

The Greatness of Salvation

by William MacDonald

The greatness of salvation is that God's love is greater than our sin, and it persists even when we reject him.

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Topics: "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher highlights the difference between the law and the gospel. The law demands obedience but does not provide the means to fulfill its requirements. On the other hand, the gospel brings good news of salvation and offers the ability to soar like wings. The penalty for breaking the law is eternal death, and there is no mercy in the law. However, the gospel offers grace and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, who meets the qualifications of being human to be our substitute. The preacher also emphasizes that while the commandments are repeated in the New Testament, they are not given as laws with penalties but as instructions for those who have been saved by grace.

Transcript

Hebrews, chapter 2, verse 1. Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard him, God also bearing witness, both with signs and wonders, with various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will? Notice that expression, so great a salvation. I'd like to latch on to that word, great, and find some other great things in this passage, and if they're not there, we'll put them there.

Great laws, the word spoken through angels. Great sinners, every transgression received a just recompense of reward. Great condemnation, a just reward.

Great love. Well, you won't find great love there, but you'll find it if you turn to John 3, 16. And the message wouldn't be complete without it, so let's just put it in.

Great Savior, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and a great salvation. Well, that's what we have, great salvation. A great message, and you have that in verses 3 and 4, the message that was spoken by the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard him, and then a great danger, if we neglect, so great salvation.

A lot of great things in this passage of Scripture. Somebody else thought up a lovely outline of the passage, salvation, so great. Neglect, so easy.

Escape, so impossible. I think that says it very, very well. Let me tell you ten things about the law, because that's what we're going to be thinking about first.

It says if the word spoken through angels was steadfast, the law was given through angels. The law here, the word spoken through angels was the Ten Commandments, is what it was. It was spoken through angels.

Now, if you go back to Exodus 20, you won't find the angels mentioned there, but you'll find them here. You'll find them in Acts 7, and the fact of the matter is that's how the law is. God spoke through angels, through Moses, to the people of Israel.

That spoke of distance between God and sinful man. It wasn't a direct face-to-face meeting of God with men. No, no.

There were intermediaries there. There was distance that sin had created between God and man. So, the law was given by angels, through angels.

Secondly, the law reveals man's responsibility. First of all, it reveals man's responsibility to God. The first three commandments have to do with my responsibility to God.

The fourth has to do with the Sabbath day. And the rest of the commandments have to do with my responsibilities toward my neighbors. You might just turn to Exodus 20.

I think it's better if we see it. Exodus 20, this is when the law was given. Verse 3 is the first commandment.

You shall have no other gods before me. Verse 4 is the second commandment. You shall not make for yourself any graven image, carved image.

Verse 7 is the third commandment. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Verses 8 through 10 have to do with the Sabbath day.

And then 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 have to do with your responsibilities toward your fellow man, your neighbors. And I think it's so interesting that when a lawyer in one passage of the gospel and a scribe in another came to the Lord Jesus and said to him, in effect, Lord, give us a summary of what the law is all about. What did he say? He said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy might, and thy neighbor as thyself.

He just took them all together and summarized them in that single verse of Scripture. So, just remember that the law revealed man's responsibility to God, first of all, of course, and then to his neighbor. The third thing I'd like to mention about the law is that God never intended the law to be a way of salvation.

So many people today, if you speak to them about the salvation of their souls, well, they say, I try to keep the Ten Commandments. They can say nice things about the Ten Commandments, but God didn't give the Ten Commandments as a way of salvation. No one but the Lord Jesus ever kept the Ten Commandments.

No one can keep them. Paul speaks in 2 Corinthians as the law being a ministry of condemnation, isn't it? And then he says in Romans 3, For by the law is the knowledge of sin. The purpose of the law was to show me that I'm a sinner, not to show me how to be saved.

In that sense, the law isn't a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. The law never brought anybody to Christ, but it shows us that we need Christ. It shows us very vividly that we need Christ.

