

THE ETERNAL TRUTH ABOUT OUR ETERNAL SALVATION

The prophets Isaiah, Haggai, and the writer of Hebrews, tell us that at the end of the age there will be a time of universal shaking in which every aspect of our living experience is shaken out of normality. As Christians we see this already happening, and at such a time it would be wise to firm up our foundations so that they cannot be moved. Let us start with our salvation. In the second chapter of Ephesians, Paul explains the foundational basis of our salvation.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Eph 2:8-9

“by grace you have been saved” –

The first important truth we must take on board is that we are saved by the grace of God. The meaning of grace is “unmerited favour.” There is nothing we can do or achieve in our daily lives that can merit our salvation. No matter how hard we try to live a sinless life, or how many good deeds we do, or all of our efforts to be a good person – none of these things can acquire our salvation. Paul says it is “**not of works, lest anyone should boast.**” Salvation cannot be earned by our best efforts – it is a gift from God that is not granted by the merit of our lives, but by the merit of Jesus Christ, the “**spotless Lamb of God,**” who paid the debt for our sins on the Cross.

“through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” -

We must receive our salvation by faith. There is no need to fear not having sufficient faith, because the reading says that God supplies faith to be received as a gift.

Only two things are needed to receive salvation by faith.

- 1 We must believe all that the Scriptures say about Jesus Christ is true.
 - That Jesus is the Son of God
 - That He came to earth, born of the Virgin Mary.
 - That by His life and teaching He revealed God to us.
 - He became sin for us, bearing the punishment for our sins on the Cross.
 - He was crucified, and His body laid in a tomb.
 - By the power of the Holy Spirit, His dead body was brought to life.
 - Jesus was resurrected and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
 - Mankind has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus and we are eternally saved.
- 2 By faith we claim that Christ’s redemption of mankind applies to us personally, and that we are righteous before God, and that **WE ARE ETERNALLY SAVED.**

CONFESSION OF OUR SALVATION

In the Tenth Chapter of Romans, Paul provides us with a pattern to guide us in accepting and confessing our salvation.

“But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION.” (Rom 10:8-10).

There are three basic elements in this pattern.

- 1 The gospel truth of our salvation has been presented to you.
- 2 You must believe it with your heart.
- 3 You should confess it with your mouth.

What is involved in the instruction to “**confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus?**”

It is a statement that you believe all that the Scriptures say about the Lord Jesus. Scriptural truths about Jesus have already been outlined earlier.

Here is a sample confession that leads to salvation: Because the reading above says “**confession is made unto salvation,**” after our confession, we can say with confidence, I am saved. A fitting closing statement is: I choose to receive Jesus as the Lord of my life.

**I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
He came to earth to be a sin offering to pay the debt for our sins.
He bore the punishment for MY sins in His own body on the cross.
God raised Jesus from the dead and He is now enthroned with Him in heaven.
MY debt has been paid and I am now righteous in God’s eyes.
I HAVE BEEN ETERNALLY SAVED.**

I choose to receive Jesus Christ as the Lord of my life.

Following this confession, we can be assured that it has been witnessed in heaven and accepted, and your name has been registered in the “book of life” that you are eternally saved.

SPIRITUAL TRUTH and PHYSICAL TRUTH.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul tells us that there are two types of truth - the unseen or spiritual truth which is eternal, and visible truth, which is temporary.

“...while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Cor 4:18.

The Spiritual Truth Concerning Our Salvation

Spiritual truth concerns what has happened in heaven after your belief and the confession of your salvation.

Your confession of your salvation has been accepted by God, and your name has been written in the Book of Life. You are eternally saved; your sins have been forgiven and in God’s eyes you are holy and blameless; He has adopted you and you are a child of God.

That is eternal truth, and the only thing that can alter that is if you yourself reject it, or in rebellion reject Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. Paul enjoins us to stand steadfast in this eternal truth. **“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received**

and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you... 1 Cor 15:1-2.

The Visible Truth

The visible truth is what you see after being saved. Sometimes it seems that nothing much has changed, in that you still sin with your eyes and mouths, and still cater to fleshly desires. But the fact is that you have changed. You are under new ownership, and if you are willing to lay your carnal nature on the altar of the cross, God will undertake a lifelong work of stripping away that nature and forming the nature of Christ in you.

We are his workmanship, being gradually transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Eph 2:10.

Satan is the accuser of the brethren, and he continually turns your thoughts to the physical realm taunting you because you still sin, and casting doubts about your salvation. But Paul says, **“we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.”** His mind and heart were settled on the spiritual truth of who he was in Jesus Christ. In Colossians he tells us -

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” Col 3:1-4.

JESUS IS THE LORD OF YOUR LIFE

This reading shows that in overcoming Satan, it is important to make Jesus Lord.

“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” Rev 12:10-12.

No matter how much Satan accuses us about our sins, our response is that the blood of Jesus has cleansed me from all unrighteousness.

The word of our testimonies is our use of Scriptures to counter Satan’s accusations.

“they did not love their lives to the death” – is our willingness to give up our self-lives and make Jesus the Lord of our life. Jesus then receives the responsibility of keeping us.

BAPTISM

In the early Church, the confession and receiving of salvation was immediately followed by being baptised by full immersion, or sprinkling in the case of those who were frail or elderly. Baptism was a symbolic enactment of what had taken place in the spiritual realm. Being immersed in the water symbolises our ‘old man’ put to death and buried with Christ. Rising out of the water symbolises being raised up with Christ as a new creation, with all of past sins washed away. The following readings bring out some of the essential points about baptism

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in (the likeness of) His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.” Rom 6:3-7.

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Gal 3:27-28.

So what does our baptism reveal to us about our salvation?

The person we were before salvation with a past history of sin, and subject to Satan’s legitimate claims, was crucified with Christ, and buried with Him in the baptismal water. All of the sins of this past life were washed away in the waters of baptism remembered by God no more. We are raised out of the waters of baptism as new creations united with Christ.

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal 2:20-21

What does it mean, being baptised **“in ‘or into’ the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit?”** Matt 28:19.

The name is indicative of all their attributes.

Being baptised into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, means that we have been incorporated into the presence of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and Jesus said, **“I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one...”** John 17:23. It is to be baptised into their fullness, with authority in the name of Jesus Christ to partake of their attributes.

We now have personal knowledge and experience of the blessings of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

We now know personally the reality of -

We know God as Father, He who provides, He who heals, He who keeps, etc.

We know Jesus as our way, our truth, our life, our righteousness, our strength, our joy, our peace, etc.

We know the Holy Spirit as He who empowers, our helper, our guide, our teacher, etc.