

# Sunday Night Meditations 32 Message and Song - 1950's

by Welcome Detweiler

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*We can know our salvation and be sure of our eternal destiny by trusting in Christ and resting in the finished work of Christ on the cross.*

**Duration:** 31:37

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Hebrews 9:22, 1 John 1:7, 1 John 5:13

**Topics:** "Faith Assurance", "Eternal Salvation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Caleb from the Bible. Caleb is praised for his faith and wholehearted devotion to God. The preacher emphasizes the importance of trusting in Jesus for salvation and having assurance of eternal life. He encourages Christians to live for Christ and serve Him faithfully. The sermon concludes with a reminder that salvation is not based on our own good works, but on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

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## Transcript

Greetings to our radio listeners. Our program opens today with the choir singing, I Belong to the King. When we take time out to think upon spiritual things, can you think of any question that is of greater importance than this one? Can I be sure that when I leave this scene, I will be in heaven? Some tell me that no one can know.

We must simply hope for the best in the end, and if that is true, I will have to be satisfied to take a leap in the dark with only a faint hope that somehow I shall land in heaven. I have been told that if I do the best I can, that is all that God can expect. But to be perfectly honest about it, I have not always done the best I could, and I am still not doing the very best I can.

So if doing the best I can will give me a title to enter God's presence, I do not qualify. I've also been told that in order to enter heaven, I must ask God regularly to forgive my sins. I did this for a number of years, but I could not definitely say that my sins were forgiven.

I could only say I hope they are. If I could only find some verse in the Bible that would indicate if a man sincerely asks God for forgiveness, God will forgive. But alas, such a verse could not be found.

Somehow I conceived the idea that the good deeds that I had done might cause God to overlook the bad things that I had done, which were not really too bad, but at least not pleasing to God. Of course, I got very little peace or satisfaction in just hoping that this theory would work. About that time, I met some friends who could say, I know I'm saved.

I know that when I die, I will go to heaven. I had always considered these friends to be mentally normal, but it was very hard for me to believe that anyone could be absolutely certain of going to heaven. It certainly sounded like boasting, and in effect I said, I hope I never become so presumptuous.

And yet, if it is possible for anyone to know this most important matter, I too want to know it. I misunderstood them, for I thought they said I am so good that I deserve to be in heaven when I die. But they didn't say that at all, but rather the very opposite.

They would freely confess that they were sinners and deserved to be in a lost eternity. They emphatically said that their good deeds, their church membership, their baptism, their taking the Lord's Supper had nothing to do with their salvation, but that they were resting entirely on the work that Christ accomplished on the cross of Calvary when he who had no sins of his own died the just for the unjust. I discovered that their loyalty to Christ was not with a view to obtaining salvation, but rather the outflow of the salvation they were already enjoying.

I read in my Bible in Isaiah 53 and verse 5, he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. I don't think I ever realized that all my sins were laid on Jesus, and that he suffered as a substitute for me on the cross.

Again, I read in Hebrews 9 22 that without the shedding of blood is no remission. According to this scripture, someone's blood will have to be shed before I can have remission, and with that I read 1 John 1 7, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from all sin. Can it be true that all my sins, past, present, and future were laid on Christ while he suffered for sinners on the cross? It must be true.

The Bible says it in so many times, and can it be true that God is satisfied with Christ's full payment for my sins? Then there is no charge against me if I accept Christ as my sin-bearer, as my substitute, or as my savior. If the question of all my sins was settled to God's satisfaction on the cross, there is nothing left for me to do but to believe and thank the Lord Jesus Christ for what he has done for me. Why should he love me so? Why should he take my place and die for me? These questions have never been answered.

The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell. The simple and clear way of salvation seemed so new and astonishing to me, but really it wasn't new, for many of the old hymns that I loved expressed the same truth. For instance, what can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh, precious is the flow that makes me whiter snow, nor other fount I know. Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Then again, for nothing good have I were by thy grace to claim. I'll wash my garments white in the blood of Calvary's lamb. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe.

Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow. Thus I could quote dozens of hymns which all agree that I can only obtain forgiveness by resting completely in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In John's Gospel, chapter 3, verse 36, I read, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. Notice it does not say, He that believeth about the Son hath everlasting life. To believe about the Son simply means that I believe the historical facts about Christ, and that will bring no salvation.

But to believe on the Son means that I believe that the work that he accomplished for me on Calvary is in itself enough to save my soul for all eternity. He that believeth on the Son hath, not may have, but h-a-t-h, hath everlasting life. God says it, and I believe it.

I believe that when God says, hath everlasting life, he means it. He does not mean shall hope to have. A little boy once said, hath means got it, and so it does.

Then again that familiar verse, John 3, 16, offers to me the same assurance. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Again, it does not say those who believe in him may have or may not perish, but it's definitely should not perish, but have everlasting life.

My last scripture is found in 1 John 5, 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life. What could be clearer than such a simple statement? God wants us to know, not to hope.

There is something seriously wrong when a person says, I hope I am saved, or I am reasonably sure that I am saved. God wants us to know, and I have found that many who do not know but only hope later on find out that they are not saved at all. If you would like to know that you are saved, I am happy to say that you can know, and you should know.

If you will in simple faith tell God that you believe, that the work that Christ did for you on the cross of Calvary is enough to save you, that you will rest in him alone, God's word declares that you are saved and the possessor of eternal life. Then of course as soon as you enjoy this wonderful possession, God will change your life. You will have new desires.

You have a new Christ to live for, and as you appreciate the wonderful work that he did for you on Calvary's cross, the cry of your heart will be, Lord Jesus, since you have done so much for me, I would like to serve you with all the ability that thou wilt give me. May God help you to rest in this assurance and to go forth from this day being able to say, I have trusted Christ completely for my salvation, and now I can say, I know I'm on the way to heaven. Greetings to our radio friends.

Our program opens today with a choir using a special arrangement of the old hymn, Take the Name of Jesus with You. Some years ago a Christian prayed, Lord, make me an extraordinary Christian, because there are already too many ordinary ones. Such a request might come under criticism, at least, if we take the privilege of judging his motives.

We might say he wanted to be an extraordinary Christian to attract attention to himself. But on the other hand, to refuse to ask God to be an extraordinary Christian might be a way of excusing our indifference. For the most part, God has been carrying on his work through men who trusted God wholly.

His mighty acts have been done through devout men upon whom God could thrust responsibility. In the Old Testament we have such extraordinary men as Caleb and Joshua, of whom we read, they wholly followed the Lord. In this they became conspicuous because the majority did not wholly follow the Lord.

All professing Christians make some pretense of following the Lord, but on the average the percentage is very low. Half-hearted and cold-hearted professing Christians are by far outnumbering those who seek to live entirely for the glory of God. In the case of Caleb, God's word tells us why he was extraordinary.

In the book of Numbers chapter 14 and verse 24 we read, But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit within him, and hath followed me wholly, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went. Did you notice the two words, another spirit? That's the secret of Caleb's life of victory. Another spirit simply means a spirit different from the general run.

The nation of Israel at this point was characterized by a spirit of rebellion. Caleb did not have a share in that attitude. He had a spirit of absolute obedience.

Israel was driven by a spirit of grumbling and complaint. Caleb had another spirit of quiet submission to God's plans and purposes. Again the nation had a spirit of independence.

She followed God only so far as it seemed wise to her to do. Caleb could not share that spirit of indifference or independence, for he wanted God's blessing, God's best. The tragedy of our age is not outright idolatry, but of those who claim to be Christians, the general spirit is we follow our savior after a certain fashion or to some degree, but only as far as it suits our convenience.

God gets the leftovers. He is squeezed into our program at the very end if there is any room left. It is very unwise to point the finger of chastisement at the nation of Israel for having so few who followed the Lord when we today have even fewer.

God's promise to the nation of Israel was conditional upon obedience. He said, Every place whereupon you tread with the soles of your feet, I have given it to you for an inheritance. Ordinarily we do not like to be accused of having big feet, but there's a sense in which we can congratulate Caleb for he had big feet.

