

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Salvation?

Salvation? - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/11/18 18:37

All is death without Him. Bring your dead soul into union with Him, and He will give you eternal life. -Robert Murray McHeyne

For many people in our churches these days, salvation is all in their minds. This will result in their missing heaven by eighteen inches, because God's salvation has never gotten down from their heads into their hearts, where Christ can become their life. They know the verses, but they do not know Him; whom to know is life eternal.

It is little wonder then that many are disillusioned with Christianity. They have yet to realize that salvation is not a plan, not in scripture verses, not in ordinances and not in a scheme of theology. Salvation is not a decision and not a pronouncement of an evangelist, a pastor or a teacher. We shouldn't wonder that Christianity is not "working" for some people. God's purpose is not simply to give us a ticket to heaven.

-Paris Reidhead (Finding the Reality of God pg.19)

Salvation is not what Jesus did for us, but Salvation is Jesus. He was our sacrifice and became our salvation! Our union with Christ is what makes us a Christian, not our accepting or believing of Scripture, but that can lead us into union with Christ.

Re: Salvation? - posted by almondBranch (), on: 2003/11/18 18:44

Quote:

-----Salvation is not what Jesus did for us, but Salvation is Jesus

We have just been talking about that in the bible study some of the saints in my town have on a Tuesday night. One of the key things that I believe the Lord was bringing to light tonight was "He who has the Son has life, and he who has not the Son has not life". Its as simple as that, not he who confesses to the statement of faith of our church or he who assents to our creed, but he who has the Son. I grew up in a christian family and all my life believed in the doctrines of the bible that any evangelical would believe in. but it wasn't until I was 19 years old that I "had the Son".

On christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/11/18 18:53

Quote:

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AMEN! I was so humbled in the last 3 months when God has been dealing with me and this doctrine. There is such a misconception about this doctrine in evangelical circles.

Yet, among the people of God there were certain truths considered to be essential to the faith. These we call "fundamental truths." And those who accepted these truths were genuinely and wonderfully born of God! However, when their children grew to adulthood, these beliefs were being adulterated. Many thought: If you merely believe in the fundamentals—that is, if you say, "yes, these basic doctrinal propositions of Christianity are true"—you can assume you are saved.

When the third, fourth and fifth generations—where we stand today—the gospel has been increasingly obscured. What we find today in Christian circles is this: If you will say, "Uh-huh," to these few questions you are hereby declared "saved."

-Paris Reidhead (Finding the Reality of God pg.45)

He (Christ) has joined himself to us and we have received Him. Salvation is not from Him, salvation is in Him. He wants to be in you—to be your life. This is the testimony of the Word. Can you say, “Christ the Lord is my salvation?” That truth was clear to David, who exclaimed in Psalm 27:1, “The Lord is my light and my salvation.” You see, Christ is not our Savior because He is in heaven. He is our salvation when He lives in us.

-Paris Reidhead (Finding the Reality of God pg.37)

Re: Salvation? - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/11/18 22:12

In June 2003, I made the move from South Florida to North Florida. I know that may not seem like much to many of you, but for me it was moving away from a place I had lived in all of my 18 years at the time...460 miles away to a place, Tallahassee, located in "The Bible Belt". As if college enough weren't a wondrous new experience on many levels, all of a sudden there were hundreds of Christian peers.

Being a not-quite-two-year-old Christian myself, all I could think was, "Wow! Instant friends!"

You know, in a sense, I was right. I was right in that I did have a lot of automatic friends as a result of the common bond in Christ, and I was right in assuming that it should be easy since for a Christian, Christ is obviously all-consuming.

Dictionary.com defines "the Bible Belt" as "those sections of the United States, especially in the South and Middle West, where Protestant fundamentalism is widely practiced." Everyone here "grew up Christian."

And at first I was shocked when I'd often hear, "Oh, you're a Christian, too? Awesome! You want to go drinking with me this Friday night?"

