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"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

SALVATION AND CONVERSION

C.D. Cole

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I am using these two words to teach a needed distinction. I am using salvation in the objective sense and conversion is obviously a subjective experience. Salvation, objectively, is something wrought and finished outside us--something that may be presented to the sinner--and something the sinner may neglect or refuse to accept. I am using salvation in the sense of a deliverance from the guilt of sin; and, I am speaking of conversion as a change wrought in the soul of man.

I. WHAT IS SALVATION?

A. The word simply means deliverance. Any kind of salvation is deliverance from something--it is the escape from something. In the financial realm, it is deliverance from extreme poverty or bankruptcy. In the physical realm, it is deliverance from danger or disaster of some kind. But the salvation the Bible puts emphasis upon is deliverance from sin--it is the escape from sin and all its conse-

quences. In its fullest sense, salvation is in three tenses: the believer has been saved from the guilt of sin; he is being saved from the damning power of sin; and he will yet be saved from the very presence of sin. But I want to confine my remarks to salvation as deliverance from the guilt of sin: its past and present aspect.

B. This aspect of salvation is called by many terms: (1) Justification, (2) Everlasting life, (3) Deliverance from the curse of the law, (4) Deliverance from gehenna or the lake of fire (Matthew 10:28). In commenting on this, Dr. Broadus says: "Fear is natural to man; and our Lord does not say we must root it out and have no fear, but that the less fear must give way to the greater." In Romans 3:18, Paul preaches the climax of sin and misery when he says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

For a man whose breath is in his nostrils; for a person who cannot wrap himself in his own winding sheet; for one whose feet are on the brink of eternity, to

have no fear of God is the climax to all stupidity and folly. Hebrews 11:7 says, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Acts 9:31 says "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

II Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Philippians 2:12, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Salvation is from something that is to be feared: because there is wrath, beware.

C. H. Spurgeon: "The dread of divine justice has often driven men to seek mercy. Many have been caught in the whirlwind of wrath; and in their dismay, they fled for refuge to that Man who is a covert from the tempest. Hence the Lord does not decline to work upon the minds of the guilty drawn from fear. Our dear Redeemer, whose lips are as lillies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, in great tenderness of heart, warned men of the sure result of their sins; and, none used stronger or more alarming language than did he concerning the future of ungodly men. He knew nothing of that pretended sympathy which will rather let men perish than warn them against perishing. Such tenderness

is merely selfishness excusing itself from a distasteful duty. Our Lord spoke of the true and earnest lover of men...He spoke of weeping and gnashing of teeth, of a worm which dieth not, of a fire that is not quenched."

Oh, I would hate to preach hell if there is no salvation from it. To preach the danger of sin and need of salvation without preaching the Gospel--the remedy--the way of escape would be uselessly cruel.

C. H. Spurgeon: "Still, the master-magnet of the Gospel is not fear, but love. Penitents are drawn to Christ rather than driven. The most frequent impulse which leads men to Jesus is hope that in Him they may find salvation. Truly, even then, they are moved by fear of the evil which they would escape: but their feet are led to fly towards him by hope in his gentleness, his goodness, his readiness to receive sinners."

II. WHAT IS CONVERSION?

It is a spirit-wrought work in the souls of men by which they take warning of the danger of sin and look to Jesus Christ as the one and only Saviour. It is to receive the truth concerning sin and salvation in the inward parts. It is to have objective truth as a subjective realization of the heart. It is to know and agree with what God says about sin. God says sin is abominable and hateful and damnable. He says sin is the transgression of His law; rebellion against his will and government. He says that sin will bring one to hell as its just deserts. He says there is a day of judgment and a place of wrath for the sinner. Do you take all this to heart?

God also says that His Son is mighty to save. That what He did in putting away sin was enough. God says there is eternal life in His Son. Do you agree with Him about this? Do you so agree with Him that you will trust yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ?

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Feeling comes when we truly believe God's word and trust Jesus. Then, we begin to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Romans 5:1-2 says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into

this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

III. CONCLUSION

(By Al Gormley)

Faith is acting on what God says. The true order in an experience of conversion is: fact, faith, feeling.

The fact of the gospel is how that Christ died for our sins, was buried, was raised from the dead and is alive and ascended into heaven and is coming again.

Faith is a complete trusting in this fact. Faith is coming to Jesus for salvation. Faith is the committing of your soul to Christ for him to save you. II Timothy 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Faith is receiving Jesus Christ as God's gift to us that we might be saved. John 1:12, "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:" Faith is fleeing to Christ for refuge. Faith is looking to Christ to save you. Isaiah 45:22,

He best can part with life without a sigh whose daily living is to daily die.

--C. H. Spurgeon



"WITHOUT MONEY WITHOUT PRICE"

C. D. COLE

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1).

The blessings promised and provided in the gospel cover all of man's needs. In our text these blessings are set forth under three figures: water, wine, and milk. Water refreshes, wine gladdens, milk nourishes. So the gospel refreshes and gladdens and nourishes the soul of man. There is water, wine, and milk in a higher realm than the natural and physical. That which satisfies the body cannot meet the needs of the soul.

