

Salvation, the End of Your Faith

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Peter identified salvation as “the end of your faith.”

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls. (1 Pet 1:3–9).

Salvation summarizes the theme of the Bible in one word. There are many sub-themes in Scripture, but all must bow to the overarching theme of salvation. This is the subject of Jehovah’s rebuke of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). The flood and the ark are types of spiritual salvation (1 Pet. 3:20–21). The real message of the promise to Abram (Gen. 12:3) is salvation through Christ (Gal. 3:16, 22, 24, 29). Salvation was the quest of the prophets (1 Pet. 1:10). Well did Peter say that “the end of your faith” is “the salvation of your souls.” Besides mentioning this great theme, Peter also provides a very full analysis of the subject.

Its Foundations (verse 3)

The **first** foundation of our salvation is God’s great mercy. We would be hopelessly lost and could not be saved had God not been merciful. To speak of mercy is to speak of grace, its twin concept: “For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). All were/are sinking in the quicksand of sin, but in God’s great mercy, he cast the lifeline of salvation within our reach. Surely, any discussion of man’s, salvation must begin with God’s mercy.

The **second** foundation is Christ’s powerful resurrection. Had He not “burst the bars of death,” we would still be without a Savior, for all His claims, promises, and work hang upon that singular event. Paul well expresses the relevance of the resurrection to our salvation in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. He reminds the Corinthians of the Gospel which he preached, by which they are saved if they continue in it, and emphasizes the resurrection as an indispensable part of that Gospel. He neatly summarized the consequence of a lifeless Jesus: “If Christ hath not been

raised, then is our preaching vain; your faith also is vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14).

The **third** foundation is man's regeneration: "he begat us again." This is the great lesson Jesus taught Nicodemus (John 3:3-5); being born again is basic. Man is spiritually reborn when he humbles himself in obedient response to the commands of the Spirit's Gospel that result in the forgiveness of his sins. Baptism is the culminating act in this rebirth (Rom. 6:3-4, 1 Pet. 5:21, et. al). Jesus is referring to this in His instruction to Nicodemus; new birth requires the elements of "water and Spirit." No man can be saved apart from God's plans for his regeneration.

Its Nature (verses 3-4)

Salvation is "a living hope." As the ancient Ephesians were without hope and without God in this world before hearing and obeying the Gospel, so are all men of every age (Eph. 2:12). The Christian has a living hope because he has a living Lord. This hope extends far beyond this world and its tomorrows. Rather, it is bound up with eternal values and with yearnings of the spirit and soul of man.

Salvation is also pictured here as an "inheritance." As such it is incorruptible. It is not subject to processes of decay and waste; it is immortal. It is undefiled; it is unstained, unblemished; nothing will ever contaminate it; it is unfading. This word derives from *amarantos*, a beautiful flower with a perpetual bloom. Salvation is reserved, held in custody or trust for us. It is in Heaven, not on the earth as the materialists falsely teach.

Its Attainment (verses 5-8)

Our salvation depends upon the "power of God." Through our own might, power, work, or strength we could not attain it. The One we follow and trust in has overcome the world (John 16:33). We can courageously say, "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. 8:31). He will not, permit temptation beyond our ability to withstand (1 Cor. 10:13). A fatal error is seen in those who neglect to follow Him for fear that they are too weak; such deny the power and promises of His Word that enable one to be strong.

Our salvation depends upon our faith, too. "By grace are ye saved through faith..." Paul echoes Peter (Eph. 2:8). *Faith* is man's response to God's grace and power and is used here, as in many other places, to embrace all of man's duty and obedience to God. This faith is tried/proved as we experience manifold trials (vv. 6-7). Like us, these disciples loved and

believed in Christ without having seen Him (v. 8). Only by the combination of God's power and man's faith is salvation attainable.

Its Timing (verses 5-9)

It will be "revealed in the last time." This phrase refers to that future moment when time shall end. We have salvation now only in promise and hope; it is yet to be revealed and realized perfectly. It will be after "a little while." If we live 100 years, all of which are filled with trial, it will seem but "a little while" when salvation is ours. It will be ours "at the revelation of Jesus Christ." He promised His apostles that He would come again and receive them unto Himself (John 14:3), a promise that extends to all His faithful disciples (Mat, 25:34, 46). Salvation will be and is the end of faith; it is both the **object** and **completion** of faith. When we see the Lord in His glory, faith will end in sight.

Its Present Results (verses 6-8)

The anticipation of salvation causes us to "greatly rejoice" in our lives on earth. This salvation causes us to live in praise, glory, and honor to Christ, even though we are beset by trial. It is through Him that salvation is possible and will become a reality. He paid it all; we owe it all and should live in unflinching thankfulness to Him. Our salvation should cause "joy unspeakable and full of glory." How little some Christians value salvation if their attitude and approach to life is any indicator. The Christian's whole personality should be governed by the sublime contemplation that he is an heir of God!

The best that is in men cries out for salvation, although we often smother the cry in our rush for the fragile material trinkets of an out-of-balance age. To the Christian, salvation is the summit, the end, the fulfillment of all things. This salvation has been offered to all men (Mark, 16:15-16). "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb. 2:3). Truly, we shan't!

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