

“The Only Source of My Eternal Salvation”

In 1987, when I transferred to the main campus of Bible College in Pennsylvania, less than 5% of students used computers in my class, and all others used typewriters, including me. But two years later, when I went to seminary in California, all of my fellow classmates used computers. The typewriter had already become an antique. So, I had to buy my own computer.

At that time, everyone used desktop computers that could only be used at home. Not long after that, notebook computers appeared. Thanks to this, we were able to use computers in classrooms and do work at multiple destinations. Of course, laptops back then were very heavy and bulky. After that, the tablet PC appeared, which we could take pictures with.

Now, we all use smartphones since many of them are as powerful as tablets. They have so many functions now that it boggles the mind. Could you have imagined 30 years ago that we'd have devices such as these? We can carry this phone anywhere, but still, we can lose it, have it stolen, or have it malfunction. As people dream, if someday ordinary people install a chip with these capabilities into their bodies, there will be no more separation between the device and us.

Looking at it from a different angle, the history of mankind can be regarded as a timeline of God's promises. Today is one of the Sundays of Lent, a week before Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem. Specifically, we have read in the scriptures about the new covenant of God that is renewed for mankind through Jesus Christ. Let us look at how Jesus accomplishes the promises of the Father God for us.

I. God gave us a new covenant through Jesus.
God proclaimed the promise of the "new covenant" through the prophet Jeremiah in the sixth century B.C. for our eternal salvation. He gives a new covenant and completes the old covenant, which he gave to Israel through the Law of Moses.

The new covenant is a prophecy of the covenant of the blood of Jesus Christ accomplished through the cross. This new covenant is a promise to the whole world, that will stand throughout all of history, to all human beings.

Let us examine the three points of this new covenant.

One, God puts his law into our hearts and writes it on our minds (v. 33). This work can only be done by the Holy Spirit. Here is why we confess the work of the Holy Spirit. God takes the initiative in helping us have the heart of the Lord.

It is as if God puts the soul chip called "the Lord's heart" inside our hearts. Therefore, there will be no more separation between us and the Lord.

Two, God allows us to know Him (v. 34).

God gives us the privilege of being children of God through faith. In addition, through the help of the Holy Spirit, He allows us to communicate directly with God and to know Him.

Three, God forgives our sins and does not remember them (34). This reveals what the sacrifice of the cross of Jesus plays in the relationship between God and us. If our sins are not forgiven, we cannot be saved. But the taint of sin cannot be sustained in the presence of Jesus' blood.

II. The glory of faith can only be obtained after suffering.

Jesus said this in the Gospel of John. "If one grain of wheat dies, it will bear many fruits." "You must hate your own life so you can preserve it." This foretells the way of sacrifice he must go in order to give us eternal salvation. It also explains the attitude of faith that His disciples should have. So, we can say the glory of faith can only be obtained after suffering.

I'm sure this is not what most people want to hear. What do people hate to hear when they are going through hardship? "Tough, that's life. You should embrace it." No one wants to hear those things, am I right? However, it is a hard truth we must accept.

What is the reason that Christians in the world also face hardships and adversities? When they do, they ask a question. "Why do Christians suffer the same as those who do not believe in God? If I pray to God, shouldn't my pain go away and my problems be resolved?"

However, it is because God is with us. The people of the world suffer without God, and we suffer with God. So, I have a secret that I can boldly introduce to you. That is, we continue to trust in God's promises to us through the Bible, even during our hardships.

Look at Jesus introduced by the Hebrew Scriptures today. Although he was the Son of God, he learned obedience through suffering, and after he became perfect through his obedience, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obeyed him. The harsher the training process of faith for us, the stronger our Heavenly Father's protective hand guards us by the Holy Spirit.

The eternal salvation we have been given is because Jesus paid for our eternal punishment. As Christians, it is our duty not to keep this wonderful news to ourselves. Let's remember that we are called to follow this principle of the cross. We must always think about how the actions we choose affect the spread of the gospel of Jesus.

We must be interested in how today's changes in America and the world are related to the building of God's kingdom. Our faith begins where we are comforted by others. But as our faith grows, we must move to the position of comforting others. This is possible when all the sources of consolation are placed on the cross of Jesus.

Is it possible for us to sacrifice ourselves for the gospel, the Lord's body, and the church? It is when you completely rely on Jesus to guide and support you. If you think that it is not possible that way, you are severely limiting your understanding of His power, which even conquered sin and death.

III. God heard Jesus' humble cry and devotional requests. Today's Hebrew scripture shows how Jesus obeyed God the Father while in human form for our eternal salvation. Jesus raised prayers and supplications with a great cry and many tears (v. 7).

So, God heard Jesus' humble cry and devotional requests. We question whether "Jesus, the Son of God, should do so to the Father."

But depending on who is receiving the prayer, prayer and pleading can be a burdensome labor. On the other hand, it can be a privilege and a joy. Jesus gave the prayer "to Him who can save from the dead." Do you firmly believe that fact when you pray today? Prayer is not mere labor. It is a great tool to experience God's kingdom, strength, and love!

Jesus entrusted his death to his heavenly Father and obeyed him. The Father received the sacrifice of death offered by his Son, and through his resurrection, life made his Son the source of eternal salvation. Can you even entrust your death to God? Through that trust, you can free yourself from all the underlying questions in your life.

San Diego County has Anza Borrego Desert State Park, which has the largest area among state parks in the country. The badlands spread out widely within the park, and in the center is a place called Seventeen Palms. The surrounding area is full of unspoiled Badlands hills. It is not a lowland where groundwater can flow. But how can palm trees live there?

I'm sure there is one case where water can come out, even in a high place. It is because there is hot spring water. Someone said the trees standing there now would be about 250 years old. There is no place to worry about the heat and the drought in the desert, where there is a hot spring coming from the bottom of the earth.

It is the world where the children of our God live. It is because you can drink the hot spring of Jesus' salvation, which is unchanging and will never become dry. We must know that the fact that Heavenly Father answered the prayers of Jesus the Son is a clear proof that God certainly answers our prayers as well.

Today, the reason for the existence of the universe is to accomplish God's promise of eternal salvation for humankind through Jesus Christ. No one knows when the war between Russia and Ukraine, Israel, and Hamas, which threatens the world's political and economic stability and the settlement of countless refugees, will end.

However, we must know that no great chaos and change in human history can cause God's plan for mankind's salvation to be frustrated or regressed.

At any time and in any environment, our main concern should be salvation from God. The events involving the forces of man and the world cannot surpass the powers of God and his plans.

When we hold this promise firmly, our lives will be filled with joy and boldness today, tomorrow, and until the last day. This is our confession of faith. Amen!

Reflections and Applications for Today's Sermon:

1) Explain why you acknowledge and believe that Jesus Christ is the only source of your eternal salvation.

2) What do you offer your prayers and petitions to God with tears today for? What impact does Jesus' prayer on earth to his heavenly Father have on you?

3) Find out what acts of obedience the Holy Spirit requires of you today so that you live as "a dying grain of wheat" for the gospel, and pray for them.