

Things That Accompany Salvation

~Other Speakers G-L: Aaron Hills:

"Things that accompany salvation" (Heb. 6:9).

How much the word "SALVATION" means! Print it large; for it stands for the greatest experience that comes to man in time or eternity. Man is born with a proclivity to evil, a heart estranged from holiness and from God. At the earliest dawn of his moral life he gives expression to that evil tendency by the deliberate choice of sin. Sins multiply. Wrong acts form wrong habits. Habits rapidly form character. Wrong character soon determines a wrong destiny. Salvation reverses the entire process and alters the eternal result.

God sends His convicting Spirit to bring us to repentance. If the Spirit is yielded to, we turn from sin with abhorrence, and forsake a life of self-gratification, and make the supreme choice to live for the good of others and for the glory of God. This is, in Scripture language, being "born again." The life is no longer self-centered but Christ-centered.

But there is still left in us the evil trend. Sooner or later the Spirit will convict us of a need, and awaken within us a heart-hunger for more grace. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). If that divine prompting is yielded to, the hunger and longing to be delivered from the carnal mind will be so imperious that the soul will not cease its seeking and striving and pleading for help from God until the heavens open and Christ pours out His Spirit with sin-killing energy, and the heart is cleansed from indwelling sin (Acts 15:9, Luke 11:13). Such has been the experience of countless thousands of souls. This is what we call "full salvation"! Now what is it that accompanies such a salvation?

1. -- Power to be what He wishes you to be.

Christ said, "Ye shall have power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses." Oh, how many Christians perpetually carry about a heavy heart because they realize that their own life does not measure up to the moral standard of their own judgment of what a Christian ought to be! Their own inner light reveals the flecks and flaws, the inconsistencies and blunders, the faults and sins, into which they have been trapped unexpectedly and unawares by the great adversary of all good! They sincerely wish they did live more worthily. They sigh because they are not better specimens of a Christian, better examples of the might of Christ to save. What poor witnesses for Christ they feel they are! How little their life commends Christ to sin-burdened souls!

But oh! when this blessing comes in its glorious fullness; when Christ is revealed in His full power to save; when the flood-tide of salvation joy comes pouring in, and the heart, like a bird, is full of song, and there is a new light in the face and a new look in the eye, and a new spirit and steadiness of life in the whole being -- then, then is realized Jesus' promise, "Ye shall receive power to be witnesses."

II. -- Power to do.

"They that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

Has it not always been so through the ages? The people who knew God and had a special endowment of His Spirit, so long as they kept the experience, never lived in vain, never were just ordinary. They might have been ordinary enough before they received the blessing, but never afterward. What a list of spiritual giants, men and women, might be named, from George Fox, the founder of the Quakers or Friends, and Jonathan Edwards the Puritan, and John Wesley the Methodist, and William and Catherine Booth of the Salvation Army, and Madame Guyon the Roman Catholic, and John Bunyan the Baptist, and Finney the Congregationalist -- all leaders of great movements in the religious world -- down to the present hour; evangelists, bishops, authors, editors, teachers who have blessed their age, touched the nations with a hallowing influence, and who light up Christianity itself with a radiant glory which shall never grow dim! An uncounted host of Christian workers are rearing godly families, training children for future service in the kingdom of Christ, teaching in Sabbath schools, doing visitation work where they live, pushing on the Church and kingdom of Christ to ever-increasing victory and triumph just because they welcomed the Holy Spirit into their hearts.

III. -- A burden for souls.

This is another thing that accompanies this great salvation.

Paul had it. He said: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish myself accursed

from Christ for my brethren." It nearly broke his heart to see them continually rejecting their only Savior. So whenever this blessing comes, the pastor or the laity can never be satisfied with fruitlessness. There is an impelling influence, a divine urgency which will not be quenched. Christians feel it even in the humblest walks of life. The most illiterate as well as the educated have a heaven-born passion for souls.

I was once spending the night with a man who had been recently saved and sanctified. He could neither read nor write. But he carried in his pocket a New Testament, with pages marked by a friend that would teach others how to be saved or sanctified. With that meager equipment some ten people, his own workmates, had been led into rich experiences of grace.

David Brainerd said of himself: "I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ. While I was asleep I dreamed of these things: and when I awaked, the first thing I thought of was this great work. All my desire was the conversion of the heathen, and all my hope was in God." John Smith, the mighty Wesleyan preacher, used to say: "I am a broken-hearted man; not for myself, but on account of others. God has given me such a sight of the value of souls, that I cannot live if they are not saved. Oh, give me souls, or else I die!"

Of Alleine it is said that "He was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls; and to this end he poured out his very heart in preaching and prayer."

Bunyan said: "In my preaching I could not be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work."

Doddridge wrote to a friend: "I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything besides. I could not only labor for it, but die for it with pleasure."

Whitefield prayed: "O God, give me souls, or take my soul!" This was the passion that brought Jesus from the skies, and it is the spirit that will possess us when this blessing of full salvation comes to us.

IV. -- Trials.

Trials will assuredly accompany salvation.

It will not be because one has little salvation but because he has much. Trials are a matter of divine appointment. They let us know what we are and how much we have got. They are more precious to God than gold.

Less than two years ago a letter came informing us that over three thousand dollars' worth of wheat had been stolen from us up in Canada. I never lost one wink of sleep over it. I said: "Thank God! now I know that I have a good case of religion. I have something laid up in heaven more precious than barns full of wheat, where thieves cannot break through and steal!"

St. Paul had ceaseless trials; but he wrote to a church, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice!" Jesus had no end of trials; but when standing under the very shadow of the cross He said, "My peace I give unto you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but he of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

V. -- A concern for the kingdom.

A concern for the kingdom and the glory of the King accompanies this great salvation.

No sooner had the Spirit come upon the first disciples than they manifested a great concern for the glory of Jesus. Everywhere and always, if they wrought a miracle or made an effective Speech that produced results, they gave Christ the glory. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them: Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that BY THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, even BY HIM doth this man stand before you whole" (Acts 3:8-10).

When the rulers threatened them if they spoke or taught any more "in the Name of Jesus," they answered, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."

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Thus they went forth burning with zeal to glorify Christ and spread His kingdom, unmoved by scourgings and imprisonments and tortures and death in the amphitheaters, their lives a living sacrifice for Christ.

Such deeds fitly and naturally accompany this great salvation. Many are now going everywhere to the ends of the earth to spread the good news. In city or village or country, in churches or halls or tents or in the streets, with pay or without pay, with popularity or persecution, on and on they go to rescue souls from death and hell, and to spread the glory of the Name that is above every name.