

# God Our Salvation

by William Gadsby

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*God's salvation is a complete and personal experience that transforms the sinner, bringing them into a new relationship with God.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 12:2, Isaiah 51:11, John 16:14, Romans 3:23, Romans 4:25, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Ephesians 2:1, 2 Timothy 1:9

**Topics:** "Divine Salvation", "Trinitarian Theology"

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## Description

William Gadsby preaches about the necessity of God personally declaring to the soul, 'I am thy salvation,' emphasizing that human efforts and angelic strength are insufficient for salvation, and only God Himself can provide the needed salvation. He delves into the essential need and suitability of this salvation for sinners, highlighting the depth of depravity, the extent of God's holy law, and the comprehensive nature of the salvation provided by God. Gadsby explains the two branches of salvation - what it saves from and what it saves to - illustrating the transformative power of God's salvation in raising sinners from degradation to glory. He concludes by emphasizing the role of the Trinity in this salvation, with God the Father predestinating, Christ securing, and the Holy Spirit revealing and applying this great salvation to the hearts of believers.

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## Transcript

"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." (Psalm 35:3)

You and I stand on the verge of an eternal world, and unless God himself say to the soul, "I am thy salvation," we must eternally perish. The great body of professors of religion are quite satisfied in talking about or hearing of a salvation. They tell us what great salvation God has accomplished for us, if we will but close in with it, if we will but do our part; and other professors please themselves with talking about the discriminating doctrines of the gospel, and more or less ridicule the inward teachings and workings of God the Spirit in the soul, and the feelings of the poor sinner under them. But whenever the Lord the Spirit circumcises the heart of a sinner by the knife of the law, he lays his heart open, and lets the contents of the heart begin to ooze up with abominable filth, guilt, and horrors. Nothing will then do for the soul short of the Lord speaking, and saying to such a soul, "I am thy salvation."

All the efforts of nature will leave a man to perish in his sins. There is not strength enough in an angel to save him. In fact, if all the angels in heaven were to unite to save one sinner, that sinner must be eternally lost if he had not a better salvation than they could give him. He must have a salvation which none but the

Lord himself is, and none but he can make known.

I shall endeavour, as the Lord shall give me wisdom and grace, and strength of body and mind, to make a few remarks on the following particulars:

I. Show what makes this salvation essentially necessary and particularly suitable for the sinner.

II. What this salvation couches in it.

III. That God himself, in his Trinity of Persons, is this salvation.

IV. Show the effect of a sinner being made to feel his need of this salvation. The quickened sinner, made alive to God, will be putting up this petition, and never rest satisfied without an answer, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." It will not do for him to be told all have a chance of being saved; it is all lumber to such a poor sinner. The man must have a salvation that leaves no chance of being lost. This alone will fit his troubled conscience; therefore his soul will from time to time vehemently cry, "O Lord, say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."

V. Show what is the effect of the Lord revealing this salvation to the conscience.

I must be brief. May the Lord the Spirit lead me to speak such things as his solemn Majesty designs to apply to your hearts.

I. Show what makes this salvation essentially necessary and particularly suitable for the sinner. What a blessing it will be if the Lord lays open some poor heart tonight! If he does, and lets you feel what your heart is, you will not be able to find a greater wretch than yourself in all the town. There may be practically worse; but you will feel, between God and your soul, the seeds of all iniquity within you. If they have not come out in practice, there is no merit due to you; for had the Lord placed you in the same circumstances as some are, and left you to your own workings, they would have come out. So we have cause to be thankful to God that we are preserved from the outward enormities and evil practice of others. I am a living witness of it, and can say now to the honour of God that he kept me from one awful branch of open vice and immorality; for had he not, I should have gone on the same as others. I remember the time well. I resided not more than three miles from this place, when I was bent on ruin, determined what I would do, and laid my plan most successfully, as I thought, being determined to gratify my carnal heart by committing gross uncleanness in its various branches. But the Lord restrained me, and I was not so well pleased, I assure you, that I was frustrated, so wretched and guilty was I at that time. But when his solemn Majesty laid my heart open, what a scene presented itself to my view! What a horrible wretch I appeared in my own eyes, my own feelings, before a heart-searching God. The truth is that law and justice, holiness, and everything becoming the character of God, as a just and holy God, is against sin, and sin is against this holy God. "For we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) Every perfection of his nature will unite to cut down the sinner in his conscience if he has quickened his soul, and eternally if not interested in this salvation.

