

Title: "YOUR SALVATION"
 Text: Ephesians 1:12-14
 Date: Sunday Morning — August 6, 2006
 Tape # Z-07a
 Reading: *Isaiah 35:1-10*
 Introduction:

My subject is "*YOUR SALVATION.*" It is my prayer and my heart's desire to God for you that he will be pleased to make his great salvation your salvation, for Christ's sake.

I rejoice in the many descriptions of salvation given by God himself in Holy Scripture. This is how the Word of God describes our salvation. The very first time the word "*salvation*" is in the Bible, it is called "God's salvation" (Gen. 49:18). The Book of Hebrews declares that it is "*eternal salvation*" (5:9). Jude speaks of the salvation of God's elect as the "*common salvation*" (v. 3). It is a salvation enjoyed in common, equally, and fully by all God's elect.

In Hebrews 2:3 the Holy Spirit tells us that our salvation in Christ is a "*great salvation.*"

(Hebrews 2:3) How shall we escape, if we neglect SO GREAT SALVATION; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*?

That is a good description of salvation. — "*So Great Salvation!*"

- • It comes from the great God.
- • It is for great sinners.
- • It comes to us through the merits of the great Savior.
- • It flows to us from the great reservoir of God's great grace. — The Heart of God — The Love Of God!

Could we with ink the oceans fill,
 And were the skies of parchment made,
 Were every stalk on earth a quill,
 And every man a scribe by trade, -
 To write the love of God above
 Would drain the oceans dry;
 Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
 Though stretched from sky to sky!

- • It secures for us a great inheritance in heaven!

Yes, indeed, God's salvation is "*so great salvation*". No words can adequately describe it!

The prophet Isaiah (45:17) describes this thing we call salvation as an "*everlasting salvation.*"

(Isaiah 45:17) *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an EVERLASTING SALVATION: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

Salvation is eternal both ways. It is from everlasting and to everlasting. If salvation is God's work, it is an everlasting work (Ecc. 3:14).

(Ecclesiastes 3:14) I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him.

Sinners saved by grace shall never perish. We are saved beyond the reach of condemnation, or even danger!

- • God's love is an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3).
- • God's election is everlasting election (Mal. 3:6).
- • God's grace is everlasting grace (Rom. 11:29).
- • Christ's redemption is an everlasting redemption (Heb. 9:12).
- • The Spirit's seal is an everlasting seal (Eph. 1:14).

But no description of salvation can be found that is sweeter, more delightful, comforting, or more satisfying to our souls than that which is found in Philippians 2:12. Here the Spirit of God declares to believing sinners that God's eternal, great, everlasting salvation is "your own salvation."

(Philippians 2:12) Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out YOUR OWN SALVATION with fear and trembling.

I like that! If you are saved, the salvation you have is "*your own salvation*." God devised it for you. Christ purchased it for you. The Holy Spirit brought it to you and wrought it in you. It is yours forever! If you trust the Lord Jesus Christ, all that is included in that word "salvation" is your personal property and possession forever! It belongs to you by the gift of the grace of God!

Here is an admonition. — "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*" — That does not mean, "Work that you might be saved". It means, "Work outwardly what God has worked inwardly."

(Philippians 2:1-5) If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, {2} Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. {3} *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. {4} Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. {5} Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

(Matthew 5:16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

(Titus 3:8) *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

(Titus 3:14) And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Here is an assurance. — "*For it is God which worketh in you both to will (to desire) and to do of his good pleasure!*"

(1 Thessalonians 5:23-24) And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. {24} Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

If you are saved, the salvation God has wrought in you is "*your own salvation*". Now, I want you to turn with me to Ephesians 1:12-14. Let's look at these three delightful verses of Inspiration together; and ask the Lord God our Savior to let us see what he has to say about "YOUR SALVATION." God's great goal in all his purpose and works of grace is...

(Ephesians 1:12-14) That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. {13} In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in

whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, {14} Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Proposition: That great, glorious, eternal, everlasting, common salvation which God has wrought in us is distinctly ours. It is here called "YOUR SALVATION"¹

Divisions: There are five things clearly taught in these three verses about your salvation and mine. Believer, child of God, your salvation is...