These gospel blessings are to be had gratis—without money—and lest we think that, although money could not buy them, something else could, it is added "without price." There is absolutely nothing the sinner has to bring to God for salvation. The day that saw Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise blotted forever the word "human merit" out of the dictionary of truth. But in spite of this, men in their natural state have insisted that they must bring some price for salvation. Some say you have to keep the Ten Commandments; some say you have to do the best you can; others say you have to do your part, but they never are able to tell you what that part is. Still others depend upon some ceremony or ordinance; and many think you have to bring a certain amount of feeling. As Spurgeon puts it, "They think they must be distressed up to a certain point, and made to tremble in a certain measure, and become despairing before they can ever hope for mercy." Now these things are the usual experience of a sinner in salvation, but they are no price for salvation. And the man who depends upon them is as truly lost as if he depended upon gold for salvation. The sinner can do nothing to fit himself for salvation. He is already fit by the very fact he is a sinner. What fits a man for washing except to be dirty? What fits a man for food but to be hungry? What fits a man for healing but to be sick?

Why do sinners insist on bringing something for salvation?

1. Because their reason is ruined. Ridpath said every man is insane on some subject. I know what that subject is: it is salvation. Man can reason properly on things outside his relation to God. The lost man can graduate from a university as easily as a saved man. Sin does not affect his ability to grasp mathematics, and astronomy, and other natural sciences. But when it comes to his relation to God, it is a horse of another color. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. The prodigal had to come to himself.

2. Because of their natural pride. Pride is self-exaltation, self-importance, self-sufficiency. It began with the devil when he said he would exalt himself on an equality with God. It seized man when he followed the devil's lie that he would be like God. Pride is woven into human nature. All men have it by nature, and it is the last thing that dies in a saved man.

Men want to be saved on some principle that will enable them to boast. But God says, "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

3. All religions that have ever been in the world of man's making teach that salvation is to be merited. From heathenism down through Mohammedanism to Popery, all demand a price for the promise of salvation. The Pharisee depends upon his good works. The ignorant heathen will torture his body or make great sacrifices to his idol. The Mohammedan has his pilgrimages and a host of meritorious prayers. As for the Papist, his religion is merit and payment from beginning to end, not only during his lifetime on earth, but even after death by means of masses for the dead a tax is still collected.

Man wants to bargain with God and turn His temple of mercy into an auction-mart where each man bids as high as he can and procures salvation if he can reach a certain figure. But here stands the Gospel with all the treasures of grace unlocked and all the graneries of heaven with doors taken off their hinges, and it cries, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "Without money and without price."

Why does salvation have to be free?

1. Because of the character of God. God gives His blessings; He does not sell them. It is His very nature to give. He gives to His creatures sunshine and rain, the air they breathe, the sleep they enjoy. He gives to poor sinners His great salvation. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

What did the father do when the prodigal came back? Did he put him in quarantine to see if he had a clean bill of health? Did he ask him for a gift in order to be reconciled to him? Why the parable would be spoiled by the hint of such a thing. The father did the giving. This parable shows the heart of God towards the sinner who comes to Him through Christ. The father did all the giving; the prodigal was the blessed receiver. The best robe, the fatted calf, the ring for his finger, shoes for his feet, music for his ears, were all gifts for the son from the father. They were gracious gifts, not one of them deserved. Can you imagine Christ going over Palestine selling His cures?

2. Because of the value of salvation.

It is without price because it is priceless. Who can properly estimate the worth of salvation? A man's soul is worth more than the whole world. To try to buy salvation with anything we have is absurd. It is like trying to buy the Empire State Building with a nickel.

3. Because of the bankrupt condition of the sinner. Salvation has to be free if anybody gets it because nobody has any price to bring. Suppose you are dead broke financially, and also broken in health so that you cannot earn a dollar. You and your family are living outdoors. You need a house. Here comes a large truck of lumber—just about enough to build what you need. The man in charge hears of your need for a house, and he comes to sell you this lumber. He starts out with his salestalk by saying that high prices prevail, that most lumber men demand black market prices, but that he will be moderate and let you have the lumber at a small profit. You would say, "Well, that is very good of you, but I am broke and have no earning capacity for the future." Then he offers to reduce the price; he will let you have it for half price. You would say, "I'm not finding fault with the price, but I told you I have nothing to pay." Then he says, "Why, I will let you have it for a song—you may have the whole load for \$100.00." Think of enough lumber for a whole house for \$100.00. With tears in your eyes, you would say, "I would love to have the lumber, but I do not have any money and cannot make any." The only way that man could be any blessing to you would be by giving you the whole load without money and without price.

The blessedness and glory of such a gospel that offers salvation without money and without price:

1. Such a gospel can be preached to every creature. If we look for some price in the hand of the sinner, we could not preach it to a dying thief, or to the poor drunkard, or to Mary Magdalene with seven devils. No creature is too poor or too big a sinner or too old to

preach the Gospel to.

2. It forbids despair. If salvation is for sinners, then no sinner need despair.

3. It inspires with gratitude. And gratitude becomes the basis for holiness. A man cannot be very grateful for something he has bought and paid for. He can feel no obligation to the person who sold him something. It is the gift for which we feel thankful.

4. It will make more devout worshippers in heaven. If salvation were by works—by human merit—heaven would be filled with boasters instead of worshippers. This shall not be for Ephesians 2:8 and 9 says: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."