

# Truth for Today

The Bible teaching radio programme

For reply: Email: [truthfortoday@aol.com](mailto:truthfortoday@aol.com)

**Broadcast Date:** 22 February 2015

**No.** T0873

**Speaker:** Mr. Stephen Thomson

## What Christ is to us: Saviour

Today we begin a new series of four talks entitled, 'What Christ is to us'. In the next three talks we will be considering Christ as our Lord; Christ as our Head and Christ as our Great High Priest and Advocate, but we start today with the subject of Christ as our Saviour.

The emphasis in this series is twofold:

1. What Christ is in Himself; He is the Saviour; He is the Lord; He is the Head; and He is the Great High Priest and Advocate; and
2. What He is to us.

Our desire in presenting Christ in these different ways is that we might "*know Him*" (Philippians 3:10). This was the Apostle Paul's great desire (see Philippians 3:7-11), counting everything else loss that he might know Christ in a deeper, fuller, meaningful way.

If we call ourselves Christians (Christ's ones), then surely our greatest desire too should be to know Him more and more. In these difficult days when there is much to discourage us, more than ever we need to be found "*looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*", Hebrews 12:2. I understand the literal meaning of "*looking unto Jesus*", is to look away from other things and to fix our eye exclusively on Him. May God help us to do just that!

It is just a few weeks since we celebrated Christmas. What a wonderful day in the history of this world when Jesus was born! In Matthew's Gospel we read that the angel said to Joseph, "*Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins*" (Matthew 1:20-21). Here we have the very reason why He came - He came to save!

In Luke's Gospel the angel said to the shepherds, "*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*" (Luke 2:10-11).

You will notice that in Matthew 1:20-21, the salvation was to be to His people - a clear reference to the Jewish nation, which is in keeping with Matthew's presentation of Christ as the King of the Jews, but in Luke 2:10-11 the salvation would extend, through 'the Son of Man' to all people.

John's Gospel makes the extent of God's love and salvation (found in Christ) abundantly clear when we read, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*", John 3:16. Here we find wonderful parallel truth: that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world, but at the same time He is my own, **personal** Saviour.

Not only is He my own **personal** Saviour, the One who rescues and delivers me from the punishment of my sins, but He is my **present** Saviour, the One who saves and keeps me from the power of sin, and He is the **promised** Saviour who soon will remove me altogether from the presence of sin. I grew up hearing older Christians say, "He's an 'all the way home' Saviour", and so He is!

These three aspects of salvation, (past, present and future) are put very succinctly in 2 Corinthians 1:10, "*God ... who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us*" and again in Romans 5:9-10, "*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*"

Justified and reconciled by His death - that is the past; saved by His life (where He is now, as a Man, in heaven) that is the present; and at His coming (yet future) we shall be saved from wrath. Every instructed child of God knows that God's righteous wrath and judgement will soon come upon this sinful, Christ rejecting world, and how thankful we

should be that before it does, "...*the Lord himself shall descend from heaven...*" (see 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18), and His promise "...*I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*" (see John 14:1-3) will be fulfilled to His own.

I wonder, before we go any further in our talk today, can I ask you this all important question - do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your own, personal Saviour? Have you trusted Him for your salvation or are you trying to merit God's favour by some other way? Be assured of this that the Bible says, "*Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*", Acts 4:12. We cannot obtain salvation by any other means and to try is to offend the One Who "*sent [His] Son to be the Saviour of the world*" (1 John 4:14). The jailor at Philippi asked Paul and Silas a straightforward question, "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" And they said, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved...*", Acts 16:30-31. This message has not changed with the passing of time! We need to be saved and salvation is only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the One, "*who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*", Romans 4:25