We need a salvation that is as extensive as the requirements of God's holy law, as extensive as the demands of justice, as extensive as the sinner's awful depths of depravity; a salvation,--I speak it with reverence, that the Lord cannot mend nor Satan mar. A salvation short of this will not reach the core of your heart. We may cover the outside of the wound, but the core is untouched. As we have sinned against God, and as his holy law says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which is written in the

book of the law to do them," (Gal. 3:10) and, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point is guilty of all," (James 2:10) do not we need a great salvation?

Perhaps some of you may say, "I have never gone the lengths that some have; I have never committed adultery or fornication." Neither have I, practically; but I say, when the Lord laid my heart open, I found, what you will, if he lays yours open, there were within all the seeds of evil. The law of God looks at the intents and thoughts of the heart. It condemns for filthy thoughts, it condemns for evil principles. So extensive is the law, in its searching power, and the sentence that it passes, that it solemnly declares, "He that offends in one point is guilty of all." Have you never offended in any one point? Now, when your heart has been laid open to the eye of infinite Justice, and the strictest scrutiny of God's law, where must you look for help?

Rather than that the Almighty can save the sinner at the expense of his justice, or to the disparagement of his law, his very nature binds him to doom to eternal misery the whole world. Some persons try to mend the law, and what they call mollify it. They tell us we must do by it as the schoolboy does by his copy, come as near to it as we can; but God's law will have nothing to do with their copies. You may depend upon this, you must either bring a holiness and righteousness that the Lord cannot find fault with, or he is bound to send you to hell. If you cannot produce a holiness and righteousness that the Lord himself cannot find fault with his very nature binds him to send you to eternal punishment. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4,20) As we have all awfully sinned, we need a salvation, and a great one, and such a one as no creature can produce.

If the Lord has taught you, and you take notice, you will see there are two tribes of professors in our day who appear quite different in their creed, but both unite in self. One party says, "We all need salvation, and all have it in our power to save our souls if we perform the conditions laid down;" and another party says, "There are no conditions. Salvation is full and free; without any conditions on our part. We have only simply to believe in Christ and the doctrines of the gospel, and we have no cause to be concerned about the misery and wretchedness of our corrupt nature, or about our sins, or to look for any special manifestations. We have simply to believe and receive the doctrines of grace and truth as in the Word, and we shall be happy." The truth is, the devil would rejoice in such happiness; for all you do will never disturb any of the powers of darkness. One party says, "Work;" the other, "Believe;" and both act from their selfish nature. But when the Lord brings his people experimentally to know they can neither work nor believe, they are brought to feel, before a heart-searching God, they have need of this great salvation.

"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Justice must be satisfied, the law must be honoured, sin must be destroyed, Satan defeated, the world overcome, and God glorified, or the sinner cannot be saved. We pass on to notice.

II. What this salvation couches in it. There are two distinct branches in salvation. First, what it saves from; secondly, what it saves to.

Before I enter on this point, allow me to illustrate it thus. Suppose you knew one of the vilest of the vile in the town of Bedworth, one who had committed all manner of abomination till the whole town rang with it; he is taken up, sent to prison, tried, cast, and condemned; but, through some interest, the queen pardons him; he is set at liberty, and escapes the gallows; that would be in one sense salvation. But this is not half a salvation; because nobody would employ him. The whole neighbourhood thinks it a pity and a shame such a vile character should be let loose to be the terror of the place again.

As nobody would like to see him, in all probability the poor creature must have recourse to his old practices of stealing, or he could not get bread. So this would not be half a salvation. But if the queen could prove, and did so, that he was one of the royal family, and was in her heart and affections, and sent her state carriage to fetch him from the prison to the palace; washed, clothed, adorned, and fed him; made it known he was to be in the palace as long as he lived, and commanded the nobles to honour him; and put such honour on him that he was arrayed in the royal robe, and the nobles proclaimed, "Thus shall it be done unto the man the queen delighteth to honour;" so not only lifts him from the dungeon and saves him from the gallows, but raises him to the highest honours, conferring upon him the greatest glory the nation can confer, this looks like a great salvation; so that the poor wretch would not be in the danger he was in before.

But the salvation of which I am about to speak, if the Lord will lead me on to declare it, you will see is infinitely more than even this. It takes a poor man from the dust, and a beggar from the dunghill. Depend upon it, "he raiseth up the poor from the dunghill, to set him among princes," (1 Sam. 2:8) the princes of God's people, and makes the man inherit the throne of glory. He takes him from the lowest state of degradation, and exalts him far beyond angels. The Lord does more for the sinner he saves than he has done for all the angels in heaven, put them all together.

