

So Great Salvation

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead's sermon emphasizes the comprehensive nature of salvation and the dire consequences of neglecting the fullness of what Christ offers.

Duration: 56:17

Scripture: Matthew 5:20, Luke 13:3, Hebrews 1:1-2, Hebrews 2:1-3

Topics: "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of paying close attention to the word of God and not allowing it to slip away. He shares a personal anecdote about his wife losing a precious stone from her engagement ring in the mud, highlighting how easily valuable things can be lost. The speaker then relates this to the tragedy of neglecting the truth of God's word and the consequences that come with it. He warns against becoming preoccupied with worldly tasks and urges listeners to give earnest heed to the things they have heard. The sermon emphasizes the need to not neglect the pardon and justifying love of Jesus Christ and the importance of not letting the truth of God's word slip away like sand through our fingers.

Transcript

Will you turn, please, to Hebrews, the first chapter? I want you to notice, then, carefully, the first two verses of Hebrews, chapter one, and without delay, without comment, we'll begin reading with the first verse of the second chapter. Now, there's a reason, and I'll explain that. The balance of the chapter, from verse three on, exalts the Lord Jesus above angels, sets him forth in his character and in his office above angels.

And we recognize this, and we receive it, but we're desirous tonight of knowing why God has, through the writer of the book of Hebrews, made this emphasis that Christ is above angels. And we'll see that in the second chapter. 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, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world.

Therefore, and whenever you find a therefore in the scripture, don't leave it until you find out what it's there for. And it's extremely important right here. Therefore, because God has in times past spoken unto us by the prophets, and now has spoken unto us by his Son, therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard from the Son, 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 him? Now the emphasis of this that I've read is as follows. The word of angels was steadfast. The commandments they brought, the message they gave, God respected, and it declares that every transgression and every disobedience received a just recompense of reward.

God honored the word of angels. God attested the word of angels. If this was true, and it was, how much more ought we expect him to honor, respect, and confirm the word of his Son? If his Son is infinitely above all angels, then God would put infinitely more concern to seeing that the word of his Son was respected.

Now notice also, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? Obviously our temptation would be here to say, oh, salvation. That means pardon from sin. But you know the word salvation is an immense word, far greater than we generally associate with it.

If you will take that word and trace it through the New Testament, you will find that there are actually four tenses of salvation. Tense in this sense I use the word. There's the past perfect tense, the past tense, the present tense, and the future tense.

Now let me explain. The past perfect tense. I have been saved from the pleasure of sin, repentance.

The past tense. I was saved from the penalty of sin, justification. I am being saved from the power of sin, sanctification.

I shall be saved from the presence of sin, glorification. Now if somebody comes to you and says, are you saved, brother, sister? You would be quite in order to say, how do you mean? I have been, I was, I am being, and I shall be. Now let's talk about the one you're interested in.

The word saved has been generally compressed by us to be equivalent to forgiveness. But the word in its use in the Bible is far larger, far more inclusive than just pardon. For instance, you find Paul saying something like this, now is our salvation nearer than when we believe.

It sounds strange, doesn't it? If he has saved us by his death, how much more shall we be saved by his life? We find that the word saved is an immense word, just as the word sanctification is an immense word. In the mind of God, our sanctification was planned before the world began. It was accomplished at Calvary.

It became ours potentially at the point of repentance. It became ours experientially as we saw ourselves in our union with Christ, and it will be effected throughout the endless ages of eternity. These are vast words, immense words.

So when we read in Hebrews 1.3, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? No one can say, well, thank God, my sins are pardoned, I haven't neglected salvation. The word here used includes everything that God in grace has done for his people through the crosswork of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the warning given in this third verse is not respecting pardon from past sins.

It is neglecting anything that the Lord Jesus provided for his people, and thus deals with that heart of indolence that says, well, I'd like this from the Lord, but really I'm not the least interested in any more. Utterly cutting across this attitude that says, well, I'd like to take certain things from the sacrifice of Christ,

but you see, really, I just don't want to go all the way. I'm not interested in some of these other things.

The word in the first verse is equally explicit. We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard. Why? Because there's a tendency to allow precious things to slip through our hands.

Things that are of tremendous value can be easily lost. I had given to my wife before we were married an engagement ring. One day out in Africa, she was taking some weeds out of the zinnias.

The ground was muddy. She was down there working. When she came in, washed her hands, she found the set in her ring was gone, and she was concerned about it.

Now had she had any thought that the mud would have been sufficiently viscous to have drawn the stone out of the ring, she certainly wouldn't have worn it. And so in that little task, it was just in passing, but she was going from one house in the station to another, stooped down, picked up some weeds, pulled them out, put them away. And when she came in, something that meant a great deal to her was gone.

