

Aspects of Salvation – Part 2

Luke 24.46-49

Rev. Jerry Jackson

Intro:

- We began last week examining this passage where Jesus lays out to his disciples their marching orders and gives various aspects of salvation.
 - We saw that the basis or foundation of salvation was the person and the work of Jesus Christ.
 - His person as both fully God and fully man and his work as encompassing the perfectly righteous life, his sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead to immortal life.
 - Jesus Christ forms the very bedrock of salvation . . . he is the chief cornerstone on which our faith resides.
 - Secondly, we saw that the condition of salvation was repentance of sin.
 - Repentance for the forgiveness of sin . . . without repentance one will not benefit from the salvation of Jesus Christ.
 - It is the condition required by God before one receives the salvation of God founded upon the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - Now we must always be clear that though repentance is the condition required by God, it is also a gift bestowed by God . . . just b/c God demands that all men everywhere repent does not mean that all men everywhere have the ability . . . but rather only those who are granted the gift of repentance will meet the condition of repentance.
 - When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.” ~Acts 11.18
 - Thirdly, we saw that the scope of salvation was ‘to all nations.’
 - Not to the Jews only . . . not the Gentiles only . . . not some nations but to all nations . . . anywhere they can go, the disciples are to preach the message of repentance that the full measure of both Jews and Gentiles might be brought into the Church.
 - “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.” ~John 10.16
 - “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,” ~Rev. 7.9
 - Up to this point in history, the gospel has been almost exclusively among the Jews . . . mostly in this one area . . . Israel and the surrounding nations . . . almost exclusively but not exclusively . . . after the Resurrection, the gospel that was mostly among the Jews from Abraham to Jesus will go into all the nations.
 - This is the mystery that was hidden for generations and ages that has now been made known . . . “the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.” ~Col. 1.26

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- Mystery not in the sense that no one knew the gospel . . . but mystery in the sense that very few in comparison to the rest of the world knew the gospel . . . the nations lived in darkness while the Jews had the oracles of God . . . the prophets were mostly to the Jews . . . but now the apostles are going to go to both Jews and Gentiles . . . into all the world.

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- Specifically . . . repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name . . . you are witnesses to these things.
 - Should be proclaimed and you are witnesses
- This is the means of salvation.
 - The basis is the person and work of Jesus Christ . . . the condition is repentance for the forgiveness of sin . . . the scope is all nations . . . and now the means or the method . . . the tool . . . whatever you want to call it.
- God has ordained the means He will use to call his people . . . the elect among the nations . . . to call them out of darkness into light . . . to produce in them both faith and repentance that leads to salvation . . . God uses the preaching of the Word of God to bring about the necessary condition that leads to salvation.
- God the Father has given to God the Son . . . many children . . . or many offspring . . . or many brothers . . . the Father has given to the Son a people.
 - Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." ~Is. 53.10
 - Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments;" ~Ps. 110.3
 - Hebrews 2.5-18
- So God has chosen a people from before the foundation of the world . . . a people for his own possession . . . a people who will be holy to the Lord . . . these people have been chosen or elected by God.
 - The Father has promised to give this people to His Son . . . but the people are by nature children of wrath . . . the people are by nature sons of the Devil . . . slaves of sin . . . dead in trespasses and sins.
 - And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." ~Eph. 2.1-3
- The only way these people can become holy to the Lord . . . is by the Son coming and offering his sinless life as a substitute for them . . . Jesus comes and dies on behalf of the people that God has given to him.
 - "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." ~Jn. 10.11
 - He lays down his life for the sheep . . . he dies for their sins and is raised for their justification.

