

Salvation

by George Kulp

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's presence in our lives, trusting in Jesus for salvation, and living out our faith through our works.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Isaiah 1:18, Matthew 11:28, John 3:16, John 14:6, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Personal Salvation", "Repentance Forgiveness"

Description

George Kulp preaches about the transformative power of encountering God in everyday moments, using stories of individuals who had profound encounters with God that led to repentance, forgiveness, and a new life in Christ. Through these stories, he emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, seeking forgiveness, and experiencing God's love and compassion. Kulp highlights the need for a personal relationship with Jesus, acknowledging our sins, and trusting in His salvation and grace to overcome struggles and find peace.

Transcript

IS GOD HERE?

A young man had been extremely profane and thought little of the matter. After his marriage to a high-minded, lovely wife, the habit appeared to him in a different light, and he made spasmodic efforts to conquer it. But not until a few months ago did he become victor, when the glowing evil was set before him, by a little incident, in its real and shocking sinfulness.

One morning, while standing before the mirror shaving, the razor slipped, inflicting a slight wound. True to his fixed habit he ejaculated the single word "God!" and was not a little amazed and chagrined to see reflected in the mirror the pretty face of his three-year old daughter, as, laying her doily hastily down, she sprang from her seat on the floor, exclaiming, she looked eagerly and expectantly about the room, "Is God here?"

Pale and ashamed and at a loss for a better answer, he simply said, "Why?"

"'Cause I thought He was when I heard you speak to Him."

Then noticing the sober look on his face, and the tears of shame in his eyes as he gazed down into the innocent, radiant face, she patted him lovingly on the hand, exclaiming assuredly, "Call Him again, papa,

and I dess He'll surely come."

Oh, how every syllable of the child's trusting words cut to his heart! The still, small voice was heard at last. Catching the wondering child up in his arms, he knelt down, and for the first time in his life implored of God forgiveness for past offenses and guidance for all his future life, thanking Him in fervent spirit that He had not "surely come" before in answer to some of his awful blasphemies. Surely "a child shall lead them."

-- Pacific.

JESUS, TAKE ME

I am going to tell you a story, not about a child, but about a great strong man I saw in a meeting where many were asking what they should do to be saved. At first he did not know what to make of it. He thought the people were all crazy. But he had not been there long before something that was said from the platform touched his heart. God taught him that he was a lost, guilty sinner, and that if he did not forsake his sins, and believe in Jesus as his Savior, he would have to be shut up forever in God's prison-house, which in the Bible is called HELL. Then he thought of all his sins and they were like a heavy burden. He thought he could never be forgiven. He did not understand that Jesus had been punished for his sins, and that God was more willing to save him than he was to be saved.

And so for several days his sins grew heavier and heavier. He could not sleep at night; he feared he might awake in Hell. He felt that God might justly shut him up there forever. He was one of the officers to execute the laws in the country in which he lived. Sometimes it was by his command that prisoners were dragged away to the dark prison and shut up for years. And for a long time he could not see how God could justly forgive him. He had heard about Jesus, but he felt that he was such a wicked sinner that Jesus could not receive him. Christ, he knew, had suffered on the cross, but he didn't think He had bled for him.

One day he went to his office, but he could not attend to his business. He could only think of the great judgment day when the Lord will say to the wicked, "Depart!" In great distress he went away to his house. As he walked in, his son, a little fellow about three years of age, was building a play house of blocks of wood. In turning round to see who was coming in, he struck the blocks, and down fell the whole house, and some of the blocks fell on his toes and hurt him. Tears filled his eyes and he began to cry, but in a moment he turned and ran to his father, and with sobs said:

"Papa, take me! Papa, take me!"

The tall man stooped down, lifted up the little one in his arms, and at once the little fellow dried his tears and was happy again. The father said to himself, "That is just what I will do. I will go to Jesus in the same way; He will take me." And so he put his child down and went away to his own room. And with the tears running down his cheeks, he cried, "Jesus, take me." And Jesus did take him, for His words to all who come to Him are, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

The father's tears were dried. God opened his eyes and showed him how Jesus had satisfied all God's demands. And he was then quite sure that he would never be shut up in God's prison.

From that hour he was quite happy; the burden was all gone. I have often seen him since. He has been doing all he can to get others to come and trust Jesus.

ADOPTED JIM

"Get out of the way there, you Jim!" A dozen boys were shouting it at once. They were newsboys waiting for their armfuls of evening papers, and Jim was taking up the whole sidewalk with his antics just as a lady wished to get by. This Jim, an orphan, was the raggedest, dirtiest boy of them all. He had no home or lodgings. He slept in doorways, in boxes and carts. When only five years old he was turned into the street, and had been a "street arab" ever since. He was now eleven; but the boys called him "Baby," scant food and exposure having stunted his growth.