And so it could be that this is implied in the text. Becoming concerned about other things and interested in tasks which are more appealing to us, truth which was in the eternal mind and heart of God and purchased at the tremendous price of the blood of Christ, just slips through our fingers and slides away with the common cares of the day. And so we have a warning here.

We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest in our preoccupation with many things, this truth, just like sand in our hands, slip through, slide away, and we be left with nothing but regrets. Again, we see it here. How shall we escape if we neglect? It isn't refusal.

It isn't rejection. It isn't a matter of taking one's stand against. It's just the little matter of saying, well, another day, another time.

There are other things more important, other things more challenging, other things more demanding of my time and thought. And the question isn't whether or not we will neglect it. The question is this.

What are we going to do? How are we going to explain it? How are we going to face Him who purchased these priceless privileges with His precious blood, included them in His Word, and had them expounded to our hearts? And then we, in our indolence and in our carelessness, were prepared to just neglect the things which God purchased by the poured-out blood of His only begotten Son. How are we going to escape it? How are we going to escape it? This is the question. Well, what are the consequences? You understand, of course, that if a person neglects repentance and neglects faith in Jesus Christ, that they'll be forever in hell.

I am confident that in hell tonight there are multitudes of people that intended someday to repent. I can't for the world believe that everyone there made up his mind at some point of crisis that he was determined to be lost. Years ago, down in Richmond, Virginia, I was talking to a young man who said, Well, religion is all right for the old.

Christianity and salvation is good for people when they're on their last legs. But anybody as young as I am doesn't want to be saddled with a lot of do's and don'ts and a lot of religion. And when I get old enough to take my social security, I'll also take my heaven security and I'll get along with it then.

But right now, sir, don't bother me. And so I said, Well, what else? What about that? Well, he said, Well, frankly, I don't even know that then I'm too interested. I said, All right, I'm going to draw up a contract and you sign it.

So I took a piece of paper that his mother handed me, and I drew up such a contract as this. Because I do not know that I'll live to be old enough to take my social security, and because I have no certainty of tomorrow, and because I made up my mind that I am not going to do anything with Jesus Christ until I get to be at least 65, I hereby relinquish now and forever all interest in the death of Christ. And I declare to one and sundry to whom this paper may come that I refuse hereafter to consider myself a candidate for salvation.

I am determined, therefore, to go to hell. I have made up my mind that I shall be lost if lostness there is as the consequence of my action, because I am simply not interested in Jesus Christ. I said, Would you sign that? He read it over, his face blanched, his blood drained from it.

He said, No, I wouldn't sign that. You think I'm a fool? I said, Yes, I do. I actually do.

Because you have essentially signed it by telling us, your mother, your wife, all of us here, that it is your intention to do nothing with Jesus Christ until some point in the indefinite future, and there's no reason to suppose that when you reach 65 that you won't postpone it again. And so I said, You might as well get the thing off your mind so that when people trouble you in the future, you can say, No, I've settled that. One Sunday afternoon in my mother-in-law's house, I just made up my mind that I wasn't going to be bothered about it anymore.

I said, I think that would be the wiser course, rather than just somehow going to do it in the meanwhile, case-hardening your heart against any work of the Spirit of God. He said, Mister, you put it to me in a hard way. I don't know what I'm going to do about it, but I assure you this, I'm going to think more than I have in the past.

I don't know what happened to him. I wasn't able to follow it up. But it's my conviction that hell is filled with people that have said, Well, someday, someday, someday.

And we know that it is fatal to neglect repentance and faith. And we have every reason to believe that when we find that word in Thessalonians saying that the Lord Jesus Christ shall come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them, that know not God, and obey not our Lord Jesus Christ, that it will include that company of people that have just neglected to repent, neglected to deal with the issue that was exposed by the gracious love work of the Spirit of God. And so, to sinners, we say, you have an option.

You must face Jesus Christ. You have to face Him. God has promised that every knee shall bow to His Son.

When the Lord Jesus Christ left heaven and took upon Himself the form of a man, the Father said to Him, Every knee of man shall bow to You. And then He gave to man the option as to when they bow. You can either bow now in time entreated by the Spirit of God, warned by the Word of God, wooed by the love of God, bow now in repentance and faith and live, or refuse to bow now, go out of life with your head unbowed and your back unbent, and then to meet Jesus Christ, not at the mercy seat, as He is now beckoning and waiting, but to meet Him at the great white throne, where He shall be seated in judgment, and where it will then be that the books are opened and the Lamb's book of life in which the individual's

name will not be written, and then, calling for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon Him, He will be forced to bow before the Lord Jesus.

