

# Salvation: God's Love Forever

Bethany Bible Church, Adult Sunday School Class, September 15, 2013

## Our Joy in One Another's Salvation

THE 'WHY'  
OF  
SALVATION

Last week, we began studying some aspects of the theology of our salvation that don't necessarily fit in any of the traditional categories--but that are very much worthy of consideration. We've been calling them the 'wonders' of salvation. And this morning, we'll consider the next wonder--our joy in one another's salvation.

THE 'WHAT'  
OF  
SALVATION

When we think about our salvation, it's understandable that we tend to think singularly--focusing primarily on what God has done for us personally. But from God's perspective, our salvation isn't just a singular matter. He saves us to belong to Him as the *church* of the redeemed--an assembly of saints together forever. When Jesus spoke of His redeeming work for those who are His own among the Jewish people, He said, ". . . I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:15). And then, He spoke of those who were His own from among the Gentiles when He said; "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice"--and added, "and there will be one flock and one shepherd" (v. 16).

THE 'HOW'  
OF  
SALVATION

Our Lord Jesus has it as His goal to unite His redeemed people together. And if the prospect of that eternal unity is a thrill to His heart, it should be a thrill to us too. We should not only praise God for our own salvation, but also for that of one another.

Consider that . . .

THE 'WHO'  
OF  
SALVATION

### I. GOD DELIGHTS IN THE PROSPECT OF OUR GLORIFIED UNION.

A. When Jesus prayed His wonderful prayer in John 17, He prayed not only for His twelve apostles, but also for us who would come later; and said, "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me" (John 17:20-23). Jesus' prayer suggests to us that it is not only His delight that we be united together in Him, but that it's the Father's delight also that we be united in Him in His Son! Think of it! The bond of eternal love that is shared between the Father and the Son--through the communion of the Holy Spirit--is something that we have been saved to enter into and enjoy together forever! Our salvation would not be complete--in terms of the Father's divine intention and purpose--unless *all* of His redeemed ones are forever in an bond of divine love with Him and with each other.

THE 'WHEN'  
OF  
SALVATION

B. The way that eternal bond of love looks can certainly be seen in the union of the Father and the Son. They are forever two Persons--retaining their individual distinctions of subsistence; but yet in such a way as Jesus could say, "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30); and "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). And similarly, we will retain our individual personalities of being; but will be united as one body in perfect unity. A picture of this might be seen in Jesus' promise concerning our eternal dwelling place. He said, "In My Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2)--literally, many 'rooms' or many 'dwelling places'. There are many dwelling places--perhaps a dwelling place for each one of us; but all in the one great house of our Father. If that's how our Father views our salvation, then we

THE 'WHERE'  
OF  
SALVATION

THE 'WONDER'  
OF  
SALVATION

ought to be thinking of our salvation as an “us” thing as much as we think of it as a “me” thing and a “you” thing.

## II. WE WILL ENJOY ETERNAL DELIGHT IN ONE ANOTHER’S GLORY.

- A. The Bible doesn’t tell us everything we might like to know about our eternal state of being. But we can know something about it from our Lord Jesus. We are destined to share together in His glory. Jesus prayed and said, “the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one” (John 17:22). And just think of what it will be like to behold in one another the very glory that the Lord Jesus Himself now enjoys and shares with us! We’re told that the angels of heaven will marvel at the display of God’s wisdom and wonderful grace in us as a result of our salvation (Ephesians 3:10); and if we are destined to exceed the angels themselves in glory, how could we not marvel at that display in one another to a far greater degree than they will?
- B. And there will be absolutely no sin to interfere with our joy in one another. The Bible tells us that “Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-28). And that of course means that there will not only be no imperfections for us to behold in one another but also no imperfections in our beholding! As Jonathan Edwards put it, “those that are lower in glory will not envy those that are above them, because they will be most beloved by those that are highest in glory. And the superior in glory will be so far from slighting those that are inferior, that they will have most abundant love to them--greater degrees of love in proportion to their superior knowledge and happiness. Such will be the sweet and perfect harmony among the heavenly saints, and such the perfect love reigning in every heart toward every other, without limit or alloy, or interruption; and no envy, or malice, or revenge, or contempt, or selfishness shall ever enter there, but all such feelings shall be kept as far away as sin is from holiness, and as hell is from heaven!” (*Charity and Its Fruits* [Banner of Truth Trust], pp.337-8). As Jude 24 says, God is able to “present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy . . .” That exceeding joy will no doubt be ours as well as His.

## III. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN ONE ANOTHER’S SALVATION NOW.

- A. All of this being true--this being the absolute and certain destiny of all of us who are redeemed in Christ--then we should rejoice now in one another’s prospect of eternal glory. In 2 Corinthians 1:13-14, Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers--who were far from perfect yet!--and told them, “we are your boast as you also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.” It should be our great joy *now* to anticipate seeing one another *then*--crowned in glory, rich in eternal rewards, a delight to the Savior who bought them with His own blood! The apostle Paul told the Thessalonian believers, “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy” (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).
- B. What’s more, we should give ourselves toward advancing that future glory in one another. If the great joy of our hearts will be to see one another glorified in Christ, then we should give ourselves to advancing that glory now! Paul wrote to the Philippian believers and told them that he wanted them to minister faithfully for the Lord “so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me”

(Philippians 2:16-18). We should be willing to labor hard for one another's glory in Christ!

- C. And finally, we should do what we can now to protect the unity that will be ours in glory forever. Paul urged us to walk "with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:2-6). "Therefore", our Lord taught us, "if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). We should labor diligently to preserve our unity in Christ and protect one another's holiness in His sight.

---

<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are taken from The Holy Bible, New King James Version; copyright 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc.