

THE SAVIOUR'S INVITATION

And Other Evangelistic Sermons

by

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SERMON EIGHTEEN

PLAIN GOSPEL FOR PLAIN PEOPLE

“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

“For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:8-13).

The salvation discussed in these simple verses of Scripture is needed by all.

- It is intended for all.
- It is within the reach of all.
- It may be secured by all.

There are various offers of salvation in the Bible.

Isaiah 45:22 declares: **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. The fullness of salvation is ours for a look.”**

Isaiah 55:6, 7 tells us: **“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”**

In Matthew 11:28 we read: **“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”**

John 1:12 tells us: **“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”**

John 3:14-16 says this: **“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”**

John 5:24 states: **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”**

In Acts 16:31 we read: **“And they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”**

Revelation 3:20 contains this glorious promise: **“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”**

In the thirteenth verse of the tenth chapter of Romans, **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,”** which is part of my text, is the simplest, the clearest, the easiest to understand of them all.

There are three great thoughts in it:

First, the universal offer of salvation;
Second, the universal condition of salvation;
Third, the universal promise of salvation.

*The universal offer of salvation is contained in the word “**whosoever.**”*

There are no national restrictions. The Jew, the Gentile, the American, the European, the Asiatic, the African, the man from the islands of the sea—all need Christ; all are included in the Gospel; all are offered salvation by Christ.

Some years ago I found myself in the First Baptist Church in Lawton, Oklahoma, in a Baptist associational workers’ meeting. It was a drowsy afternoon. The proceedings were rather dull. Report after report had been read to the sleepy assemblage. Suddenly the moderator called out, “Appelman, come up here.” I came to the front of the church and stood at the pulpit to shake hands with the presiding officer.

“Girgis, you come here.” From the right side of the auditorium there stepped out towards the pulpit a slender, dark-faced, narrow-eyed, kinky-haired Egyptian.

“Appelman, do you know Girgis? Girgis, do you know Appelman?”

“Yes,” replied the two. We know each other. We have been prayer partners in the seminary.”

“Hays!” called the moderator, “you come here also.”

From the middle of the auditorium there arose a strong-looking, clean-faced, barely middle-aged preacher, and he also took his place before the group.

Hays, Girgis and Appelman shook hands. One was a Russian-born Jew. The second was an Egyptian-born Copt. The third was an Irish American. They were all Christians, Baptists, preachers of the Gospel. Beloved, I submit to you that only in Christ, only in the Gospel, only in salvation could these three have met on equal terms.

There are no material restrictions. The rich man, the poor man, the beggar, the thief—all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. They all need the blood of Calvary’s Cross to make them fit and favorable in the sight of God. The king on his throne, the murderer in his death cell, the queen in her boudoir, the harlot in her den of assignation, the philosopher in the hall of science, the peasant following the plow—all are in sin; all look alike to Christ. In the same way, upon the same conditions, applying in the same manner, they must be born again or each and every one of them will be forever doomed.

There are no mental restrictions. One does not need an unusual education, extreme knowledge, extraordinary talent, exceptional ability to become a Christian. The Gospel is the plain Word of God for plain people. The child, the underprivileged person, the benighted heathen—all may understand, believe, receive, be saved.

Some years ago, in a revival meeting in Natchitoches, Louisiana, on a Friday night, thirty-five people responded to the Gospel invitation and took their seats at the front of the auditorium. Among them was the head of the mathematics department of the Louisiana State Normal School, located in that city. In the same line was also a blacksmith by the name of Jess Brown. Night after night that blacksmith had raised his hand for prayer, but had refused every appeal to take his stand for Christ. That afternoon the pastor and I visited Brown in his “smithy.” After some persuasion he declared that the thing that had kept him from a decision was his inability to read and write. He said he did not want to be embarrassed by being asked to fill out an application card. When the pastor promised to fill out the card for him he accepted Jesus and was received into church fellowship that night. These two men were poles apart, but Christ saved both of them.