Now listen, God promised that every knee would bow to His Son. Now they're either going to bow willingly in repentance and faith and live, or they're going to bow coerced and forced by the majesty of God and the promise He made to His Son, and then to go out into the eternal darkness, having acknowledged under pressure what they refused to acknowledge under grace. This is the tragedy of neglect.

This is the crime of neglect in respect to the matter of past sins and the matter of the pardon and justifying love of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so we recognize that this is fatal in its consequence, and I'm sure that there are a few here that would challenge that tonight. But then there's another thing that comes along.

We somehow have gotten the idea, you know, that whereas it is of tremendous importance that we should acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and we should accept the salvation that He died to provide, it isn't nearly as important to take the other things that were included in His death. And so we find that there's a matter of option there. I think it grows out of our misuse of the word saved.

I think we have failed to understand that that word was never intended to be used as we customarily use it. First, I'll call to your attention that no one in the Bible claimed He was saved. No one ever said that word of Himself in personal testimony.

Oh, Paul said, Who hath saved us and called us. But because the word is such an immense word, there would be no point in the pilgrimage that all of the word implied could have been completed by a man living and walking in time. And so no one used it, being consistent with the book itself.

The Spirit of God just didn't record such a testimony. Paul said, When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me. And there were others who testified one way and another to the grace of God in their life, but they didn't use that word saved.

And I think because we have misused it, we've misled a lot of people into thinking that the only thing God is interested in is sort of getting them signed up to occupy a room in the mansion He's building in eternity. As though God were afraid He wouldn't have enough people to fill up the house, and so He's just terribly concerned about getting people fixed up with a hell insurance policy. And as soon as they have that, then that's all He's really concerned about.

Now, some of them, He realizes, according to this misconception, may be a little more enthusiastic and a little more eager, and so He puts some challenges for them. And if they'll scale the hill, He's got a little reward at the top for them. And they may be first-class citizens and the other second-class.

But after all, the important thing is to get people, quote, saved, unquote. And then if some want to go on to the deeper life or the higher life or the fuller life or the sanctified life, that's up to them. Now, brethren, I believe this is an utter misconception.

I believe this is not defensible from the Word of God, and I believe it is something that every one of us ought to do our very best to stomp out. For instance, when John the Baptist was preaching, he never taught in any such way at all. For you'll find him saying, Repent, for there's one coming after me, who's preferred before me, the latchet of whose shoes I'm unworthy to lose.

He it is that baptizeth you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. In other words, John said to his generation, Repent, because repentance is the means whereby the barrier between you and God is removed, and the end of God's grace is to bring you into fellowship with God, not simply to take you to heaven. Now, here's a misconception that carries along with what we've been discussing.

Too many people have felt that God's great purpose in grace was to take us to heaven when we die. Oh, how many things can grow out of the wrong emphasis. God's great purpose in grace is not just to take us to heaven when we die.

It is to save us from sin. It is to make us like Jesus Christ. It is to bring us into vital, living, warm, experiential fellowship with Him now during the days of our pilgrimage.

And then because He's already brought heaven to us, it'll be a simple matter for Him to take us to heaven. But heaven was to begin in our hearts. Now I'll say another thing that I think you'll agree with.

And that is that if God were to take you to heaven, send you to heaven, rather, and wouldn't come Himself, give you a mansion, give you a house right down on the main street of glory, right next to the river of life, and even give you the franchise to take up the paving in front, the gold paving, and sell it to the rest of the inhabitants, God still would have doomed you to hell if He didn't come there. Because I assure you that heaven cannot consist in a mansion. It can't consist in any of the things which are generally associated with a heavenly abode.

The thing that makes heaven heavenly is not the mansion, not the street of gold, not the river of life, and not the harps in which the angels will play. The thing that makes heaven heavenly is the revelation of God without restriction or inhibition or anything to obscure Him. And if He were to send you to however blissful a situation you can imagine and not come Himself, He would have simply relocated hell and renamed it.

For that which your heart demands is not a place and not things and not a situation. Oh, I can understand how some of the slaves in other days could say, when we get to heaven we're going to put on our shoes and we're going to walk all over God's heaven, and they never had shoes. And it gets cold down there.

And they could imagine this was going to be a tremendous improvement on their state, and I'm sure that God took care of that when they got there. But if your concept of heaven is mansions and shoes and so on, then it is simply a kind of an idea of marrying Mr. Dayton and moving into the department store so that you could change your furniture every month and everything else. Oh, this is the most sensual concept.

This is the most materialistic concept. What we are seeing is that heaven is a place, but that which makes the place heavenly is the presence of the King of the place, the Lord of the place, the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore, God's purpose in grace isn't just to give us a ticket to a place, but His purpose is to bring the atmosphere and the government and the blessing of that place to our hearts by bringing the person who will make the place heavenly to our hearts.

