

# So Great Salvation

by Martyn-Lloyd Jones

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*The sermon emphasizes the greatness of salvation and the importance of heeding the message of God, highlighting its authorship, the condition it saves us from, and the consequences of neglecting it.*

**Duration:** 51:17

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:27, Exodus 20:1-17, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 2:1-4, Hebrews 9:27

**Topics:** "Salvation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the first four verses of Hebrews chapter 2. He emphasizes the importance of paying close attention to the word of God and not letting it slip away. The preacher highlights the significance of the salvation offered through Jesus Christ, which was confirmed by those who heard Him and witnessed signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. He emphasizes that this salvation is of great importance because it saves us from the punishment of breaking God's law and prepares us for the final judgment before God. The preacher concludes by urging everyone to listen to the gospel message as it reveals the truth about God, ourselves, and our eternal future.

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## Transcript

I should like to call your attention this evening to the first four verses in that chapter that Dr. Fitch read to us, namely the second chapter in the epistle to the Hebrews, the first four verses. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard it, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders and with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.

But I want in particular to call your attention to the question, the great and momentous question that is asked at the beginning of the third verse. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Now this man, as you notice, is writing to a number of Christian people. They were Jews and had been brought up in the Jewish religion, but they had heard the preaching of the Christian gospel, and they had believed it, and for a while they had rejoiced in it.

But for various reasons, persecution and other reasons, they had become unhappy, many of them had become uncertain, and many of them were even tending to drift away altogether from the Christian faith.

And he writes his letter to them to deal with that very condition. His letter is characterized by alternating passages of exposition of the Christian doctrine and solemn warning of the danger of departing from it.

And in these words that we are looking at together tonight, we have the first of these great warning threatening military passages for which this epistle is so famous. Now he says we ought to give them an earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. There was the danger of their allowing these things to slip away from them.

Or there are some who would interpret it by saying that it should be translated lest at any time we slip away from them. There are those who say that the picture here is a picture of a ship that is breaking loose from her moorings and tending to be carried down the stream by the tide. Well, whichever is correct, it doesn't matter.

The point is that these Hebrew Christians were in grave danger of losing their grip on the Christian faith and of departing from it. And this man solemnly warns them of the danger of doing that. And at the same time, of course, he gives them reasons for not doing so.

Now it is that very thing I want to put before you this evening in the light of the teaching of this chapter. Let me put it like this in a modern form. There may be those here tonight who have been Christian people, but for various reasons you may be slipping away from it.

You may have had illness or accident, things may have gone wrong with you, you may have been influenced and affected by the teaching of the day in which we live and the kind of life that is so common, random, about us, for various reasons. Your hold upon this faith may have slackened and you may be drifting away from it. I want to show you the folly and the danger of doing that.

I want to give you reasons for coming back and taking a firm hold and grasp upon this faith. But there may be some in this congregation who have never believed this message. There may be those who say, why should anybody believe it? There are many who take that view today.

They regard the Christian church as a kind of anachronism in this modern world. What has that old message got to say, they say? Why should we listen to it at all? Well now, my friend, I want to give you some very good reasons for listening to this gospel, to pay the most earnest heed to it, and to believe it, and to commit yourself to it. And it's all put, it seems to me, in this phrase.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Why are we so right in doing what we are doing here tonight? Why do we call upon the whole world to listen to this message? Well the answer is, it is a salvation. It is the message that offers a way of deliverance, a way of release, a way of health, a way of healing. It's a salvation.

It's a glorious message to men and women in trouble, to a world in pain and in sorrow. But the thing I want to emphasize is the thing that this man emphasizes. It's this adjective of his.

He doesn't say merely that it is a salvation. He says, so great salvation. Now here is the question.

Why were these people departing from it? Because they had forgotten the greatness of the salvation. Why do people not believe it today? It is because they've never realized the greatness of this thing, which they are refusing and neglecting. Now I want to show this to you.

We're all interested in greatness, aren't we? It's an age that's characterized for its liking of, its almost adoration of big things, great things. We all like that. And this is the very term that this man uses, you notice, in describing this salvation.

And what this man does is, of course, what all the other writers of the New Testament do. They've all had a glimpse of the greatness, the bigness, the majesty of this salvation. Take the Apostle Paul, for instance.

