

Saving Souls From Death

by George Kulp

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, divine benevolence, and faith in salvation, highlighting the role of preachers in dealing with sinners and praying for the salvation of souls.

Scripture: Isaiah 45:22, Ezekiel 18:20-36, John 3:16

Topics: "Repentance And Salvation", "Holy Spirit"

Description

George Kulp preaches about the importance of repentance and turning to God for salvation, emphasizing God's desire for all to live and be saved. He highlights the need for Divine strength from the Holy Spirit to pray effectively and scripturally, urging believers to seek God's touch upon their wills and affections for fervent prayer. Through examples of spiritual discernment and impactful encounters, Mr. Kulp illustrates the power of God's grace in transforming lives and leading souls to salvation. Despite facing severe trials and illness, Mr. Kulp continued to labor for the Lord, witnessing conversions and experiencing God's work in various places.

Transcript

"The soul that sinneth it shall die."

"Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?"

"As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but would rather that all men should turn unto Me and live."

"Look unto Me and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else."

"Whosoever believeth shall not perish, but have eternal life."

It may seem a very simple thing to kneel down and talk thirty minutes or more with the Lord; but those of us who love to pray and are trying to live a life of prayer find out after awhile that it requires strength from the Holy Spirit to pray effectively. To pray scripturally, and in the Spirit, requires a Divine touch upon our wills to give us patient perseverance, and another touch upon our affections that we may pray with a proper feeling and intense desire after God's glory. Without Divine strength to pray with, our prayers will wither just like flowers without water. So at the beginning of a season of prayer we should ask our Heavenly Father to impart to us by the Holy Spirit special strength all through our faculties, that we may pray acceptably and effectively.

--Living Words

"In the month of June," says a friend, "I had an opportunity of spending half an hour with Mr. Smith as I passed through Lincoln. I found him, as usual, absorbed in his great work. He related to me, with much delight, many pleasing instances of the power of grace which had recently occurred in the circuit; and, among others, mentioned one place in the country, at which, a few evenings before, between twenty and thirty souls had been set at liberty at a prayer-meeting. I was particularly struck with his powerful expressions on the subject of the Divine benevolence, and more especially with the last sentence which he uttered before I took my leave of him: 'If God will not save men, it is no business of ours;' -- a truth deeply momentous and interesting; since human exertions for the salvation of souls are only rational on the ground of the surpassing and infinite willingness of the Almighty."

As an instance of Mr. Smith's spiritual discernment, we give the following: A sick woman was visited by him. She was under deep concern, but made no advance in the Divine favor. Mr. Smith at last said to her, "Have you not at some time known the grace of God, and proved unfaithful?" With some hesitation the woman confessed that this was the fact. "Oh, then," said Mr. Smith, "you must take your right character before the Savior -- you are a backslider; you must come to God as such, and He will receive you." He then prayed with her, and she was enabled to exercise faith in the promises adapted to her state. She was filled with peace and joy, and shortly after her spirit returned to God. Mr. Smith was a perfect stranger to her character at the time of his visit; and the friend who accompanied him, and who gives the relation, had not the slightest idea of the real state of the case.

Mr. Clarkson relates the following examples of the success which, about this time, attended Mr. Smith's labors in private. The latter is inserted as an illustration of his faithful and searching method of dealing with sinners: Mr. Smith was one evening at the house of a friend, and among the company was a young lady, the daughter of an eminent and exemplary deceased member of the society. He addressed her on the subject of religion, and inquired whether she wished to go to Heaven. She replied in the affirmative, but added that she thought she might succeed in arriving there without meeting in class, etc. "But that was not the way your father went," said Mr. Smith. "No," she rejoined, "it was not." "Then," said he, "you are wiser than your father;" and after some further remarks, he added, "The Lord has hold of you, Miss ____." The next day she met him in the street, and asked permission to come to his class. He inquired the reason of her wish. With much emotion she replied, that his conversation the previous evening had made an impression on her mind so deep, that she could not rest in her present state: she was resolved, she said, to go to Heaven the same way as her father. She attended the class, and shortly afterwards entered into the enjoyment of the salvation of the Gospel.