Now, if this is the case, then we'll understand that everything that the Lord Jesus provided is important. Everything that was included in His cross work was important. And you can't sit back and say, Well, I'm justified, I'm pardoned, I'm forgiven.

That is salvation. And I have that. And I have what He came to bring.

And I know He's left a few little heights for people to scale one way or another. But as far as I'm concerned, I have the important thing. What is important? Everything is important.

Everything He intended. Everything He provided. Everything that was procured by the shedding of His blood.

And therefore, how are we going to escape if we neglect anything that God intended to be ours? Yes, there ought to come into every heart an avid hunger to have all that the Lord Jesus died to make ours, to be all that He intended us to be, and to experience everything that was ours. Let me give you an illustration. Suppose, dear heart, you could be justified and born again and have an attitude of complete indifference to the things of God.

And you get home to heaven. And the first thing the Lord does is say, Come with me, child. And He takes you out to the warehouse of His grace.

He throws back the big double doors, and there are the deep shelves lying with things which He purchased with His blood, signed, sealed, packaged, and addressed to you in the various stages of your pilgrimage. Here, here was health when you were sick. Here was victory when you were tempted.

Here was the power of the Holy Spirit when you were entrusted with tasks. And as He begins to just point these things out and take the promises that He put in His book, and says, Why didn't you take this? Why didn't you claim this? Here I have made provision for you. And then He gives you a flashback of your life.

And you see how that you went along broken, went along defeated, went along creeping when you could have run, when you could have mount up with wings as eagles, you prowled as a worm in the dust. And He says, See what your life was? And then He gives you a preview of what your life could have been. And there is the cupboard filled with the blessings that He provided with His own blood, purchased for you.

And you were too indifferent and callous to even want to claim. How are you going to escape the heartache and the grief that comes from realizing you have robbed the Lord Jesus of the glory He could have gotten out of your life if you cared about the provisions of His love? Stubborn? Hard-hearted? Indifferent? Preoccupied? Satisfied with a crumb when you could have had a loaf? And all the time you've been dishonoring Him because you've been less than He provided, less than He expected. Suppose I were to send my children to school and they were to go with their clothes in tatters, now I mind you they have some overalls that have been well patched that they use when they're climbing trees and we insist that they put them on.

But we've also managed along the way to scrape up a pair of shoes now and then so that they don't need to go with their soles flapping and their feet letting blood on the snow in the wintertime. But suppose my children should have forgotten completely about the box up on the shelf which is a new pair of shoes or the ones in the back of the closet which they use for school and they simply wear these bedraggled old things to school and they wear them all the time and there they go with nothing but rags and tatters, neglect the food that's put on the tables, refuse to eat the provisions that are there, refuse to take all that's given for them and they go out in the community thus caricaturizing their father because it isn't them that's being dishonored it's their father that's being dishonored for the father is responsible to provide for his children and so it is that when the children of God spurn the provisions of God's grace and neglect that which he's given they are actually shaming their heavenly father.

They're dishonoring him because here were provisions of love that in his infinite wisdom he knew his people needed in order that being strengthened and helped and encouraged and delivered they could walk in the presence of a skeptical world and by their walk and their attitude and demeanor and expression and their victory and their joy and their peace they could honor their father but they were unwilling to dress in the clothes that he provided to wear the shoes that he gave unwilling to eat the food that he provided and they skimmed along on what they had and all the while they dishonored him what are you going to do about it dear child of God if and when you get home to heaven you discover that though you've made it by the skin of your teeth yet every step of the way you've dishonored

the father that loves you and whom you profess to love by simply neglecting the provisions of his love and the provisions of his grace can you see the tremendous importance that's attached to the text well you say if God wanted me to have these things wouldn't he force them on me oh I think not God has given us promises and we are by these exceeding great and precious promises made partakers of the divine nature and you see he has told us that we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip because the God of this world is trying to make these things seem unimportant and the pressure of occupation is trying to make us seem too busy with other things to give our time here and we seem to get along too well without some of the

things which are set forth in the word and then we meet someone who claims to have had these things and they don't seem any different than we are and so we say well what's the use what's the value and the net result of it is that before we know what's happened we've just let them slide through our hands we've let it slip away and consequently we have robbed the Lord Jesus Christ of what he had a right to expect from us now what is this great salvation what does it include what did our Lord have to say it's this that is of tremendous concern to all of us tonight I think we will see it if we take the word now on another visit I've given you this message but I give it just in review because I want you to see it I'd like to have you remember now and review with me what the Spirit of God has

recorded for us of the ministry of our Lord for it says here with which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord what did the Lord have to say about this so great salvation well if we turn to Matthew 5 in verse 20 we will have the beginning statement and if you would like to record these it might be helpful to you in the future and we'll add this word that will be the key you'll hear it for our Lord is speaking to a company of people on the most important subject in the world and this is what he says I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven what was their righteousness it was the righteousness that a dedicated mind and a consecrated intellect could produce without the