Jim got out of the lady's way nimbly enough; but he was not a little surprised when she stopped and beckoned to him. In spite of rags and dirt the boy attracted her. She had noticed him more than once before. Having inquired about him, her mind was already made up. "Jim," said she, "I want you to go home with me. We have no child: you shall be my boy. You shall have my name. I will adopt you. Will you go with me?"

Jim hesitated. He partly knew what the invitation included -- combing, scrubbing, school, church, all the clean ways of a Christian home. He had often passed the beautiful house of Mrs. Williams, and many a dark night stopped on the pavement to look in at the cheerful fire which seemed so far from his cold, bare feet. He was sure that her home would be no place for a dirty body or a dirty mind. Soon, however, a better light came into his eyes. He looked up at his new friend, saying, "Yes, mum, I'll go." At her side off he started, but stopped to shout, "Bye, bye, boys!" and to throw them the rag that had once been a cap.

On the way home the lady and the boy -- whose name was hereafter to be not "Baby Jim," but James Williams, talked about the future. It was understood that James was to put off his bad ways and try to please and honor the kind friend who was now his mother. Once within the house the new life began -- scissors for the tangled hair, a bath, clean linen, a fresh suit. There was a great change in the boy, inside as well as outside. When he had said, "Yes, mum, I'll go," his heart had spoken. It was the turning away from a dark, bad life.

For awhile all went well. The people liked "James Williams." He was certainly learning good things. He was like Mrs. Williams' son. But one day he passed the old corner and there were the old boys. They surrounded him, and with all the wit and cruelty they could command, made "game" of him. For a time he bore their taunts smilingly; but patience was at last exhausted, and a battle followed, in which James became "Jim" again, scratched and bruised, soiled and torn. "It's all over," he said to himself; "I'm only Jim after all. I'll not go home. She'll not want to see me."

Quickly, however, the good lady, missing her boy, and suspecting what might have happened, searched for him and found him. He was sorry and penitent, but fully discouraged. "I'm only Jim," he wailed.

Then it was the mother's turn to speak. "Why, James, I adopted you," she said. "I have taken you into my family. I have given you my name. You are my heir. I love you. Did you suppose that I could so easily let you go? You may sometimes do wrong, but you are my boy still. You are sorry. You love me. I am glad to forgive you, and shall try always to help you. Come right back home; and I am sure that you will be more than ever careful to please me." There was new light in the boy's heart. "So I am Williams anyhow," he thought, "just because she adopted me! I'll try harder than ever to do as she tells me."

In this story we have a faint idea of the sinner's standing before God, when Christ has been accepted, and His work fully appropriated. Without Christ, we are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;" but through faith in the only begotten Son of God we are BORN into the family of God, and we become "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

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I once heard an Andersonville prisoner say that next to the greatest joy he ever had in his life, was to get a whole biscuit when he was starving to death.

"But what was the greatest joy?" inquired some one. "Seeing poor old Bob, my bunk-mate, eat the biggest half of it," was the reply.

Brethren, it is that kind of religion that Christ wants us all to have, and it is to receive it that He says to each one of us, as soon as the word has been spoken that gives us life in Him -- "Come forth."

SAVED BY SONG

A party of northern tourists formed part of a large company gathered on the deck of an excursion steamer that was moving slowly down the historic Potomac one beautiful evening in the summer of 1881. A gentleman who has since gained a national reputation as an evangelist of song, had been delighting the party with his happy rendering of many familiar hymns, the last being the sweet petition so dear to every Christian heart, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." The singer gave the first two verses with much feeling, and a peculiar emphasis upon the concluding lines that thrilled every heart. A hush had fallen upon the listeners that was not broken for some seconds after the musical notes had died away. Then a gentleman made his way from the outskirts of the crowd to the side of the singer and accosted him with, "Beg your pardon, stranger, but were you actively engaged in the late war?"

"Yes, sir," the man of song answered, courteously; "I fought under General Grant."

"Well," the first speaker continued, with something like a sigh, "I did my fighting on the other side, and think, indeed am quite sure, I was very near you one bright night eighteen years ago this very month. It was much such a night as this. If I am not mistaken you were on guard duty. We of the South had sharp business on hand, and you were one of the enemy. I crept near your post of duty, my murderous weapon in my hand; the shadows hid me. As you paced back and forth you were humming the tune of the hymn you have just sung. I raised my gun and aimed at your heart, as I had been selected by our commander for the work because I was a sure shot. Then out upon the night rang the words: Cover my defenseless head With the shadow of Thy wing.

"Your prayer was answered. I couldn't fire after that, and there was no attack made upon your camp that night. I felt sure when I heard you sing this evening that you were the man whose life I was spared from taking."