He finds himself constantly in difficulties when he tries to describe this salvation. He talks about the exceeding riches of God's grace. He talks about the unsearchable riches of Christ.

He talks about the love of Christ, which passive knowledge. Those are his terms. The greatness, the bigness, the majesty of this gospel, this great salvation.

That's the characteristic way in which the New Testament always describes it. And you'll find exactly the same thing in your hymn books. When you take the really great hymns, because all hymns are not great hymns, but if you want great hymns, always choose an 18th century composer, and you'll get great hymns.

You don't get many such in the 19th century, but the 18th century. These were the men, the Wesleys, Isaac Watts, Doddridge, and people like that. You read their hymns, and this is what you'll find.

Take, for instance, Charles Wesley. Listen to him. Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise.

What's the use of one tongue? What's the use of ten tongues? What's the use of a hundred tongues? No, no, he says, the thing is so big. Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise. And take another man, Samuel Davies.

A Welshman who played such a prominent part in the beginning of Virginia. The writer of this great hymn, great God of wonders. All thy ways are godly, matchless, and divine, but the fair glories of thy grace more godlike and unrivaled shine.

You see, these men have had a glimpse of the greatness and the glory of the gospel. But it's not confined even to the writers of the hymns. If you turn to the realm of architecture, you will find that some of the greatest buildings in the world have been produced as the result of this gospel.

Take the great cathedrals that people still go to visit. On the continent of Europe, even the ruins are worth looking at. Why did those men ever build these magnificent cathedrals? What were they trying to do? Well, the answer is, they were trying to give some conception of the bigness, the greatness, the elevation, the majesty of this great message of salvation.

And they expressed it in stone. Some of the greatest masterpieces of painting and of art have been the result of precisely the same thing. Leonardo da Vinci and others, these men had caught a glimpse of this and were trying to express it.

Come to the realm of oratory and of eloquence. And you have to admit and to grant that some of the most eloquent and moving statements and speeches and addresses that have ever been delivered have been delivered by Christian preachers, moved by a vision of the greatness of this great salvation. And when you come to the realm of music, it's exactly the same thing.

I'm sure that everybody here tonight will agree with me when I say that undoubtedly the greatest single masterpiece of music that has ever been composed is Handel's Messiah. Why did he write it? What's the secret? Well, he fortunately has told us. He tells us that during those few brief weeks in which he produced that outstanding masterpiece, he says, I did feel as if I were lifted up into the heavens and did see something of the majesty of God.

What's the explanation of the Hallelujah chorus? What's the explanation of worthy is the Lamb? He has the answer. Handel did a glimpse of this so great salvation. Well now my friends, I want to put a question to you before I go any further.

Is that your customary habitual way of thinking of this gospel? When you think of Christianity and of the Christian message, is that how you think of it? It's the only true way to think of it. And if you don't think of it in that way, I come to one conclusion. You've never seen it.

You don't know it. You may think you're a Christian, but if you're not impressed by the fact of its greatness, its majesty, its glory, you've never seen it. Now this is the thing, you see, that these Hebrew Christians had lost sight of.

And that's why they were turning back to Judaism and others giving it up. This is the tragedy of the modern world. The world despises this message.

It thinks it's out of date. It dismisses it. Why? It doesn't know anything about it.

It's never seen it. Its greatness, its majesty, and its glory. Ah, but here it is.

So great salvation. I'm not surprised that the masses of people are outside the Christian church. For so much of what they hear that passes in the name of Christianity on the radio and on the television and so on, what is it? Well, it's nothing but politics, or economics, sociology, philosophy.

There's nothing great about that. There's no salvation in any of those. They can raise problems, they don't solve them.

But Christianity is a salvation. It solves the problem. And it's a great salvation.

Well, come now. Let me try to show you some of the elements of the greatness of this so great salvation. In what respect is it great? Well, the first answer to that question is this.

It is great in its very authorship. Here's a good way of testing the greatness of any teaching. Who's produced it? Who's brought it into being? Now, take a book for instance.

How do you estimate the greatness and the value of a book? How do you decide when you go to the library what book you're going to borrow? What books do you read? Well, I think you'll agree with me when I say that one generally decides this issue in terms of the author. You want to read a book by so-and-so because you believe, or are being told, that he's a good and a great author. It's true about novels.