Some people wear Christ's name like a banner over their life, and in the shadow of that banner live as the heathens that they are. I am appalled by the number of times I've had to explain to people, "Your soul is not a family soul or a group soul. Just because your family is Christian doesn't mean you have an automatic ticket to heaven." Or, "Just because you read the Bible or go to church weekly doesn't mean you're Saved."

If they read the Bible, how is it not clear to them that this is not Christianity, but merely a fabricated image of it, hardly close in semblance to begin with?

The only thing that comes to mind is Matthew 13:15...they've heard so much and seen so much.

God has blessed me with a testimony that makes it easy for me to empathize with those who are so deep in their sin they hardly realize they're drowning, but how do I witness to someone who has grown up in the church? How do I witness to someone who already KNOWS why Jesus died on that cross, yet still doesn't realize it intimately? :cry:

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/11/18 23:51

Quote:

-----but how do I witness to someone who has grown up in the church? How do I witness to someone who already KNOWS why Jesus died on that cross, yet still doesn't realize it intimately?

I think this following advice from Paris Reidhead would be a good prescription to the problem of 'gospel hardened' people in the bible belt.

"Paris Reidhead said these wonderfully wise words: If I had my way, I would declare a moratorium on public preaching of 'the plan of salvation' in America for one to two years. Then I would call on everyone who has use of the airwaves and the pulpits to preach the holiness of God, the righteousness of God and the Law of God, until sinners would cry out, 'What must we do to be saved?' Then I would take them off in a corner and whisper the gospel to them. Such drastic action is needed because we have gospel-hardened a generation of sinners by telling them how to be saved before they have any understanding why they need to be saved.

Don't use John 3:16. Why? Because you tell a sinner how to be saved before he has realized that he needs to be saved. What you have done is gospel-hardened him."

Re: salvation - posted by sdb, on: 2003/11/19 0:42

I can't exactly remember, but I think it was Ravenhill who said that being "saved" was so cliché, everyone today is "saved"---what we should be asking "Is Christ in you?"

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/11/20 10:57

Quote:
-----I can't exactly remember, but I think it was Ravenhill who said that being "saved" was so cliché, everyone today is "saved"---what we should be asking "Is Christ in you?"

...and its corollary "are you in Christ?" "am I in Christ?". The Bible tells me wonderful things about 'being in Christ' but it doesn't tell me that I am in Christ; it can't, that is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit.

This is why Tozer was so scathing in his denunciation of 'logical deductions drawn from proof texts'.

In the late 1950s, A. W. Tozer wrote about what he called "the error of textualism," which has its counter-part in today's "wordism." This is what he said:

"The error of textualism is not doctrinal. It is far more subtle than that and much more difficult to discover, but its effects are just as deadly. Not its theological beliefs are at fault, but its assumptions.

"It assumes, for instance, that if we have the word for a thing we have the thing itself. If it is in the Bible, it is in us. If we have the doctrine, we have the experience. If something was true of Paul it is of necessity true of us because we accept Paul's epistles as divinely inspired.

"The Bible tells us how to be saved, but textualism goes on to make it tell us that we are saved, something which in the very nature of things it cannot do. Assurance of individual salvation is thus no more than a logical conclusion drawn from doctrinal premises, and the resultant experience wholly mental." (Man: The Dwelling Place of God, A. W. Tozer, page 18, copyright 1966 Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, PA.)

I'm not sure where I got this from originally, so if I got it from here, my apologies. Perhaps it will bear repeating. Tozer originally wrote this almost 50 years ago; things in evangelicalism have not improved in that time.

Re: - posted by -David, on: 2004/1/15 22:45

"...and its corollary "are you in Christ?" "am I in Christ?". The Bible tells me wonderful things about 'being in Christ' but it doesn't tell me that I am in Christ; it can't, that is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit."

Rom 6:10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Rom 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Rom 6:12 ¶ Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, (NASB)

-David

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/1/21 10:27

Hi David

I have only just noticed this one. I think I understand your point. This admonition is directed to a specific group of people namely 'us', but 'us' is not anyone who happens to find this letter lying around. It is referring to those who have been baptised into Christ Jesus

It is also addressed to those who 'know' that our old man was crucified with him etc, (Rom 6:6); this knowing is *ginosko*, which is "knowledge grounded on personal experience" and to those 'having known that Christ being raised etc' (Rom 6:9) This 'having known' uses *eidō* which really means perceive. It is the knowing of revelation.

