

# An Everlasting Salvation

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## Shreveport Grace Church

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Before the Lord to open my eyes by his Spirit and to reveal unto me the Lord Jesus Christ and my need of him, I had an image of God, I had formed an image of God based upon what I had been taught but it took the Lord to open my eyes and cause me to see that even that was idolatry and that had he left me in that state, I would have been lost right along and been condemned with the worst idolaters that you might think of in some third world country.

This word pertains to many in our generation. They shall go to confusion when they find out that they have no ransom for their sin. They'll go to confusion when they find out that their works really didn't amount to anything but dung before a holy God. In a small way, have you ever done some work, I remember this, my first English class in college, I even got an English major to help me write this first paper and when I got it back, I knew I was in trouble. Welcome to college. It had red marks all the way through it: poor work; poorly stated; poor; poor; poor. The first thing I did was call up the English major that helped me and said, "What did you do to me?" I didn't even want to take responsibility for it.

Confusion. That's just a small picture of the confusion. It won't be confusion in the sense of people running around but dumb-foundedness. When they stand before the Lord Jesus Christ, they've had Christ on their lips but they haven't known the Lord Jesus Christ and he'll say to them, "I never knew you." That's the confusion of which he speaks there in verse 16.

But look at the contrast. You say, "By resting in the Lord Jesus Christ, this one set forth here in the word, how do I know he is the truth?" Well, God says he is. It says there in verse 17, "But Israel shall be saved," notice, "in the LORD." It's not just saying he'll be saved. That word is thrown around a lot today, "So-and-so got saved at a meeting last night." Really? Was the house on fire? Was there a flood? What do you mean got saved? "Oh, you know what I mean." No, I don't.

You know, Scriptures very clearly attribute salvation to one source and this then is the second point regarding eternal or everlasting salvation: not only is God the source but it is a sure salvation because it is in the Lord. That's an important word there, "in the Lord." In his representative. L-O-R-D is the word "Jehovah" which means "God saves," but it's also the Hebrew verb for "I am." So when the Lord Jesus Christ said, "Unless you believe

that I am," the editors added the little word "he," but "Unless you believe that I am, you'll die in your sins." Why believe that he is? Well, because there is salvation in none other.

Israel, here he's talking about true Israel. Wednesday night we looked at that, the difference between natural Israel and spiritual Israel. You have to look at the context. It's not saying that natural Israel will be saved in the Lord but his Israel. The word means "Prince with God." It was the name given to Jacob when the Lord was pleased to teach Jacob of Christ. And Paul uses it in Romans 11, "so all Israel shall be saved." He's talking about Jew and Gentile. Any that the Lord has purposed to save and for whom Christ died shall be saved in the Lord in this one who came, lived, died and rose again as the representative. It's in the Lord, the one of whom Paul wrote in Ephesians that all spiritual blessings are given in Christ. Can you see substitution there? In other words, the reason he died was that justice had to be satisfied and the reason he rose again is because justice was satisfied and the reason he ascended on high was that, as it says here even in our verse 23, that "unto him every knee should bow and every tongue should swear that he is," what? "Lord."

That's the Lord of whom the Scriptures speak and anybody that attributes their salvation to any other reason isn't in the Lord. It's not in my decision. It's not in my getting down in the water. It's not in having the pastor pray for me. It's in the Lord. It's in the Lord and the Scriptures say that those that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, rise up with wings of eagles, shall walk and not be weary, run and not faint. It's in the Lord and who he is and in his work.

But you see in verse 17 the sureness. When you talk about an everlasting salvation, it's a sure salvation, "with an everlasting salvation." Now, it had to be worked out. You see, some people confuse eternal with everlasting. "Everlasting" means "that which never ends." It doesn't mean that it was already done before it was done like some are saying. Yes, God purposed it and that's why it's everlasting but it's still in the Lord that Israel, notice, shall be saved, God's Israel. It had yet to be worked out at the time that Isaiah wrote of this. It was still future but this "in the Lord," this one who would come, God in the flesh, the Lord of glory is what he's called, had to lay down his life, pay the debt, but the result would be an everlasting salvation. The sureness of this salvation is in the one who accomplished it.

If you go over to Luke 9, this was a portion I read with the men in the study just before our time of worship, when Christ was on the mount, which was called the Mount of Transfiguration, in verses 30 and 31, there appeared with him and talked with our Lord two men and then they are described, "which were Moses and Elias," or Elijah. Moses represented here the law. He was a representative of the law. Elijah represented the prophets. What it's showing us is that the law and the prophets, the Old Testament, looked forward to this one who would come, the one by whom Israel would be saved that we're reading in Isaiah.

Notice how they spoke of it in verse 31, "Who appeared in glory, and," what? "Spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." So whenever it speaks of an

everlasting salvation, it is the effect, it is the fruit of what Christ accomplished. It's not saying it was done before it was done. Is he the eternal God? Yes, but to be satisfied on behalf of those sinners that he purposed to save, it was needful. It was necessary that Christ come and lay down his life and accomplish it.