Holy Spirit they fasted they tithed they prayed they abstained from eating meat they observed holy days they memorized scripture they were enthusiastic in talking about their religion and all of these things can be done without the Holy Ghost all of this can be done you can be orthodox in your theology and you can be evangelistic in your zeal you can be missionary in your fervor you can be devout in your practice you can fast you can tithe you can pray you can do all of these things and do it with the natural energy with which previously you served the devil and so the Lord Jesus Christ said the righteousness which prepares you for heaven is not that which you produce by your energy but it is that which is produced in you by another source entirely it is that righteousness which is from

above it is the work of God in you and so this is something he has to say about salvation the second thing we find that he is saying is in Luke the 13th chapter verses 3 and 5 here he speaks to this wonderful

subject again our great salvation and he tells us twice in these two verses that except you repent you shall all likewise perish have you repented? or have you neglected it? how are you going to escape? for he has declared that except you repent you'll perish we've defined repentance as a change of mind of intention and purpose from pleasing self to pleasing God for in it is the seed of all righteousness and all holiness as a sinner your purpose was to please yourself and your direction was aimed that way then you came to the place of repentance you made a right about face and a

complete turn and from that moment on your intention was to please God and your purpose was to glorify God and the end of your being was his satisfaction not your being satisfied with him but his being satisfied with you now have you repented? except you'll repent you'll perish you see the fatality of neglect here you can see how important it is that you shouldn't overlook this well come with me then to Matthew chapter 18 in verse 3 for here we find our Lord speaking about something else he's been out walking with his disciples and they've been arguing as to which one of them would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven our Lord called a little child set the child on his knee and turned to his disciples and said except you be converted and become as little children ye shall not enter

into the kingdom of heaven the word converted means turned again and our Lord is saying that though they've repented though they've received him the evidence of the genuineness of his work in their heart that is that every time their mind is in conflict with his mind his mind prevails and thus you'll find it stated in Romans 12 1 and 2 verse 2 especially we are transformed by the renewing of our minds and there it is that many of the things you've carried into this life of forgiveness and pardon were not ordained of him nor were they according to his will and so at every step of the pilgrimage you're going to find that some attitude is in conflict with what he prescribes the evidence of the genuineness of his work is that every time you find that your way is in conflict with his way his

way prevails and you're turned again perhaps you're going this way he's allowed you to go this way but all of a sudden the spirit of God stops you and says you can't go that way the evidence that you're a child of his is that you follow him that you turn again and go his way a constant attitude of rectification it's like driving you have to decide which town you're going to suppose you were leaving today for my town back in the east in New York City first thing you've got to head right don't go west it's such a long way around but even after you've decided to go east don't just lock your wheels and step on the gas you'll be in trouble because after you've decided to go to New York and you've headed east you've got to make many minute corrections because as your car is riding along the

road there's a slant on the road and you have to correct against this slant and so there's a bet in your disposition and a bet in your nature and your purpose to please God but the evidence of the genuineness of his work is that whenever the car begins to drift away from his will you bring it back again you keep bringing it back again because your purpose is to please him and you're not going to allow the drift to pull you into the ditch you see except you be converted and become as a little child it's the attitude of constant correction to the will of God and continuous concern that you please him not simply that some place in the back in the past you made a transaction and signed a decision card but today the attitude of your heart is I want to please God and if he shows you that some

action some attitude something you're doing doesn't please him you don't rest in the past you aren't simply resting there you're saying Lord I want to please you today as much as that day back there when I first met you and you have a continuous attitude toward his will then we come to something else if we turn please to John the fifth the sixth chapter we'll find a statement let's turn first to John the third chapter and we'll see

there that our Lord had something to say about this great salvation we'll hear three times in as many verses he says something about it in verse three he says except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God in verse five he says except a man be born of water in the spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven and in verse seven he says you must be

born again and so our Lord Jesus has made it expressly clear that that which prepares us for salvation is not something that we've done toward God but something that God has done toward us oh there's something you must do toward God you must repent and you must believe but the evidence of the genuineness of your repentance and your faith isn't that you can remember when you repented and when you believed but the evidence of the genuineness of your repentance and your faith is that when you repented and believed God regenerated you by the Holy Ghost and gave you the witness of the spirit that you'd passed from death to life and you knew you'd been born again now this is a point of tremendous tremendous significance how are we going to escape if we neglect it you can't get by he said except

