

## “How to be Saved and Know It!”

The Vine Series... John 15:5

### SCRIPTURE

1 John 5:11-12 (NIV)

<sup>11</sup> *And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

<sup>12</sup> *Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

<sup>13</sup> *I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.*

**Subject Question:** What 3 realities concerning our salvation does the Apostle John teach us in His small epistle?

**Compliment answer:** Salvation is a Gift, Salvation is a Grab, and Salvation is a Guarantee.

**Big Idea:** The 3 realities concerning our salvation that the Apostle John teaches us are: Salvation is a Gift, Salvation is a Grab, and Salvation is a Guarantee.

**Homiletical Idea:** “A Permanent change...”

**Purpose:** I want the congregation to understand the uniqueness and solidity of their salvation experience in and through Christ.

**Introduction:** To be the receiver of God’s salvation is truly life’s most precious possession. To understand that possession however, in all its fullness, is something that most of us as Christians struggle to grasp. Today we will consider what the Beloved Apostle, the one whom *Jesus loved*, had to say about the subject. We shouldn’t be surprised that salvation itself is literally a gift of grace of the highest order. Being a gift... it simply calls for us to live out our “saved” lives in a thankful, thank-filled way. Let’s see what John says concerning, Salvation is a Gift, Salvation is a Grab, and Salvation is a Guarantee.

**Groundwork:** Salvation, commonly referred to as “being saved” means deliverance or redemption from sin and its consequences. We are told in Romans 5:8 that God demonstrated His love for us through the death of His son, because of our sins. Ephesians 2:5 tells us “even

though we were dead because of our sins, [God] gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. It is only by God's grace that you have been saved." In order to receive salvation, we have to be born again. We commonly hear the terms, "born again" again and "saved" in Christian circles. They are two of the most popular phrases used by present day Christians, but many can't pinpoint the definition when they are asked to. When you are saved, or born again, you experience a spiritual transformation, a total change of heart. To be born again is to be saved.

To better understand salvation through the act of being born again, turn to John 3:1-21. In this passage, Jesus Christ is talking to Nicodemus, a prominent Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was the ruling body of the Jews. During this exchange, Nicodemus came to Jesus with a number of questions.

Nicodemus says "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." (John 3:2) Jesus uses an illustration Nicodemus can easily understand, one of a newborn baby entering its life to represent beginning new life with God. "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." (John 3:3). Nicodemus is confused at first by Jesus' response, when he uses the term born again, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" (John 3:4). Jesus provides clarity: "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again"(John 3: 5-7). You can see through this passage that Nicodemus is searching for answers, but what he really needs is a change of his heart. The same applies to us. When we identify as born again we have experienced new birth in Christ and through this process ultimately become children of God.

Another crucial aspect of salvation is God's gift of grace. We are told in Ephesians 2:8 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is a gift from God." Grace is God's love in action. Biblical scholar Paul Enns describes grace as "the unmerited or undeserving favor of God to those who are under condemnation." (The Moody Handbook of Theology). Though we are undeserving of grace, God loves us so much that He continues to save us. We needed to be rescued. God made us "in His own image." Genesis 2:7 tells us "Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into His nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." God energized them through His breath. Given man was created in God's image, we know that they were perfect. But their disobedience showed not only their distrust of God, but their own brokenness. We are similar, being that we are like God, yet ungodly, victims in a world of sin. We are living in a world of lost souls. But God doesn't want this for us. In fact, God rescues us from our sin.

To be saved, or born again is to accept the plan of salvation that Jesus offers us. In order to understand salvation, it's imperative that you understand the death and resurrection of Christ which points to our salvation. The son of God was made human, and during His earthly life, he lived a perfect life, and died not because He wanted to but because we needed salvation. He was made to die for us. Amazingly, God raised Him from the dead into new life, and promises to

resurrect us when Jesus comes again. The salvation we need is Jesus, and can only be accessed through Him.

