

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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"Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state"

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THE INVITATION

By: C. D. COLE

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:28-32.

No uninspired person could have written the eighth chapter of Romans. It is so contrary to the natural mind and to popular thinking, that it had to be the inspired word of God.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," II Timothy 3:16. The Bible was not written to confirm our thinking but to correct it; not to approve our conduct but to reprove it.

Salvation is a comprehensive term and includes all those gracious and sovereign acts of God in which He delivers a sinner from the penalty of his sins and fits him for heaven. Salvation is twofold: it makes a person both safe and sound. In his natural and fallen state the sinner is a child of wrath - he is in danger of Divine wrath - and he is also depraved or unfit for fellowship with God and holy angels.

And so a work must be done for the

sinner to make him safe from eternal punishment and a work must be done in the sinner to fit him for heaven. The work done for the sinner to save him from the penalty of his sins was done at Calvary; the work done in the sinner to make him sound is done by the Holy Spirit and is a process, beginning in regeneration or the divine call and culminating in glorification in heaven.

In this sermon I want to analyze the salvation experience in the hope that we may be understanding it and give credit to whom credit is due. This salvation experience is described in Roman 8:28-32. It was purposed in eternity past - *"for whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate."* It is experienced in time - He also called and justified. And it will be consummated when the believer appears with Christ in glory.

Nobody has experienced salvation in its fullest sense yet, for it includes glory in heaven at the return of Christ.

There are many aspects, phases and stages of salvation, and there is a particular word to describe each part of it. The Bible puts salvation in three tenses: he has been saved; he is being saved, and he will yet be saved. *"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed,"* Romans 13:11. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,"* Ephesians 2:8. *"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace,"* Romans 6:14.

SALVATION PROVIDED AND SALVATION EXPERIENCED

Salvation experienced begins with the divine call (regeneration). The divine call enables the dead sinner to understand the gospel, trust Christ and be saved. *"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God,"* I Corinthians 1:23-24.

THE INVITATION

The purpose of the invitation is to get believers to identify themselves.

When one believes on Christ he should not keep his faith secret.

In the invitation we should urge the believer to confess Christ before men - to make public acknowledgment of their faith in Christ.

The invitation is to discover the results of the sermon. Without an invitation one may believe and leave the meeting without making it known.

The invitation is to impress upon the believer the duty of baptism and church membership. The first duty of the saved person is baptism, and his solemn responsibility is partnership with others in giving glory to Christ through the church.

*"God holds the key of all unknown,
And I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if He trusted it to me,
I might be sad."*

THE CALENDAR OF GOD

BY: C. D. COLE

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,"
Galatians 4:4-5.

INTRODUCTION: God has a calendar. It is full of events. No event ever slips up on God. The time of everything is fixed by God. There is a date on His calendar for your death and mine. Our times are in His hand. *"If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that,"* James 4:15. There are many red-letter days on God's calendar; world shaking and world shaping events. One of these red-letter days called for His greatest gift; the gift of His Son and so *"when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, made under the law."* He came when the shepherds, on the Judean hills, kept watch over their flock by night.

There have been some wonderful nights in the history of the world. There was the first night of all, the night of creation, *"And God said, Let there be light...and God divided the light from the darkness,"* Genesis 1:3-4. There was the night of redemption of Israel from Egypt, when God's redeemed stole forth over trackless wastes to the Promised Land. There was the night which saw the downfall of Babylon, ushered in by Belshazzar's feast and the handwriting on the wall. In our own history there was the night of civil war by which human souls were set free, and the Union preserved. During World War II many were on the front line on a dark night when the "cease fire" order was given. But the greatest night of all nights was that silent night in Bethlehem of Judea when the world's Saviour lay in a manger cradle. How paradoxical it all is: God's eternal Son became Mary's baby; the Ancient of Days became an infant; He upon whose arms the world had rested clung to a woman's breast. He who was and ever is life drew nourishment from a woman's breast.

God sent forth His Son. God's calendar called for His biggest gift - the gift

of His Son. Who can make a bigger gift than the gift of a son?

This was a love gift. *"For God so loved the world, that he have his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

FOR SINNERS

We usually give our gifts to friends but God gave His best and biggest gift to His enemies. Was every anything so strange and unusual?