That sinner who is blessed with God's salvation in his heart has blessings vastly greater than the angels. They were predestinated to a holy state, and confirmed in it; but they were never redeemed. They know nothing about redemption for themselves. Here is a poor sinner, a beggar, a pauper, a lawbreaker, a God-dishonouring sinner, a hell-deserving sinner, redeemed, quickened, consecrated, and raised from his degrading state of guilt and filth, and raised to the highest state of declarative glory that the Lord can possibly raise a poor sinner to.

What a salvation it is that accomplishes this! O! This is God's blessed salvation. It is a salvation that saves from the guilt of sin; the damning power of sin; the curse connected with it; the reigning power of it, the love of it, and at death the inbeing of it. It is a salvation completely from sin. What a salvation, then, this must be; for sin conquered all the world. O, this horrid monster, sin! We read of one great conqueror who conquered all the known world, yet never conquered the hearts and affections of the people; but sin has done this.

There is not a man or woman under the sun who has not in some way given their hearts and affections to sin; embraced it and cleaved to it, so that they would be eternally lost before they would part with it, if the Lord did not quicken their dead souls, and give them divine life. Such is the vileness of nature, the love of sin, that they would never part with it.

Well, this salvation of which I am about to speak is a complete salvation from that enemy who has conquered the whole universe and every human being. This is a complete salvation from that monster sin; so that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Hence the Lord Jesus Christ is said to have finished transgression, made an end of sin, and redeemed his people from all iniquity. (Dan. 9:24)

This salvation is not only a salvation from sin in all its bearings, but it is a salvation from the curse of the law. The law cannot curse the sinner that is saved, because he has become dead to the law by the body of Christ. What adds to the blessedness of this salvation is, that it is a salvation of manifestive union to the Son of God. Those who are killed to the law are married to Christ, and are manifestly one with Jesus; they are bone of his bone, body of his body, flesh of his flesh, and spirit of his spirit. Then what a glorious

salvation that is which the Lord has accomplished for poor sinners.

I have often thought of what Paul says: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." (Rom. 7:5) Have you not found it so? When in the flesh, working such abominable things, sometimes it has brought forth legal vows and promises; at other times working wrath and rebellion; so that in the end it brings forth fruit unto death. This is all that ever the law can do for a sinner. All its workings in a poor sinner's heart only make it fruitful unto death. But, being delivered from the law by the blessed body of the Lord Jesus Christ, we bring forth fruit unto God; we bring forth fruit unto holiness. Thus it is a salvation that raises a sinner from the most awful state of degradation and ruin to the blessed, solemn, glorious state of manifestive union to Christ; to oneness with him. They therefore bring forth fruit unto the praise and glory of his name.

This salvation is a salvation from death in all its bearings. "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23) This is a salvation from death. Say you, "Will not the Lord's people die? Shall we not all die?" I will tell you how it is. The Lord's people go to sleep; they sleep in Jesus. That is what the Holy Ghost declares: "They fall asleep in Jesus." Death to the child of God, who is saved by the grace of God, is no worse than a gentle nurse coming and rocking a peevish child to sleep. They are rocked asleep in the cradle of the love and blood of the Son of God. "They that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." They shall be eventually raised from this sleep. It is a salvation from every appearance of death; a salvation to all the glorious appearances of divine life and love. This is the salvation the Lord accomplishes for his dear people. You know what the Lord says concerning this people with the rest of mankind, that they are all dead in trespasses and sins: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1) Then, whether you know it or not, if the Lord has not quickened your soul, you are as dead to spirituality as a dead corpse in the grave; and it has as much power to come out of the grave and work as you have to quicken your own soul. This salvation is a salvation that brings quickening power, and makes the dead soul alive to God; brings the soul that was spiritually dead up into life in the Lord.