By the law is the knowledge of sin. So how does that work? Well, I say to myself, do you love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbor as yourself? I mean, just to ask the question is condemnation, isn't it? Thou shalt not covet, which is another way of saying, how is your thought life? And I wither when those commandments are brought home to me with the power of the Holy Spirit. For the law curses everyone who does not keep it perfectly and continuously.

The law really isn't good news, is it? The law curses all who do not keep it perfectly and continuously. You say, does it say that in the Bible? It certainly does in Galatians 3.10. It says, cursed is he who continues not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. Continuous and complete.

Continuous and perfect. Wouldn't be enough if I just kept the law perfectly until today. Until today, keep it perfectly from now on.

The law doesn't give us the power to obey. That's what's really tough about the law. It tells you what to do.

It doesn't give you the power to do it. And it curses you if you don't do it. Run, John, run, the law demands, but gives me neither feet nor hands.

Far better news the gospel brings, tells me fly and gives me wings. And I think that epitomizes the difference between the gospel very well. Run, John, run, the law demands, but gives me neither feet nor hands.

Far better news the gospel brings, tells me fly and gives me wings. The penalty for breaking the law is death. And that's eternal death, too.

It's not just physical death. Penalty for breaking the law is eternal death. And don't forget what it says here.

If the word spoken to angels is steadfast, steadfast, that means there's no give or take to it. There's no mercy in the law. This is it.

This do thou shalt live, this fail to do, you shall die. In that sense, it's steadfast like the bars of a castle. They're cold, hard, and inflexible.

That's what it means here when it says if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, it really is steadfast. There's no plea bargaining with the law. Today you can commit the most horrendous crime and you can plea bargain with the prosecuting lawyers and maybe get off a little easy.

There's nothing like that with the law. No mercy in the law. Every transgression.

And James reminds us that to break one part of the law is to break all. The law is like a chain of ten commandments and you break one link in the chain and you've broken the chain. In California, there's a law, three strikes and you're out.

With the law, one strike and you're out. This is interesting to me. While the law was given to Israel, yet the works of the law are written in the hearts of all men.

This is true. The law was given to Israel and only to the nation of Israel. But Paul tells us in Romans 2 that the works of the law are written in the hearts of the Gentiles.

What does that mean? Well, it means that a Gentile knows, for instance, that it's wrong to steal. The work of the law is written in his heart. A Gentile knows it's wrong to tell a lie.

A Gentile knows it's wrong to steal his neighbor's wife. How does he know that? Well, he knows it because if somebody stole his wife, he'd be really highly incensed, to put it mildly. He knows.

The Gentiles know there's a law, a God. They know there's a God, but they don't want to acknowledge him because if they acknowledge him, they have to be responsible to him. The Gentiles, the people know there's a God.

They try to deny it at every possible way. So what God did, God took the Jewish people as a test tube and he tested them under the law. And then he applied the findings to the whole human race.

Is that fair? Yeah, that's very fair. They do it in chemistry labs all the time, don't they? Take a test tube, make a test and apply it to all that it came out of. That's what God did with the law.

Israel, what's the test tube? Israel was found guilty under the law and God applied that finding to the whole world. Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament. Nine are repeated in the New Testament.

But they're not repeated as law with penalty attached. This is very, very important. For instance, it says in the New Testament, Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the earth.

This is the first commandment promised. But it doesn't say if you fail to do it, you'll die eternally. It doesn't say that.

When those laws are repeated in the New Testament, they're repeated as instruction for those who have been saved by grace. They're repeated to show you the kind of a life that's in harmony with people who've been called by the grace of God. Now, there's one of them that is not repeated, and that's the Sabbath.

The Sabbath. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and in the law, God set aside the seventh day of Saturday as a day of rest. Christians are never told to keep the Sabbath.

Never told to keep the Sabbath. You'll never find that in the New Testament. Actually, that one law is more ceremonial than it is moral.