I don't know what people do now, but when I was a boy, my favorite author was Sir Walter Scott. Supreme in this respect. I wanted a book, a novel by Scott.

Others liked Sir Dickens and so on. You estimate the value of the greatness of the book in terms of the author of the book. And this is true not only of books.

It's true in other realms. I remember reading in the newspaper a few years ago of a sale which had taken place in the famous Sotheby's sale rooms in London. Great sensation.

What was it? Well, it was this. There had been a sale the night before and a particular painting had been sold for £136,000. Well, you may say that sort of thing happens fairly frequently.

What was the excitement about? Ah, the excitement was this. The man who had sold that painting the night before for £136,000 had bought it for less than £100. What had happened? Well, this was the story.

This man was interested in paintings. He liked to have some nice paintings on his walls at home. And one day, walking through an antique shop, he suddenly saw a painting.

It wasn't very clean, but there it was. But he liked it. And he pulled it out and looked at it.

And eventually, he liked it so much that he paid something just under £100 for it. He took it home, cleaned it up as best as he could, and put it on his wall with his other paintings. Several years later, a friend of his who was a bit of an expert in these matters came to visit him.

And he was showing his friend around his collection of paintings. And when the friend came to this particular painting, he stopped. He looked at it and kept on looking at it.

He said, you know, this is remarkable. Do you know what you've got here? Well, he said, the man, I don't know. But all I know is that I liked it.

I thought it was wonderful, and I felt I must have it. Well, you were very right, said the friend, unless I'm greatly mistaken. This painting is by El Greco, one of the great Spanish masters.

Well, the man was so sure of this that they agreed that they should call down the greatest experts from London. And they came down, and they treated this painting with chemicals and did various things to it. And the experts were unanimously agreed in saying that this was a painting by the great El Greco.

And you see what happened. When it was realized that this was something produced by El Greco, its value is no longer a hundred pounds. One hundred and thirty-six thousand pounds.

The same painting, remember? Exactly the same painting. So you estimate the value, the greatness of the painting, by the painter, the man who's produced it, the one who's brought it into being. Well, now that's exactly the same thing that is said here.

Why should we call this so great a salvation? Why should we invite the whole world to listen to this message? And here's the simple answer. This is the message of God. Not men.

You notice how this man puts it. How shall we escape if we reject so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, that's the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him. God also bearing them witness, that's God the Father, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

There is the third person in the Trinity. Who is the author of this word? Well, the man has told us this at the beginning of the first chapter. He bursts out and says, God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

This is God speaking, not men. So why do we ask the world to listen to this message tonight? The answer is, because it is the message of God. The blessed Holy Trinity is the author of this message.

Don't you think, my friends, it's about time the world began listening to this? Aren't you tired of listening to statesmen, politicians, sociologists, philosophers, scientists? What are they to offer us? What are they giving us? Look at the state of our world. Isn't it time that the world began to listen to this? This isn't men's message. It isn't my message.

I'm not here to give you my views of life this evening. I am merely a channel and an instrument to deliver to you the message of Almighty God. God has spoken.

Now, if we had no other reason for listening to this message, if we had no other reason for claiming that it is a great message and a glorious message, this alone was sufficient. This is the message of the living God in which He tells us the truth about Himself, ourselves, our world, and its whole eternal future. That's one reason for calling it so great a salvation.

But let me give you a second. It's not mine. It's the one produced by this man.

It is a great salvation because of that from which it saves us. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? You measure the greatness of this message in what it delivers you from. It's a great deliverance.

Yes, but if you want to see how big it is, look at what it saves you from. Now, here again is a test that we all employ quite often, don't we? How do you tell or estimate the value of a drug? Well, I suggest that you do so in terms of the conditions of the diseases which it cures. Let me give you a simple illustration.

Take a familiar, well-known drug called aspirin. It's a wonderful little drug. If you've got a headache, take an aspirin.

Aches and pains, take aspirin. And you get rid of it. Aspirin can cure headaches, aches and pains, but it's very cheap.

Costs practically nothing. You can buy large numbers of tablets of aspirin for practically nothing. A wonderful little drug, but it cures headaches, aches and pains.

But you know, there are other drugs which in Britain at any rate are sometimes described as miracle drugs. And they're very costly, they're very expensive. And our Minister of Health is constantly telling the doctors not to prescribe too many of them.