A respectable class-leader of the Lincoln society has supplied an account of a visit, which, in the early part of the year, he and Mr. Smith paid to a sick person; and which, as somewhat resembling the preceding narration, is inserted in this place. The individual had been the engineer of a steam-packet, and, from what can be gathered, a very profligate sinner. He appears to have had some serious impressions from the time he was taken ill; but these were matured and rendered indelible by a dream which he had a few days before Mr. Smith called on him. He imagined that he saw four of his children, who died in their infancy. They appeared very beautiful, and unspeakably happy. But when they passed the foot of his bed, they assumed a severe aspect, and, looking frowningly on him, exclaimed, "Where we are, you can never come." He awoke in extreme agitation; strong convictions of sin seized upon him; and his past life, in all its defilement and rebellion, rose in vivid array before his conscience. His medical attendant, finding him in great distress, begged Mr. Smith to visit him. When he and his companion came into his room, they found

him half sitting up in bed, crying earnestly, "Lord, have mercy upon my soul!" "Amen!" said Mr. Smith. "Lord, save my soul!" "Amen!" "Just now extend Thy mercy to me." "Amen, my God!" "Canst thou pardon such a wretch as I am?" "O man," cried Mr. Smith, "you are in a desperate condition; how long have you been thus?" The man told him, adding, "Sometimes I think God will save me, and at other times it is suggested that I am such a wretch there is no mercy for me." Mr. Smith said, "God is able to save all them that come unto Him. Do you believe God is able to save you?" "Yes." "He would much rather save you, than damn you. Come, let us pray." Having prayed, he called on the sinner to pray and endeavored to induce him to cast his soul on Christ. "You deserve Hell, you deserve Hell," he said. "Hell is too good for me," cried the other. "But, glory to God," continued Mr. Smith, "you are out of Hell, and may be kept out. Now, try and pray for yourself." He did so; hope began to beam on his mind; his efforts for salvation became more resolute and confident. Mr. Smith kneeled once more, and wrestled with God in mighty agony, till the trembling penitent was enabled to cast himself fully on the atonement. He then rose up in bed, and cried, "I see Him; He died for me; He is my Savior, nailed to the cross for me and my salvation. I do believe in Him; yes, I do believe that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned all my sins." His burden was all removed, and he united in singing the praises of that "God from whom all blessings flow." He was afterwards partially restored to health; but he still maintained his confidence, and for a short time walked worthy of his high calling. It then pleased God to take him to Himself. "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

The Conference of 1830 was held at Leeds. Mr. Smith attended it, and preached several times with much power and considerable success. To one of these occasions he thus alludes in a letter to a friend: "At the Conference, one Tuesday morning, the floods came down. Many were pardoned, many were cleansed. At the glorious coming down of Jehovah, the noise of the people was as the sound of many waters. It required strong measures to get order, but it was secured, and God stayed and worked signally and clearly. His hand was seen and adored. He will stand by His own plan. His good pleasure is to save."

Finding, however, that he was in danger of injuring himself at Leeds, Mr. Smith retired to Cudworth before the Conference concluded. Here he preached once, and several souls were given to his ministry. A gracious work began in the village from this time. Writing to his father, a few months afterwards, he thus speaks on this subject: "The tidings of your prosperity at Cudworth gave me great pleasure. Only stick to the work, and then -- this is a must be. There should be no flagging: in order to this, lengthened meetings generally should not be encouraged. If you mind, you may have a sweeping work this winter. Try!"

On the first Sunday that Mr. Smith preached at Lincoln, after the Conference, seven persons were converted to God, and in general the circuit continued to present gratifying indications of prosperity. At the September quarterly meeting, sixteen hundred members were reported, being, after all deficiencies arising from deaths, apostasies, and removals had been supplied, about half as many again as twelve months before. Under the date of September 24th, Mr. Smith thus writes to Mr. Calder, in reply to an invitation from the Missionary Committee at Leeds: "Such is the state of my health, that I must not leave my circuit for some considerable time. Indeed, at present, I am taking rest. My windpipe is the failing instrument, and Mr. Harvey is trying his ability to mend it ... God is smiling upon us in this circuit still. Our people have stood well during the harvest: a good omen this. Expectation, too, is rising. I suppose you will join with me in saying heartily, I am sure God will not fail. No, it is the good pleasure of His goodness to save. Let us take fast hold of God's good will to man. Strong exhibitions of the superabounding goodness of God do much execution, and desponding man needs them. I love you much and should like you to have much fruit. My Christian love to your family. Praying that God may hold you in His right hand and employ you in

saving many souls, I am," etc.