The Sabbath law is ceremonial. Why is it wrong to work on Saturday for Jews? Because God said it's wrong. It's not inherently wrong, but it's wrong because God said it.

So, that Sabbath law is really quite different from all of the other ones. Great laws. And really, the Ten Commandments are great in this sense.

As the knowledge of the Ten Commandments decreases in the world about us, and you can see what's happening in the world, can't you? It's a great moral code that expresses the righteousness of God, and

people are ignorant of it today, and things are going from bad to worse. Yes, the words spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward. Every transgression and disobedience received a just reward.

Great sinners. And that's, of course, what the Bible tells us, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. A fable is told about one day the sun and the moon and the planets were to pass before the great white throne.

When the sun passed by, the Creator smiled. And when the moon passed by, the Creator smiled. And when the other planets passed by, the Creator smiled.

And when Earth passed by, He blushed. Only a fable, but a fable with a meaning connected with it. But I don't think we live very long before we know that the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked of all things who can know it.

When we think of the wickedness of the heart of man, we think of the Holocaust. Don't we? We think of how one-third of the Jewish population of the world was wiped out in gas chambers and ovens. One of the leaders, one of the Nazi leaders at that time, was a man named Adolf Eichmann.

And after the war, he escaped to Argentina, and he lived there for years in Argentina. But the Jewish people didn't rest. They finally tracked him down, and in one of the cleverest coups that I've read about, they captured him and took him back to Israel and put him on trial.

And then they called witnesses from Auschwitz to testify in his trial. And I'd just like to share with you concerning one of the witnesses that they called. His name was Yehiel Diener.

He had miraculously escaped death in Auschwitz, and the day came for him to testify. He walked into the courtroom and met eye to eye the man in the glass box, Adolf Eichmann. And when he saw him, when he looked at him, he fell to the floor screaming and weeping.

Why was he weeping? Why was he screaming? Because he looked upon the face of a monster? Because he saw the devil incarnate in that face? No, that wasn't why he was weeping. What startled Yehiel Diener was that he was just a normal man. Just like himself.

Just like himself. Let me read it to you. As the eyes of the two men met victim and murderous tyrant, the courtroom fell silent.

Filled with the tension of the confrontation that no one was prepared for what happened next, Yehiel Diener began to shout and sob, collapsing to the floor. Was he overcome by hatred? By the horrifying memories? By the evil incarnate in Eichmann's face? No. As he later explained in a riveting 60-minute interview, it was because Eichmann was not the demonic personification of evil Diener had expected.

Rather, he was an ordinary man, just like anyone else. And in that one instant, Diener came to the stunning realization that sin and evil are the human condition. I was afraid about myself, Diener said.

I saw that I am capable to do this, exactly like he. Diener's remarkable statements caused Mike Wallace to turn to the camera and ask the audience the most painful of all questions. How was it possible for a man to act as Eichmann acted? Was he a monster? A madman? Or was he perhaps something even more terrifying? Was he normal? Yehiel Diener's shocking conclusion.

Eichmann is in all of us. And it's really absolutely true. It's really wrong for us to look down our theological noses and say, well, I would never do that.

We could do that. We have that capability. We have that capability.

Dear friends, there's nothing as bad as the human heart. And that's what the law was given to reveal. It's exactly what the law was given to reveal.

If the word spoken through angels was steadfast, then every transgression received a just recompense of reward. One man said, of the ten commandments, I have broken twenty. Good.

Very good. That man really was facing things. Great condemnation.

Eternal death. That's what it means. Every transgression and disobedience received a just reward.

A just reward. You know, people with a heart like I've just described, they can't go to heaven unless that's taken care of, can they? I mean, that wouldn't be heaven. Imagine an unconverted Eichmann in heaven.

Imagine an unconverted me in heaven. That would ruin heaven. It wouldn't be heaven for me either.

