

GLAD TIDINGS, or

Believe And Live

by

Robert Boyd, D. D.,
Pastor of Wabash Avenue Baptist Church, Chicago

Copyright © 1860

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer in the spirit of the Colportage Ministry of a century ago

~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~

CHAPTER SEVEN

MIGHTY TO SAVE

SOULS fleeing from the wrath to come often need strong consolation. It has been observed that Satan will do what he can to keep a man from becoming a Christian at all, but if he cannot succeed in this, he will try, by doubts and fears, to make him as miserable a Christian as possible. And so this enemy of souls tries first to lull souls asleep in a presumptuous security.

By false representations of the general mercy of GOD, by perverted views of the nature of sin, and by preaching from the old, popular, and pleasing text, "**Thou shalt not surely die,**" he will try to keep all thoughts of coming wrath from disturbing the soul.

But if in this he cannot succeed, if no species of hellish logic can keep the soul from concern about its state before GOD, then the "**father of lies**" will try to persuade the sinner that there is no salvation for him.

Hence you will see the same man, in the course of a few hours, rush from the extreme of presumption to that of despair. Formerly he could not be made to fear, now he cannot be made to hope. To such I would especially address myself in the following remarks.

Such persons are just as much in the service of the devil in their present state of mind, as they ever were. They may go to the house of GOD, may attend inquiry meetings, may converse with religious people freely, and appear to be more religious than they ever were before; but they are still believing Satan's lie, in opposition to GOD's truth; they are entrenched in unbelief under the influence of which they refuse to trust - the imperishable word of the GOD of truth, and cast back the precious promises in the face of the Eternal.

There are two great truths which stand out on the pages of the Bible so plain that he that runneth may read them.

The one is that if any sinner is ever saved, GOD's will be all the glory; the other is, that if any sinner is ever lost, the sinner's will be all the blame.

These two truths GOD has joined together, and let no man dare to put them asunder. We may talk about GOD's sovereignty and man's free agency, about liberty and necessity, until both ourselves and our hearers become lost in the thick metaphysical fog of our own, raising; but thank GOD, when we emerge forth out of the thick darkness of our own creating, we see these two truths in the Word of Life, shining out gloriously, lights in a dark place to which we do well that we take heed.

GOD has been at infinite pains to convince the sinner that he has no pleasure in his death, and casts the whole responsibility of his soul's eternal state upon himself.

As if to set this matter for ever at rest, and for ever to shut the mouth of unbelief, the Eternal GOD, in infinite condescension, comes before the assembled world of his own guilty creatures, and swears by his own Being, not only that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but that he has a contrary pleasure - a pleasure in their conversion.

Now it is said that among men, "**an oath of confirmation is an end of all strife**," but it seems that between the sinner and GOD it is not the end of all strife; but that the sinner after refusing to believe the word of GOD, will go on to doubt his very oath! O, how deep and damning is the sin of unbelief!

The doctrine that GOD honestly and earnestly desires the salvation of the sinner is everywhere taught in the Bible, and in the strongest terms. II Timothy 2: 4 "**For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth.**" II Peter 3: 9 "**Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**"

Many other passages might be quoted to show how earnestly GOD longs for the salvation of the greatest sinner, and that when the sinner perishes, it is not because there is no love for him in the heart of GOD, not because the blood of JESUS has not been shed for him, not because that blood, so efficacious to save others, has no power to save him; but simply because he persistently refuses to be saved by GOD's appointed method, faith in the death and righteousness of the Lord JESUS.

If GOD is a holy GOD, as is universally acknowledged, then he must desire to see all holy; and as an evidence of this when a little of GOD's own Spirit takes possession of any man, from that moment he begins intensely to long and pray for the salvation of all.

Now if a very little of GOD's Spirit in the heart of a Christian, makes him desire the salvation of all men, does the Spirit itself only desire the salvation of a few?

Ask any good man when the spirit of prayer is imparted to him, how many perishing sinners he desires to be saved, and he will at once exclaim, "that all my Saviour knew."

Now that desire did not come naturally from himself, neither did it come from the prince of darkness, but is in his possession because he has been made "partaker of the Divine nature," because the mind that was in CHRIST is in him. In short, the fervent longing of the believer for the salvation of the world, which shows itself in tears, in prayers, and in untiring efforts, is but the echo of that voice that comes from the eternal throne, "**As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he would turn unto me and live.**"

As an unanswerable proof that these were GOD's feelings towards a perishing world, when He gave his beloved Son, he sent a company of holy angels to announce the errand on which He came, not as a Saviour for a few, but for all. "**Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.**"

Now if JESUS did not die for all, if salvation is not free to all, the Gospel could not be glad tidings to any of us.

Suppose that a number of persons are confined in prison under sentence of death. One night the door of their cell is thrown open, and a messenger from the Governor enters, saying, "Cheer up, my friends, I have good news for you."

They would all expect to hear something that would make them happy. Every eye is fixed upon the face of the messenger, and the interest is intense, when he breaks the deep silence once more by saying, "There is pardon and deliverance for some of you."

This would not really be good news to any of them, it would not really make any of them happy; but as they could not know who the favored ones were, would cast them back into greater suspense and anxiety than before. But if a free pardon is offered to all without exception, it can truly be called good news whether it is received or not.

Some might be too proud to accept of it, and others might think they could save themselves in some other way than by accepting an offer of free grace, nevertheless the message itself was glad tidings, and was for all the condemned.

