

Receiving Salvation Made Simple

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- [0 : 0 0] Some longer than others, and of course, thank you to each one of you for coming out tonight on a Wednesday night. If you've got your Bibles, then find 2 Corinthians 11.
- I'd like to begin in 2 Corinthians 11. I've been keeping track of attendance for all of our services, and we've been in the 40s on Sunday mornings with the sicknesses, and even with several out this weekend, past weekend, I was surprised that we were up 55 on Sunday, which was a pretty good number, I thought, for where we've been.
- And now that we've gotten a few more that are back among the flock, we'll be pushing forward, Lord willing. So we had a good day Sunday, and I look forward to this coming weekend as well.
- In 2 Corinthians 11, we'll just begin at the very first verse, and just catch a few verses here to introduce where we're going to go tonight.
- Paul says, Would to God you would bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me, for I am jealous over you with godly jealousy. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.
- [1 : 1 8] But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit which ye have not received, or another gospel which ye have not accepted, you might well bear with him.
- For I suppose I was not a wit behind the very cheapest apostles, but though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge, we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things. And Paul says this in verse 4, he says, You might well bear with him.
- He's being sarcastic, saying that if somebody showed up preaching another gospel, you'd probably let them preach. He's telling this church that he's worried about them. As he said earlier in the passage, he's jealous over them.
- It's a good thing, because he's espoused them to one husband, to the Lord Jesus Christ, but he's afraid of something in verse 3, that their minds would be corrupted. From what?
- From verse 3, the simplicity that is in Christ. And he goes on later in the passage, look down at verse number 19 and 20. He said, For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.
- [2 : 3 3] He's again being sarcastic to them, saying, You are allowing fools to get up and say what they say, thinking that you know what you're doing, that you're wise. And verse 20, For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face, saying, You just let it all happen to you.
- Like you have no discernment. And so he's rebuking this church, but what he feared was that they would be turned away, their minds would be corrupted from the simplicity in Christ.
- And that's where I want to focus on is something simple, really simple today, but the simplicity of salvation in this age, the simplicity of it, and the things in the scripture that it's likened done to.

This is just like almost a children's lesson in a sense of illustrating and comparing things that we understand and partake of in everyday life and showing how simple it is to receive the free gift of eternal life.

And religion has never made it simple. Man has never made salvation simple. Man has come up with ideas like strapping bombs to your chest and killing people, innocent women and children.

[3 : 44] Go kill them. God will be pleased with you. And can you imagine somebody that deluded and that deceived, yet probably sweating and putting the cables together and plugging it in and hooking it to the battery pack and probably shaking and convincing themselves and uttering and ranting these things in their mind, these quote-unquote holy scriptures to themselves to force themselves to go forward to committing suicide in the name of their God.

That's nothing simple about that. That's not salvation either, by the way. That's just one sect in this world. And how many other religions are there that tell you that you have this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this to do this week.

And then come back next week and check the list off again and maybe, maybe you'll earn your way into the grace of God. There's nothing simple about that.

Paul was afraid for these simple believers, for these simple in mind believers, thinking they're wise and allowing themselves to be deceived about what he calls the simplicity that's in Christ, the simplicity of the gospel.

So let me show you, let me take you through, I've got eight of them, but I don't know if we'll go through all of them. But this isn't like eight long points by any means. It's just the way that salvation is pictured in this age.

[5 : 07] Come back to Numbers chapter 21. And here's a scene that I'll use to illustrate because Christ uses it himself. Numbers 21, a story I'm sure you're familiar with of this Old Testament when God got pretty upset with his people because the people of Israel spake against God in verse 5 and against Moses.

In Numbers 21, verse 5, the people spake against God and against Moses. Wherefore have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? Why did you bring us out here?

They were ticked off. Foolish. For there's no bread, neither is there any water. And our soul loatheth this light bread. That's a tough one to say five times fast.

Our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people and much people of Israel died. And therefore the people came to Moses and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee.

Pray unto the Lord that he may take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people and the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

[6 : 26] And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, he beheld a serpent of brass. He lived. Now this is a large camp. I don't have any dimensions to give you, but there is millions, two million plus people out here.

And this is quite a spread of things. So you couldn't just crawl out your tent door and look out and see this serpent. You had to go to it. Make your way to it. And what that would do is show faith.