Why? Well, because they cost so much. But why are these drugs so wonderful? Why are they so costly? Well, here's the answer. These drugs cure not merely headaches and aches and pains.

They cure the most terrible diseases. When I was a medical student 40 years ago, there was a disease, it still happens, called tubercular meningitis. And you know, at that time, if a doctor diagnosed tubercular meningitis, he might as well sit down immediately and write the death certificate.

There was never a cure. It was a lethal, it was a killing disease. It was invariably fatal.

But you know, some of these new drugs, they can cure even tubercular meningitis. They can heal it. They can restore this little child dying of tubercular meningitis.

It's a miracle drug, it's a marvellous drug, it's a great drug. So great salvation. But you see the way in which you arrive at the estimate.

It is the character of the disease, the greatness of the danger, the greatness of the power of the disease, the greatness of the possibilities. This man uses exactly the same argument. How shall we escape, he says, if we neglect so great a salvation? Why is it a great salvation? Well, because of the greatness, the awfulness of the condition from which it saves us.

What is that? Well, he tells us. You've only got to listen to him. He says in the second verse, For if the words spoken by angels were steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? What's he talking about? Well, he was writing to Jews, who'd become Christian, and they knew their law, the law of Moses and the Old Testament, and in that second verse he's referring to that, that the words spoken by angels, the law was given through the mediation of angels.

And he reminds them how the Ten Commandments and the moral law not only told people what to do, but warned them of the punishment that would be administered and meted out if they didn't keep this law. The threatenings of Mount Sinai. The threatenings of the law of God.

What were they threatening? Well, they were telling us that if we were guilty of transgression and disobedience, he's reminding them of the law that God gave through Moses to the children of Israel, the Ten Commandments. That you worship God and you worship him alone. That you never take his name in vain.

You don't take his day in vain. You honor your father and mother. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, and so on.

These are the laws. And the punishment of breaking the law was made perfectly plain and clear. Now this man reminds these people of all this.

And this is the very truth that you and I have got to realize this evening. Why should every man in the world listen to this gospel? And here is the answer. It is because every one of us has got to die and stand before God at the final bar of judgment.

This man says that at the end of chapter 9 where he elaborates this point. It is the point where he says unto all men once to die and after death the judgment. We've all got to stand before God in judgment.

What will we be judged by? Well, the record is kept. Every transgression, every disobedience. God has told us how he wants us to live.

He's made us in his own image. And he's given us the prescription for life. And every one of us whether we know it or not is going to be judged according to God's holy law.

The modern man doesn't know anything about this. Of course he doesn't. As many a man may have a cancer and doesn't know he's got it.

But his ignorance doesn't mean it isn't there. It's the same with the law of God. God holds us all responsible.

And every one of us will have to give an account of the deeds done in the body whether good or bad. Now the modern world doesn't like this. The politicians don't talk about this.

But this is the message of this gospel. That God has told us exactly what he expects of us. He's given us a soul and we're meant to live according to the soul not according to the body.

And we shall have to answer for our lives in this world. The soul that sinneth it shall die. What does God ask of all of us? Here it is.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy mind and all thy strength. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Now every one of us is going to be judged according to that standard.

It'll be no use here saying at the bar of judgment well I never got drunk, I never committed adultery, I was a good man, I was a moral man, I tried to help good causes. It won't help you. It is God who decides what the standard of judgment is.

And he's made it perfectly plain and clear. And as the apostle Paul tells us in the epistle to the Romans there is none righteous, no not one. The whole world lieth guilty before God.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Now it doesn't matter what you think. It doesn't matter what you feel.

We don't decide. Here it is in the word of God. Disobedience, transgression.

Failure to live to the glory of God. And what God has told us is this. That if we die in that condition of failure nothing awaits us but eternal punishment.

Now I'm not saying this. It's the Lord Jesus Christ who said that. They go to the place where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

They go to the place from which you cannot pass to heaven. There is a great gulf fixed. Here is the teaching.

And here we have all sinned against God. We've none of us lived to his glory. How can we face him? What hope is there for us? We are under condemnation.

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold down the truth in ungodliness. There it is. Have you realized that my friend? You sit in judgment on this gospel.

You give your opinion of Jesus Christ and of miracles. That's not your question. The question is this.

What are you going to do when you die and stand before God and face this judgment? We are all lost. We are all under condemnation. And it lasts forever and forever.

