

SALVATION

by

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CHAPTER TWELVE

LAST APPEAL

SHOULD you, reader of this book, be uncertain of your salvation, or know that you are not saved, will you not respond to the loving invitation of your God and come to Him by the way He has provided in the Person and cross of His Son? Think not that He expects anything from you but your whole trust in Him until He has first saved you by His grace. He will faithfully do according to His Word the moment you have chosen positively to rest your salvation in His saving power and grace alone. After you have thus believed, He purposes to supply all the enabling power to meet all the problems and the needs of your daily life. You need not fear, only believe His Word. His wisdom, strength and bounty are sufficient for you.

Having cast yourself upon His saving grace as it is in Christ Jesus, you have the right to believe that He has saved you, and you should, in honoring His faithfulness, immediately take the place of a son before Him and draw moment by moment on His exhaustless bounty and love.

Should you, on the other hand, be confident that you have believed and are assured that you are a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ; will you not praise Him anew for **“so great salvation”** and so yield yourself to Him that He may more perfectly use you as His ambassador to tell His truth to others? Will you not, in these dark days of confusion as to the truth of God, take great care to be accurate in the presentation of this priceless Gospel message to others? It is quite possible to mislead souls unintentionally by misstating the divine conditions that lead to life eternal. **“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”**

The privilege of preaching the Gospel to one soul is priceless. So, in like manner, any blunder in its presentation may contribute to an eternal disaster and woe. Carelessness in preaching is criminal and ignorance is inexcusable. The Gospel is plain. Earnestness is important, but no amount of earnestness can be substituted for the exact statement of God's message to lost men.

It is too often supposed that preaching about sin is preaching the Gospel. Sometimes the purpose of such preaching is to deepen conviction concerning sins of the past. Such a message could be of value only as it prepares the way for the Gospel. By itself, this message is in no way the good

news of saving grace. Men do not have to arrive at some prescribed degree of consciousness of sin in order to be saved. They need only to know that whatever sin God may have seen in their lives has been already laid on His atoning Lamb. They are now asked to believe that glorious message.

Sometimes preaching against sin is with a view to encouraging men to cease sinning. This is superficial indeed and unbiblical. The unsaved are “**dead in trespasses and sins,**” and are “**in the power of darkness.**” Sin is a nature as well as a practice. Fallen man would be lost had he not sinned. He must be born again; not as a means of correcting the effects of his past practices, but because of his fallen Adamic nature. Being spiritually dead, he must be given spiritual life. No reformation can change the fallen state. When preaching against sin, it is well to remember that the unsaved cannot cease sinning. When they receive the Saviour, they will receive both the power to discontinue and the disposition to turn from sinning.

It is sometimes supposed that to preach Christian-living is preaching the Gospel. Sinners are thus told to “**walk in the light,**” to pray, to study the Bible, to make confession of sin, or to repent. On the contrary, they have no light in which to walk, no access to God in prayer, no understanding of the Scriptures apart from the message of saving grace which the Spirit will use to their salvation. They are on no grounds of relationship before God where confession could be of any avail. They are already condemned. They cannot change their own mind, or repent. They can believe on Christ by the Spirit and such believing includes that change of mind, or repentance, which is possible to the unsaved. They stand confronted with the revelation concerning a Saviour Who waits to save. He is to be believed upon. Other issues can serve only to postpone the day of salvation.

Encouraging men to believe that God will be merciful is not preaching the Gospel. All such preaching really ignores the cross. Salvation is not a present act of generosity and leniency on the part of God. Salvation is possible because the love of God has already provided all that a sinner can ever need. The sinner is not saved by pleading with God for His kindness: he is saved by believing that God has been kind. Such is the exact place of the cross in the message of the Gospel.

Preaching the Gospel is telling men something about Christ and His finished work for them which they are to believe. This is the simplest test to be applied to all soul-saving appeals. The Gospel has not been preached until a personal message concerning a crucified and living Saviour has been presented, and in a form which calls for the response of a personal faith.

The Saviour said. “**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**”

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