Over in Acts 4, I want you to see this. Acts 4. You see, there are some writers and some that I read and respect but when they state that as soon as God decreed it or purposed it or, as they say, thought it, then it was done is contrary to what we find here in Scripture. Would it be accomplished exactly as he purposed it? Absolutely, but this salvation, this everlasting salvation had to be worked out in a body. It had to be done in time. There had to be a physical body that could bleed and die. It couldn't simply be decreed from heaven and this is where Isaiah is pointing us as readers.

But in Acts 4:26, he's quoting here from Psalm 2:1 and this is their prayer, this is what the church was praying in the face of persecution that was arising in the early church, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together," notice, "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined beforehand," what? "To be done." So I'm happy to stand here and to tell you that when the Scriptures speak of an everlasting salvation, it's because of the God who ordained it but it's also because of the Savior who worked it out. That's why it's everlasting. It has everything to do with him. Any for whom he did it are the beneficiaries but it has everything to do with him.

Those for whom he is the Savior, even though he hides himself from others. You say, "Where has he hidden himself?" In this Christ. He's the God-man. You see, that's what confounded many of his day. They couldn't believe that God would actually take on flesh but it was God's blood which purchased the salvation of this Israel of whom we speak here and therefore it is a sure salvation.

Those who are saved with the everlasting salvation shall never be ashamed. So when you ask me, "Well, how do I know that it is the only way?" It's because God said it. I know we used to say, "God said it. I believe it. That settles it." Whether you believe it or not, it's still settled. God said it. Even there, men try to put their little believing in there to make it that's what settles it. No, God said it, that settles it. Whatever the Lord says shall stand.

Now, the third thing about this everlasting salvation in the next few verses, beginning with verse 18, it's a salvation that is revealed by two great lights. It takes eyes to see, it takes light to see. The first light is that of nature. Look around you. You see, this is the argument that Scripture says, "Come now and let us reason together." I find that all of Scripture is written to address man's reasoning. Even though it's depraved, the Lord still shines the light on it.

And we see two lights given here: one is of nature in verse 18 and the other is of revelation in verse 19. Let's look at that in verse 18, the light of nature. Look around you. Do you see the little word "for"? If you want to know how this salvation is everlasting, "For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens." Just go out there and look up at the sky at night, what holds those stars in place? Is man doing it? Is there some center somewhere we're going to find out in the middle of Nevada in the desert that we really find is keeping everything in place through these little protons or whatever that are being shot up there and holding it? You say that's foolishness.

"The LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it." You take any other man-made object that man has built and throw at it the force of what men call disasters such as a tsunami or a hurricane or a tornado, when we hear about these things and track it, men hunker down. They don't really have any control. They don't know what's going on and it's the Lord's hand in just raising up a little, for him what would be considered a whirlwind on this earth, but it has not altered the earth even though the earth has been around for millenniums. People are still trying to guess how old it is but this earth is not being diminished. The earth is forever because God created it to be forever. You think about the bombs that men drop on each other and annihilate. They're not annihilating the earth but what they're doing is annihilating what man built on the earth but the earth is as solid as it's ever been. The foundation is as sure as it has ever been.

So this is what the Lord himself gives as a testimony of the surety of the salvation which he has wrought for his people. If he can hang the stars in the universe and he can put this little globe out there which, when you stop and think about it, you pull away and see how small we really are in the grand scheme of things, there has never been...people talk about an asteroid that's on course to destroy us and yet how many millenniums has this world existed and here it is. They say, "Well, this lake was created by a meteorite that fell and this one was created by an earthquake." It's still God's earth. He's just moving the furniture around on it and he allows us to live on it for a little while but you stop and look at how many things have outlasted the very people that have built these things on the earth. Such is the God of this earth and if he's the God of this earth, how much greater then the God of salvation?

When it says here, "he hath established it, he created it not in vain," that's an important statement. There some that believe that the earth is somewhat like a clock that the Lord made and wound up and now he has set it to run and it's running itself and he's given us now that responsibility to run it and every once in a while he'll pick it up and wind it up again and put it back down. That's how they believe things are. I hope you don't. We live and we move and we have our being in him and any other notion is idolatry.

You notice it says here, "he formed it to be inhabited." We give glory to the pioneers. They came in and they settled this spot and they give glory to Columbus for doing his thing. Columbus ended up only where he ended up because the Lord purposed the end of it there. That's it. If you look in Acts 17, by the way, he didn't really end up on the continental United States. If you want to travel down to Haiti sometime and go to the

northern part of that island, Hispaniola, you can look and actually see where he landed. It looks like a turtle, in fact, that's what they call it, a turtle and that's where he thought he had...I don't know where he thought he had landed but he landed where the Lord purposed him to land.

In Acts 17, when Paul was walking around and noting the idolatry here in Mars Hill in Athens in Greece and they were known for their wisdom in the day. Philosophers. But it did not keep Paul from declaring to them the truth. They even, to make sure they had all the gods covered, they even had a monument to the unknown God and Paul, verse 22, "stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." I like that word. You know, some might say, "Well, they were devoted. They were sincerely devoted." Paul says superstitious. We try to kind of soften a little bit about people who worship in another way, "Well, you know, at least they're sincere." They're superstitious. That's the word that Scripture uses.