It would really be hell for me, unconverted, to be in heaven. Heaven, hell, a place where there's no love. No love.

A terrible thing to think of a place where there's no love. Where the worm dieth not. Where the fire is not quenched.

The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. And then there's the great love, which I mentioned. It's not exactly stated in so many words in this passage, but it's really implicit in verses three and four.

A great love. Imagine God looking down upon creatures whom he had made. He didn't make them with this terrible capability for sin, but this is what happened as a result of a fall.

Imagine God loving people like that. That in itself is an eternal mystery. We were not only without strength, we were ungodly, and we were enemies of God.

Isn't that true? When a person is unsaved, and the subject of God comes up, he becomes immediately uncomfortable, doesn't he? When people are saved, they're in their own elements when they talk about the Lord. This is the way it should be. This is comfortable, but unsaved people can't be comfortable in thinking about the Lord.

And yet God looked down, and he saw us in this terrible condition, and he loved us. And when he loved us, he knew all that we would ever be and all that we would ever do. Much of our love is an ignorant love.

You know, people fall in love today. A young couple falls in love, and they think everything is Gloria and Excelsis, and, you know, everything is moonlight and roses, and then they get to know each other a little, and all of the warts and the wrinkles and the faults and the failures, and it's just not the same, is it? I mean, still love one another, I hope, but it's a more intelligent love then. But God knew all about us.

Knew all about us. He knew all the rotten things I would ever do, think, and say, and he loved me just the same. I tell you, that's love, friends.

And he loved us when we shook the fist in his face, huh? Against the God who built the sky, fought with hands up, lifted high, despised the mention of his grace, too proud to seek a hiding place. That's not the way we act with people. They don't love us.

I often think of that lady down in Newport, Rhode Island. Years ago, she wanted to break into the blue blood circle there, you know. It was a very class-conscious society in those days in Newport, Rhode Island, and she just wanted to become a member of that society, you know, prestige and status and all of that.

She bought a mansion there, and she moved into the mansion, but the people rejected her, and she moved out, and she just left the mansion go to rot and ruin, which didn't do a thing for the neighborhood. She left the mansion, go back to wilderness. The human response to rejection wasn't God's response to us, was it? How grateful that we can be.

I think one of the marvelous pictures that you can think of is the Lord Jesus standing at a heart store, my heart store, for years, knocking and wanting to come in, and I, a creature, such as I've just described, like Yahiel Dinur, and keeping him outside. I tell you, that's love that persists. Really love that persists that long is divine love.

There was a lady named Teresa. She was a refined cultured lady. She moved from Spain to Mexico during a time of political turmoil in Spain, and she bought a lovely house in Mexico, but when she looked out the apartment window, down at the back of her backyard, there was a series of hovels.

I mean, places you wouldn't want to live. They were just cardboard and wood and tin, people living in the most abject condition, and this was very offensive to her, a refined, cultured lady, to look down in her backyard and see a condition like that. But there was one thing else that she saw down there.

She saw a family there, six people in the family, father, mother, and four children, and eating disreputable food day after day, but she noticed they always bowed their heads and gave thanks for the food, and then they sang some songs before they ate. It was food that she wouldn't have wanted on her table, but all these poor people had. The man was a dock worker, Don Roberto.

He was a dock worker, and this used to make her wonder. These people eating food that she would have rejected. And then, you know, Don Roberto and his family, they got to know her, and they used to witness to her about the Lord Jesus.

I tell you, she was a Roman Catholic. She was born a Roman Catholic. She was going to die a Roman Catholic, and she was going to attend confession.

She was going to attend Mass, and she would never be influenced by these people. Only God can say never. She finally got so distressed, she moved away.

She had to get away from it, from this family that used to speak to her about the Lord Jesus. Don Roberto found out where she lived. One day, he knocked on her door, and she couldn't reject him, but she rejected his Savior.