There is no end to it. Is there no way of escape? There is. But there is only one.

And it is this one. And that is why it is so great a salvation. Here is a gospel that makes the difference between eternal death and eternal life.

Everlasting misery, everlasting joy and glory. It's the biggest thing in the whole universe. Now there are other things that can help us for a while.

Let me be fair. Philosophy can help you up to a point. The politicians can help you up to a point.

There is not one of them that can help you to die. There is not one of them that can help you to face God in judgment. There is not one of them that can influence your everlasting and eternal destiny.

This does. It's the greatest thing in the universe. So great salvation.

The greatness of the calamity, the disaster from which it saves us. But I would like to leave you on a negative. Let me put it in the positive.

You see the greatness of this salvation not only in its authorship, not only in that from which it saves you, you see it still more wonderfully in that to which or for which it saves you. And in the remainder of this chapter this man goes on to elaborate this. Why should you believe this gospel? Listen my dear friend.

Let me tell you of some of the things that it will do for you if you believe it and accept it. What does it do for you? Well, I've already been reminding you. The first thing it does is to save you from the judgment and from the disaster.

This man puts it like this at the end of the chapter. Wherefore in all things it beheld him to be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. The wages of sin is death and we can't pay it.

But Christ has come into the world to pay the price, to make reconciliation. The man who believes in him is forgiven. He is reconciled to God.

God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself not imputing to them their trespasses. Reconciliation. What a gospel.

Oh, how great a salvation. I'm not here to disparage what men can do for you, what governments can do for you. But do you know there's one thing that all of them together can never do for you? That is to give you peace of conscience.

To give you a knowledge that your sins are forgiven. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though you may have lived a life of sin until you entered this building tonight.

Though you may have broken every single commandment, they have nothing to recommend you. It is my proud privilege to say this to you. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

Your sins will be blotted out as a thick cloud. God will smile upon you and look upon you as his son. He'll clothe you with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

He'll regard you as if you've never sinned in your life. Reconciliation for the sins of the people. And it's given you for nothing.

Without money and without price. What a salvation. Nothing else can do this.

But this is the very essence of the gospel message. It offers it to you. Look at the Philippian jailer.

Desperate fellow on the verge of committing suicide. Says, what must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. And I ask, there it is.

It starts with that. It gives you that. But you see that isn't the only thing it does.

Having given you this assurance that your sins are forgiven. It introduces you to God and enables you to speak to God. It brings you into contact and into communion with God.

So that you can pray to him and you go through this great high priest. This same Lord Jesus Christ. What else does it do for you? Well, it gives you a new nature.

A new heart. A new outlook. It gives you a new beginning in life.

Did you notice it as the reading was given at the beginning? We read, Do you know what that means? Who is he that sanctifyeth? Jesus Christ. Who are they that are sanctified? Those like ourselves who believe in him. And what we are told is they are both of one.

One what? One nature. Did you know this my friend? That if you believe this gospel. Not only are your sins forgiven.

You become a partaker of the divine nature. You are born again. You become a child, a son of God.

You are adopted into the royal family of heaven and all for nothing. That's what it offers you. Is it surprising that he calls it so great a salvation? What else? Well you see.

Though we believe this gospel and are forgiven and become the sons and children of God. We still live in this sinful world. And we are tempted and pride.

And the devil and the world and the flesh are against us. And we feel weak. What can we do? Listen.

In that he himself has suffered being tempted. He is able to succor them that are tempted. You are not left to yourself.

He is with you. He will walk with you. So that in the hour of trouble you turn to him and you say.

I need thee every hour. Stay thou nearby. Temptations lose their power when thou art nigh.

What a wonderful gospel. Enabling you to live as a child of God. Even in the midst of the vileness and the foulness of this modern world.

But the greatest and the most marvelous thing of all. Is the thing which he talks about in the fifth and the following verses. Listen.

For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified saying. And he quotes the eighth psalm.

What is men that thou art mindful of him or the son of men that thou visitest him and so on. What is he talking about? What do you mean by saying. For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak.

Unfortunately this King James translation here is a little bit unfortunate. It puts it too negatively. What he is saying is this.

You know he says. God has not prepared the world to come for angels. But for us.