Why? What is the explanation for such love? Who can say? Come on ye smart people, tell us why God loved His enemies with such a love? Was it because they were lovely? Dare ye say it was because they deserved His love? Does filth appeal to purity? Can crime have any claims on justice? Does rebellion earn a palace in the kingdom of God?

SALVATION

Salvation was the end or aim of this gift. *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins,"* Matthew 1:21. *"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved,"* John 3:17. What is salvation? There is always the danger of missing the idea of what salvation is. Salvation is not physical health or social prominence or financial prosperity or political popularity. Paul had none of these things, but he was a saved man. Salvation is not represented by earthly benefits. Salvation is not expressed by a bank roll; salvation is not weighed according to pounds avoirdupois; salvation is not measured in the tincup of human praise. Salvation is from the wrath of God. Christ saves by redeeming us from the curse of the law. God's law has to be reckoned with in salvation. There is forgiveness with God, but it is through redemption in Christ Jesus. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,"* Ephesians 1:7. Somebody has said that every believer ought to be in hell five minutes to learn what it is to be lost.

Then, every unbeliever ought to be there five minutes to learn how awful sin is, for hell is the price of sin.

The sinner is wrong on two questions: how bad sin is and how precious Christ is. Sin is so hateful to God that it took the best thing in heaven to save from it. There is a man, William Keenan, a New York contractor who is taking his family from New York to Montana to escape future danger from atomic bombs. He has heard that eastern and populous cities will be in most danger in event of another war with a-bombs chief weapon, and so he is moving to Montana, a sparsely settled place for safety. But there is something worse than a-bombs to flee from. *"Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible,"* Isaiah 13:6-11. The believer has salvation now but it will not be manifest what salvation is and how valuable it is until the day of judgment.

STRANGE PACKAGE

God's gift is wrapped in a strange package. *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,*

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GOD, SIN, SALVATION

BY: C. D. COLE

Introduction: Many years ago there was much publicity given to the preaching of a native Japanese Christian named Paul Kanamori. He had only one sermon in which he tried to embody the whole truth of the gospel. The sermon covered the three subjects of God, sin and salvation. It took him three hours to deliver it, and he went over the country of Japan reaching as many people as possible and seeking a new congregation every time he delivered it. He would ask those who heard it to not come back but to stay away and get others to come. He claimed to have reached 300,000 people and that 50,000 were saved by it. It was his ambition, whether realized or not I do not know, to reach 3,000,000 people with this one sermon.

While in Tampa recently, I stepped into a second hand back street and found a copy of his book called, *The Three Hour Sermon*. And that book suggested this sermon.

CONCERNING GOD

God is the most stupendous subject we can think about. Infinite; incomparable; incomprehensible; immutable; independent; eternal. Human depravity evidenced in the fact men do not like to think about God. Mention God in places of sin and see the effect.

There is one God. *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me,"* Isaiah 45:5. In three persons: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Pagan religions have a multiplicity of gods. When Paul Kanamori would preach to his people about the true God they would complain that they didn't need another god. They would say that many good things had been imported from western countries, such as railroads, telegraph, steamships, because they did not have them, but that they had all the gods they needed. Paul found gods everywhere in Athens and lest one of the gods might be neglected they had an altar erected to the unknown god. When Paul preached Jesus and resurrection they thought he was introducing two new gods. They had a law against introducing any more gods and Socrates was put to death because they

thought he preached a new god.

The God of the Bible is the Creator; all other gods are manufactured gods; man made, hand made gods. In Japan every home has its god on the shelves.

The God of the Bible is the sustainer of creation. *"He is before all things, and by him all things consist,"* Colossians 1:17. *"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,"* Hebrews 1:3. Think of this vast universe of planets, myriads of worlds dashing through space, resting on no foundation; supported by nothing but the arm of God, directed only by the hand of God.

The God of the Bible is the Ruler of creation. This world is not like a team of runaway horses out of control of the driver. And yet apart from the Bible revelation is what seems to be the fact. There is rebellion against God but it presents no problem either to His wisdom or power.

God is a lawgiver to whom all moral beings are responsible and before whose throne every one of us must stand. A moral being is one who has a sense of right and wrong, a being with a conscience capable of reasoning. This brings us to our next subject.