That soul that is made a partaker of this salvation is brought to cry, sigh, groan, pant, pray, and wrestle again and again, day by day, and will never rest till the Lord manifests to him Christ's salvation. There being living movements in all his ways, after the Lord makes him alive, he has living movements towards God. It is as that blessed portion of the Word of God says, "The Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:27) That poor soul in which the Lord has begun salvation,--at times he cannot talk; he cannot speak in prayer to the Lord. Perhaps some poor soul may be here tonight who is so bewildered, who is so confused, when he is on his knees he has not words to speak. "But," say you, "if he cannot speak, he should use the prayer book." You might as well count twenty. There is no prayer book that will touch your case, or come to the core of your disease. Now, mind what the Lord says. The Spirit helpeth the infirmities of the saints: "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." The Spirit maketh intercession according to the will of God. Is there a soul here groaning, sighing, panting for the living God? There is the inditing of the Spirit of God in your soul. He has commenced his divine life, seating himself there; and you may rest assured of this, he will maintain the life he has commenced. This salvation brings peace to the conscience, and is a salvation from death to life. That poor soul is alive that is in such a state that he sighs and groans to God to have this salvation brought down to his conscience. Once there was a time when he had no desire to groan; he had set his eyes, his ears, and his heart on pleasure; when he took his fill of sin, saying, "What is it to anybody? We are to do as we like. Come, let us have another glass to drive and drink away sorrow." Many thousands drink away sorrow, till they drink themselves into the wrath of God in

black despair. It is through the mercy of the Lord he does not leave you to say this.

When this salvation is made known and manifest, it leads the soul to plead with God; sometimes there is such a blessedness in it, the man feels such fellowship between God and his conscience, that he is led to follow the Lord from Bethlehem to the wilderness, from the wilderness to Gethsemane's garden, from the garden to the cross, from the cross to the grave, and from the grave to the right hand of God, who has raised his people up together with Christ, and makes them sit together with Christ. Thus he raises the soul up to have holy converse with God. Thus he can plead with God as a man pleads with his friend. This is the nature of this salvation; it takes away his filth and gives him Christ's holiness. Christ is made to such a sinner sanctification. It takes away his unrighteousness, and gives him the righteousness of Christ. Christ is made of God unto him righteousness. He delivers him from all his foes, internal, infernal, and external. In the end, it raises him up to have intercourse with God in glory. He shall reign with him and Christ for ever and ever.

What a blessed salvation this is! Talk about doing our best, and the Lord will do his part, is all foolishness, mere lumber. When the Lord, in the riches of his grace, comes into the soul and raises the sinner up to God, and brings God and heaven down to the sinner, then God and heaven meet in the sinner's heart. Here is immortal glory not to be described by all the powers of men and angels.

"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." You sometimes talk about the glorious body of Christ. Did you ever give it a thought what is intended by the glorious body of Christ? See the Lord Jesus Christ traveling in the desert; we do not see his glory. I have often thought of one thing that eclipsed his glory, and an awful thing it was,--the sins of his people. They were all imputed to him and put upon him. If only yours and mine are so great, what must all the sins of God's people be? Do you wonder the people saw no beauty in him? It was no wonder when he was covered with such an awful garment as your sins and mine. There was one place where his solemn Majesty appeared in his glory. That was on the mount of transfiguration. Peter, and James, and John were with him, and said, "It is good to be here." Peter wanted to stop there for ever. Poor creature! He was for setting about building three tabernacles; but the Lord had better work for him to do.

This salvation our God has accomplished,--a salvation from death in all its bearings, and which shall issue in life in all its matchless glories. By this salvation he will raise the bodies of his people and fashion them like to the glorious body of Christ. Body and soul be together glorified with Christ.

III. God himself, in his Trinity of Persons, is this salvation.

It is said in Isa. 12, "Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." (Isa. 12:2) Our prayer is, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Had I strength and you patience, we might attempt to notice how the Three-One God, in all his glory, is our covenant God, in this salvation. However, as there is not time, a hint shall suffice. Let us hear what the Holy Ghost says upon the subject: "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) You see he saves us before he calls us. How so? "By his eternal purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This is what God says about it. Therefore the Holy Ghost, in another place, speaking on the subject says, "Sanctified by God the Father;" that is, set apart by God the Father; and where God the Father put them they are preserved in that state; there Christ preserves them. "Preserved in Christ Jesus." (Jude 1) God the Father

put them in Christ, and Christ never lost them. They lost themselves in Adam the first, but were never lost in or by Christ. There were secured where the Father put them; and where the Father put them he preserved them; he preserved them in Christ Jesus, and in God's own time they are called, quickened, and made alive by God the Holy Ghost, who manifests this salvation. The Father brought, predestinated, and gave them to Christ. Christ secured all the new covenant blessings. In Christ their Head the Father has secured all that shall make them holy and righteous: "The Lord shall glorify the house of his glory." (Isa. 60:7) In speaking to the believer the Lord says, "Thy God thy glory." What a blessed glory this is, compared with our poor creature fleshly glory that we are sometimes so foolishly built upon, which is nothing but rags when we have done; but when we are brought under the sweet and blessed teaching of the Spirit, and can enter into the mystery of God being our glory, we then know what this means: "Thy God thy glory"--God glorifying the house of his glory. We are led in some blessed measure to know something of this salvation proceeding from the heart of a covenant God.