a man be born again except a man be born of the spirit except you must be born again and you can see how fatal it is to neglect at this point and so it's of tremendous importance that you should make absolutely sure that you've repented that you're righteous the righteousness is not the righteousness produced by men by effort but it's the righteousness that's produced by God through the sovereign and the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit oh it's a tremendous thing this salvation but then we come on to something else if you'll go to John the sixth chapter in the fifty third verse here he's talking to a company of people that were going to make him king and they were going to be his disciples and we find that he has they've asked him however for a certification to do a miracle predict it

have it come to pass to prove that he was who they thought he was who he said he was and now Lord Jesus said oh no I can't do that you see I am the bread of life I am the living bread which came down from heaven if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever and the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world the Jews therefore strove among themselves saying how can this man give us his flesh to eat then Jesus answered and said unto them verily verily I say unto you except you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day you see salvation is not in a plan salvation is not in scripture verses salvation is not in

ordinances nor a scheme of theology salvation is not in decision salvation is not in the pronouncement of an evangelist or a pastor or a teacher salvation is a person this is the cardinal truth of our faith salvation isn't from a person only it is but salvation is a person David saw this in Psalm 27 Jehovah is my light and my salvation again we have it he that hath the son hath life life is in the son he that hath not the son shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth upon him you understand therefore that salvation is Christ he is our light he is our salvation he didn't die to send it he died to become it and he isn't just savior because he's in heaven it has to be in you now Paul wrote to the church at Corinth in the second letter the thirteenth chapter in the fifth verse and said

examine yourselves whether you be in the faith prove your own selves know you not your own selves how that Christ be in you except you be reprobate and so it isn't just Christ on the cross or Christ in the tomb or Christ raised from the dead on the throne but it is Christ in us in you the hope of glory and so he said that to have life was to have him become so united with you that it was as though you've eaten his flesh and drunk his blood he has become the life of your life bone of your palm he's joined himself to you and you've received him because salvation isn't just from him salvation is in him and when he is in you then he is your

life now this is the testimony of the word and how important it is therefore that you shouldn't miss heaven by 18 inches multitudes of people are going to

do that our evangelical churches are filled with people that are going to miss heaven by 18 inches because all their salvation is up here and it never got down here where Christ became their life they have the verse but they don't have him years ago down in Tennessee in a service on a Sunday morning invitation was given a man came forward a personal worker with a card and a snapboard and he said I went to see him said what did you come for I came to be saved he said what do you want to be saved from he said I didn't know there was a choice sin and hell I guess he said alright are you a sinner he said yes or I wouldn't be here he said the personal worker opened his bible and said read that the man read he that hath the son of light hath life he that hath not the son shall not see life oh

do you believe it yes I believe it and so he said what's your name what's your address telephone number he said now do you want to be baptized he said well I don't know I guess so I suppose he said any questions yes there is a question I just read that verse he that hath the son of light and I told you I believe it and that's true but there's just one question how do you get the son well he said don't worry about that that isn't important we'll take care of that in one of the Sunday school classes the important thing for you to know is now that you believe it and so they signed his name to the card and ten minutes later he was being baptized and the personal worker came to a pastor friend of mine and said you know I've been in a little bit of trouble about that that fellow believed that

verse all right but I've just been thinking maybe we ought to do a little more than we do because it isn't just to have the verse that says he that hath the son of light because life isn't in the verse life is in the son have I been wrong about that and my pastor friend said oh my dear brother and multitudes of people in that day are going to hear him say away with you I never knew you because they'd said Lord, Lord but they'd never come to the place where they truly repented and truly received him and he had become the flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone and life of their life and all they had was the word and all they had was the verse and salvation isn't a verse salvation is a person and that person in vital relationship with you can you see how important it is that we don't

neglect that we should be among that number in that day that will hear him say away with you I never knew you they knew him they knew the right things to say the right places to go the right things to do but he'd never come in and salvation isn't a person and you're agreed with this and we can understand that but we don't stop there turn to John chapter 12 John chapter 12 in verse 24 our Lord Jesus Christ is continuing to minister to us and so it's in this particular occasion in verse 23 a group of previously a group of Greeks had come and said sir we would see Jesus and Jesus answered them saying the hour has come that the son of man should be glorified verily verily I say unto you except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone but if it die it bringeth forth much