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- And these sheep are scattered both among the Jews and among the Gentile nations . . .
 - These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ~Matt. 10.6-7
 - At this time in his ministry, he wants the disciples to go and bring into the fold those lost sheep of the house of Israel . . . those people among the Jews who have been elected by God for salvation but who are still currently dead in trespasses and sins.
 - They go and proclaim the gospel among the Jews and God uses their proclamation to gather the lost sheep into the fold.
 - But then later . . . after his ascension . . . he will send the disciples to gather not only the lost sheep of Israel but also the lost sheep scattered among the nations.
 - And by lost sheep . . . he means . . . those who have been chosen by God before the foundation of the world for salvation but who have not taken possession of this salvation . . . who are still dead in trespasses and sins.
 - “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.” ~John 10.16
 - The end goal is that the full number of the elect among both Jews and Gentiles be brought into the church . . . that they be called out of darkness into light.
- And what is the means God uses to accomplish the gathering into the fold of Christ the lost sheep from among the Jews and the lost sheep from among the Gentiles . . . the preaching of the Gospel by Ambassadors of Christ.
 - “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” ~2 Cor. 5.20
- The messengers of God go into the nations . . . armed with the Word of God and they proclaim to anyone who will listen . . . they proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and call men to repent for the forgiveness of sins.
 - And the Spirit of God uses that Word preaches by the messengers to call out from among the wicked those that have been predestined by God for salvation . . . the children of God come out from among the children of the Devil and what makes the distinction is the way they respond to the preaching of God’s Word.
 - Those who remain dead in sin will reject the Word
 - Some with hostility . . . some with indifference . . . some with temporary enthusiasm but who eventually prove to be worthless
 - Those who have been chosen for salvation will hear the same word preached but instead of rejecting it . . . will through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit receive the implanted Word with meekness that is able to save their souls.
 - That implanted Word will spring up and produce good fruit
- It is the Word of Christ proclaimed among the nations that reveals the Sons of God . . . it is the Word that is used by the Spirit of God to call the Sons of God out from among the Sons of the Devil . . . the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to produce a Child of God.

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- It is the message that is the key . . . it is the word of the cross that is used by the Spirit of God . . . it is not the messenger . . . the messenger is simply a servant of God who is used by God but the messenger is nothing at all.
- We must understand this . . . the key is not found in getting the right messenger . . . if we could get this popular preacher to come . . . if we could get this Xian celebrity then many people would believe . . . this is false.
 - The key is not in the delivery . . . if you smile a lot people will respond better . . . if you are funny and winsome and very charming then people will believe . . . this is false.
 - The key is not in doing some social ministry . . . you have to earn the right to share the gospel . . . you have to meet some immediate, physical, felt need and then people will respond favorably to the gospel . . . then many will be saved.
 - Give them a cup of cold water . . . give them a pound of sugar . . . give them a bag of rice . . . give them free medical care . . . then they will believe.
 - We use these methods to get our foot in the door and then we preach the true gospel.
 - This is how the argument goes . . . but what ends up happening . . . you produce what they call in India 'rice Christians' . . . or bean Christians . . . or corn Christians . . . or clean water Christians . . . or in America pizza and cookie Christians.
 - But they will say . . . we preach the true gospel . . . but when you lead with some felt need . . . an appeal to some desire of the flesh . . . you diminish the message . . . and really what is the key in this method . . . the key is not in the preaching of the gospel . . . the key to success is in the bag of rice or the pound of sugar.
- And this methodology . . . which is almost universally practiced . . . shows a fundamental lack of understanding of two things:
 - First, the depravity of man . . . just how dead man is in trespasses and sins . . . in this world it is quite easy to overcome the sinful nature of man . . . just give him a bag of rice.
 - Second, a lack of confidence in the power of God's Word . . . the key to converting the world is not found in the Spirit of God using the simple preaching of the Word of God . . . it is found in meeting some need.
- But this is not the practice of the prophets, the Apostles or our Lord Jesus Christ . . . they simply preached the Word of God without mincing any words . . . simple, clear, authoritative preaching of God's Word . . . and trusted the God would use it according to his purposes . . . He would use it to both call and sanctify the elect and he would use it to harden and prepare for judgment the reprobate.
 - This is why they gave people the unadulterated Word of God . . . not carefully crafted sermons . . . not meticulous planned illustrations . . . not emotions heart moving stories . . . not lets establish a relationship for 5 years . . . not if we say it just the right way . . . at just the right time, then they will believe.
 - This is not their practice . . . but rather simple, clear, authoritative . . . often times very offensive preaching of the Word of God.
- They simply put it out there and knew that God would use it . . . all that mattered was getting the message out . . . proclaiming the gospel.