Don Roberto and his family kept in touch with her for 17 years. For 17 years, she rejected the Savior of the world. At the end of 17 years, they told her that there was an Argentinian coming to the assembly that they attended.

He was a refined, cultured man. That was kind of a key. They used the word refined, cultured man.

She considered herself refined and cultured. They asked her if she wouldn't come and hear him, and she agreed to go. She agreed to go.

First of all, they had the Jesus film there that night, and then at the end, they had this Argentinian who preached the gospel. She went home, and she began to think, what has the Catholic Church ever done for me? What has confession and the mass ever done for me? Then she thought of these people and how happy they were, and the singing impressed her very, very much, the singing, and how friendly they were to her when she went into the assembly. About the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then she moved from Veracruz to Teotihuacan in Mexico with the same story. Everywhere she went, the web was working, and so came to the Lord Jesus through Doña Terri's testimony for them. But imagine, 17 years, that poor family that gave thanks for their food and sang songs when they sat down to eat this miserable food.

17 years, they knocked at her door. She finally broke and received the Lord Jesus as her Savior. Great Savior.

Great sinners, great condemnation, great love, great Savior. I'm going to tell you the Lord Jesus is a great Savior, isn't he? He really is. He's great in his qualifications.

I'm sure that we've gone over this before, but whoever was going to be your substitute and mine had to meet certain qualifications. He had to be human. Why did he have to be human? Because to be a substitute, there has to be an equal exchange.

An angel couldn't have taken our place. That wouldn't be equal. Satan said, uh-uh, God, you can't do that.

You can't do that. You can't make an angel die. And as far as we know, angels can't die anyway.

But he said, you can't make an angel die for a man. That's not equal. That would be unfair.

So the Lord Jesus had to be, the substitute had to be a man. Had to be a man for another reason. He had to be a man because without the shedding of blood, there's no remission of sin.

Blood had to be shed to wash my sins away. No other detergent would have ever taken care of that. But he had to be not only human, he had to be divine.

He had to be God. You say, why did he have to be God? Well, because he had to die for an infinite number of sinners. An infinite number of sins and sinners.

He had to die for all the sins that ever had been committed, all the sins that are being committed today, and all the sins that ever will be committed. And you know, only a divine person could ever be a substitute to take care of that. And then he had to be sinless.

Wow, it's getting more difficult all the time, isn't it? Had to be sinless. Why did he have to be sinless? He could be human, but if he sinned, he'd have to die for his own sins. And that explains the incarnation, doesn't it? How he came, the sinless son of God, into this world.

And not only that, as we said, he had to shed his blood. We're not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. And then, finally, and this is the big one, he had to be willing.

Had to be human, divine, sinless, shed his blood. He had to be willing to do it. The marvelous thing is that God the Son, in perfect fellowship with God the Father, in perfect harmony, in perfect bliss and purity, was willing to come down to this jungle of sin, shed his blood, to die for you and for me.

I want to tell you, he's a great savior in his qualifications. There's no one else in the universe who would meet the qualifications but Jesus. And it's so wonderful that he, the only one, would be willing to do it.

But I tell you, he's not only great in his qualifications, he's great in his effectiveness, too. Would you turn to Hebrews chapter 10, verse 12. Hebrews chapter 10, verse 12.

I think we'll go back a little. Let's go back to verse 5. Therefore, when he came into the world, that is, when the Lord Jesus came into the world, he said, Sacrifice an offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me. That means that God was never fully satisfied with the sacrifices and offerings of the Old Testament, with animal sacrifices.

They never fully satisfied the heart of God, did they? Why? Well, for one reason, they never put away a single cent. They were ceremonial. They were ritual.

God is not a ritualist. God is not pleased with people just going through ritual. Notice the contrast.

Sacrifice an offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me. The Incarnation, Bethlehem, born of the Virgin Mary. Why a body? So that as man he could die for man.

