

# THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS

## I Peter 1:8-12

By Jon Quinn



The Bible talks about the state of mind of the Christian who is aware of what God's grace has brought him or her. For example, Peter writes "...you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory." (I Peter 1:8). Moffatt's translation renders the passage this way: "And you will thrill with unspeakable and glorious joy..."

This means that salvation is thrilling! Of course it would not be to the worldly minded or the disinterested. The nominal Christians at Laodicea whom Jesus described as "lukewarm" probably were not all that thrilled. But to those who are living by a true and mature faith our joy, confidence and love for Jesus is our hearts' answer to the salvation of our souls which He has brought us.

We certainly hope and pray that more will discover the value of salvation, in both this life and the next. It is a shame that many do not perceive the precious nature of this great gift of God, and are much like the hog that would trample valuable pearls in the mud as it roots for a corn husk (Matthew 7:6). It is also obvious that many who claim to be Christians do not really esteem God's salvation as highly as they ought. To take such a gift for granted is to be ungrateful to the extreme.

Consider why Peter says the thought of salvation brings such a thrill to the heart of the discerning man or woman of faith. He says, "...obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven - things into which angels long to look." (I Peter 1:9-12).

### THE BASIS OF SALVATION

"And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory." (I Peter 1:8). The New Testament is quite clear that there is no salvation for anyone apart from Jesus (John

14:6; Acts 4:12; Roman 1:16). He has paid the price; all of it.

It is not narrowmindedness bigotry that exalts Jesus as our only hope, like liberal-minded social changers and theologians charge. It is the gospel truth, and to say so does not mean we do not love atheists, humanists, Moslems, Jews and Bhuddists as we ought. No, rather, our concern and commitment that they hear the truth about Jesus affirms our loving concern for them. We desire that they share inexpressible joy in Christ with us.

## THE RECEPTION OF SALVATION

"...obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls." (I Peter 1:9). It is our faith in Jesus by which we are saved. Without faith we cannot be pleasing to God. We are saved by grace through faith (Hebrews 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-10).

But please understand that it is an obedient faith by which God's grace saves us. We are not justified by faith alone, which is described in the Scriptures as "dead" and "vain" (James 2:14-26).

Peter had earlier in the chapter made it clear that our access to the blood of Christ by which we are saved depends first upon our obeying Jesus. He said, "...according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled by His blood..." (I Peter 1:2). He continues by saying it was by God's grace mercy that we were caused "to be born again unto a living hope" and then later in the chapter related being "born again" to obedience: "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls... for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God." (I Peter 1:3; 22,23).

## THE PROPHEESIES OF SALVATION

"As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow." (I Peter 1:10,11). For centuries before Jesus' birth, the prophets had been announcing His coming. Hundreds of prophecies had been made concerning the Messiah, and One has fulfilled them all. It is powerful evidence to see how these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.

The prophets desired to know more about the salvation which they were predicting to come. They understood how precious it was, even though seeing it from afar off. As they looked forward, we look back to the Person whose birth divided human history into two parts: B.C. and A.D.

## THE INSPIRATION OF THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION

"It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which have now been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven..." (I Peter 1:12a). The gospel is not the product of the mind of man but comes to us from heaven. The Holy Spirit inspired the writing and telling of the gospel so that our confidence might not rest in the mind of men but rather in the power of God. It is a gospel not to be tampered with. It is true and noble and powerful to do that which God intended it to do; to save our souls.

When men are displeased with the gospel, it is up to men to change themselves. If men do not like its moral teachings, then it is men who are wrong. If they do not like the gospel's Savior, they may well attempt to find a substitute, but they will be lost. If a vast majority of mankind believe the gospel to be inadequate, then "let God be found true, though every man be found a liar" (Romans 3:4).

## THE INTEREST OF ANGELS IN SALVATION

"...things into which angels long to look." (I Peter 1:12). The value of salvation is also seen in the interest of the magnificent heavenly creatures in it. These noble and powerful creatures would not be drawn to any but the most important and vital of matters. Salvation captivates their attention. No doubt it is because they are not only aware of those things concerning salvation which have been revealed to us, but they are also aware of things which are unknown to us; glorious and high things unutterable and incomprehensible to human beings in our present forms. But this we know: if angels long to look into these things, and since these things pertain to us, then we had better pay them close attention!

Words to the hymn

### Mended and Whole

by Donald M. Alexander

Oh how great a salvation in Jesus, that  
the prophets of old testified!  
Even angels desire its revealing.  
Praise and glory to Christ crucified!  
You were threatened for me. You were  
slandered for me.  
Ev'ry thorn, ev'ry nail, ev'ry tear was  
for me.  
Sweet the tho't that my soul may be  
mended and whole by my Lord who

was broken for me.

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