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- What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. 6I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8 He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building." ~1 Cor. 3.5-9
- For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? 17For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ." ~2 Cor. 2.15-17

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- We have seen thus far:
 - Basis of salvation – person and work of Christ
 - Condition of salvation – repentance for the forgiveness of sins
 - Scope of salvation – all nations
 - Means of salvation – preaching of the gospel
 - Last, the power of salvation – Holy Spirit
- As the disciples go into the world and preach the gospel to every nation, they will not go alone . . . the Spirit of God will go with them . . . he will work in them and through them to bring about the obedience of faith among the elect of God.
 - There is both the outward and the inward ministry of the Word of God that is necessary for salvation.
 - The outward ministry . . . the external call . . . the verbal preaching of the gospel to those in darkness has been given to the church . . . it is our duty to call men to faith in Christ and repentance of sins.
 - The inward ministry . . . the invisible, internal call . . . this ministry belongs to the Spirit of God . . . only God's Spirit can cause a man to believe in Christ and turn from sin . . . only He can produce faith and repentance in the dead man.
- So as the disciples go into the world to preach the gospel . . . they will proclaim the good news to anyone who will listen to them . . . but not all who hear the gospel will believe the gospel . . . but among the hearers are those who are effectually called by the Spirit of God . . . God's Spirit will take the preached Word and use it to grant salvation to those chosen by God.
 - Very important that we understand the sequence . . . the ministry of the Spirit precedes faith and repentance . . . He is the immediate cause that produces true faith and repentance.
 - It is not the other way around . . . faith is not the cause of regeneration . . . we don't exercise our free will . . . we do not exercise faith and then the Spirit of God grants regeneration to those who freely choose to believe in Jesus.
 - But rather, the Spirit of God regenerates the dead heart producing faith and repentance . . . we believe unto salvation b/c of the Work of God's Spirit.

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- Example of the two-fold ministry: Acts 16.13-15
- Now, I take this reference to the Spirit to be two-fold . . . both a common work of the Spirit that is true for all ages and an uncommon work of the Spirit that was true for the apostles.
 - What has been said concerning the necessity of the Work of the Spirit of God to produce true faith and true repentance in the child of God is true . . . and has been true since Adam.
 - No one has ever believed from the beginning of time to the end of time without the work of the Spirit of God.
 - If all men from Adam onward are dead in trespasses and sins (Romans 5, 1 Cor. 15) then how is it that Abraham believed God . . . how is it that Noah was a righteous and blameless man . . . how is it that David was a man after God’s own heart?
 - Only by the power of God’s Spirit . . . all the OT saints were converted by the power of the Spirit and indwelt by the Spirit from conversion to death . . . He empowered them to live a godly life . . . this must be true.
 - “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all.” ~Jn. 6.63 (not Spirit who will give life after Pentecost)
 - This is before Pentecost
 - The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ~Jn. 3.8 (Is not will be . . . before Pentecost)
- So if the work of the Spirit has been necessary from Adam . . . if He has been converting and indwelling men who believe from the beginning of time then what are the disciples waiting on? What is this being clothed with power from on high?
 - This is the uncommon work of the Spirit . . . the Spirit would give to the apostles gifts so that they could perform miracles . . . Jesus’ ministry was marked and validated by his many might miracles . . . the apostle’s ministry will be marked and validated by many might miracles.
 - Moses . . . Elijah/Elisha . . . Jesus/Apostles
 - This is unique to them . . . Jesus has given them temporary power when he sent them out two by two . . . but it was only for brief moments . . . now they will be equipped and empowered to perform this type of ministry but not until the Day of Pentecost.
- On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples will receive a larger, extraordinary measure of the gifts and grace of the Holy Spirit to qualify them for the task before them.
 - We will turn more fully to this in the 2nd hour so until then . . . let us remember that God has given to us His Word to make us wise unto salvation . . . and God has given to us His Spirit in order to empower us to do His will.
 - And Let us fervently pray that God’s Spirit would take God’s Word that we have heard today and cause it to bear much fruit in our lives.