In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you had no pleasure. It means no ultimate pleasure. If the hearts were right, you had a pleasure.

But the trouble was a lot of them just went through the motions and their hearts weren't corresponding to the motions. For instance, when a Jew brought the burnt offering, the burnt offering told a complete commitment to the Lord. That's what it told.

That burnt offering was completely burned, you know. And the Jew was saying, This is me, completely committed to God. A lot of times they weren't completely committed to God.

It wasn't a case in total for this. And they were just going through these religious motions, and that's why it says in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, you had no pleasure. Behold, then I said, Behold, I have come in the volume of the book it is written of me to do your will.

Oh God, this is the willingness part of it, right? The only one who was eligible was also willing. Behold, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me, from Genesis to Revelation, the same testimony. The willing, living, loving Lord Jesus coming down to the world to suffer, bleed, and die for you and for me.

I have come to do your will, oh God. Previously saying sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin you did not desire nor had pleasure in them, which are offered according to the law, then he said, Behold, I have come to do your will, oh God. He takes away the first, but he may establish the second.

That is, that whole dispensation of animal sacrifices just passes away, and the completed work of the Lord Jesus comes upon the scene. First refers to the Old Testament economy of animal sacrifices. The second refers to the complete, perfect, final work of the Lord Jesus, by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Notice this next, and this is beautiful. Every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sin. The priests in the Old Testament were something like religious drudges.

They were going through these motions, but they never were effective. And they could never sit down and say, well, thank God, that's finished. They could never sit down in the temple or the tabernacle.

There wasn't any chair in the temple or the tabernacle. What? The work was never done. And that's why it says, ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sin.

And verse 12, a beautiful verse, This man, but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till his enemies made his foot to it. For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified or those who are sanctified. And that's wonderful.

The Lord Jesus is a great Savior because of the effectiveness of his work. He finished the work. He's seated at the right hand of God in heaven waiting for his enemies to be made his foot to it.

When it says in verse 14, By one offering he has perfected forever, it doesn't mean that Christians are perfect. It doesn't mean that Christians are never sinned. They're never sinned.

But it means that they have a perfect standing before God because he sees them in Christ. It has to do with our standing with God, not our state day by day. Our state should be becoming better and better all the time.

That's not what it's referring to. It's referring to our standing before God. So thank God for the greatness of the Savior.

I want to tell you this morning, the Lord Jesus is not an amateur Savior. And he's not a partial Savior either. So many people profess to be Christians and they think, well, Jesus did part of the work, but I have to do my part as well.

And they ruin the whole thing when they say that. He finished the work. That's why he cried on the cross at Calvary.

It is finished. Great Savior. Great salvation.

What a great salvation. We sometimes think, what a wonderful redemption. Never can a mortal know how our sins, so red like crimson, can be whiter than the snow.

What's great about our salvation? Well, I'll tell you what's great about it. Complete forgiveness of sins. That's pretty great to me.

Complete forgiveness of sins. God says, I'll remember them no more. As far as the east is from the west, so far have I put your sins away from me.

Buried in the sea of my forgetfulness. Forgiveness of sins. Eternal life.

That's pretty wonderful. That means eternal life with God in heaven, with the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. And not only that, but we're made children of God.

That dear family living there in Mexico, in that hovel, eating miserable food but giving thanks for it, didn't seem like much in this world, but they were children of God. And the refined, cultured lady had to find that out after 17 years. Children of God.

And that's why John expresses that eloquent gasp in chapter 3 when he says, Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, saith it movingly. The world didn't know that dear family down there, Don Roberto and his family, didn't know them.

Packed by them but little care. God cared. God has a hand upon them and used them in a wonderful way.

Redeemed. That means bought back from the slave market of sin. I tell you, it touches me when I think that my redemption costs the blood of the Son of God.