There are no moral restrictions. The cry of God still is: **“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”** The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, still cleanses all sinners from all sin. Friends, you need not hesitate. No matter what your sin or sins may be, no matter how bleak or how black they may look to you, God is exceedingly, abundantly able to forgive above all that you ask or think. There is no stain so ingrained in your soul, there is no blemish so etched in your character, there is no habit so deeply driven into your conduct, but that Christ can save you from it, to the uttermost. The Devil has no hold upon you that the Son of God cannot break. Hell has no claim upon you that the blood of Christ cannot redeem. The law has no bill against you that the Redeemer has not fully satisfied.

There are no sex or age restrictions. Men, women, and children from the earliest days of accountability to the last hours of mortal existence, are all invited and welcomed by God. For nineteen hundred years men, women and children of every age, of every condition, of every clime, have found a ready welcome in the open arms of the Son of God.

Some years ago on a Sunday night at the end of the closing service of a revival, I was sitting in a great church. Exhausted, dripping with perspiration, I watched the pastor baptize the great number of candidates who had been saved and added to the church during the campaign. In the course of the baptismal service there stepped into the waters the seventy-three-year-old manager of a large ice plant. Following him came the ten-year-old son of a deacon of that church. Behind him came a Norwegian family, consisting of a father, a mother, two sons and a daughter. The five members of that family stood in the water while the pastor baptized them, one after the other. Surely that scene was ample proof of the universal offer of salvation insofar as sex and age are concerned.

There is also in this text the universal condition of salvation.

This too is simple, clear, definite, and understandable. We are not saved by our opinions, by our theories, by our churches, by our ordinances, by our works, by our efforts. We are saved by Christ. We must apply to Him for salvation. Our text states the universal condition of salvation in these words: **“whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord.”** We are saved by calling upon the Name of the Lord.

What does that calling mean? What does it involve? How must we call? The best illustrations of this calling upon the Name of the Lord are, of course, found in Scripture. Understand the meaning in God’s Word of that term **“call.”** We must rightly point out to you, then, the implications found in that condition.

There is first the call of repentant humility, the call of sins grieved over and confessed, the call of transgressions acknowledged and repented of. You no doubt recall the story which Jesus tells in the eighteenth chapter of Luke, beginning with the tenth verse:

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

The Pharisee proudly boasted of his virtues, of his goodness, of his morality. The publican, in confessing his transgressions, humbled himself before the Lord, acknowledging his faults, admitting his sins, anxiously confessing his guilt. Jesus said, ***“This humble, penitent, confessing publican went home justified, a saved man.”***

Friends, you will never find favor with Christ, never obtain salvation until you first recognize your own unrighteousness and humbly admit it to God. *There must be therefore the first call of repentance.*

In the second place there is the call of faith for aid. Turn to the story of blind Bartimaeus, as recorded in the tenth chapter of Mark, beginning with the forty-sixth verse:

“And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.

“And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.”

Bartimaeus was helpless in his blindness. He had almost, if not altogether, given up hope. From the remarks of passers-by he had heard of the mighty works of Jesus. When Christ came along and Bartimaeus knew who He was, there was no stopping him. When Christ passed by, Bartimaeus pressed on towards the only One who could give him relief.

The passers-by strove to drive him back, but he continued to push forward. It perhaps took some time for Jesus to hear his cry, but Bartimaeus kept on calling. Why do you think Jesus asked him the question **“What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?”** Jesus knew that he was blind. Jesus knew that he wanted his sight restored. I believe this event shows us that the cry of faith is essential to salvation. Jesus paused, hesitated, waited. The minute Bartimaeus cried out in faith, **“Lord, that I might receive my sight,”** Jesus healed him with the words **“Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.”**

There is last of all the call of grateful confession.

Again and again it is referred to in Scripture. Stand with me on Calvary on the awful day of the Crucifixion. Hear once more the words recorded in Luke 23:39-43:

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

I believe that the cry of the thief, **“Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom,”** was a confession of faith in the Lord Christ which insured salvation for that malefactor.