Show that you're bitten, you're messed up, it's obvious, it's in your flesh, this disease that's killing you as you stand. But there's a cure. I heard of a cure.

And it's over yonder. And according to the word, if I go and look at it, if I'll get myself to the cure and look upon it, that's exercising faith to believe those words.

Certainly there were people that said, whatever. How can looking at a brazen serpent on a pole heal me of the disease in my flesh? A snake bit me, I'm going to die.

[7 : 28] Some people dropped dead. Some people never made it. But others believed. And others made a movement and acted and were delivered.

They were saved, if we could use the word. Salvation is pictured in this Bible in one way. And the first way that I want to show you tonight is just by looking.

The Bible says in Isaiah 45, verse 22, look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. The Lord Jesus Christ, when he was dealing with Nicodemus, he said, and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

Why? That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life. The look to Jesus Christ is the look of faith. And it's pictured here, we see it in the Old Testament, we see it in Christ's words, by looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

It's pictured by looking. Now how hard is that? How hard is it to look upon the Lord Jesus Christ in faith, believing? You see the faith, the element of faith, it was in the Old Testament, it still exists today, and believing on Jesus Christ.

[8 : 40] But it's such an effortless, a simplistic means of obtaining eternal life. Looking. Look. Not do. Just look.

Come to Matthew chapter 11, I want to show you another one. This is Bible salvation. It means, or examples, illustrations of exercising faith in the gospel.

Matthew chapter 11. And look at verse 28.

And you can see in verse 28, religion. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. The Lord Jesus Christ offers, or he pictures again, how simple salvation is.

[9 : 47] Just come unto me. Come right here. Similar in the Old Testament, they had to come to look upon that serpent. Jesus Christ, again on the cross, calls men to come.

They hear the call. The salvation is the voluntary response to the call to come unto him. How hard is it? Well, some people would rather labor in verse 28.

They'd rather be heavy laden with things. Those words are words that Jesus Christ used against the Pharisees for how they were putting things upon others, the common people.

How you've got to do this, you've got to keep that, you've got to follow us there, you're not there. And Christ says, forget all of it, drop it, come unto me. You'll find rest for your souls.

So again, it's pictured as something as simple, as effortless, as just coming. It's not a hard road. It's not something that's impossible to make.

[10 : 45] It's just, come here. I call out to my kids oftentimes throughout the week and yell at one of their names and say, Noel, come here. Now she could sit there and say, he didn't really call my name.

Or she could sit there and say, I don't want to. I'm like, I'll take the consequences. I could call again, Noel, come here. And just like that sinner could sit there and say, I don't, I'm not coming to that call.

I'll just deal with the consequences. I'll take my chances. I don't think that the one that's calling me to come to him is worthy of my coming. And a man or a woman ends up in hell to suffer the torments of the wrath of God when all Jesus Christ wanted to do was come.

Just come here. Salvation is that simple. Coming to Jesus Christ. Religion makes it hard. Jesus Christ makes it easy.

Effortless. Come to John chapter 1. Keep moving to your right. John chapter 1. I put these in order, but I do reserve the right to hop around.

[11 : 56] John chapter 1. And now notice verse 11 and 12. Well, we can go to 13.

He came unto his own, but his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave you power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

When you receive him, you're born of God. A spiritual birth takes place upon receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is pictured in something as simple as just receiving.

How do you receive a gift? Just basically, you just reach out for it, right? It's not that you're reaching and pulling it towards you and getting and using, mustering all your strengths.

You just, you receive it. Can you, when I was young, I used to see these, what were they called? You guys know what this is. Ed McMahon, the sweepstakes thing or the big check showing up on the door, you know.

[13 : 06] Publishers Clearinghouse, is that it? And you see him come to the door, there's cameras, there's, you know, microphones in their face. In the old days, they knock on the door and you just won, whatever.

And could you see somebody just slam the door? I don't believe it. I don't want it. Get off my lawn. Or do you just gladly receive the free gift?

Jesus Christ likens salvation to just receiving it. Opening your heart's door and receiving it. It's not something you have to do. It's something you receive.

What a blessing it is to consider these simple, pictured, effortless thoughts of salvation, how receiving Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul says, as ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

And he teaches us we walk by faith. Therefore, we've received Christ Jesus the Lord by faith, not by works of righteousness. Receiving him.