You know what that means? It means that if I accept this truth, it's got to be everything or nothing for Jesus Christ. That's what it means. I mean, if you follow the implications of the Christian faith to their logical conclusions, it means it's got to be everything or nothing.

And that's why the Lord Jesus says in Revelation, you know, I wish you were cold or hot. Because you're lukewarm, I will spew you out of my mouth. Children are redeemed by the blood of Christ, accepted in the Beloved.

That's wonderful to me. It's one of my favorite truths concerning salvation that God looks down and he never, he doesn't see me anymore as Bill McDonald in the flesh. He sees me as Bill McDonald in Christ Jesus.

That's okay. I'm okay as long as that's true. And then I turn to Colossians 2 and this is complete in Christ.

That means that I don't need, because I have Christ, I have the ticket to heaven all paid. And there's nothing more I need or can have as far as fitness for heaven is concerned because I have the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm justified.

This is wonderful. I'm justified. I no longer fear God as judge because you go into the courtroom and say, let's find the records concerning Bill McDonald.

Dear friends, they're gone. They're gone. Never find those records because he's justified and he's reckoned me to be righteous.

And then sanctified, that means set apart from the world to belong to himself. Set apart from the world. This is very real too.

Very real. It's true positionally and it's true practically too. You know, when a person is saved, he receives a new life.

It isn't by gritting his teeth and trying to live the Christian life. He does receive a new life and he's really different. He's really different.

And the things that he once used to be comfortable with, he's not comfortable with them anymore. It isn't by trying, it's just the nature, the new nature he has received. He's indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

You know, it's easy to stand here and say these words, but when you think of them, the truth that they enshrine, indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. That was true of Don Roberto, wasn't it? Didn't have much as far as this world is concerned, but I tell you, one of the persons of the Trinity dwelt in his body and manifested his presence there too. And we're sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise until the day of redemption.

We have the earnest of the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. We're eternally secure in Christ. We have a new citizenship.

You know, here's a man in France at the time of the Battle of Waterloo, you know. France loses. He's on the losing side.

But a year later, he crosses the Channel and becomes a citizen of Great Britain and he's on the winning side. He's on the side that won the Battle of Waterloo. And when we're saved, we get a change of citizenship, don't we? Our citizenship is from heaven.

From whence vaults do we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus? Transferred from the losing side to the winning side. And then we have access to God in prayer. That is a wonderful thing.

And we have a joy that we never knew could exist before. We have a peace. I like to think of that dear man up in Vancouver right now who has ALS.

ALS. And he's lying in a hospital bed and all he can move is a thumb. That's all he can move.

But if he could communicate with you and you asked him what does ALS stand for, he would say a loving Savior. Peace. And he has witnessed in seven years while he's had the disease, he's witnessed for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rest. Rest. I'm thinking this morning of a dear young guy up in Toronto and he belonged to the restless generation.

And he decided to leave home, leave his environment, leave the establishment, go west to Edmonton, Alberta. And he left. He wanted to find freedom.

He went to Edmonton, Alberta. All he had was the address of a farmer in Red Deer, not a Christian either. And he wasn't a Christian, of course.

He got to Edmonton and he wasn't there very long before somebody stole his suitcase with everything in it and left him with what he had on his purse, which wasn't much. So he went out to Red Deer, he got his way out to Red Deer and worked for two days and then the restlessness overtook him and he started hitchhiking again. But one day he's walking along the highway and he wasn't hitchhiking, he was just walking.

And a young fellow drove up and said, looking for a ride? Well, he actually wasn't at the time, he was just walking. And he said, well, he said not, well, he said, get in anyway. The young fellow said, get in anyway and I'll drive you to the next town.

So he got in, Greg Edwards got into the car to drive to the next town. And on the way, the fellow said, got a place to sleep tonight? He said, actually don't, he said. He told him about losing his suitcase and everything in it.