The singer grasped the hand of the Southerner, and said with emotion: "I remember the night very well, and distinctly the feeling of depression and loneliness with which I went forth to my duty. I knew my post was one of great danger, and I was more dejected than I remember to have been at any other time during the service. I paced my lonely beat, thinking of home, and friends, and all that life holds dear. Then the thought of God's care for all that He had created came to me with peculiar force. If He so cares for the sparrow, how much more for man created in His own image; and I sang the prayer of my heart, and ceased to feel alone. How the prayer was answered I never knew until this evening. My heavenly Father thought best to keep the knowledge from me for eighteen years. How much of His goodness to us we shall be ignorant of until it is revealed by the light of eternity! 'Jesus, lover of my soul,' has been a favorite hymn; now it will be inexpressibly dear."

The incident related in the above sketch is a true one, and was related to the writer by a lady who was one of the party on the steamer.

-- London Freeman.

THY GARMENT'S HEM

I'm tired, Lord, an' sick an' sore,
This vale o' tears a wanderin' o'er,
Th' flinty stuns hev cut my feet,
I've a'most dropped from noonday heat,
Yet travelin' up the streets o' pain,
I've just a longin' hope tu gain,
An' tech Thy garment's hem.
I'm sore beset with grief an' fears,
My eyes is full o' streamin' tears,
As strugglin' on my lonely way,
I've only strength tu hope an' pray,
That sometime, somehow, I shall stand
A reachin' out my tremblin' hand,
Tu tech Thy garment's hem.
I've allus sort o' felt, dear Lord,
Thet all o' life is in Thy Word:
Thet praisin' Thee don't do no good,
Ef actin' Thee haint understood,
So bent an' broke, despised by man
I'm tryin' tu reach's fur's I can,
Tu tech Thy garment's hem. -- Sel.

WORTH HER WEIGHT IN GOLD

A few years ago a steamer was coming from California. The cry of "Five! fire!" suddenly thrilled every heart. Every effort was made to stay the flames, but in vain. It soon became evident that the ship must be lost. The burning mass was headed for shore, which was not far off. A passenger was seen buckling his

belt of gold around his waist, ready to plunge into the waves. Just then a pleading voice accosted him, "Please, sir, can you swim?"

A child's blue eyes were piercing into his deepest soul, as he looked down upon her.

"Yes, child, I can swim?"

"Well, sir, won't you please to save me?"

"I cannot do both," he thought. "I must save the child and lose the gold. But a moment ago, I was anxious for this whole ship's company; now, I am doubting whether I shall exchange human life for paltry gold." Unbuckling the belt, he cast it from him, and said, "Yes, little girl, I will try to save you." Stooping down, he bade her clasp her hands around his neck. "Thus, child, not so tight as to choke me. There, hang on now, and I will try to make land."

The child bowed herself on his broad shoulders, and clung to her deliverer. With a heart thrice strengthened, and an arm thrice nerved, he struck out to the shore. Wave after wave washed over them. Still the brave man held out, and the dear child on, until a mighty mountain billow swept the sweet treasure from his embrace, and cast him senseless on the bleak rocks. Kind hands ministered to him. Recovering his consciousness, the form of the dear child met his earnest gaze, bending over him with more than angel ministrations, and blessing him with mute, but eloquent, attention.

-- Anon.

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Though a man is not saved by works, there is no objection to his showing by his works that he is saved.

TO THE POINT

"When John P. Durbin was a young pastor in Cincinnati he was once summoned at midnight to visit a dying man. The message was short and urgent, and moved him swiftly through mean streets and narrow alleys and up through several stairways to a wretched garret, where he found a middle-aged man almost dead. He talked to him of Jesus, and begged him to cast himself on God's infinite mercy. With hungry eyes and tense voice the dying man cried out, 'How do you know that Jesus died for me?' Mr. Durbin answered, 'You're made of flesh and blood, are you not?' 'Yes,' said he, holding up his purple hands, 'but what has that to do with it?' 'Why,' said the preacher, 'if you are made of flesh and blood, then Jesus died for you, for I read thus in God's sure Word, "'Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part in the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage.'" The seeking soul seized that lifebuoy and passed away in the peace and rapture of a trembling, repentant and believing sinner."

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A testimony, touching in its naturalness and modesty, comes to us from the mission field. An English missionary in Singapore was surprised to find the church freshly whitewashed, inside and out. Going in he found a Chinaman (a converted prisoner, a painter by trade), who had done this work at his own expense. His natural explanation was, "I did it to thank God."

BROWNLOW NORTH'S LIFE AND DEATH

As Brownlow North lay on his death-bed he enjoyed, according to his own confession, "perfect peace." To a bystander he said: "You are young, in good health, and with the prospect of rising in the army; I am dying; but if the Bible is true, and I know it is, I would not change places with you for the world."