Shortly after this, Mr. Smith spent some time at Nottingham for the recovery of his health and appeared to derive much benefit from the change. In consequence of taking cold upon his return, he was again laid aside. In a letter dated October 22nd, he says: "Ever since Conference I have been under pain. My body is badly shaken, but I believe it will be repaired again. God is doing much good on this circuit. Why do we dwell upon earth but to get and diffuse good? Appropriate labor always tells. Labor we must use. I intended being in London this month, but it is over: my health has interfered. An idle or a resting man I could not be in London. Safety is connected with staying at home. I have had to say No to, I should think, near twenty requests since Conference, to visit other circuits. This has been painful, because God has used me in this way. I must and do submit. Much of the steel has been forced from my body; I still hope it will harden."

After passing a few weeks in rest at his native village, Mr. Smith returned to Lincoln, sufficiently recovered to resume his beloved employment. To his father he thus writes immediately afterwards: "Dec. 10. -- You will be glad to learn that I got to Lincoln without taking any cold. I have taken my full work ever since, except one sermon. Two souls found peace on the first Sunday evening at Lincoln, and I have some very gracious seasons in the country; some good has been done. I stand my work better than I anticipated; and I trust, with care, that I shall be able to go through my labors with tolerable ease. At P__ we have a remarkable work. At the prayer-meeting seven got liberty. I was much concerned for the family that entertained me. They seemed far off. I was in my closet about them next morning, and went to breakfast in a pensive mood, pondering and pondering what to do. While we were at breakfast, the leader's wife came in, and said, 'Seven got liberty last night, and your charwoman was one.' Mrs. Smith, my hostess, said, 'She saved? she is as much saved as I am!' I said nothing. The woman came in to breakfast, and after reading I said, 'Well, some say that you got your sins forgiven last night; did you?' 'No, sir.' 'Then you are not happy.' 'No, sir.' 'Do you wish to be saved?' 'Yes, sir. When?' 'Now, sir.' 'Then God and you are agreed. Well, Mrs. S., how long is God to wait for you?' 'I do not know, sir. I do not think that either I or anybody else can come to God for salvation unless something particular comes upon them.' 'Of course, the fault is God's, then,' said I. 'Now, I assure you, you are wrong; for God would have saved you long ago. Your conduct is telling God that He is a liar. We must pray.' The charwoman and Mrs. S's daughter cried aloud for mercy. They soon found peace. 'Now, Mrs. S., what will you do?' She shook as if she had four agues upon her, and cried for mercy, till God saved her. I then went to the husband. He said he could not believe. I prayed; he then said, 'I can, I can believe.' We arose, and praised God for liberating the four. I was at the place this week, and they all stand. I believe not fewer than fifty have been brought to God there in a very short time. Upwards of twenty were saved that week. Glory be to God! ... I am going to Leeds tomorrow week. Get your class to pray for me." In a postscript he mentions a love-feast which had recently been held at Lincoln, "the fruits of which were twenty souls pardoned or cleansed."

Several circumstances conspired to render the last six months of Mr. Smith's life a season of severe trial. Pain, his natural fortitude might have enabled him to endure; but, to be cut off from his beloved occupation and to have to contemplate the anxiety of a beloved wife, was indeed sorrow. Disease made progress, and nothing seemed to repel it. His aged father said, "Oh, how glad I should be to die for thee." But now the good man must endure his own suffering and privation. On Sunday, May 1st, he went from his bed to the pulpit and once more labored to enforce that text on which he had so often preached, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh; and I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my

statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." (Ezek. 36:26, 27.) It was with the utmost difficulty that he proceeded with his discourse; and, at its conclusion, he told the congregation that he felt so ill as to be quite incapable of addressing them in the evening. He then closed the service, and retired from the pulpit. This was his last sermon.

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