

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13

INTRODUCTION:

1. Christians are chosen by God and saved through the Spirit. But what is the Spirit? (2 Thes. 2.13; John 17.17; 1 Pet. 1.22,23)
2. There can be no greater blessing in life, no more generous gift, than being loved by God and saved by the blood of Christ
3. It is easy to forget what it really means to be saved. Consider:

I. BEING SAVED MEANS WE ARE FORGIVEN

- A. **ACTS 2.38:** *“Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins...”* Remission means forgiveness. (cf. Heb. 9.22)
- B. God paid it with the blood of Christ. (1 Pet. 1.18,19)
 1. Our debt is rightly owed. (Matt. 18.24-27; Rom. 6.23)
 2. Thus salvation is by grace. (Eph. 2.8)

II. BEING SAVED MEANS WE ARE IN THE CHURCH

- A. When one becomes a Christian, God places each member into the church. (Acts 2.41,47; 1 Cor. 12.18)
 1. Some ask, “Must I be a part of the church to be saved?”
 2. The church is a collection of saved Christians. (1 Pet 2.4)
- B. Our spiritual relationships are unique. (1 Cor. 12.12-14)
 1. The positive encouragement is unmatched. (Heb. 10.25)
 2. The care and love that is shown to one another acts as a safety net when we fall. (1 Thes. 5.14; Gal. 6.1)

III. BEING SAVED MEANS BEING AT PEACE

- A. It is impossible to have life without conflict.
 1. There are always going to be discord. (Rom. 12.18)
 2. Challenges will always be present. (Job 14.1)
- B. However, we have peace with God (Rom.5.1)
 1. Thus the troubles of life are minimized. (John 14.1,27)
 2. Christians can cast their cares upon God. (1 Pet. 5.7)

IV. BEING SAVED MEANS HAVING SECURITY

- A. In our lives, security is important. People want to feel safe.
- B. God will not allow Christians to be robbed from His hand. (John 10.27,28; 1 Pet. 5.8; 1 Cor. 10.13)
- C. It is only by our choice that we fall from grace. (1 John 2.1)

CONCLUSION: No one is more blessed than those in Christ.

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MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS :	9:00AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP:	9:50AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP:	6:00PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS	7:30PM

*Worshipping
God “in Spirit
and truth”
(John 4.23)*

DECEMBER 13TH, 2009

IS THE LORD'S HAND TOO SHORT?

A question that is asked relates to God's ability to save. If God is all-powerful as the Bible describes Him, then why does He not just swoop down and save all of mankind? Why does He require us to go through the process of meeting the conditions of the gospel when He could just snap His fingers and bring everyone to heaven?

Such a question is not an uncommon one and is answered by God Himself. To the prophet Isaiah, God said, *“Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy that He cannot hear”* (Isa. 59.1). Earlier, when God called Israel to receive salvation no one came. He considered that the reason for their absence is because they had no confidence in God's power. Therefore He asks rhetorically, *“Is My hand shortened that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver”* (Isa. 50.2)?

The reason God does not save all man automatically has nothing to do with His lack of ability and has everything to do with the will of man. Just as God gives man the freedom to sin and put himself in a lost condition, God also gives man the freedom to accept or refuse His salvation. While God's hand is not shortened, He states that man has decided not to come to God for salvation (Isa. 50.2), and to separate himself from God by sinning (Isa. 59.2).

The grace of God is made available to everyone. However, it is up to man to accept and receive the grace of God by meeting the conditions of the gospel (Rom. 6.17). CLP

GOD'S TREATMENT OF THE PROUD AND HUMBLE

JAMES 4:6

INTRODUCTION:

1. Two different circumstances prompt the inspired writers to quote an Old Testament passage. (James 4.6; 1 Pet. 5.5)
2. Both pride and humility begin in the mind and are perhaps the most difficult to maintain.
3. What is God's view toward the proud and humble and how does He handle them?

I. "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD"

- A. The comprehensive Biblical description of the proud.
 1. Proud: (huper – "above"; phainonai – "to appear"). Hence huperephanos: "to show oneself above another"
 2. The proud are those who scoff and mock those things that they do not know. (2 Pet. 3.1-4; 1 Tim. 6.3,4)
 3. The proud scorn judgment believing them to be above the laws of God. (Ps. 10.1-13; Rom. 2.3; Heb. 2.1-3)
- B. How does God resist the proud? (1 Pet. 3.12)
 1. God does not withhold His providential care for the wicked and proud. (Matt. 5.44,45)
 2. God's opposition is manifested by His word by which He will judge the world. (2 Tim. 3.16; John 12.48)
- C. The proud will not prosper. (Job 9.4)

II. "GOD GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE"

- A. The word of God is equally descriptive of the humble.
 1. Humble: (tapeinos) "of lowly degree; poor"
 2. Those who are humble recognize their inability to sustain themselves and are dependent upon God. (2 Cor. 1.8-10)
 3. The humble exalt not themselves but esteem others as being better. (Phil. 2.3; 1 Pet. 5.5; Rom. 12.3,16)
- B. How does God give grace to the humble?
 1. God gives His grace in that He offers salvation to the world through the gift of His Son. (Rom. 5.15-17)
 2. The same message that rebukes the proud also saves and transforms the humble. (1 Cor. 1.18; Titus 2.11-14)
- C. Christians approach God with humility. (James. 4.8-10)

CONCLUSION: The humble resists the devil. (1 Pet. 5.5-9)

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Salvation is freely available to all who will receive it. However, the cost of our salvation is more than what anyone can ever imagine. The Psalmist wrote, "*the redemption of their souls is costly*" (Ps. 49.8). Our debt of sin was not paid by things which have monetary value but by the blood of Christ. (1 Pet 1.18,19). It took the shedding of God's only begotten Son to secure the offer of salvation to man, for "*without the shedding of blood there can be no remission*" (Heb. 9.22).

God has commanded that every first day of the week, Christians come together and remember the unprecedented sacrifice of Christ. It is not too much to ask those who have been redeemed from sin and death to have the hope of eternal life to memorialize the death of Christ as God desires. Yet some resist the idea as some denominations make it a once a month or even once a year event. Regardless of their reasoning behind it, it is still the expressed will of God to remember His Son's death on the first day of every week (1 Cor. 11.18).

To partake of the Lord's supper properly involves four directions in which a Christian must look. He must first of all look inward in reflection and self-examination of his life (1 Cor. 11.27,28; 2 Cor. 13.5). Secondly, one must look outward in proclamation of the gospel, for by partaking of the Lord's supper we proclaim our faith in the significance of His death (1 Cor. 11.26). Third, we look upward in anticipation of His return as we partake of the Lord's supper till He comes again (1 Cor. 11.26). And finally, we look backward in remembrance as we are both saddened by His tragic and painful death and grateful for His willingness to offer such a sacrifice (1 Cor. 11.23-25).

When one fails to partake of the Lord's supper in the manner in which it is prescribed, then his spiritual condition is affected. Paul wrote "*For this reason, many are weak and sick among you and many sleep*" (1 Cor. 11.30). Indeed, many in the Lord's church are spiritually weak, and some are even spiritually dead because they fail to memorialize the Lord's death in the manner that God desires.

At the very core of our salvation is the death of Christ. God gave up His Son so that He can gain our salvation. Christ gave up His life that He might give us life. May never forget and always appreciate and value such a tremendous gift. CLP