CONCERNING SIN

What is sin? It is the transgression of divine law. If there is no moral lawgiver and no divine law then there are no sinners. Sin is not imputed where there is no law.

SIN & CRIME

A criminal is one who has broken the law of society; a sinner is one who has broken the law of God. Every criminal is a sinner, but every sinner is not necessarily a criminal. The Japanese would resent the preaching of Paul Kanamori because they did not distinguish between sin and crime. When he would call them sinners they would say, "What have we done? On what evidence do you call us sinners or criminals? These preachers are always saying sin, sin, sin, just as if they were prison offi-

cials talking to convicts. This is what we dislike about Christianity; we don't like to be talked about as if we ought to be in prison." But to be a sinner is not the same as being a thief or murderer or drunkard. Sin is violation of the law of God and all have broken it.

WHAT IS THIS LAW OF GOD?

Sometimes spoken of as the ten commandments. *"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,"* Matthew 22:37-40. *"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law,"* Romans 13:8. Any commandment is a test whether one loves God or not.

We measure sins as if they were against society and say that murder is the greatest. But sin is against God. *"The carnal mind is enmity against God,"* Romans 8:7. It expresses itself by shunning God; by doubting God's word; by breaking his law. From the standpoint of crime the best man in the community may be the biggest sinner before God. We are prone to call a man good regardless of how he treats God, if he treats his wife and neighbor okay. The carnal mind is not enmity against man, but against God. The world doesn't hate me because I am a man, but because I am a man of God. *"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you,"* John 15:19.

CONCERNING SALVATION

It is by grace. This means that it is undeserved. It is not a divine obligation. Every aspect of salvation is of grace; every step we take toward heaven is by grace working in us.

Not of works lest any man should boast. Salvation by works would make boasters. God hates boasters. With the proud Nebuchadnezzar, it was "I, I, I," until God put him out on the pasture to

eat and sleep with the cattle until he learned to praise and honor God.

Through faith. Faith is the mighty hand receiving salvation from the pierced hand of Christ. Faith is the acknowledgment of a bad record trusting the good record of Christ. Faith is the hand that pulls off the robe of self-righteousness and puts on the robe of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Faith is not a human product, but the work of grace in the soul. *"And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace,"* Acts 18:27. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,"* Ephesians 2:8.

It is on the principle of substitution. Principle well understood in human affairs. One teacher will substitute for another; the postman has his substitute; a substitute is one who takes the place of another and acts for another. If there is no substitute for sinners then every sinner will have to settle with God for his own sins and this will mean eternal punishment. A man commits murder; he is convicted and sentenced to die. But when he is put in prison he repents and determines to live better and never do that thing again. He sends for the judge that found him guilty and pronounced sentence and asks him to let him go free because he is sorry of what he has done and will never do it again. Do you think the judge will open the prison doors to that man? No the sentence cannot be provoked on such grounds. Crime must receive its deserved punishment, or the judge is unjust. In this country there is no way for a murderer to go free consistent with justice. In Japan long ago the law allowed the principle of substitution; an innocent person taking on himself the offence of the criminal and dying in his place. That was called Migawari; a substitute.

The happiest thing about the law of God is that it allows the principle of substitution. And God the lawgiver provides the substitute. His Son is the substitute for sinners. Repentance and remission of sins are in his name. He was punished for His people's sins so that they will not have to be punished for them. God *"is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,"* Ephesians 3:20.

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God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," Romans 8:3. He was not recognized or wanted. *"He came unto his own, and his own received him not,"* John 1:11. *"...the world knew him not,"* John 1:10. God's gift is not wanted. A man once stood on London Bridge for a whole day trying to give away golden sovereigns and only two persons would accept them. They doubted they were genuine; they doubted their worth. And so men refuse Christ because they doubt His worth. How foolish!

THE TIME OF THIS GIFT

"When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son." He came at the time fixed by God. It was the time fixed on God's calendar. It was God's time and therefore the right time. It was the right time from every viewpoint. The Jews had long been trained by the law in the conviction of sin and were looking for the promised Messiah. Heathen philosophers or worldly wisdom had reached the height of its possible development and was decaying. It had found no way to God and salvation. Rome had politically prepared the way for the spread of the gospel.