

# What's So Great About Our Salvation?

## Introduction

- A. Turn with me to Hebrews 2.
  - 1. The book of Hebrews can certainly be a challenging book to study as we discovered last month when we read through it. It takes on some pretty deep issues: the priesthood of Melchizedek in chapter 5, the detailed differences between the covenants in chapters 7-10.
  - 2. But all of this was written for a very practical purpose. Hebrews was addressed to struggling disciples, Jewish Christians who were considering the unthinkable. They were actually thinking of leaving Jesus and going back to Judaism. This book was written to encourage them to hang on to the better things they had in Jesus (Hebrews 10:35-39).
- B. Which brings us to Hebrews 2, our text for this lesson.
  - 1. I should mention that in chapter one the writer begins by telling us that God did not just send another prophet to make His will known under this new and better covenant. He sent His Son, Jesus, to tell us what He wants us to do (Hebrews 1:1-2a).
  - 2. And so, chapter two opens with a strong admonition to pay attention to what Jesus said (Hebrews 2:1-3a). He reminds his audience that when God's people disobeyed the laws of the old covenant, there was a penalty. They suffered the consequences. But if that was true of the Old Testament laws that came through prophets, how much more will it be true of the laws of God spoken by Jesus Himself?
  - 3. To those disciples who considered turning away from Jesus, the writer is saying, how do you expect to escape punishment if you do this; if you neglect this great salvation Jesus brought?
- C. It is this language the writer uses at the beginning of verse three that I want you to take special note, "so great a salvation."
  - 1. I suspect that these disciples who were turning from Jesus had forgotten their great salvation – how much had been done for them.
  - 2. I mention this because I think it can happen to us as well. Sometimes we forget how much has been done for us, how many spiritual blessings we have in Jesus. We forget just how great our salvation is!
  - 3. When we lose that sense of awesomeness, gratitude, and indebtedness, then the devil has begun to pave the road that leads away from Jesus. I think this is why people leave Jesus; they forget how great salvation really is.
- D. Perhaps there is someone in this crowd who has considered leaving Jesus.
  - 1. Maybe you've tried this business of being a Christian and just don't feel like it's worked out so well. Perhaps you've missed some sinful things from your former life. Perhaps some of your family or friends have given you a hard time and you're tired of it all and ready to quit.
  - 2. As we pass through times of adversity and doubt like these, we need to be reminded of our great salvation.
  - 3. So let's pose the question, what's so great about our salvation? There are six answers I want you to consider with me.

## A Great Savior

- A. Let's go back to Hebrews 1.
  - 1. Notice that Jesus did not come just to reveal God's will for man. He came to make purification for sin (Hebrews 1:2, 4).
  - 2. When we needed to be rescued from our sin, this is who God sent to be our Savior - His beloved Son, Jesus (Romans 8:31-32)!
  - 3. Think about that. It is powerful testimony to the depth of God's love for us (1 John 4:9-10).
- B. This reality should have a powerful impact on us.
  - 1. When people stop serving God, we sometimes say that they have "left the church" or abandoned their spiritual family.
  - 2. While this is true, it misses the more important point. When I turn back to the world, I'm leaving Jesus. I'm saying that my heart can no longer be touched by the amazing love God demonstrated when He sent His Son.
  - 3. This is first and foremost about me and my Great Savior! Because of what God was willing to sacrifice to rescue me, I should be willing to stick with Him, even when things get tough. Our salvation is great because it began with the gift of a Great Savior.
  - 4. But it's not enough to say that Jesus came to rescue us from sin. Our salvation is great because it required...

## A Great Sacrifice

- A. Do you ever let yourself ponder the magnitude of Jesus sacrifice – all that He did to provide for our salvation? It was more than the cross.
  - 1. He left heaven and came to live among men; God living as a man on earth (John 1:14).
  - 2. While He was here, He did not enjoy the finest things this life could offer. He lived a common, in some ways, deprived life (Luke 9:58).
  - 3. He was hated. His enemies were always seeking to trip Him up, ridicule Him or discredit Him (Matthew 19:3).
  - 4. Ultimately, they manipulated the Romans into killing Him using the agonizing process of crucifixion.
  - 5. From man's perspective, it wasn't much of a life.
- B. But from God's perspective this was the sacrifice necessary to deliver man from sin.
  - 1. John the Baptist described Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29) – who takes away my sin, and your sin.