[14 : 06] Here's another one, John chapter 6. We can all get this one. John chapter 6, verse 51.

Christ says, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.

Salvation, eternal life is obtained by eating or pictured by eating. By eating. This is not a literal statement.

The Catholics take this literal and come up with their own peculiar beliefs about things. We'll discuss that some Sunday evening a little bit. You're not to eat the flesh of Jesus Christ.

He's likening himself to something you partake of. Later in the chapter in verse 63, he said that the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. I'm not going to eat his flesh and drink his blood.

[15 : 15] But here salvation is likened to something every man can understand, bread, and receiving it or partaking of it, eating it. What a simple, simple, simple thing that even a child can do.

Receiving the Lord Jesus Christ is just like eating. And we do it all the time, don't we? Look at John chapter 7. Here's another one very close to that. John 7 verse 37.

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. There it's likened to drinking.

And notice the very next verse says, He that believeth on me. That's what he's talking about. It's about exercising faith in the person of Jesus Christ, not eating his flesh or drinking his blood.

That's nonsense. The scripture doesn't show that. It's pretty plain. It's exercising faith. Likened to or pictured by the simplistic thought of drinking.

[16 : 18] Come to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1. Lord, is there a day in your life and your soul you thirsted for something better?

In John chapter 4, he told that woman at the well that I have water, living water, that if you'll drink of it, you'll never thirst again. Remember what it was like to be thirsty in your soul, to have nothing quench that feeling inside, knowing that you've tried this, you've done that, but still, you don't feel like it's quite good enough?

How many men and women lay their head down on their pillows tonight, not knowing for sure that their sins are covered by the blood of Christ, not knowing that they've done enough? Thirsting inside, still thirsting.

You know what it's like to be thirsty? I'm thirsty right now. I feel like pounding that water, but I'm trying to hold off. You know what it's like to feel dry, to get out here in this hot sun and thirst?

You know what it's like to thirst and drink, but still thirst, and it never, this isn't doing it, this isn't doing it, throw it away? Yet how many men still continue to drink their religion and drink their religion and try and try and try and never have tasted how satisfying exercising faith in Christ is?

[17 : 44] Salvation's pictured by drinking. Ephesians chapter 1, now it's likened to something else, it's something simple. It's trusting. Verse 13, In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

Again, the word believed is in the verse replacing the word trusted. You trusted. Verse 12 says, Ye should be the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ. Trusting.

Exercising faith. That's all that God calls for, for salvation. You may say, well wait, what's this about tonight? Why, what do we think, do I think we're all lost? Do I think John's coming back from the south and he lost his salvation?

No. I don't, I don't think anybody in here is lost. I hope not. I think we should appreciate how simple salvation is and have our eyes open to realize the world doesn't know this stuff.

They're so deluded about salvation, their minds have been corrupted from the simplicity in Christ. The Bible describes it and pictures it as just trusting.

[18 : 57] You know, when I came up here to come up to the plow, about to start, I sat down on that chair, that little mini pew. I never touched it. I never pushed on it. I didn't even think twice.

I trusted it. Every one of you did the same thing when you walked in here and sat down. You trusted the seat underneath you. You believed it was going to hold you up and you didn't check underneath, see if the screws and bolts, did somebody play a prank on me tonight?

You didn't care. Jesus Christ calls on you to trust in him. Come to Hebrews chapter 6 and this one, may match the song we just sang about the anchor.

Hebrews chapter 6 and verse 18. Hebrews 6 verse 18, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

That's the Lord Jesus Christ. And all we're supposed to do is lay hold. Lay hold. It doesn't, I know there's the gospel song, I'm not holding on to Jesus, he's holding on to me. And I get that.

[20 : 26] Eternal security based on his work, not yours. But the picture is laying hold. It's not a picture of somebody hanging on while you're getting whipped around through some terrible peril.

The picture is just like that woman that came to Jesus Christ that had that disease and she just got a hold of him. It's like hugging. It's come to me and just lay hold of me.

You know what I'm holding on to for salvation? The Lord Jesus Christ. I just come to him. I'm not showing him anything. I'm not showing him, I'm not doing anything to impress him.

Just, just taking him. Say, I am his and he is mine. And we have a fellowship now. We have a relationship now. Because I laid hold on that hope set before us.