So to those who

1. have been baptised into Christ Jesus,
2. and who have the knowledge, founded on personal experience, that our old man has been crucified with Christ,
3. and who have seen inwardly, by revelation, that Christ being raised dieth no more etc

...to those, Paul writes, "reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God..."

to quote Tozer again this must not be a logical deduction drawn from proof texts but the consequence of a living personal encounter with Christ.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/1/21 15:04

Quote:
----- have only just noticed this one. I think I understand your point. This admonition is directed to a specific group of people namely 'us', but 'us' is not anyone who happens to find this letter lying around. It is referring to those who have been baptised into Christ Jesus

When we are baptized into Christ Jesus we become part of His body. We died with Christ and He raised us *with* Him, but the *in* is the substitution and our accepting and vicariously being effected by that substitution. But our end result is:

Ephesians 2:5-6 - made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

we have *been* raised with Christ but our life is *still* hidden in Christ.

Colossians 3:1-3 - Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Christ lives in us, but when we are raised to heaven to meet Christ in the air then we will be in Christ.

1 John 3:24 - Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

hmmm what about this verse:

1 John 4:15 - If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

Re: Salvation? - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/1/21 16:08

Quote:
"to quote Tozer again this must not be a logical deduction drawn from proof texts but the consequence of a living personal encounter with Christ."

“The finished work of Christ really has gone to the root of our problem and dealt with it. There are no half measures with God. " Knowing this," says Paul, " that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin " (Rom. 6. 6). " Knowing this " ! Yes, but do you know it? "Or are ye ignorant?" (Rom. 6. 3). MAY THE LORD GRACIOUSLY OPEN OUR EYES!“
Watchman Nee - The Normal Christian Life (last paragraph of chapter 2)

This is a penetratingly powerful question that Nee asks: “Yes, but DO you know it? “Or are ye ignorant?“ Paul begins the 6th of Romans with the question, “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized (past tense) into His death?“

Paul’s prayer for the Christians at Ephesus was “.....I do not cease praying for you.....(that) the eyes of your understanding may be opened; that you may KNOW what is“

I once had opportunity to lead small group study of Nee’s The Normal Christian Life. Here, at the end of chapter 2, I introduced some supplemental material, including among other things a message by Major W. Ian Thomas called “A Death Like Ours and a Resurrection Like His.“ The Lord began to give the light of revelation to one man at this point. He

began to realize with conviction that, when Christ died, he died also. He realized that 2,000 years ago he had been included in Christ, that the Lord had taken him into Himself, and in "being made Sin", and in "tasting Death" for him, the Lord had died the Death into which all of us were born "in order that like as Christ was raised from the dead, we too, in Him, might be raised into (the) newness of Life".

John Owen gave one of his books the powerful title, "The Death of Death in the Death of Christ".

Something else that's powerful ("awesome" as the young people say :-)) is Ron Bailey's series on Baptism, if not available on this site, then available at <http://www.biblebased.co.uk/RonBailey/>

To return to Nee: In the book, he describes how important it is to KNOW that we have died with Christ in His death before we try to "Reckon" ourselves dead. He describes the futility of his own trying for years to "reckon" himself dead before he "knew" that he had died. At one point he told the Lord that he refused to preach another sermon until and unless the Lord revealed to him the truth that he had died when Christ died. He goes on to describe the day the Lord "opened the eyes of his understanding".

Re: - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/1/21 16:16

Quote:

"At one point he told the Lord that he refused to preach another sermon until and unless the Lord revealed to him the truth that he had died when Christ died. He goes on to describe the day the Lord "opened the eyes of his understanding".

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

Refrain
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see,
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.

Refrain

Open my mouth, and let me bear,
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.

Refrain

--Clara H. Scott