And so, let us think for a few moments about the One who came to save the lost; the guilty, the Hell deserving sinners, who had no hope of rescuing themselves from the judgement of a Holy God. But first let us consider who those people are, and before we make a list of those who commit terrible and awful sins, let us hear the words of Scripture, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" Romans 3:23. I don't doubt the fact that there are 50 pence and 50 pence debtors (the Lord Jesus spoke of such, see Luke 7:40-43) but the fact remains that we are all sinners. I trust there is no one listening who thinks they are not a sinner! The Bible says, "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*" 1 John 1:8. The first step on the path to blessing is to recognise and confess that we are sinners before God. The old chorus says,

*There's a way back to God from the dark paths of sin,  
There's a door that is open and you may go in.  
At Calvary's Cross, is where you begin,  
When you come, as a sinner, to Jesus.*

*E. H. Swinstead (1882-1950), Public Domain*

So confessing the fact that we are sinners puts us into a position to receive the wonderful 'good news' of the Gospel that, "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...*", 1 Timothy 1:15. From Adam onwards there was not one man (or woman) who could be the saviour, because there was none without sin. King David says in Psalm 51:5, "*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me*" and that is true of all mankind, **but** not of our Lord Jesus Christ. Conceived of the Holy Ghost (as we have already quoted from Matthew 1:20) and born of a virgin, the Lord Jesus Christ is unique in that He did not inherit the sinful nature common to man. Sinless at birth, and sinless throughout His life, He was the only One suitable to be the "*Lamb of God*" (John 1:29), the One who "*takes away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29) and who can forgive us our sins.

Like the repentant thief (Luke 23:39-43), we should be willing to admit that we deserve to be punished for our sins and wrongdoing (Luke 23:41), but also to acknowledge that "*This man [the man Christ Jesus] had done nothing amiss*" (Luke 23:41). He didn't die for His own sins, He had none! The Easter hymn says,

*He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to heaven  
Saved by His precious blood.*

*Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)*

Well might we also sing,

*"Hallelujah, What a Saviour"!*

*Philip P Bliss (1838-1876)*

And so we can know Him now as our Saviour - the One who has personally cleansed us from our sins in His blood and made us fit and ready for heaven. We can have full assurance that our eternal salvation is dependent entirely on Him and the work He completed at the Cross of Calvary. We neither need to, nor can, add anything to a work which has been "*Finished!*" (see John 19:30). We have full assurance that we have been saved from the penalty of our sins, praise God! The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from among the dead, and His ascension into heaven is the proof that the work He did at the Cross is entirely acceptable to God. He has been glorified on account of His work.

However, as we know only too well, we also need salvation day by day, as we try and live godly lives in this ungodly world. Although, as we have considered we have been saved by His death, the power of sin still needs to be dealt with in our lives. Being saved doesn't mean that we have been made sinless and the potential for sinning is still with us. Being saved, we are partakers of the 'divine nature', (don't confuse that with Deity) but our sinful human nature is still present with us. Now this alters nothing which we have already considered together about our eternal salvation and the forgiveness of our sins, but it does bring into focus the need of present salvation which comes from our risen, glorified Saviour who has gone *"into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"*, Hebrews 9:24 and much of the preceding chapters.

I feel we need to understand this present aspect of our Saviour's work for us as I fear there are Christians who feel that they are failures because they still fall into sin. I agree that as Christians we should not live sinful lives, and the Holy Spirit, who indwells us, helps us to do that but that does not add up to sinless perfection. Don't let anyone fool you - we need our Saviour every day of our lives as we travel home to glory. Thank God, our Saviour is an 'all the way home Saviour'!

What I say in relation to our present salvation will no doubt be expanded on as we consider Christ as our Great High Priest and Advocate, but it will bear repeating. As our Great High Priest now, on the right hand of the majesty on high, He saves us 'in the power of' His endless life.

Jude, the servant (and half-brother) of Christ concludes his short epistle with a doxology which begins, *"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy..."* (Jude 24-25) so we can see that our Saviour is concerned about our spiritual welfare now but will also finally present us faultless in God's presence.