fruit he that loveth his life shall lose it but he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal if any man serve him he let him follow me and where I am there shall also my servant be if any man serve me him will my father honor and so great salvation this great salvation doesn't only include salvation from the penalty of sin it doesn't only include Christ our life that he has delivered us from death by becoming our life but he said if any man serve me let him follow me and where I am there also shall my servant be where did the Lord Jesus go for us where did the Lord Jesus go for us he went to the cross he went there in our place and in our stead he was there crucified for us as a corn of wheat he was prepared to fall into the ground and die knowing that if he did

not he would abide alone but were he to die as the father had sent him into the world for that hour and that purpose he would bring forth much fruit but he said it isn't just a cross for me four times in the ministry of our Lord he mentioned the word cross in Matthew in Matthew 10 he said take up your cross and follow me in Mark 10 he said to the rich young ruler first tell all you have give it to the poor take up your cross and come follow me and in Matthew 16 he said if any man would follow me let him take up his cross and come follow me and in Luke 14 he said except a man if any man take up not his cross and come follow me he cannot be my disciple the only four times the Lord Jesus mentioned the word cross as such was in reference to his disciples at the very outset he said this is the

condition for coming to me it is as though you were to say here at Bethany Fellowship the only possible way that anyone can become a member of Bethany Fellowship is to go to the gallows have the rope put around your neck the trap door sprung and your life utterly taken away from you and when they've taken you down from the gallows slip the rope off your neck and you're cold to death then you're a candidate for Bethany Fellowship it was as though we were to say in the gospel tabernacle in New York City that no one can become a member of that church until they've gone up to Sing Sing they've gone into that little room that's set aside for criminals under capital punishment they've had the electrode put around the forehead around the hands and the feet and the power has been turned on and

they've been electrocuted and then it is that when they've been taken out of that room and laid out and stretched their candidate for membership it was just this shocking when the Lord Jesus Christ used these words in this context his people couldn't understand it did you know what he said if any man take not up his cross and come follow me he cannot be my disciple and so we find that this great salvation does not only include salvation from sin salvation from hell but it also includes salvation from the world in which we've lived that's governed us and controlled us whose attitudes whose maxims whose rewards we've sought and whose interests we've served it not only includes salvation from the world but includes salvation from the flesh from our own personality and nature traits and

interests it includes salvation from those habits and attitudes that we've developed and acquired but it not only includes salvation from the world and the flesh but it also includes salvation from the devil we were his bond slaves we'd given him control of our life it had been done for us by the father of the race but it had been confirmed by us by our own choice at the age of accountability and we were then the children of the devil his father he was our father we were his children his nature we exhibited and his acts we performed and his government we accepted but we come to the Lord Jesus Christ and his purpose is not only to save us from hell and save us from sin but it's to save us from the world and its government and its interests and its control it's to save us from the flesh

with its pull and its hold and its ensnaring and meshing pulls around us and it's to save us from the devil with all of his power and all of his cunning and all of his craftiness the Lord Jesus died therefore to set his people free for whom the son makes free is free indeed free from the fear of death free from the fear of hell but free from the power of the world free from the power of the flesh and free from the power of the devil this was all part of his great salvation now can you see the folly of a person saying well I don't want to go to hell when I die but I'm quite content to be in bondage to the world to its aims to its goals to its interests to its rewards and to engage in its service for can you see how silly it is how foolish how ridiculous it is for a person to say I don't

want to go to hell I want to go to heaven but I'm quite content to go on being in bondage to my own personality I've got a mean ugly disposition you see oh I lose my temper I get terribly mad but I'm quite

content to go on shaming Christ and caricaturizing Christ you see because really all I wanted out of Christ was to escape from hell can't you see what a total contradiction this is can't you see how foolish it is for a person to say well you see I'm quite willing to go on doing the business of the devil I'm willing to be a fifth columnist for hell because I've already been secured against the burning I won't have to go to hell when I die and so I don't care if I do serve the devil a little bit it's alright can't you see what a total contradiction of terms this is how unthinkable it is

and no wonder the writer of Hebrews says how can we escape if we neglect so great salvation when God's salvation intended deliverance not only from the penalty of our sin and from the certainty of hell but it included deliverance from the power of the law its grip and its hold upon us it included deliverance from the power of the flesh the personality the nature the traits of the individual it included deliverance from the power and control of Satan himself and the demons of darkness and for a person to say well I'm all all I really want from Christ is just to go to heaven anyway why it's unthinkable it's inconceivable it can't be it just can't be that anyone can spurn the grace of God and the mercy of God and the love of God manifest in the death of his son to set his people free and go

on in bondage when he's already paid the price of their deliverance they tell about a man out in the western part of Mississippi in a little rural town way back up the river that had a large plantation and many many slaves somebody came around to the slaves and said the emancipation proclamation's been signed they went to the owner and says now what does that mean he says that means I can't sell you to anybody else that means that from now on you just I just can't sell you it's utterly impossible for me to sell you the government said I can't sell you and so well what does that mean that means you just go right ahead and work here and you don't need to be the least bit afraid you just work for me and go right on working for me and I'll never sell you I'll never sell you you can stay right