Mr. North wrote the practical counsels which follow:

1. Never neglect daily private prayer; and when you pray, remember that God is present, and that He hears your prayers. Heb. xi, 6.
2. Never neglect daily private Bible reading; and when you read, remember that God is speaking to you, and that you are to speak and act upon what He says. I believe that all backsliding begins with the neglect of these two rules. John v, 39.
3. Never let a day pass without trying to do something for Jesus. Every night reflect on what Jesus has done for you, and then ask yourself, What am I doing for Him? Matt. v, 13-16.
4. If ever you are in doubt as to a thing being right or wrong, go to your room and kneel down and ask God's blessing upon it. Col. iii, 17. If you cannot do this, it is wrong. Rom. xiv, 23.
5. Never take your Christianity from Christians, or argue that, because such people do so and so, therefore you may. 2 Cor. x, 12. You are to ask yourself, How would Christ act in my place? and strive to follow Him. John x, 27.
6. Never believe what you feel, if it contradicts God's Word. Ask yourself, Can what I feel be true, if God's Word is true? and if both cannot be true, believe God, and make your own heart the liar. Rom. iii, 4; I John V, 10, 11.

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"Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still traveling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight
"So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the path of men."

BETTER BE SURE THAN SORRY

"I do not think there is need of covering the flowerbeds tonight. I do not believe there will be frost enough to do harm." "Better be sure than sorry," the gardener replied; "if the frost should nip them, it would be too late, you know."

To the cavils of the skeptic and the sneer of the scorner, who do not believe because they do not understand, or think there is no danger because they would have it so, this same answer would be wise: "Better be sure than sorry." If there should be an eternity, then the question, "Where shall I spend eternity?" puts all other questions in the shade. The frost may nip all the springing hopes of the soul. "Better be sure than sorry." Thousands of souls are hesitating about giving heed to their immortal interests. "We do not think there will be frost night," they say. "Better be sure than sorry." If the frost of death should blight the soul, it would then be too late forever.

--W. J. L., in the "Mid-Continent'."

OVERCOMING SIN

Communion with the sinless One is the only sure method of excommunicating sin. Gazing into the face of Christ, and beholding the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shines there, will surely disenchant our hearts from worldly objects.

"Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him and observed Him."

Dannecker, the German sculptor, spent eight years in producing a face of Christ, and at last wrought out one in which the emotions of love and sorrow were so perfectly blended that beholders wept as they looked upon it.

Subsequently being solicited to employ his great talent on a statue of Venus, he replied, "After gazing so long into the face of Christ, think you that I can now turn my attention to a heathen goddess?" Here is the true secret of weanedness from worldly idols, "the expulsive power of a new affection."

"I have heard the voice of Jesus

Tell me not of aught beside;

I have seen the face of Jesus,

All my soul is satisfied."

"You may lay it down as an eternal truth," said Archbishop Farrar in his sermon on a recent Sunday morning in St. Margaret's, "that what the Divine Majesty requires is innocence alone. You will be saved neither by opinions nor by observances, but solely by your character and life. A man is not holy merely because he observes the Rubric. He must do right"

REAL MASTERY OF SIN

It is not enough when you have been guilty of a sin "merely to wet it with a tear and breathe upon it with a sigh," and then go and do the same again. Unless a man has, at least, so far conquered sin that sin has ceased to have dominion over him; until his reason and his conscience, not his pride or his lusts, have the upper hand in the governance of his life -- he cannot be saved. A man who is wholly mastered by, who is entirely helpless against the perpetual recurrence of a besetting sin, is in a state of sin; and, "be not deceived," a state of sin is not and cannot be the same thing as a state of grace.

-- Archdeacon Farrar.

NEITHER

"Well, I cannot understand why a man who has tried to lead a good, moral life, should not stand a better chance of Heaven than a wicked one," said a lady a few days ago, in a conversation with others about the matter of salvation.

"Simply for this cause," answered one. "Suppose you and I wanted to go into a place of interest where the admission fee was one dollar. You have fifty cents and I have nothing. Which would stand the better chance of admission?"

"Neither," was the reply.

"Just so; and therefore the moral man stands no better chance than the outbreking sinner. But, now, suppose a kind and rich person who saw our perplexity, presented a ticket of admission to each of us at his own expense! What then?"

"Well, then, we could both go in alike; that is very clear."

"Thus, when the Savior saw our perplexity, He came He died, and thus 'obtained eternal redemption for us' (Heb. ix, 12), and now He offers you and me a free ticket. Only take good care that your fifty cents does not make you proud enough to refuse the free ticket, and so be refused admittance at last."

Reader, there is a solemn moment coming! Have you a ticket of admission?

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