

“Saving Faith is Christ Salvation”
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 Sermon for 26 October 2025
 Text: The Doxology

“*Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*” Thus we sing. It is either all we know; the sum of the best we know; or the best of all we know—your choice.

Saving faith is Christ salvation; or, phrased differently, it is the way of salvation. And I wish to demonstrate how Christ salvation is not mere mental assent to truth, but it is rather entire trust in Jesus—a heart and soul matter. We trust in the Lord, His life, death and ministry—His death burial and resurrection. We believe that He lives as the risen one and reigns with the Father. He is returning to this world to usher in His everlasting Kingdom and we shall live with and enjoy Him and each other forever.

Now all those blessings we sing about come from and originate in His undeserved, unmerited favor which we designate as His grace. We do not merit blessings, and we do not earn them—else we might have something to boast about. As it stands, however, universally applied, no created being, man included, can claim divine blessing as his wage, reward, or earning. God by grace formed man out of the dust, breathed into his clay nostrils the breath of life **and he became living being**. It was also by grace that God stamped upon our souls His very own image/likeness and gave us dominion over all living things—**all things under our feet**—a governance which began with naming names that were what the animals were and follows with a creation/stewardship mandate.

This “knowledge” is supernatural and it was a gift of grace as well as an exercise of intelligence—bringing direction, governance and accountability with it! All blessings, all gifts of free mercy. “Nothing we are, or have, or do” warrants, or deserves the smallest of God’s blessing. It is utterly free. And, in the moral realm, both virtue and righteousness follow the same creation pattern; they are gifts of God fitted into existence to enrich, enhance and elevate us from the merely material, biological and physical levels of life. Now we also have a spiritual life—especially those who have moved either from non-Christian to “almost Christian” **and then to the blessedness of “altogether Christian”** in our spiritual standing, “Almost Christians” are decent, moral folk but they are not pious folk; they are not reverent, devotional, committed, worshipful **children of God**. They may pursue righteousness but they have not attained righteousness which is possible in Jesus Christ alone. Christ salvation brings transformation! Those who obtain it wear the livery of Christian liberty—both in matter and in manner.

When we humans transgress, rebel, revolt, break God’s law and otherwise disobey God, through conscious and intentional actions, we render ourselves sinful and introduce the need for rescue, forgiveness and for atonement. *Atonement is what has to happen in order for our sinful patterns to be altered, reordered*, or for our souls to be restored to their original state, and restful position. However, it turns out that whatever we might do, say, repent, or ask to seek forgiveness from God—*who is actually the one we sin against whenever we sin*—proves insufficient (or inadequate) as a means to that spiritual end of alteration and restoration.

We are neither what we were made to be, nor are we what we hope, or ought to be!

For that we must use all the means that God’s grace supplies. Our good works, despite being made possible by divine grace, cannot succeed being unholy, unclean and corrupt.

This is where the frequently heard claim “I’m a good person” typically enters—as spoken by those wishing to justify themselves *without cause, or good reason. It is untrue*. By intentionally sinning, we lose our original, glorious righteousness of our “good” origin through transgression. The image of our Creator in us is marred, disfigured, or defaced by us, leaving us unable to honestly, or justly claim our own righteousness, or even the goodness of the works that God predisposes us to do. We need an atonement we cannot produce, or supply.

The good works of the unsaved cannot attain it, even sacrificial worship cannot attain it. So we are “miserable sinners” because we both feel bad about our sin, and we feel bad about our inability to rescue, redeem, or atone for ourselves! *That is our plight*.

We are moral, accountable and incapable of self-salvation through punishment, or penance, or changed behavior. If we sinful people are to achieve peace, or to find favor with God (experienced as forgiveness); it is only from the fullness of His grace. Yes, and so we sing, “Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.

Now implicit in all that I am just saying is this assertion: that salvation is the greatest blessing of all divine blessings. It is an indescribably great gift and an awesome demonstration of love, of divine redeeming love: **God so loved the world that while we were yet sinners—while we were diametrically opposed to God as enemies!—Christ died for us, making atonement for our sins.**

When we declare, there is salvation in no other name, we ought by rights to add, and there is no forgiveness in any other name either!

There is spiritual opposition to Christ salvation and it is headed up by our Adversary who desires to smear, deface, besmirch, sniff, disfigure anything reflecting the divine nature—either in us, or around us. Forces of darkness, and evil and ugliness actively oppose the beauty, the light and the good *as they continued with, quarrel over* and seek to duel God, our Christ and all His followers. They seek to exchange hatred for love, and evil for good incessantly.

So. Let’s close by asking: what is the nature of the faith by which we are saved? What is the nature of the salvation that comes through that faith? And what might some objections to the answers sought here be? That is our focus this morning.

Okay, so *saving faith* is the nature of the faith we profess. It differs from the faith of pagans, heathens and unbelievers. Remember, it’s a universal truth: **without faith it is impossible to please God—or for us to be pleasing to God! God rewards those who seek Him**, and those who, not believing He exists, do not seek Him will not find Him—they will go without reward, or spiritual satisfactions. God expects all creation to render thanks and praise, and He expects us to pursue certain things: moral virtue, or excellence, justice, peace, mercy and truth towards our fellow human beings. He created a moral universe, and expects morality in response. Yes, trade in right and wrong, good and bad/evil, truth and falsehood are essential ingredients of Creation.