here so one year went on two years went on they kept living in the slave quarters they kept going to the field eating the food taking the lash of the overseer just going right on and they said isn't it wonderful to be emancipated we don't have to be so fear about being sold our families won't be broken up and children you can live right here with your father and your and your mommy all your life we go right on working for the master here and so they go right out into the field and grovel and serve and they were talking about being emancipated because they couldn't be sold to anybody else then someone came along and said what are you doing here well we we don't need to be afraid about being sold anymore you don't understand what emancipation is you don't need to serve that man anymore he

doesn't own you he not only can't sell you but he can't work you you don't have to do his dirty bidding anymore you can leave here pack your things and go down the road and go anywhere you want to go well he never told us that that's what it meant to be emancipated and so we've spent four years working here when we didn't have to oh listen I know children of God that have been four years doing the bidding of the world and longer than that doing the bidding of the flesh and longer than that being hounded and whipped by the devil and they never heard that Jesus Christ died to set them free but oh to think that when they've heard they'll go right on in bondage that's unthinkable that's unthinkable and so if I speak to you and you've had bondage to the world it's been gripping and pulling the

Lord Jesus died to set you free he carried you with him to the cross so that as you went down in death the world would have to relinquish its hold it couldn't follow you into death he carried you with him to the cross so that as you went with him into death the flesh couldn't hold you and govern you anymore he carried you with him so that the devil couldn't hold you anymore and then he brought you up on the other side of the

grave with him in newness of life so that you could walk and flee for he that is dead is freed from sin can you go on neglecting so great salvation you can't you've got to admit your bondage admit your need admit that you've been serving when you didn't have to serve and come and throw yourself at his feet and gladly take from his nail pierced hand the deliverance

that he purchased with his blood because you've heard about it you've heard about it and you know that he died to set you free set you free years ago an Englishman had gone out to California made his fortune in the gold fields he wanted to go back and live with his own people so he sent his money by check around back to England and he came overland on the Santa Fe trail to Kansas City and down to Missouri and then the Mississippi and ended up in New Orleans where he was going to take ship to New York and from there to England and as a tourist in New Orleans he did as most tourists do he went down to the slave market only then in the early 1850s there were still slaves being sold and as he went into the market he saw a lot of men gathered there and one party was put on a young Negress very

beautiful for her race and he heard the men as they were speaking about her he saw two evil looking men bidding for her quite heatedly and then he heard them say what they would do with her and his heart just revolted against the whole swinish thing and finally when they were bidding and the bidding prices were getting very high and smaller he just couldn't stand it and so he beckoned to the auctioneer and he said a figure which was exactly twice the last bid utterly beyond anything that had ever been paid for a slave in that market before he said have you got the money and he came up and he said yeah he got the money and so the bill of sale was made out and he went over to the block to take the woman that he had purchased and as she came down one step and stood just about level with his

eyes she had made a mouth full of spittle and she spat right full in his face and hissed through her clenched teeth I hate you he said nothing to the back of his hand he wiped the spittle away took her by the hand walked down the street across this intersection through the mud down that street till he came to a little office building she couldn't read didn't know what it was he went to the desk began to speak the man behind the desk began to protest he said I insist it's the law I insist and finally he came back paid some money and got a paper he walked over to the woman that was like a beast ready to spring on him he handed the paper out and he said here here are your manumission papers you're free she still hissed I hate you didn't you understand I said here are your manumission papers

you're free she said no you paid twice as much for me as they've ever paid for anybody on that block are you giving me these I don't believe said yes these are your manumission papers and he put them in her hand and she said stop mister do you mean to say that you bought me to set me free said yes that's why I bought you to set you free tears came up into eyes that hadn't known tears for a long time the gist spilled over her face softened and then she slipped down on her hands and knees and she reached down and put her hands around those rough miners boots and then laid her cheek down on the toe of one of them and through her tears she sobbed oh you bought me to set me free you bought me to set me free you paid more than has ever been paid before just to set me free and then through her

tears she looked up and said oh sir all i want in life is to be your slave you bought me the lord jesus christ bought you to set you free and when you understand that then it's the joy of your life to come and stand against the door of grace and let it bore through the ear of your heart that you can be a virgin born slave forever he bought you to set you free not only from hell but from the world and the flesh and the devil he bought you oh come to him kiss his nail pierced feet and take from his hand that great salvation that he purchased with his blood and remember he bought you to set you free

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0770.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paris-reidhead/so-great-salvation/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net