- A. Salvation is a Gift (Vs. 11) <sup>11</sup> *And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*
- B. Salvation is God's **desire** for all humanity: 1 Timothy 2:1-5 *I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— <sup>2</sup> for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.* Yet, we know that all people will not accept Christ, will not trust in His salvific work on their behalf. Yet... some will and some do. And in the long term the only person that you and I are truly accountable for receiving God's invitation is us; you and me. We can pray for others; we can witness for Christ. And yet, we need to be absolutely sure of our own salvation before we venture out and be concerned for others.
- C. Let's consider Saint Paul's words in Ephesians 2:

<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

1. <sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved... Grace is unmerited favor. God has taken notice of YOU. And more, he has taken an interest and action in you.
2. through faith... Belief, but not simply an intellectual assent. But belief that is undergirded with confident assurance.
3. and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Even that confident assurance that you have is something that God supplies...
4. <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. Never dependent on our works to get into heaven: works come because we are bound for heaven!
5. <sup>10</sup> For we are God's handiwork. God has taken delight in doing His work in us and showing off His work through us.
6. created in Christ Jesus. To be born from above... to be blessed with the faith to believe in Christ. Plus, be given the Holy Spirit as proof of our acceptance by Christ.

7. *to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.* Works are the evidence that God has given us the privilege of being in partnership with Him to influence and affect others for Himself!

D. If salvation is truly a gift... and it is, then what kind of attitude should literally ooze out from our lives, day in and day out? Thankfulness. Gratitude. Happiness. Maybe the words of Andre Crouch express it best:

### To God be the Glory

How can I say thanks  
for all the things you have done for me  
Things so undeserved  
Yet you gave to prove your love for me  
And the voices of a million angels  
Could not express my gratitude  
All that I am and ever hope to be  
I owe it all to Thee

(Chorus)

To God be the glory  
To God be the glory  
To God be the glory  
For the things He has done  
With His blood, He has saved me  
With His power, He has raised me.  
To God be the glory  
For the things he has done

(Hear it, Believe it, Know it!)

- A. Salvation is a Grab (Vs. 12) <sup>12</sup> *Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.* We've already considered the fact that Salvation is God's great and wondrous gift to you and me. Buy what does it really mean to "have" the Son? Let's consider the Apostle John's words:
- B. John 1: *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* <sup>12</sup> *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* <sup>13</sup> *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*
- C. Again, I could tell you about Christ sacrifice, encourage you to come to Him and let He be your Savior and Lord, convince you that there really was a

Son of God, a man named Jesus, born of a virgin, who once waked the hallowed places of this earth 2000 years ago.... but until you reach out and grab it for yourself. Until you make it your own. Until you claim it as yours, nothing happens. Receiving him simply is going past yes, I believe in you Jesus, to yes, I receive you into my life and heart as not only my savior, but you can have me ALL. Be the one who is in control from now on. Be the one who will guide me through all the days of my life. Work out **your** plans for **my** life in a way that pleases and honors you.

- D. Here's the irony of reaching out and grabbing ahold of Christ...we find that it's always really been him grabbing ahold of us. When our hands go up in submission we touch the hand that has been reaching down to us all along. Salvation is as much as grab on His part as it is on our part!

(Hear it, Believe it, Know it!)

- A. Salvation is a Guarantee. (Vs. 13) <sup>13</sup> *I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life* Let me say this up front: you are not what is wrong in this world—you are what's right. You are not an anomaly or an abnormality in the human race—you are what human beings are supposed to be. You are not an odd ball with old fashioned ideologies—you are the example of God's design, God's Son and God's offer of forgiveness and love.
- B. But you are not really of this world. Oh sure you are a human being. But you will never really fit into this world that is a fallen world. Listen to what Paul wrote to the Philippians:  
*Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.* <sup>18</sup> *For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.* <sup>19</sup> *Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.* <sup>20</sup> *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,* <sup>21</sup> *who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*
- C. I think most of us know the reality of John 3:16... the promise of eternal life. I think most of us have heard about heaven and the streets of Gold and the reunion with old family and friends. I think we can be confident that God will give us new bodies and even more: that there will be no more suffering, or dying or crying or pain, for the old order of things will be done away. I think that most of us can relish in the final victory where Satan and even death will be dealt with forever.

D. I think most of us however, deal with the question: can I make it. Can I keep my salvation even when I am getting older? It seems that when I was young I could believe in heaven... But as I get older...? I think I may have dropped the ball. I don't feel that I am living up to my end of the bargain anymore. I am sure that Christ must somehow be disappointed in me now that I am in the twilight years... Let me in closing quote Paul's wondrous words of God's guarantee concerning us:

*I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

(Hear it, Believe it, Know it!)