS CHRIST

These are days of apostasy when the doctrine the Trinity is widely rejected and the Unitarian idea, which denies the deity of JESUS CHRIST and teaches that salvation is by character, is being taught. It is therefore highly

important to notice what the Bible teaches as to the place of JESUS CHRIST in salvation. It is impossible to consider GOD's salvation as offered in His Word without realizing that JESUS CHRIST is the SAVIOUR and that salvation is through Him. But because of the denial of CHRIST's work in salvation it is needful to point out that apart from Him there can be no salvation for man. To reject that teaching is to reject the very central message of the Bible.

JESUS said to His disciples, "**ye believe in God, believe also in me**" (John 14:1). **It is not enough to believe in GOD -- to acknowledge that there is a GOD who created and provides for man. It is equally necessary to believe in His SON JESUS CHRIST. This is so because no one can come to the FATHER except by Him.** He said, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me**" (John 14:6).

He is the way; that is, the way to GOD. No man can find GOD apart from JESUS CHRIST. No man has seen GOD, but the SON of GOD. When He lived on earth as a man among men He declared GOD to man. He is the truth, and He is the life. To reject Him is to reject both truth and life and the only way to GOD. "**He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life**" (I John 5:12).

It has been told by a missionary to Congo that the natives of that land believe that there is a heaven and a hell. They also believe that it is impossible for man, because of his wicked condition, to go to heaven; he must go to hell. Therefore they worship Satan the ruler of hell. They offer sacrifices to him so as to lessen their punishment in hell. To them there is no way to GOD because they know not of JESUS CHRIST, the only way to heaven and the FATHER. They do not commit the error of those who hold the Unitarian viewpoint, disregarding the only Way and seeking to go to GOD by their own merit. In seeing their own inability to please GOD, the Congo natives see the truth better than many who call themselves Christians.

Man, because of sin, has been separated and shut out from GOD. He can only come to Him by JESUS CHRIST. "**Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved**" (Acts 4:12). "**The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world**" (I John 4:14). ". . . as many as received him, (the SON) to them gave he (GOD) power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). "**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him**" (John 3:36).

That there is no salvation apart from JESUS CHRIST, He who was truly Son of man and also SON of GOD, is further proved by the fact that the Bible, in speaking of the things that pertain to salvation, consistently makes mention of the fact that these are either in CHRIST, by Him, with Him or through Him. He is always related to that which GOD does in saving man.

The following are but a few of the many references to JESUS CHRIST in His identification with salvation. They show the vital part that He has in salvation. GOD's eternal purpose with regard to salvation for this age was purposed in CHRIST JESUS (Ephesians 3:11).

- Believers were chosen in JESUS CHRIST before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4).
- GOD saves "**according to his own purpose and grace, which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began**" (II Timothy 1:9).
- He is the "**Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29).
- The exceeding riches of the grace of God in His kindness toward the saved is through JESUS CHRIST (Ephesians 2:7).
- In the SON "**we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins**" (Colossians 1:14),
- and this is because He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2).
- GOD has made peace through the blood of His Cross, to reconcile all things unto Himself by Him (Colossians 1:20).
- Believers are made accepted in the Beloved Son, (Ephesians 1:6 and Matthew 3:17)
- and are complete in Him (Colossians 1:20).
- They are the workmanship of GOD "**created in Christ Jesus unto good works**" (Ephesians 2:10).

There is not one conceivable thing that GOD does for man in salvation that is done apart from the SON of GOD, and GOD's Word is very particular always to mention that fact. There can, therefore, be no salvation to the one who has no place in his life for JESUS CHRIST as the SON of GOD.

If salvation is of GOD alone and His work is done exclusively through the medium of His SON, where is there room for any contribution on the part of man?

~ end of chapter 14 ~
