

THE HIGH COST OF OUR SALVATION

1 John 4:9-10

Intro: The First Epistle of John makes it very clear that it is important for those who are saved, to *know* that they are saved. For example, he said in 1 John 2:3, “And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.” In the twenty-ninth verse of chapter 2, he said, “If we know that he is righteous, we know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.” Going into chapter 3, and verse 14, John wrote, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” And so he wrote through the epistle. And then in chapter 5 we come to verse 13 which many feel expresses his purpose in writing the epistle: “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

The Apostle Paul in one statement about his salvation linked his assurance of salvation to his knowledge of the Lord. This is what he said: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Tim. 1:12b). My pastor in my home church when I was growing up, used to correct people who quoted that verse by saying, “I know *in* whom I have believed . . .” This is true also, but it is not what Paul said. He claimed to have a personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was not just resting in a promise of salvation, *but he was resting in the One Who made the promise* – and I think that you will agree that that is the stronger of the two statements.

However, those assurances of salvation to which I have referred are really the result of the basic work of salvation which our Lord accomplished for us. And so if we are to get started with the right idea about our salvation, we need to know about our Savior, and we need to know what He did to save us.

I. THE STARTING PLACE IN SALVATION.

Last Sunday night after stressing the importance of reading the Bible, and meditating on the Bible, I pointed out from 1 John 1 what the Apostle John said was “the message” – “the message,” which he said, “we have heard of Him, and declare unto you.” When He referred to the One

Whom He had “heard,” he was speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus in His Person and in His preaching came with “the message . . . that God is light,” and not only that, but “in Him,” that is, in God, “there is no darkness at all.” This is a truth which people need to understand before they will ever see the need for salvation. “Light” is a symbol for *purity*, or *holiness*. God is a holy God, and there is not the slightest trace of anything but light in Him. In other words, God is not a sinner. He has never been guilty of sin. He, like our Lord Jesus Christ, *cannot sin* because He is God.

So the starting place in dealing with the subject of salvation is God! It is not man because we are in no position to understand man’s need of a Savior until we have some understanding of the holiness of God. And His holiness was displayed in OT times by the cloud and the fire. Last Sunday night I called your attention to Paul’s statement in his first letter to Timothy where He spoke of God with these words:

Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen” (1 Tim. 6:16).

Now it is impossible for us to understand the holiness of God apart from the working of the Holy Spirit. And the way that the Holy Spirit does that is through the Word. Man could never conceive of a Being so great, so majestic, so glorious, as God is. And the Devil has done a tremendous job of keeping this truth away from man, and man, because he is a sinner, is naturally more receptive to lies than he is to the truth.

The Psalmist in Psalm 119:130 said, “The entrance,” or *the opening*, “of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.” And in the latter part of Psalm 36:9 we are told, “In Thy light shall we see light.” It is God’s Word which is “a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path” (Psa. 119:105). *This is why it is so important to get people to read the Bible. That is where people see the light. That is where they learn of God.*

One great truth which helps us to know and understand God, is the truth of creation. That is where the Bible starts, and that, too, is a basic truth which leads us to the knowledge of God. You can see that in Genesis 1 and 2. But another passage which is very clear on the subject of God in His relationship to the world, is Psalm 104. Please turn with me to that passage. (Read Psalm 104, and notice the reference to “light” in verse 2.) This helps us to understand that God has given us His Word to tell us the

truth of this universe in which we live. Not only did God create it, but He has sustained it from the day of creation. And He will continue to do so until the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth!

But God has done something else in order that we might know Him. He sent His Son into the world. And we read about this all through the NT, beginning with the Gospels, and especially the Gospel of John. Notice what the Apostle John wrote in John 1:1-3. And then go to verse 14 of the same chapter, and finally to verse 18.

Jesus Christ was the full and perfect revelation of God the Father. And do you remember what the Apostle John said about the Lord Jesus Christ with respect to sin? He said, "In Him is no sin"! And when Philip said to the Lord, "Show us the Father," the Lord responded saying very truthfully, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

So we have creation, we have the Bible, and we have Christ to show us the majesty and holiness of God. Cf. Psa. 19:1 ff.