1. 1. A Salvation Designed For Divine Praise — *"That we should be to the praise of his glory."*
2. 2. A Salvation Based Upon A Divine Trust — *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."*
3. 3. A Salvation Obtained And Enjoyed By A Divine Gift — *"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."*
4. 4. A Salvation Secured By A Divine Seal — *"in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."*
5. 5. A Salvation Assured By A Divine Pledge — *"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."*

DIVINE PRAISE

First, the Spirit of God tells us that our salvation in and by Christ is a salvation designed for divine praise. — *"That we should be to the praise of his glory."*

That salvation revealed in Holy Scripture always honors the Lord God. It is a salvation becoming the character of God. If your salvation does not honor God alone, your salvation is a delusion.

The great, ultimate purpose of God in all things is the glory of his own great name. That is why he has saved us (Ps. 106:8). This is the end of predestination, election, adoption, redemption, and calling — *"That we should be to the praise of his glory."*

- • That his glory might be revealed in us (1 Cor. 4:6).
- • That his glory might be revealed and displayed in us (Eph. 2:7).
- • That we should ascribe all praise, honor, and glory to him alone for all our salvation (Ps. 115:1).
- • That we should give thanks to God alone for all his benefits and blessings of grace.
- • That we should so order our lives by the gospel that we glorify the triune God in all things.
- • That we should do all things with a view to the glory of God.

Our salvation is first and foremost for *"the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ."*

DIVINE TRUST

Second, the salvation of our souls is a salvation based upon a divine trust. — *"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."*

The Apostle Paul, writing by divine inspiration, tells us here of a twofold trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. He tells us that God the Father trusted Christ as the Mediator and that all who are born of God trust him as the only Mediator between God and man.

THE FATHER'S TRUST

Be sure you notice the language of Holy Scripture. The Holy Spirit here informs us that God the Father trusted his Son long before we came to trust him. In the covenant of grace, before the world began, when

the Son of God volunteered to become our Surety, God the Father trusted his elect and all his purposes of grace toward his elect, into the hands of his dear Son. God the Father trusted Christ as our Surety, Shepherd, and Savior long before we did (John 6:37-39).

“All that the Father giveth me (GIVETH ME PRESENTLY, IN REGENERATION AND CONVERSION) shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me (HATH GIVEN ME FROM ETERNITY, AS A TRUST INTO MY HANDS) I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

Thus it is that the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of all his sheep as being his sheep, which he must bring into the fold, long before many of his sheep were even born. He spoke of them all as his present possession, though he declared plainly that they were not yet in his fold (John 10:16).

In the everlasting covenant of grace, God the Father trusted his Son, our all glorious Christ, with the salvation of his elect, and thus with the glory of his name from everlasting. When our Savior had finished his great work of redemption whereby he secured the salvation of all the chosen, he asked and the Father gave to him, as the just reward of his obedience, the glory he had with him before the world began (John 17:1-4; Heb. 1:1-3; 10:1-14).

OUR TRUST

“In whom ye also trusted.” — At the appointed time of mercy, grace and love, every chosen, redeemed sinner is born again and called by the irresistible power and grace of God the Holy Spirit to life and faith in Christ.

DIVINE GIFT

Third, if you are saved, your salvation is a salvation obtained and enjoyed by a divine gift. — *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.”* Our trust in Christ, like all other blessings of grace is the gift of God, the result of divine election and predestination, and the operation of his grace in us (Eph. 2:8-9; Col. 2:10-12).

(Ephesians 2:8-9) “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

(Colossians 2:10-12) “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (11) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

Notice here that the Object of all true, saving faith is a *“whom,”* not a *what!* *“In whom ye also trusted.”* What is involved in this matter of trusting Christ?

SELF RENUNCIATION

First, trust in Christ demands a renunciation of self. There can be no trust in Christ until we cease to trust in ourselves. Christ is the last refuge of man. Our experience of grace verifies that fact. Does it not?

When we first began to be troubled in conscience and were made to tremble before God’s holy law, we tried everything to obtain peace: reformation, repentance, religious duties, and countless other things, seeking the forgiveness of sin and searching for rest in our souls, trying to save our souls by the merit of something we could do. Thank God, he swept away every refuge of lies we made for ourselves! He made

every staff upon which we leaned a spear to pierce our hearts. He made our righteousnesses stink as filthy rags before him, and sweetly forced us to flee to Christ alone for refuge, glorying only in him.