In the meantime, John tells us in 1 John 2:1, *"And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"*, and in 1 John 1:9, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

As Christians we should never have a casual attitude to sinning. Paul in Romans 6:1 asks, *"Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"*, and answers his own question by saying, *"God forbid"* (Romans 6:2). We need to be concerned about avoiding sin in our lives, especially those sins which we struggle with and which are repeated time and time again. Our Saviour lives that we might know His present salvation from the power of sin so that we might live victorious Christian lives.

There are some scriptures about salvation which may puzzle some. For example, in Philippians 2:12, Paul says, *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"*, and Peter in 1 Peter 3:21 says, *"Whereunto even baptism doth also now save us..."* to mention only two. But if we see that these scriptures are speaking about our daily salvation and not our eternal salvation, we will be preserved from error.

Now let us look at the future aspect of our salvation and to begin I want to quote from Hebrews 9:28, *"And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without [or apart from] sin unto salvation"*, and from Romans 13:11, *"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."* From both these Scriptures (and we could quote others) we see that there is a future aspect to our salvation. As we said in the introduction, not only is our Lord Jesus Christ the One who rescues and delivers us from the punishment of our sins, and the One who saves and keeps us from the power of sin in our lives now but He is the promised Saviour who soon will remove us altogether from the presence of sin.

We believe that Jesus is coming again, (the Bible clearly tells us that) and that He will firstly come for all those who have trusted Him as Saviour (to take us to heaven) before He comes with them (to rule on the earth). We would distinguish between these two comings by referring to the 'rapture', (the snatching away of the believers) and the 'appearing' (the beginning of the display of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords in this world when He sets up His kingdom and reigns for 1,000 years).

The Lord Jesus Christ told a parable about His coming (the rapture) in Matthew 25:1-13 that we might be ready. He gave a solemn promise to His own in John 14:1-3 that He would come again personally for them (and us), that we might be waiting for Him. The Lord gives us teaching on the subject through the Apostle Paul that we might be comforted. In 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, we have the prophecy of the Lord's coming, the believing dead raised and the living ones changed and caught up.

Judgement is God's strange work; He is *"gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy"*, (see Psalm 145:8). Some may well misinterpret this compassion as slackness and say, *"Where is the promise of his coming?"* (2 Peter 3:4) But Peter assures us, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count"*

*slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*", 2 Peter 3:9. This world is condemned and will be judged by a holy and righteous God.

In Revelation 6:1-16:21, we read of the many judgements which will come upon the world. Seven seals are opened, seven trumpets are blown, and seven vials (or bowls) of wrath are poured out, in the time the Lord Jesus Christ called the "*great tribulation*". In Matthew 24:21-22 He says, "*For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved...*" How thankful we should be that our Saviour is coming for us before this dreadful time of judgement comes upon the world. He loves us so much that He came to where we were, so that He may take us to where He is!

This is the Christian hope! That Jesus is coming again for us, and that before this world is judged. Paul writes to the Christians at Philippi, "*For our conversation [or citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his body of glory*", (see Philippians 3:20-21). To the Thessalonian believers he says, "*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Thessalonians 5:23). As we look around in our world and see the dreadful things that are happening, how glad we should be that Jesus is coming again to save us, to rescue us from the presence of sin and take us to be with Himself in glory.

And so, this final, full salvation will take place at His coming, then we shall be with Christ, in glorified bodies, sharing the joys of His Father's house beyond the sphere of sin. The anticipation of this blessed and living hope should cheer our hearts and call forth praises from our lips.

The prospect of the Lord's coming fills us with joy, but it will bring to a close the 'day of God's grace' for the unbeliever. Knowing this, we should be concerned about winning the lost to Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. What a Saviour we have to preach, One who is an "all the way home Saviour!"

May God bless you all.

---

**Please Note:**

We encourage you to use this transcript for your personal or group Bible studies. This material should not, however, be used in any publications without the express permission from Truth for Today, whose contact details can be found on page 1. Large Print copies of this document are also available upon request.