Now we may ask, what part has Christ in this salvation? Bless his holy name, honours crown his brow for ever and ever! O my soul, adore him! He stood in his people's law place, called their sins his own, took their debt as his own, cancelled it by his blood, groaned, and sweat, and bled, and died. "He died the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." (1 Pet. 3:18) Can you think lightly of sin? Can you call it a trifle, while it tore the heart of our dear Christ, and horrified him? His soul was in an agony, so that he lay on the earth, and cried out, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He drank into his holy soul the hell that his children must have endured. Yea, he put out the flames of hell with his heart's blood, that my soul might obtain eternal blessedness. Then adore him, my soul, and bless his precious name! He obeyed the law in all its jots and tittles; for God says, "Not one jot or tittle shall fail till all be fulfilled." (Matt. 5:18)

You who imagine you can go to heaven by taking the law as your rule of life, how will you do? You have not fulfilled even its great commands, leaving alone its jots and tittles. When are they to be fulfilled? They are all fulfilled by the Lawfulfiller; by the living and dying of the God-man Mediator. Therefore, "he died for our offences, and rose again for our justification." (Rom. 4:25)

When the Lord the Spirit gives a poor sinner faith in his great work, this immortal work of the Lord Jesus Christ, he presents to God a perfect righteousness. Thus the apostle says, "Do we then make void the law, through faith? God forbid! Yea we establish the law." (Rom. 3:31) Under the teaching of the blessed Spirit, we find the Lord Jesus magnified it, and made it honourable, (Isa. 42:21) and brought in everlasting righteousness. (Dan. 9:24) When the Lord the Spirit gives us faith to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, then we are swallowed up in Christ, and can appear before a heart-searching God without blame. Christ has completed, by his blessed obedience, dying, and rising, this salvation. He hath redeemed us from all iniquity. He hath put an end to sin, finished transgression, and by one offering he hath for ever perfected them who are sanctified, or set apart. (Dan. 9:24; Heb. 10:14) Then, to close the business, he hath blessedly redeemed us from sin, redeemed us from our foes, redeemed us to God. This takes in the eternal world, and this redemption being eternal, it cannot be lost in time. Blessed be God for this salvation.

"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Do you think the Lord Jesus Christ gave his life, his honour, and his blood for an uncertainty? Now, mind what he says: "The redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion." It does not say they shall have a chance of coming, but, "The redeemed of the Lord shall come." Unbelief says they shall not, their carnal hearts and fleshly appetites say they cannot come at present; flesh wants a little more pleasure. But when the Lord's time comes, when "Shall come" gets hold of them, he conquers them by his constraining power, and says they shall come. "The redeemed of the Lord shall come." When the

Lord's "Shall come" gets hold of the conscience, it not only says, "They shall come," but assures the poor souls that "everlasting joy shall rest on their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 51:11) Thus our blessed Christ has accomplished this great salvation.

What hand hath the Spirit in this? Christ says, "He shall glorify me." (John 16:14) The Lord Jesus Christ says to the Father, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) The Spirit takes his stand on Christ; Christ says, "He shall glorify me." How shall he do this? He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to the poor soul, (John 15:26; John 16:14,15; Zech. 12:10) those things revealed in the Bible. We are such poor blind creatures, we cannot see them till the Lord the Spirit reveals them to the conscience; but when he reveals them, we can see and feel them, and bless God for this rich salvation. As the Holy Ghost lays our hearts open, and the heart of the Lord Jesus being open, what a blessed thing when these two meet! Our heart loses nothing but sin, and the heart of Christ brings nothing but blood and love, which is sweetly brought into ours by the Spirit. So we see this is the way the Lord healeth us. Well may we say, "O say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Thus the Spirit of the Lord commends the blessings of the gospel to the conscience, and brings us to feel a sweet measure of the love, life, and power of it in our hearts.