That anchor of the soul that's sure and steadfast. It's not going anywhere. By the grace of God, I'm still holding on to Jesus and I'm not trusting in me.

[21 : 27] You know what I mean. Nothing left, nothing to do but lay hold. Finally, there's another one in the book of Revelation that's much like these others. These are so simple.

They're so effortless. They require nothing much on your part but exercising faith. Revelation 22. And here's one really close to the drinking thought because it deals with water.

The water of life. But it uses a different verb here. Revelation 22.17 The spirit and the bride say come and let him that heareth say come and let him that is a thirst come and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely.

Taking. Just take it. You ever had somebody tell you that? Just take one. Free. Take one. Help yourself. That's salvation. That's how God offers eternal life to a sinner.

Just take it. It's paid for. My son paid for it. What a difference between what the world has come up with or with what many denominations have posed with what traditions of men have come across and have instituted for what they believe must be done to attain God's forgiveness to merit God's grace God's eternal life.

[22 : 56] No. Salvation is appropriated in these ways by faith by looking look unto me by coming by receiving eating, drinking trusting holding taking that's simplicity.

That's the simplicity that's in Christ. That's what I pray and hope I trust that you all have that I have is that simple salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ where the work was done by Him and there's nothing left for me to do but believe it to exercise my faith in it.

It's in the person of Jesus Christ. It's in the gospel of Jesus Christ. I came across some of these thoughts because I'm looking into something for Sunday that really is maybe Lord willing to try in the morning to get our hearts prepared for the evening and it just drove me to salvation and to how simple God made it for us.

I don't know about you but I appreciate that. Not just as I stand here but I appreciate that I understand how quick life is and how fragile it is and possibly how many times my life could have been snuffed out already and I appreciate that God doesn't require a whole lot of me to receive salvation.

He may call some things and ask some things of me in this life and service but it's not to get saved and so I look on these things and I thank the Lord God that it's that easy because if it was hard I know me and I know I'd probably have blown it.

[24 : 37] I'd probably just be frustrated with my lack of devotion to Him or to my lack of ability to stay right with Him and the sin that's in my flesh and eventually I'm sure of it.

I'd be up and down so many times and feel like I can't do this I can't live my life like this just done. I wonder how many men and women are done because they don't realize how simple Christ made it.

I wonder how many of your relatives are frustrated because they don't know how simple Christ made it for. I wonder how many of your co-workers I wonder how many of your neighbors don't know how simple Christ made it for them.

It could be that their minds have been corrupted from the simplicity that's in Christ. It could be that they're so foolish that they're receiving another gospel.

So may God use this to remind us of what He's done. May also God use this to encourage us to put that simple message out there to show them how easy it is.

[25 : 48] Don't be afraid of witnessing to somebody and giving them a track and don't be afraid like oh no I'm not going to cover all the bases with them. Let God do that work in their heart.

Just be faithful. Be faithful trying to get the gospel out. I know we're afraid of the one, two, three pray with me and the super soul winner that can just go out and get 50 and come back and tell the stories of you got somebody to pray.

I know we stay away from that. But I don't overthink it either, right? They need to know they're a sinner. Christ saves sinners. That's it.

There it is. You believe on Him. Let go of anything else and just take Him. Trust in Him. Receive Him. Look to Him. So I hope that those thoughts help you.

I hope they're a blessing to you. I hope that you can at least turn your mind back to this is how I got saved. Right there. Don't feel like you don't have a testimony. Don't feel like you can't explain it to somebody because it's right there.

[26 : 48] It's all it is. Let's close together in prayer. Father, thank you for tonight and for these scriptures. Thank you for how effortless, how unconditional all of this is on our part. The work's been done by your precious Son.

Lord, we remember that in the garden He didn't want to go through with it. He prayed that if the cup could pass from Him, the Lord, He willingly walked and He went forward. The Bible says He set His face as a flint.

And so Lord, we're thankful, eternally thankful for taking our shame and taking our sin and paying for it with your blood. And God, we pray that you'll empower us and burden us to spread this message, to share this truth with others, to help to take the blinders off of them and let them realize the simplicity that's in Christ.

Lord, thank you for this church and for saving our souls. Help us to be a witness. Help us to live right. Please bring us back safely on Sunday to worship you in spirit and in truth and it's in Jesus' name I pray.

Amen. Amen. You are just...