2. Knowing what a great sacrifice was made for my salvation, it ought to make it very difficult for me to ever turn away from Jesus. It should take a lot more than some cheap thrill I get from sin or some petty fuss with brethren. Such trivial things should never be able to turn me away from the One who offered this great sacrifice.
3. But to say that His sacrifice provides forgiveness of sins does not say enough. We need to appreciate that our salvation involves...

## A Great Deliverance

- A. To a lot of people around us, sin is no big deal.
  1. If we're not careful, they can nudge us in the same direction.
  2. The problem is, if sin is no big deal, then neither is salvation from sin.
  3. I'm suspicious that this is a factor that helps some turn away from Jesus. They come to believe that there just wasn't that much at stake.
- B. But keep in mind that our cultural delusion about sin doesn't change reality.
  1. It is not possible to exaggerate the horror of being a sinner.
    - a. Sin cuts us off from God so that He cannot hear us or help us (Isaiah 1:15, 59:1-2).
    - b. It opens the floodgates of sorrow and sadness as we are forced to live with sin's terrible consequences.
    - c. It makes my future bleak. For those who choose the path of sin, they will forever be cut off from God in a terrible place of suffering when this life is over (II Thessalonians 1:9).
    - d. Our hearts may still be beating, but in our sins we are spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-3). Consider the power of this language used by the Holy Spirit! We are dead!
  2. In a lot of places no one wants to talk about these realities. But that does not make them any less true.
- C. I mention this not just to illustrate the tragedy of sin, but to highlight what a great deliverance Jesus accomplished for us.
  1. These terrifying truths only help us appreciate all the more what Jesus has done for us. Because of His sacrifice, we are able to be delivered from sin and its terrible consequences (Romans 5:8-9). This is something to be celebrated.
  2. It is also something that should inspire our faithfulness. When we leave Jesus, we put ourselves right back into the middle of this terrible predicament. Why would anyone ever do that? What in this life is worth being lost?
  3. But it's not just the desire to be delivered from sin that inspires our faithfulness, it is also the promise of...

## A Great Reward

- A. There are a lot of benefits that come with the decision to turn from sin and follow Jesus.
  1. But surely the greatest reward is the promise that we will spend eternity with God in heaven when this life is over.
  2. Scripture tells us many wonderful things about heaven. One that is meaningful to me is the Hebrew writer's description of heaven as a place of rest (Hebrews 4:1, 9).
  3. After all of our labors for the Lord, the struggles against temptation, the discouragement over the evil around us, we are promised rest.
  4. Isn't that an awesome thought?
- B. It's a thought that should inspire faithfulness.
  1. When I turn away from Jesus, I'm turning away from my reward. What could possibly cause me to do that? What in this life could be worth missing heaven? It is that strong desire for this great reward, this place of rest, that keeps us going (Philippians 3:13-14).
  2. But some struggle. They want to believe in heaven, but they have moments of doubt. They wonder if there will truly be a reward in the end. To help us with our doubts, our great salvation includes...

## A Great Confirmation

- A. Our text lays this out plainly (Hebrews 2:3-4). It was Jesus who announced this great salvation. It was confirmed by those who heard Him. God also gave His stamp of approval by empowering these witnesses to perform miracles so that all would know their testimony was true.
- B. What does all this mean for us? It means that there can be no doubt that everything Jesus said, everything recorded in this book is true. All the promises in which I hope – that Jesus is coming back, that I will one day go to be with Him in heaven – it's all going to happen, guaranteed!

## Conclusion: A Great Consequence

Which means we now have to make a decision. Either we accept the salvation Jesus offers and spend our lives walking in the path He has set before us. Or we turn away from Him and go our own way. As you contemplate your own choice, keep in mind that this is a decision that carries great consequences. For those who we consider for a moment turn from Jesus, Hebrews gives this warning (Hebrews 10:26-31). Make the choice today to turn from sin and experience this great salvation.

- David A. Banning