(Philippians 3:3) "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

GLORIFYING GOD

Second, faith in Christ, trusting in him alone as our Savior, is glorifying God. He who ordained our salvation to the praise of his own glory, causes us to glorify him. By trusting in Christ we magnify and glorify each attribute of God in particular.

- To trust in Christ is to glorify the justice and truth of God, taking sides with God against ourselves. — "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*" — "*It shall be perfect to be accepted.*" — "*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*" — "*The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*"
- Trusting in Christ glorifies the truth of God. — "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*" — "*Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" — "*Whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed.*" — "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.*" — "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" — "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*"
- Trust in Christ glorifies the mercy, love and grace of God. — It is by God's free love, his immaculate mercy, and his omnipotent grace that miserable, hell-deserving sinners are rescued from misery, crowned with blessings, and raised to joys everlasting. — Faith in Christ puts heaven in our souls, and gives all the glory to our great God alone for his great, glorious grace and salvation.

There is a remarkable statement at the end of Psalm 138:2. — "*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*"

- His decreeing word — Predestination.
- His living Word — Christ.
- His written Word.

And faith in Christ glorifies God by magnifying his Word above all things, taking him at his Word (1 John 5:11-12).

(1 John 5:11-12) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (12) He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

When God graciously causes stout hearted rebels to bow before him, trusting Christ, he makes sinners saved by his grace his glory in the earth (Isa. 46:12-13). Thus, by his own free grace, he has made

(Isaiah 46:9-13) "Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, (10) Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (11) Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it. (12) Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that *are* far from righteousness: (13) I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."

Our God says of his elect, "*They shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory*" (Isa. 60:7). Imagine that. — The God of Glory calls us "*the house of my glory!*"

In his indescribable, condescending grace our great God stoops to be glorified in us! Trusting his darling Son, we glorify the triune God (Ps. 50:23).

(Psalms 50:23) "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I show the salvation of God."

The sweet incense of trust, faith and gratitude ascends day and night from the altar of love in the believing heart, to the glory of God. And when Christ returns to earth, it will be to be glorified in his saints. And when the end comes, and he delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father, then shall the faithful lift up their voices, which shall never cease, and every note and sound shall be glory to God and to the Lamb. Thus we who trust in Christ are to the praise of His glory.

SOMETHING HEARD

How did we, who were dead in trespasses and in sins, come to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at verse 13 again. — “*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*” — Here, and throughout the Word of God faith follows hearing. It never precedes hearing. Faith in Christ comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23-25).

(Romans 10:17) “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

(1 Peter 1:23-25) “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. (24) For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: (25) But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

And that which we heard, which brought forth faith in our hearts was “*the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*” — A more literal translation of those words would be, “the word of the truth, the gospel of the salvation which is yours.” Using the definite article “*the*” four times, Paul tells us exactly what God causes his elect to hear, by which he creates faith in us. It is not the bare hearing of the gospel that produces faith in Christ, but the hearing which only God the Holy Spirit can give (2 Thess. 1:4-5).

We heard the Word of truth. — The gospel of the grace of God is called the Word of truth, the Word of *the truth*, for many reasons.

- • It came from the God of Truth.
- • It speaks of Christ who is the Truth. Christ is the Word (Logos) of Truth, the Word who “*by the gospel is preached unto you.*”
- • It is revealed by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, who leads us into all truth.
- • It is this Word of the truth by which the Spirit of God sets sinners free.

The Word of the truth which we heard, not by word only but by the power of God the Holy Spirit, is called “*the gospel of your salvation.*” — Here we are told that the Holy Spirit, when he regenerates and calls sinners from death to life and gives them faith in Christ, does so by declaring to them, declaring in their hearts, what Christ has done for them, by declaring our salvation accomplished by Christ. We came to know the Lord when God the Holy Spirit brought the light of the gospel into our souls (2 Tim. 1:9-10).

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an 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, {10} But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

GOD’S ORDAINED MEANS

Thus, we are once more instructed here in the fact that the preaching of the gospel is God’s ordained means of grace (1 Cor. 1:21; Isa. 52:7).

(1 Corinthians 1:21) “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

(Isaiah 52:7) “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto

Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

This is the reason Satan is so industriously opposed to the preaching of Christ. Gospel preaching delivers the captives whom he held bound and overthrows his kingdom in the hearts of men. The devil loves for men to zealously preach works, ordinances, sacraments, and creeds. He loves for preachers to debate issues and defend and define and denounce this doctrine or that. He knows such preaching is no weapon against him and can never injure his cause. But when the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed, he always alarmed. He never ceases to use his devices to turn men away from the "*simplicity that is in Christ.*" Let us ever pray the Lord to arise, and multiply the number of his faithful heralds, and maintain his own cause, and put our adversary to perpetual shame.

(Psalms 45:3-4) "Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. (4) And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." —Thy right hand shall perform awesome things.

DIVINE SEAL

Fourth, ours is a salvation secured, made sure to each believing sinner, by a divine seal. — "*In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.*" — A better reading would be, "Having believed, ye were sealed." This is not talking about a second work of grace, but about the result of God-given faith in Christ.

The sealing work of the Spirit is mentioned after the experience of faith because our salvation is attested to and revealed only after we believe. Actually, we have a threefold seal from God.

- • The Seal of The Father's Foreknowledge (2 Tim. 2:19).

(2 Timothy 2:19) "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

- • The Seal of The Son's Love (Song. 8:6; 4:12; Rev. 7:3).

(Song of Songs 4:12) "A garden enclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

(Song of Songs 8:6) "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame."

(Revelation 7:3) "Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

- • The Seal of The Spirit's Work of Grace (Eph. 4:30).

(Ephesians 4:30) "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

It is this seal of the Spirit that gives us the full assurance of faith by which we call God our Father and draw near unto him by the blood of Christ. It is this seal of the Spirit, the gift of faith, that assures the believing sinner of a saving interest in Christ. The seal...

- Identifies ownership,
- And preserves the one sealed.

Illustration: *I salt and seal.*

God the Holy Spirit is the blessing of the covenant and the seal of the covenant (Gal. 3:13-14).

(Galatians 3:13-14) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

This work of grace, the sealing of the Spirit, is that which was represented in the Old Testament rite of circumcision. — He has sealed all grace in Christ to our hearts by faith. — Faith in Christ is our assurance of eternal salvation (Heb. 11:1). — He has sealed us in Christ. He has sealed us in grace.

My wife is a certified notary public. She is often asked to notarize deeds and documents. When she does, she seals them with her registered, legal seal. Why? That seal verifies the legitimacy of the document or deed as a legally valid thing. It cannot be altered. Anyone holding the deed can point to the seal stamped upon it, without doubt or hesitation, as final evidence that the deed is sure and cannot be cancelled.

That is what Ephesians 1:13 declares. When the Spirit of God stamps his seal upon the heart, the believer is assuredly certified, that he is chosen, redeemed, called and saved. Fear and doubt vanish. He can say, "*I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.*" He realizes that salvation is his in Christ. And he confidently cries, — "*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?*" Nothing "*shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*"— (Rom. 8:33-39).

This assurance is the work and gift of God the Holy Spirit. Man cannot obtain it for himself. One man cannot give it to another. It is the result of God given faith in Christ. It is the deep impression which the Spirit alone can imprint. He who lives in the steadily realization that he is a child and heir of God, that he is dead to the world, and that he is raised high above the range of Satan's darts lives in peace. By this blessed seal of the Spirit, we know and are assured that we have "*passed from death unto life.*"

DIVINE PLEDGE

And, *fifth*, God the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is the pledge of resurrection glory. — "*The redemption of the purchased possession.*" Ours is a salvation assured by a divine pledge. — "*Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory*" (v. 14).

The seal of the Spirit is that which gives us the assurance of salvation. The Spirit of God is the earnest of our inheritance, assuring us of it until the resurrection, here called the redemption of the purchased possession.

NOTE: Redemption is a threefold work.

- • Ransom Redemption.
- • Regeneration Redemption.
- • Resurrection Redemption.

APPLICATION:

(2 Corinthians 1:21-22) "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; (22) Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

The seal of God the Holy Spirit in us, sheds abroad in our hearts the love of God, assuring us that we are God's and that heavenly glory is ours in Christ (Rom. 5:5; 8:16-17).

(Romans 8:16-17) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (17) And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we

suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”

With this great salvation, we have this great promise, — “*Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end*”

Illustration: *Rowland Hill's Dream*

AMEN.