What is this? Well at the end of the first chapter he said. In describing the angels. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

What is all this? I don't know what you feel. But this is the thing that thrills me above everything about the gospel at this present time. Do you know what he tells us? That not only are we made children of God.

But if children then heirs. Heirs of God. And joint heirs with Christ.

What he tells us is this. That this is not the only world. Thank God for that.

There is a great world coming for the children of God. Not for anybody else. But for the children of God.

God is preparing a great inheritance. The world to come of which we speak. You know this old world of ours is under judgment.

It's under condemnation. Peter tells us in the second epistle chapter three. This world is going to be destroyed.

The elements are going to melt with fervent heat. Whether it's the result of the explosion of some super atomic bomb. Or what I don't know.

But we are certain this world is going to be destroyed. We have told it plainly in the bible. But then you see there shall be a new heavens.

And a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. That's the world about which he is speaking. This old world and it's wealth, it's power, it's pomp.

It's going to vanish, disintegrate. And men will live for this world only. And it's wealth and it's power they'll have nothing.

But the children of God will be inheritors of that world which is to come. This is what is offered you. And it's all offered you for nothing.

If you believe this gospel is so great salvation. That is what's going to happen to you. That is why you see he calls it so great a salvation.

It gives you immediate peace of conscience. It gives you immediate knowledge that your sins are forgiven. It gives you immediate access into the presence of God.

It makes you a child of God. It gives you strength and power. And when you die you go to be with Christ.

And in the end when he comes and destroys all his enemies. You'll share with him in the glory everlasting in that eternal world. And all for nothing.

So great a salvation. Isn't the world blind to despise and to ignore and to neglect this? To listen to scientists and philosophers and politicians. And think you're doing something clever and reject this? It is

sheer folly, it's madness, it's blindness.

So great a salvation. In what it gives us, what it promises us. But my dear friends if you really want to see the final greatness and glory of this so great salvation.

You must follow me yet for a few further minutes. As I describe to you the way in which this so great salvation has been prepared for us. How it has been produced and brought into being.

And it's all here in this one chapter. Oh what a story it is. What drama, what power.

Are you interested in drama? Well the world is very interested in drama. People don't go to church I'm told on Sunday evenings now. Because there's some wonderful play on the television.

They don't want to miss it. Marvelous. And you'll listen to them tomorrow telling you about this wonderful drama.

What did they see in the play? Well this is what the play was about. You know it says one to another. I've never been so moved in the whole of my life.

You know in that play there was a man, he was a very great man. But he was a very good man. And in order to help others he pretended that he was nobody.

He dressed shabbily in order to mix with common people. He was a great man by birth. He was a great man of wealth.

But in order to do good and to help others. He just pretended that he was a nobody. And he lived amongst people and they maltreated him.

They didn't understand him, they didn't know him. He didn't take any notice, he went on. And you know he suffered.

And it was marvelous as I was watching it and listening. Tears were streaming down my face. I've never been so moved in the whole of my life.

It went on for two and a half hours. It was gripping, it was moving, it was thrilling. I've never been so moved to my very vitals as I was.

Oh what a wonderful drama it was. That's how they speak isn't it? Do you want to know what drama really is? Do you want to hear about something that really can move you in a way that all the dramas of the universe together can never move you? It's all here. What is it? It is the drama of redemption.

The drama of salvation. What do you mean says someone? Well I'll tell you. Listen to the ninth verse.

This man in quoting the eighth psalm reminds us that God has said that everything is going to be put in subjection to men. But we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.

What does that mean? Well let me tell you what it means. Look at Jesus of Nazareth. There he is, he's a man, he's a carpenter.

Jesus. Who is he? Who is this man that lived amongst men that endured the contradiction of sinners? This man has answered the question in the first chapter. God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, listen, whom he hath appointed heir of all things by whom also he made the world who be the brightness of his glory.

And the express image of his person. Who is this Jesus? Well he is the one who is the brightness of the glory of God. He is the effulgence of the glory of the everlasting God.

He is the one by whom all things were made. He goes on in the first chapter to tell us that even the angels were made by this person. He's made everything.

And without him was nothing made that is made. He is the creator. He upholds all the universe by the word of his power, Jesus.

But you see what's happened? This Jesus who's made everything and sustains everything, who's made the very angels, was made a little lower than the angels himself. Was made a man. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

This brightness of the glory of God has come as a little helpless baby in Bethlehem. This is the miracle of miracles. This is the greatest drama of all time and of the universe.