Paul was on the road to Damascus, **“breathing out threatenings and slaughter.”** Christ met him, struck him to the ground and spoke to him: **“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”** I believe that when Paul asked, **“Who art thou, Lord?”** and upon hearing the answer of Jesus cried out, **“Lord, what wilt thou have me do?”** he was a saved man and became a child of God.

Jesus said, **“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.”** In our text we find this declaration of Paul’s (Romans 10:9): **“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”**

The cry of confession is an absolute essential. If you believe Jesus is the Son of God, if you believe He died for your sins, if you love Him, if you trust Him, come today, take your stand for Him, confess Him before men. That is the least you can do after all He has done for you.

These three elements—repentance, faith, confession—must be present in our calling upon the Name of the Lord, ere we can be sure of the work of God unto salvation in our souls.

Surely you can see the importance of each of the three elements. Surely they cannot constitute a barrier which causes you to hesitate about coming to Christ today. God cannot make this truth easier, simpler, or more definite. Human language is incapable of expressing the truths of God in a clearer fashion. Call upon the Name of the Lord, in this very hour, and the power of God will do the rest.

*The third thought in this text is the universal promise of salvation, contained in the words “**shalt be saved.**”*

This promise is rocklike in its positiveness. You need not dig around it or into it. That promise is guaranteed by the absolute Word of God. In Numbers 23:19 we read:

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

God has never broken any promise He has made. He will not break this promise to you. You may depend upon it. You may step out upon it. You may build your life upon that rock. The eternal salvation of your soul, if you comply with God’s condition, is guaranteed.

This promise is also supported by the finished work of Christ. The book of Hebrews states this definitely (Hebrews 9:12; 14): **“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”**

When Jesus threw back His head against the Cross, looked up into the face of God, bowed His head and cried, “**It is finished**,” He had paid completely the due bill held against us by the law, by Satan, by sin. God would have to undo the work of Christ, the shame and agony of Calvary, would have to refill the veins of Jesus with the blood He shed that day before He could ignore anyone who called upon Him in the Name of the Crucified.

Every drop of that precious ochre is an amen to the contention of Paul that “**whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**”

The testimony of the centuries, of the nineteen hundred years that have passed since the beginning of the proclamation of grace, is our sure foundation, is our solid hope, our certain faith in this promise.

For nineteen hundred marvelous years uncounted multitudes of precious souls of every kind, of every condition, of every description, have been constrained to call upon the Name of the Lord. Not one of them has been lost.

God has kept faith with every one of them. Their sins have been forgiven; their iniquities have been blotted out; their transgressions are remembered against them no more. Their souls have been regenerated, their affections renewed. They have joined the saintly band in ascribing glory and honor and praise to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

- That is your hope, sinner.
- That is the way out of your sins.
- That is the path of the Cross that leads home to God and to heaven.

- Will you take it today?
- Will you call upon the Name of the Lord?
- Will you take your stand in the shadow of the bloodstained Cross?
- Will you look up into the face of God through the blood of His Son?
- Will you penitently in faith, boldly confess Him, your Saviour and Lord, crying, “For Jesus’ sake, have mercy on me, a sinner”?

God will reach down from heaven.

- He will apply the blood of His Son to your soul.
- He will take you out of the horrible pit,
- He will lift you out of the miry clay,
- He will put your feet on the Rock of Ages,
- He will put the song of Moses and of the Lamb upon your lips,
- He will start you on your way rejoicing,
- He will keep you,
- And finally He will receive you to Himself in glory where you shall sing His praises forevermore.

Turn thee, O lost one, careworn and weary;
Lo, the Good Shepherd is pleading today,
Seeking to save thee, waiting to cleanse thee;
Haste to receive Him; no longer delay.

List to the message; think of His mercy!
Sinless, yet bearing thy sins on the tree;
Perfect remission, life everlasting,
Through His atonement He offers to thee.

Come in the old way, come in the true way;
Enter through Jesus, for He is the Door;
He is the Shepherd, tenderly calling;
Come in thy weakness and wander no more.

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