

(The Real Truth) 7. the Real Truth About Salvation

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes that true salvation encompasses forgiveness, power over sin, and the importance of community and prayer in the Christian life.

Scripture: Matthew 4:1

Topics: "Salvation", "Sin Nature"

Description

Zac Poonen preaches on the significance of the name 'Jesus' meaning 'Saviour', emphasizing that Jesus came to save people from their sins, not just to forgive them. Salvation involves being saved from the penalty, power, and presence of sin, experienced in three tenses - past, present, and future. The sermon highlights the need for God's Word, the Holy Spirit, and fellowship with other believers as sources of power to overcome temptation and live uprightly.

Transcript

The Name "Jesus" means "Saviour".

He came to earth with that Name, because that was what He came to do - to save people from their sins.

Salvation is more than forgiveness.

Let me use an illustration to make the difference clear.

Let us say that the road outside my house is being repaired, and that a deep pit has been dug there. I warn my little boy, saying, "Don't go near that pit, for you might fall into it." But let us say that he disobeys my command and goes near the pit to have a look inside. And he slips and falls inside. From inside that 10-foot pit, he then cries out, calling me.

When I come there, he tells me that he is truly sorry for disobeying my command, and asks me to forgive him. Supposing I then say to him, "All right son, I forgive you. Good Bye!", what would I have done. I would have forgiven him. But I would not have saved him.

Salvation would involve more than forgiveness. It would involve my pulling him out of the pit that he has fallen into.

This is what Jesus has come to do for us too. It is not enough that He forgives us our sins. He has come to save us from our sins too.

We have all fallen deeply into the pit of sin, by disobeying our conscience again and again. Now if God were to forgive us, that by itself would be wonderful news. But the good news of Christ is that He will not only forgive us, but save us from the power of sin as well.

Salvation is to be experienced by us in three tenses - past, present and future. We must first of all be saved from the penalty of sin. Then we must be saved from the power of sin. Then finally, we will be saved from the very presence of sin, when we get to heaven.

The first part of salvation deals with the forgiveness of our sins - the removal of the guilt of our past.

But that is not enough. We need help from God to live uprightly in the future too. And for this, God gives us His power.

I heard a story of a mental hospital where people who were mentally unsound were admitted for treatment. They used a test there to find out whether some of their inmates had been cured to the point where they could reason properly. They would put an inmate in a room where a tap was constantly gushing out water. They would then give him a mop and a bucket, and ask him to dry the floor. If he tried to do that without first closing the tap, that would indicate that he has not come to his senses as yet!!

That is our problem too. There is a tap within us that is constantly gushing out sin. Jesus not only mops up the sins that we have committed. He gives us power to close the tap as well. Otherwise the gospel would not be good news at all.

The gospel (good news) is described in the Bible as "the power of God for salvation" (Romans chapter 1, verse 16).

The first source of power is God's Word. The Bible is a powerful weapon that can help us overcome temptation. We read in the Bible that Jesus Himself overcame Satan's temptations through the power of God's Word (Matthew chapter 4, verses 1 to 11).

That is why we must develop the habit of reading God's Word every day, so that God can speak to us through it and strengthen us to face the battles of daily life.

The Bible says to young men, "You are strong, with God's Word in your hearts, and you have won your struggle against Satan" (First Epistle of John, chapter 2, verse 14).

The second source of power is the Holy Spirit of God Who comes to live within us. He wants to live within us permanently to speak to us daily, to strengthen us to face life's struggles, and to help us to follow in Jesus' footsteps as His disciples. We must ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit continuously.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "If even sinful persons give their children what they need, don't you realize that your Heavenly Father will do at least as much, and give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him" (Luke chapter 11, verse 13).

A third source of power is fellowship with other like-minded Christians.

When many coals are together in a fire, they all burn brightly. But if one coal is taken out (even if it is the most brightly burning one), it will soon die out. That is how it will be with us too, if we try to live for God all by ourselves, without fellowship with other Christians.

But it is here that we have to be careful, for not all who call themselves "Christians" are true Christians.

In fact, it would be safe to say that 90% of those who call themselves Christians are not children of God (whatever Christian group or denomination they may belong to). They have not made a personal decision to give up their sins and to receive Christ as Lord of their lives. They imagine themselves to be Christians because of "the accident of birth" - that is, they were born into Christian families.

We must avoid such people who are only Christians by name, and seek our fellowship with those who have become Christians by experience, who are seeking to follow Jesus Christ in their daily lives.

When we receive Christ as our Lord and Saviour, the Bible says that we are born from above, for we have become children of God. God is now our Father. And just like earthly fathers, God is also keen on providing us with all that is necessary for our life on earth - both spiritually as well as physically.

The Lord Jesus Christ said that if we sought God's interests first in our lives, then all the other things necessary for our life on earth will be added to us.

He said, "Your heavenly Father knows perfectly well what you need. And He will give them to you, if you give Him first place in your life, and live as He wants you to" (Matthew chapter 6, verse 33).

One of the greatest privileges that the child of God has is the privilege of prayer - to talk to Almighty God, and to hear God talking to him in his spirit. God does not usually speak to us in a voice that we can hear with our ears, but with an impression on our spirit within, that is just as real as an audible voice. Jesus encouraged us to tell God everything that burdens our hearts.

Many people suffer silently, because they have no-one to share their sorrows with. But the child of God has a Father in heaven with whom he can share everything. He can also trust His Heavenly Father to provide everything that he needs on this earth.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught us to change things by asking God to change them. This is the miracle of prayer. We don't have to fatalistically accept everything that happens to us (saying, "Whatever happens is the will of God") if such things are harming us or our families in any way. Fatalism is different from submission to the will of God. We are encouraged to ask God for whatever we need.

The promise in the Bible is, "God will supply all your need" (Philippians chapter 4, verse 19).

But like every wise father, God also will not give us everything that we want and that we ask Him for. He will only give us what we need, and what He sees will be good for us.

God is a good God, and He never desires that any evil should come to any of His children at any time. So we can go to Him boldly, and ask Him to deliver us from ALL evil.

There are many people in the world who are suffering because others have done some witchcraft or black magic on them. If you have given your heart and life to Christ, such Satanic activities cannot harm you anymore. You can use the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Who defeated Satan) to drive Satan away.

No witchcraft or black magic can ever harm you or even touch you or your children, if you resist it in the Name of Jesus Christ. The power of any witchcraft done on you can be cast off right now - this very moment - if you will call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ to save you.

The Bible says that when Jesus died on the cross, He defeated Satan and took away his power. That has already taken place. But as in the case of the forgiveness of your sins, here too, the defeat of Satan cannot become a reality in your life, until you accept it yourself.

"By dying, He (Jesus) broke the power of the devil. Only in that way could He deliver those who were living all their lives as slaves to constant fear (of Satan)" (Hebrews chapter 2, verses 14 & 15).

"Give yourselves humbly to God and resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James chapter 4, verse 7).

Even after we become children of God, God will still allow Satan to tempt us - because that is how we are going to become strong. But now we have the power of God's Holy Spirit dwelling within us, to give us power to resist and overcome all of Satan's attacks.

God has not promised that the earthly lives of His children will be free from trials and problems. No.

God wants us to be rugged and strong and not like the spoilt children of rich parents who are pampered from birth. And in order to make us strong, He allows us to face trials and problems in life just like other human beings.

But it is in those trials that we come to know God better, as we experience His miraculous help in every situation.

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