II. WHAT ABOUT MAN?

To listen to people today you would be inclined to think that man is God, that he can do anything that he sets his mind to do, capable of facing any situation.

But what does the Bible say about man? What did the Apostle John say about man?

Man walks in darkness (1 John 1:6). And so according to 1 John 2:11, if he is walking in darkness, he doesn't know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

What does it mean that man is in darkness? Well, darkness is the opposite of light. So if light means purity and holiness, darkness means sin and corruption.

Look at 1 John 1:8 and 1:10. From the day that God spoke to Adam it has been clear that the reward for sin is death, not just physical death, but spiritual death while we are living, and eternal death after we die. And the only way we can escape that eternal death is by making ourselves acceptable to God. But that is impossible! If we could please God from

this moment on, it is too late for us to save ourselves because we are already under the judgment of God. So if we are depending upon our good works to make ourselves acceptable to God, we are trying to do something that no one has ever done, nor can anyone do it.

Is there no hope then? Is man doomed to hell? Is there no escape?

Yes, there is hope, but it is not in what we can do for ourselves; *it is in what God Himself has done to meet our needs.*

III. THE DIVINE PROVISION FOR SALVATION.

This brings me to my text for tonight: 1 John 4:9-10. There are many, many other texts I could use, but since we recently covered this text, and many of us will soon be memorizing these verses, I chose this for us to consider tonight.

There are many wonderful things about the Gospel, which is the good news about salvation, but nothing is greater than to see where the whole idea of salvation got its start. It started with God! This holy, sinless God, in Whom there is not the slightest trace of sin, “sent His only begotten Son into the world.” Man certainly does not deserve this, and no man ever asked for it. It was not man’s desire, but it all originated with God.

How did God send His Son into the world? His Son came into the world born of the virgin Mary. He became a Man. He did not begin His existence as a Man; He is the eternal Son of God, not having any beginning, nor any ending. But He became God in the flesh. But why? Because He was going to take upon Himself the full penalty of every single person that He would save. The wages of sin is death, and He came to take upon Himself the penalty that we were going to have to pay for all eternity.

Now if this were God’s plan, was it successful? Let me call your attention to one word in verse 10, the word “propitiation.” Do you know what this means? It means that God was completely *satisfied* with the work of Christ, and so instead of facing the judgment of God, “we . . . live through Him.” God has accepted the sacrifice of His Son as the full payment for our sins, and for all who ever have, or every will, believe on Christ for salvation.

Now what is one word which describes what God has done? Well, you might say, “salvation.” And you would be right. What else? Grace! And again you would be right. We don’t deserve such a salvation. But what is the word that John used? He said, “Herein is l-o-v-e!” If you want a definition of love, look at the Cross of Christ.

After the Lord had taken Peter, James, and John into the mount of transfiguration, and after He came down to find that the disciples had not been able to deliver a demon-possessed boy whose father had brought him to them for help, Mark tells us this:

30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him (Mark 9:30-32).

Maybe there is something here that I haven’t seen, but I can’t understand the response of the disciples. I can understand it if they did not know what the Lord was going to do, but why were they afraid to ask Him? If they had just said, “Why?”, the Lord would have told them. He would have spoken of the love of God. He would have told them about the awfulness of sin.

The price of our salvation was so costly because it required someone to die who was not under the sentence of death, one whose was qualified to die for others, and one whose death would satisfy this holy God Who dwells in a light which makes Him unapproachable to sinful men.

Concl: How God could love you and me, is something more than we will ever be able to understand in this life. But why we did not love Him first can only be explained by the darkness in us and around us because of our sin. The preaching of the Cross is a most humbling truth. Our need was so great that no one but Jesus Christ could save us. And He continues to be the only Savior. No man can come to God except through Him. May we rejoice in His love, and be faithful in telling others about Him Whom the Father sent “to be the Savior of the world” (1 John 4:14).