The world is made that way, morality is not something we impose on creation—God forbid—it is our medium, it is what we operate in as creatures in play in a divine order. It is a very short step from imagining we impose moral order, to attribute morality to social causes, to matters of taste, custom and convention. We should reach; that else are afterthought in a creation that God created and then called good. Now everyone everywhere was expected to get at least this far—the pursuit of certain things: moral virtue, or excellence, justice, peace, mercy and truth towards our fellow human beings. We have these things by common descent, shall we say, or by design! Those outside the biblical knowledge of God still have minimal expectations morally speaking.

Saving faith differs from “heathen faith” with this difference, **it is not merely intellectual knowledge**. Demons have a “mental only belief” in God. And although their faith exceeds that of those who do not know God; it is not saving faith. Satan knows that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, and the Savior of the world. The devils said of Paul and Silas, they are **slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim the way of salvation**. They know **God was revealed in the flesh, that he put all his enemies under his feet**, and that **all scripture is inspired of God**. Demons acknowledge all these truths but they are not saved by what they know—neither are we!

Yet another distinction is that of the apostles’ *saving faith*--prior to the resurrection and following after the resurrection. After Jesus rose from the dead, vindicated and exalted by God, **saving faith was their chief subject!** They had trusted Him *somewhat* during His earthly life; they had worked miracles in His name, healed, delivered and saved many, *even exercising authority over demons and devils*, and, then, were commissioned to go forth and preach the Kingdom. What had happened? After the resurrection they keenly trusted Jesus—**saving faith is trusting Jesus, simply, utterly and entirely**. It’s a kind of a friendship, pre-doctrinal thing. Trusting comes from knowing our Friend Jesus, the one, true God. It is not speculative, neither rational only, nor a cold, lifeless assent—nor even a stream, or train of ideas in one’s head!

It is a disposition of heart. If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved—when? Right then.

What then? Question One: What exactly are we confessing? 1. That Jesus' death was necessary for atonement; 2. That death possesses merit, conveys righteousness; and 3. That the power of the resurrection changes everything. Yes, that power enacts, activates solidifies and establishes divine satisfaction with the redemption of the cross—we no longer face everlasting death as our only option. Yes, it signals that life and immortality have been secured for us in Christ Jesus! “Slain for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” ***It is heartfelt assent [between two fully reconciled parties—us and God] to the whole gospel of Jesus. It is complete reliance on the blood of Jesus, the merits of His life, death and resurrection.***

Christ, and Christ alone is our atonement and our life—he gave himself for us and in him we live, move and have our new being. Christ is our salvation.

Question Two: What is the nature of this ***Christ salvation***?

1. It is something we obtain in the here and now, presently, on earth.
2. Christ saves us from sin to the fullest extent possible. Everyone who trusts, He forgives freely.
3. Christ saves us from the guilt of all past sin and the curse of the law (which led chiefly to our conviction and condemnation). Our record has been erased, obliterated, blanked out.
4. We are rescued from fear. We have no dread of displeasure/disapproval anymore. No dread of punishment, or fear of wrath and retribution. All of that was laid on Him! God is no longer a cruel taskmaster, and oppressor but a kindly, welcoming father to his homebound children. They operate on the basis of God's love, kindness and mercy now. Unashamed and inseparable from God!
5. The power of sin is also broken. As long as we walk in faith, act as those born of God, we will cease sinning as much, if at all. Sin will be occasional and exceptional, no longer usual and ordinary. Our hearts will not be in it.
6. This means, finally, that besetting sins, self-defining sin patterns will lose the power to define and direct our steps. Sin no longer rules. No bondage, no captivity of will, no injection of poison—we will leave behind the intentional and deliberate sins—and they will occur as mishaps, or slips and accidents.

In these six conditions, we will find our joy and freedom.

Some would designate all this as *justification* (ie deliverance from sin and its consequences) and attribute it to the indwelling presence of the living Lord. The life experience of the “born-again” for all who are born-again are **hidden with Christ in God** usually proceeds from the “milk-fed” to maturity, **the measure of the full stature of Christ** with measurable and observable growth.

Saving faith, we must understand, is preliminary to all good works, to the moral life of excellence and virtue. Those who trust in the power of the blood of Christ alone will use all the other ordinances that He has left for us fully as we'll do the good works **that God has prepared beforehand that we should walk in them**. Works however do not justify. Besides it is His works, not ours **that availeth much with God**.

We cannot ever, on our own, gin up (arouse) or produce either faith or salvation! The **goodness of the Lord** should ever lead to thankfulness and repentance, my friends. **Everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life** renders every moment an evangelical one. And every category of man is an acceptable category: the poor, the young —maybe the rich, the learned and the reputable—who are very apt to exclude themselves—may be excluded! But probably not.

By grace you have been saved through faith. And so let us sing, ***“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow!”*** Let us do so with clarity, integrity, understanding and with pure hearts and purified reason.

Amen