"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing." Boy, doesn't that fly in the face of what preachers are telling people today, that God needs you. "Seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." What if we came and bowed before him with that understanding, "I need him"?

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth," and notice this, "and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." We kind of joke, sometimes people say, "How on earth did you get to Shreveport? Did you win the lottery?" No, we're here because the Lord put us here. Exactly. He traced the step to Shreveport, LA. I was thinking the other day this is the longest I've ever lived in any one place in my life, 16 years. That's amazing. I think the Lord has put me here to stay. This is his directing.

"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent," here it is, "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." When you see that word "in righteousness," notice how it's always attached to the man. Who is God's righteousness? It's Christ. "He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance." There it is. How do you know? Well, God has given us assurance. This is it. This is the way it is. "In that he hath raised him from the dead."

So that's one of the reasons God gives for us to see that everlasting salvation. If in things temporal he orders, he fixes, he establishes and we can see it with natural eyes. We can

look around and see it. The reason scientists can predict anything is because of the order. The word "cosmos, world" means "order." Why is there order? Why are not things changing like evolutionists tell us? It's because there is God who has ordered it and fixed it and settled it. Have you wondered even watching tracking a storm, how do they know that thing when it hits here is going to cut east and then go up there and there? They're tracking it. It's all based on math and science. How do men know math and science? It's based upon what the Lord has been pleased, whatever light of nature he's been pleased to give them, that's what they live on and that's how they make their predictions.

But there's another light that we see and coming back to Isaiah 45, that's what I wanted you to see: he created it not in vain. There is nothing that happens haphazardly. There is nothing that just happens. Everything is ordered and ordained by our Lord and if that's true in the natural sense, how much more so in things pertaining to salvation. Do you see the reason why this is here? It's for us to know who is this God.

Verse 19 shows us the light of revelation, "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." There is in this unbelieving heart of ours that thought that often arises, "What if I believed in vain?" Did you ever have that? That's your sin. That's your depravity that says that. The Lord never said it.

And you notice this word is not addressed to everybody. He says, "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." Are there those that seek in vain? Yes, because they seek according to their own righteousness. The Lord even said that, "Israel has not found what it sought after." He's talking about natural Israel. There is a myriad of people meeting right now who are seeking the Lord in vain because they don't hear this word. They seek him according to their own devices. They will not give up their works and left to themselves they will most certainly be confounded.

But if you're the Lord's and there came a time when he revealed in your heart the Lord Jesus Christ, that revelation was never in vain. Every one to whom the Lord has revealed himself is saved because the Lord does the saving. He has delivered you and, you know, when people question me and say to me, "How do you know? What makes you so sure?" Well, it's not in me but any time I have a question, I come right back here into this word, what has the Lord said. The Lord said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Do you believe him or don't you? I'll tell you, if you're his, he's not going to leave you out there. He's going to draw you. You might struggle and have all these thoughts, but he's all the while drawing you to himself because he's not going to lose one for whom he died and all your struggle and all your surmising and things, all that will dissipate in the light of his revelation as he reveals himself in you.

That's what he's saying here, "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." I know it's true because he said it. And don't take your opinion from another man. Don't take your opinion even from someone that you're close to. This is one of the things that the Lord teaches us to wait upon him and it's one of the things that the Lord has taught me over the years. Do I still

need to learn? Absolutely, but he did not hide himself from me. He was hidden for a while. In my own depravity I thought I knew him but he had to open my eyes and cause me to see.

But just like it says here in verse 19, "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth." It's not like it's trying to find the source of the Nile type movie where they're going out there and he's somewhere hidden. No, when he reveals himself, he reveals himself in those that he has purposed to save and for whom he has shed his blood and he has done it in a sure word of prophecy.

I'm going to turn you to one particular portion of Scripture and then we'll have to come back to this but if you'll go over to 2 Peter 1:16. I believe this is the sense here when it says, "I have not spoken in secret." He has revealed himself in the word that we have here in our hands and it is a sure word of prophecy. In 2 Peter 1:16, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." I just read for you from Luke 9 and that's what he's talking about. He says, "Do you want a sure word? I saw it. I heard it," Peter says.

But notice what he says in verse 19, he doesn't send us off to go sit on a mountain somewhere. You hear people say today, "I've been to the mountain." You know, they've gone up there and fasted for 40 days and they've come back delirious. That's not where the Lord sends us. That's not where Peter sends us. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed," notice, "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and," what? "The day star arise in your hearts." That's talking about Christ being revealed in the heart. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

How are you going to have any entering into this everlasting salvation? It's based upon the God who has ordained it. It's based upon the one who came, live, died and rose again. Fulfilled it. But it's when he is pleased. Paul said, "When it pleased God to reveal Christ in me." You say, "Well, I don't know if he has or not." Well, wait on him. Wait on him. There's no like a vending machine putting in something and getting something back. It's waiting on the Lord. Looking to him and if we had more time, that's where we'd get to but we'll come back to it.

As he said in verse 22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." That's where those look who are saved. That's how they're delivered from themselves, from their depravity, their idolatry. Every wrong thought concerning God, Christ and salvation is looking to him, being given eyes to see him and looking.