Do you know anything of this salvation? However, I must draw towards a conclusion, and

IV. Show the effect of a sinner being made to feel his need of this salvation. Every living soul made alive to God will be putting up this petition, and never rest satisfied without an answer: "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." If you can go on satisfied, and do not care what religion you have, saying you have many things pleasing to the flesh, many external duties, and much internal piety; or if, with your exalted notions of the doctrines of grace, you are satisfied with anything short of God himself speaking to your soul that he is your salvation you are in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. I do not care what your religion is; let it be what it may, if you are satisfied without this, it is not the religion of the Son of God. Where the religion of the Son of God is, that soul wants the revelation of God's salvation. This will cause the soul to supplicate, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." If the Lord does not at once manifest himself, the poor soul will not give up until the Lord does condescend to answer his prayer. He must have some sweet meltings down in his mind, some little liftings up with intimations of mercy, some drippings of his love, here and there a berry just to wet the mouth of the poor creature, and keep it from parching up, in order to keep it still sighing, groaning, and mourning. They cannot be satisfied, they cannot rest who have been quickened until they have the life and power of a salvation in their own hearts, by being able sweetly and feelingly to say, "God is my salvation." They must feel the Lord has graciously and blessedly given them that sweet and blessed power to feel in their souls that God is their salvation. "Cannot be satisfied?" say you. "Do you not think that persons who are decidedly pious, and do their duty, and never injure anybody, but love everybody, and do good to everybody; do you not think that they are right?" And perhaps some may say, "My minister says it is all enthusiasm to talk about this salvation being revealed to their conscience; all we have to do is simply to believe the Word, be decidedly pious, do our duty, and hope for the best." Now with all this, with all your decision, if this is all the religion you have, you will, so dying, be eternally lost, as sure as the Lord lives. You must have some better ground of a living power in your heart, and not rest short of God saying to your soul he is your salvation. Nothing short of this will do. You must be made to say, "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after God, the living God." (Ps. 42:1,2) If any here are resting on the delusive ground of their decided piety, there will be nothing but confusion, when the Lord, by a mighty earthquake, is pleased to come and shake you off your sandy foundations. If you have no better resting-place, you will sink into black despair.

V. Some may say, "Would not a certainty of the revelation of this salvation make us negligent, and careless, and love sin?" Let us hear what the Lord says upon it. When he is speaking of the revelation of this, he says, "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 16:63) When the Lord brings salvation to the heart, and causes the poor sinner to feel his love, the Lord fills him with a holy and blessed shame before God. He is ashamed, on account of his many sins, and he is ashamed that he has so base a heart; and he is lost in wonder at the wonderful love of God to him. The apostle says the grace of God teacheth us the denying of ungodliness. And all you who are acquainted with it remember when you were in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Has there not been a change wrought in you? Has not something taught you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world? This is what the grace of God leads us to. This grace brings humility, humility brings patience, and patience is to have a great deal of tribulation. I tell you how you will find it when the Lord reveals salvation to your heart, blessing you with the manifestation of it. You think you will never have any more sorrow, no more oozing up of sin, no more darkness, no more dismal feelings, no more conflicts within; and you sometimes act as if you wanted a sweet enjoyment of salvation, for the same purpose that a lady places a trinket upon her mantelpiece, to make a display of it. But that is not the purpose for which the Lord gives it to us. If he gives patience, it must be tried with tribulation; if he gives us faith, we shall have something for that faith to do; faith obtains the victory; but there can be no victory without a battle, and faith has many battles to fight,--battles with sin, battles with unbelief, battles with the world, battles with the man's own heart, battles with the devil in various ways. And when the Spirit gives us light, it is that we may see Christ as a Saviour, and long for his salvation.

When this salvation is revealed to the heart, it is proof against the devil and sin, pride, lust, and every abominable thing working in our vile nature. It overcomes every evil, to the honour of God and the glory of God. It shall show forth his glory. Sure I am it produces the most blessed effects; it sweetly calms the mind, produces peace, and purges the conscience from dead works. Is there a child of God in bondage, guilt, and pollution? Perhaps you will find him so peevish and wretched as not to converse with you; he cannot be pleasant with any one. And it is no wonder, seeing the numerous enemies he has to contend with. But when the Lord reveals this salvation to his conscience, it brings calmness, serenity, holiness, happiness. The man knows a little of this truth: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6) This light, this knowledge of the glory of God, transforms the mind in some blessed measure. Then we walk in the light as he is in the light, the whole mind being under a gracious feeling and very blessed enjoyment of this salvation.

To conclude. What do you know of this salvation? The greater part of you are strangers to me; but you and I must meet God and be seen exactly as we are; and if we have not this salvation, what an awful meeting it will be! Nothing short of this can do. Any salvation that does not come to the core, and give us freedom from sin and death, will leave us to perish.

May the Lord lead you and me feelingly into the blessings of God's salvation, for his name and mercy's sake. Amen!

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