That is, he claimed all of God's promises and followed wholeheartedly. How many individual Christians can stand today with Caleb and have it said of them, They have wholly followed the Lord in all things. Do you have another spirit, or are you drifting along with other professing Christians who make no spiritual progress from year to the next? The average Christian in our day does not wholly follow the Lord.

It may be that our endeavor to have more Christians, that we have unduly become interested in the quantity rather than the quality. Our present generation stands in need of outstanding Christians who are not drifting with a general trend, but men and women who can be used of God to do more than attend religious services regularly. When ten of Caleb's colleagues who inspected the land of Canaan brought back a pessimistic report, Caleb dared to oppose them because he had another spirit.

He believed God, and the people who appeared like giants to his low-living friends looked like mere grasshoppers to Caleb. When we trust God entirely, our seeming obstacles dwindle into insignificance. Giants scare us when we measure them alongside of ourselves, but giants become pygmies when we measure them alongside of God, and that's exactly what Caleb did.

Just the daily ordinary things that oppress us, or the greater obstacles, when we look at them in the light of an all-powerful God, they have a habit of melting away. Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer. Caleb had complete confidence in God, and that sounds very simple, and we say there's no good reason why we should not trust God completely.

But sad to say why we believe we should, we don't. We seem to prefer to be cumbered with a load of care, and as a result the things that should be like grasshoppers become great big burly giants. We stand before them, and we worry, fret, and tremble.

Caleb's God is our God, and I trust we shall learn increasingly to trust him completely, as did Caleb. If we raise the question, does it pay? The answer is found in Joshua chapter 14, and Joshua blessed Caleb and gave unto him Hebron for inheritance, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel, and the land had rest from war. A choice portion of this land of Canaan is the reward that Caleb received for being an extraordinary believer.

This 14th chapter of Joshua is most interesting, for it tells us something about Caleb's 85th birthday. On that day he looked back to the time when he was 40 years old, when Moses sent him to spy out the land, and this is what he says. Lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old, as yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me.

As my strength was then, even so is my strength now. Now therefore give me this mountain, referring to Hebron. I may have some listeners who are 85 or more years old, but I doubt seriously if any one of them can say I am just as strong as I was at 40.

From the retained vigor of Caleb we learn this lesson, that in the spiritual realm there is no need of growing weaker as the years pass by. Age may weaken the body, but it need not weaken our spiritual strength. Someone has introduced the expression of growing old gracefully, and no doubt it is something to be admired.

However, to grow old maintaining full spiritual strength, complete confidence in God is even greater than growing old gracefully. The devil has no happy old folks, for he has nothing to offer in declining years. He wants flaming youth, he wants your time and your talents while you are young, and he offers nothing but despair and disappointment to his followers in later years.

Those who have come to Christ for salvation, who are resting completely in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as a basis of salvation, have something very, very valuable, for it takes care of the dark past, it makes for happiness in the present, and it offers the best possible prospect for the future, an eternal home in heaven, free from earth's sorrows and cares. That's a wonderful prospect, and we need not say, I hope that will be my portion, but we can know, in fact we should know. If, my friend, you are compelled to say, I hope I'll be in heaven someday, you are not as happy as you might be, for God doesn't want you to say, I hope I'll be in heaven.

He wants you to say, I know I'll be in heaven. If our salvation depended on our good behavior, our good works, we could never be quite sure that we deserve to go to heaven. But since our salvation depends upon Christ and his atoning sacrifice at the cross of Calvary, all who are born again are assured of eternal life.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life. That's 1 John 5 and verse 13. Perhaps the secret of Caleb's strength on his 85th birthday was that he was free from all anxiety regarding his eternal destiny.

Now I see that my time is up, and I trust that those of you who do not know the Savior will see the wisdom of trusting him before it is too late. If you are a Christian, I trust you will have a desire to be wholehearted

for the Lord Jesus Christ to live for him and to serve him day by day. May God bless you.

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