Well, he said, I'll tell you what, he said, we're going to be busy during the day but you'll be down at the hotel downtown tonight and we'll come and pick you up and you can come out and stay in a cabin with another fellow and myself. And tooters word and this fellow showed up that night and took Greg out to this cabin in the woods. And he noticed, he noticed that before they got to bed, when they went to bed, they read their Bibles.

Well, it didn't particularly unnerve him because he felt that he was broad minded, you know, and he could cope with something like that. The next day, he decided to go back into town and get a job. Well, he couldn't get a job but on the way he got a chill.

He went back to the cabin to gather the few miserable things he had there and leave but he couldn't, he was sick. He spent the next three days in bed with a pneumonia. And there was a man that came, there was a man that came to visit him.

And then he found out that this man, Mr. Blair, was the manager of the Bible camp where he was staying. And it was the first that he knew that he was at a Bible camp. And as he regained his strength, he started to work at the camp.

As he worked at the camp, he heard the gospel story. He had been a stranger to the gospel. And then he took a job at a motel right next to the camp that was owned by Christians.

He was really hemmed in, wasn't he? He was really hemmed in. God was after him. One day, oh, he made a list of the pros and cons of becoming a Christian.

And so one day he couldn't stand it and he was really under a terrible burden, terrible burden. He called it heart pressure. And this day he was going to go up the mountain and he was not going to come back until he made a decision.

He listed all the pros and cons of becoming a Christian and of not becoming a Christian. He never got up to the mountain. He got a hundred yards from the motel in a field.

He fell down on his back in the field and looked up into the heavens. And he thought of Christ. He thought of the forgiveness of sin.

And he gave his heart to the Savior. He gave his heart to the Savior. Wonderful.

He went back to the motel and they noticed his face was quite different. He didn't have a frown on. He smiled, but he didn't say anything.

Three days later, he confessed to the Lord Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. And joy erupted at the camp. They had been praying for him all along.

Really wonderful, isn't it? He was looking for freedom. He found it. He found it in Jesus.

How great salvation in one day to be conformed to the image of God's Son. What a wonderful redemption. It's a great message for us to share with others, too.

You know, there are only two possible ways that you can that God could have arranged the way of salvation. I'm going to let you try to think of some other way. But you can't think of something that doesn't exist.

There are only two possible ways that God could have ever arranged the way of salvation. One, receive it as a free gift. Or the other, earn it by your character or work.

There's another way. And thank God he decided to give it as a free gift. The gift of God is eternal life.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The minute you introduce somebody, you say to me, why did you mix them? Mix works and grace. You mix them, it's no longer grace.

You mix it, it's no longer a gift, a free gift. And the words that you use in the New Testament of a gift is a free gift. No conditions attached.

That's why the gospel is such a great message. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, thou shalt receive great danger, the danger of neglect. John Alexander Clark was a missionary in Africa years ago, well known, knighted by the king of Belgium and all the rest.

He had a native who worked with him for 13 years. This native had heard the gospel over and over and over again. He knew it by heart, but he never accepted it.

And one day, Mr. Clark spoke to him again about his soul. And he said, after he said, tonight I'm going out on a mission on a hunt. Hunting was his life.

Tonight, I'm going to go out on a hunt. And he said, I'm going to kill the biggest elephant in the world. And he said, I will be known as the man who killed the biggest elephant in the world.

And he said, when I get back, I'll trust Christ. And he went out that night. And in the morning, his nephew came screaming back to Mr. Clark and said, the boobie is dead.

He went and he shot this huge elephant. And when he did, the other elephants ran. But he went close to take the final blow at the elephant.

The elephant reared up and trampled him to death. I've heard the gospel for 13 years. Neglect.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Shall we pray? Father, we've been marveling at the greatness of your word. What of a way of salvation? Your greatness and the greatness of your son and the greatness of salvation that he offers. We now come to you with the confidence that your word never returns to you void.

It does accomplish what you set it forth to do. And we pray that it might do that very thing this day. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

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