Come with me for a moment. Look into that crib, into that manger, in that stable in Bethlehem. There you see a helpless little child lying in the manger.

Who is he? Well let Charles Wesley answer the question. Veiled in flesh. The Godhead.

See. Hail him. Incarnate deity.

This is the son of God. This is the creator of the universe. But he loved himself.

He divested himself of the insignia of his everlasting glory to become in the likeness of man, in the likeness of sinful flesh. What a drama. He's come down on earth to dwell.

Follow him in his course. Here he is as this man tells us. He has taken upon him human nature.

Verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. The greatest drama of the universe is the incarnation of the son of God.

The birth of the babe of Bethlehem. What a drama. Look at him mixing with ordinary people.

Look at him suffering and enduring their buffetings, their misunderstandings, their clever questioning. Look at him tired and tempted of the devil in the wilderness and afterwards. But oh go on and listen to what this man says.

We see Jesus who has made a little earth and the angels. For the suffering of death, that he might by the grace of God taste death for every man. Drama.

Here it is. Look at that cross on Calvary's hill. Look at that one in the middle between the two thieves.

What has he done? He's done nothing. What law has he broken? No law. He's given perfect obedience to the law.

What's he doing there? And there's only one answer. He has taken your sins and mine upon himself. Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness.

God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He's taken it upon himself.

He has suffered even unto death. Yea, the death of the cross. He has tasted death for every man.

Made a little earth and the angels for the suffering of death. Oh, the drama. He gives his life a ransom for many.

But thank God it isn't the end of the story. We see Jesus who was made a little earth and the angels for the suffering of death. Crowned, crowned with glory and honor.

He burst asunder the bands of death. He rose triumphant over the grave. He's conquered all the enemies, the devil and hell.

The last enemy which is death has been punished in triumph and in glory. He ascends into heaven. He returns to the right hand of God.

It's all in the third verse of the first chapter. Who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person and upholding all things by the word of his power when he hath by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. And he's there this evening seated at the right hand of God in the glory everlasting waiting until his enemies shall be made his footstool.

And he will come again into the world to destroy his every enemy to purge the universe, the cosmos of every vestige of sin and introduce his eternal kingdom of glory and of joy forever and forever. That's how this salvation was made possible for you and for me. How is it possible for us to be forgiven? Ah, says someone, God is love.

And he has just to say I forgive you. It's not true my friend. God is just.

God is righteous. God doesn't play fast and loose with his own holy law. He says without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.

There is only one way whereby even God can forgive us. Sin must be punished. Sin has been punished.

In the person, in the very body of the blessed son of God hears the drama from the highest courts of glory to the cross of deepest woe. He came down all the way even unto death, the death of the cross. He descended into hell, he rose again and returned to the everlasting glory.

There is the drama of redemption. Is there anything in the whole world tonight that compares with this? Are you still surprised that this man calls it so great a salvation? Can't you see this evening it's the greatest thing in the world? Don't you see that this is God's word to the world? The only thing that can save us from eternal misery and destruction. The thing that opens out to us the glories of everlasting and eternal bliss.

And all has been made possible for us by the coming of the son of God into this world. By his going to God by his taking my sins upon himself bearing my punishment. Destroying my every enemy and rising again and returning to the Father where he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

And from whence he will come again and receive us unto himself so that where he is we shall be also. Come my dear friend. Have you realized the greatness of this great salvation? Are you rejoicing in this? Have you seen your need of it? Have you faced the certain fact of your death and the judgment that is certain to follow? Have you run to Jesus Christ? Have you cast yourself upon him whether you understand the doctrine or not? It is the only thing that can save you not only in this world but for all eternity.

Blessed be the name of God for so great a salvation. Are you ready to join me in saying crown him with many crowns the Lamb upon his throne. Hark how the heavenly anthem crowns all music but its own.

Awake my soul and sing of him who died for thee and hail him as thy matchless king through all eternity. Are you ready to say that? Or are you ready to join me in singing our closing hymn which is not the one announced on the order of service but instead hymn number 261 the hymn I've already quoted of Charles Wesley's. Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my dear redeemer's praise the glories of my God and King the triumphs of his grace.

Hymn number 261 let us rise and sing to his praise and to his glory.

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