Our adorable Redeemer must have known what was the nature of his mission, and whether the work that he undertook was for the whole race, or only for a part. And accordingly his account of it is, "**God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.**"

Sinner, there are two words here that take you in however great may have been your sins. GOD loved the world, you are one of the world, therefore GOD so loved you as to give his Son to die for you.

The word "**whosoever**," also includes you. It includes the whole world who will believe in him whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

Indeed, had the death of our Lord JESUS not been for all, and had his love not gone out equally to all, it could not be said of him that he kept the law, that he magnified the law and made it honorable.

The law required him not only to love GOD with all his soul but his neighbor as himself. In taking upon him our nature he became the neighbor of every man, according to his own definition of neighbor, as given in the parable of the good Samaritan. Had his love then only been a partial love, had it taken in only one portion of the race, and rejected the other, he would not have been a perfect Saviour.

But as facts sometimes strike the mind more forcibly than arguments, permit me to turn the reader's attention to a few facts, show the Lord JESUS as mighty to save the vilest of transgressors.

One day the Lord was on a visit to Capernaum, and was invited to dinner at the house of a Pharisee. While He sat at table a woman, whose past life had been stained by sins of deepest dye, came into the room where he was. She had doubtless been listening to His soul-searching preaching, which had fastened conviction of her lost condition upon her, and made the whole of her past life pass in terrible review before her affrighted spirit.

She began to wash our Lord's feet with her tears of penitence, and to wipe them with her hair; and to show the fullness of her grateful heart, regardless of expense, she began to anoint him with a very costly oil.

The Pharisee was dreadfully shocked at such things being allowed in his house, and his proud heart swelled with indignation, as he said within himself, "**This man, if he were a prophet, would have known what manner of woman this is, for she is a sinner.**"

Poor, spiritually blind mortal! "Well did the blessed Redeemer know who she was, and all about her past life; but he also knew the deep repentance and the strong faith which filled her heart, and turning to her, after administering a keen rebuke to the Pharisee, he said, "**Thy faith hath saved thee.**"

But we come to a still more notable case.

JESUS is on the cross in the midst of untold agonies. The hour of darkness now has come, and the curse due to guilty sinners is fallen upon his holy head. Around him a perfect tempest of passion is raging, and the very creatures for whose guilt he is suffering, are blaspheming him with a thousand tongues. And worse than all the pains that racked his body, worse than the ravings of blasphemy at the foot of the cross, the light of his Father's smiles, in which he had from all eternity rejoiced, is now withdrawn, and the dismal gloom which falls upon the earth, is but a faint emblem of the darkness that covered his holy mind, as he exclaimed, "**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!**"

Yet, even in that terrible hour, he did not forget to labor for the souls of the perishing.

To his two fellow sufferers he doubtless preached the doctrines of the Kingdom, and one of them receives the truth and is saved. He was suffering punishment as a thief, as one who had violated the laws both of GOD and man; but his past sins formed no barrier to CHRIST receiving him. He had no good works to present, on the ground of which he could claim acceptance with GOD, and blessed be GOD, they were not needed! He found the blood of JESUS a sufficient plea for his justification, and his righteousness an ample covering for his naked soul. He was a bad man, who had been so hardened in sin that even his fellow men could endure him no longer, but were determined to rid the earth of his vile presence, by pushing him before the bar of GOD; but in the last hour of his wasted life he believed in JESUS, and that moment his past guilt was all forgiven, and the promise of eternal life, from the lips of JESUS, fell upon his dying ear.

Sinner, why stay away one hour longer from such a Saviour, who will in no wise cast out any that come unto him.

We have thus seen what were the terms upon which JESUS received sinners in the days of His flesh; but he is no longer on earth, and the question occurs, is He the same still?

We are so liable to change ourselves, and are surrounded with so many changes, that we are apt to suspect some change in the friend of sinners. But the word of GOD assures us that He is "**the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;**" and as a proof of it we see him receiving the chief of sinners after his glorious ascension.

Shortly after he went to his throne in glory, a young man of finished education and of splendid powers of mind, commenced a course of opposition to the Lord's cause. Possessed of great energy of character, and of an impetuous spirit, that never did anything by halves, he persecuted to death the followers of JESUS, and to use his own words, was "**exceeding mad against them.**"

As he went on in his career of blasphemy and of blood, the eye of the Saviour looked down upon him, a witness of all the dark passions that filled his heart. And did that eye flash with the fires of wrath? Did a red thunderbolt leap from the hands of the Lord, to dash this rebel wretch to pieces? No!

The eye that once swam in tears for him, still pitied him; the hand that was once nailed to the cross for him, was kindly stretched out to pluck him from destruction; his blasphemies were turned into prayers; his hatred of CHRIST and his people, into love; and thirty years after, upon a calm review of the whole scene on the road to Damascus, he says, "**This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief!**"

Reader, will you now believe? I have no means of knowing how great a sinner you have been, but in the name of JESUS I bid you welcome to a Saviour "**mighty to save.**"

The terms of Solomon's pardon to Adonijah were, "**If he will show himself worthy.**"

But CHRIST's offer of pardon is burdened with no such “**if**”.

He receives the unworthy who believe in him, and through his worthiness makes them worthy.

His name is JESUS because He saves from sin.

An old writer says:

"There is majesty in the name GOD.
There is independent being in the name Lord.
There is unction in, the name CHRIST.
There is friendship in the word Emmanuel.
There is help in the name Advocate.
But there is salvation only in the name JESUS."

~ end of chapter 7 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
