

Salvation is of the Lord

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[0 : 0 0] Following along in the sermon series in the book of Genesis, and you remember that these words that we are encountering as we work our way through Genesis, these are the generations.

! Those words function as a signal marker in the book and they appear ten times throughout the book.!

And each time we see these words, these are the generations, they signal something important, some mark or transition in salvation history.

And so we should pay attention to them. And I'm doing my best to point them out to us as we work our way through. And in the passage before us this morning, we have two of these signal markers.

Two times these words, these are the generations, occur in the passage we're considering this morning. And I want us to consider what are they signaling to us.

[1 : 0 4] But first let's pray. Father, we are grateful this morning. We're grateful that you have rescued us from our sin.

We're grateful that you have not only saved us and reconciled us to yourself, but you have joined us to brothers and sisters with whom we share a precious faith.

Lord, would you, in this moment, speak to us to strengthen that faith that you have given to us. I pray that you'd open our hearts and eyes to the truth of your word, and in particular, the truth of the gospel.

Lord, you know where each one of us is, whether present or watching by live stream. You know exactly where we are and what we need to hear.

So would you speak to us as only you can for your glory. And Lord, once again, I ask that you would pour out your spirit afresh upon me, that I might be faithful to your word and helpful to your people this morning.

[2 : 1 7] We ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Last Sunday, we considered the sad account of the Tower of Babel. The entire mass of humanity living at the time collectively joined themselves together to build a city and a tower that reaches to the heavens.

And they did it so that they would not be dispersed over the earth and so that they could make a name for themselves. God had commanded them to be fruitful and to multiply and fill the whole earth.

As his image bearers, he wanted them to spread across his earth that he had created. But rather than spread out, they decided that they were going to settle down.

And they would build this city and this tower to make a great name for themselves. And so they did settle down because they refused to spread out.

And so the Lord, in response, confused their language and he caused them to spread over the whole earth. The very thing that they did not want to do, he made them do. And then he stopped them from doing the thing they wanted to do.

[3 : 32] They had to leave off building the rebellious city and tower. And so rather than building a name for themselves, what they built was shame for themselves.

They left an unfinished project that they pridefully started. And to this day, it is an emblem of shame and nonsense because Babel means confusion.

Now, immediately after this account, we come to the passage we are considering this morning. And for those of you who have noticed that the title of the sermon that's projected, Salvation is of the Lord, hopefully projected, not projected yet, but soon to be projected, is different from what you have in your printed service handout.

The reason is that this passage that we are considering this morning reminds us of the truth that salvation is of the Lord.

And this truth is a foundational truth. It is one of the most important truths to grasp in Scripture. And I say this with great conviction this morning.

[5 : 00] And I pray that all of our members, those who belong to this church, who are not present this morning, are watching my live stream. Because this is one of the most important and foundational truths to grasp in all of Scripture, that salvation is of the Lord.

And this truth is not introduced for the first time in Genesis 11 and 12 that we are considering this morning. This truth, that salvation is of the Lord, was revealed starting at the fall in Genesis chapter 3.

In Genesis chapter 3, we see after Adam and Eve sinned, that God was the one to search out Adam and Eve. They were not looking for him.

He was the one who went looking for them after they sinned. God was the one, in the face of their sin, who promised that he was going to cause the seed of the woman to crush the head of the serpent.

And he made the promise because he was the one who was going to keep it. And then God was the one who killed an animal to clothe Adam and Eve with garments of skin to replace their garments of leaves, their works to cover their sinful nakedness that they were aware of.

[6 : 29] And in that, we have a picture of Christ, who in the future would be slain, the Lamb of God, who would be slain to provide garments of righteousness for God's people.

I want to say this morning that people who have problems with how God saves people lack these foundation truths that we find in Genesis.

A lot of times when you are dealing with a problem, there's a way to diagnose it back to its root. And I can tell you, brothers and sisters, in my decades of years now in ministry, that people who struggle with the doctrine of election, we can trace it back to these foundations that they, from the start, did not grasp, that salvation is of the Lord.

Perhaps you hear this morning, or you're listening, and you've never heard of the doctrine of election. And if that's the case, I encourage you to listen closely this morning. And if you're struggling with the fact that God saves whom he will save, for his own reasons, not based on merit, not based on anything else other than his sheer amazing and undeserved grace, I encourage you to listen as we consider these foundational truths about salvation being of the Lord that we find in these early verses in the book of Genesis.

I've organized the sermon under two simple points, and they naturally follow the section divisions that we find in this passage. The first point is the line of salvation, which is covered in Genesis 11, 10 through 26.

[8 : 39] And the second point is the man of salvation, which is covered in Genesis 11, verses 27 through 12, verse 9.

So let's consider the first point, the line of salvation. Genesis 11, verse 10, begins with these words, these are the generations of Shem.

Now why is this? Remember that Shem is one of Noah's sons, one of his three sons, whom God spared the destruction of the flood.

And his genealogy, or his line, his line or genealogy, I'll use those words interchangeably, they mean the same thing. His line is first stated in the table of nations that we looked at two weeks ago in Genesis 10, verses 21 to 29.

In 21 to 29 of Genesis 10, we find the genealogy or the line of Shem. So why is the genealogy of Shem listed in two places in this account that we have?

[9 : 52] We've already seen it in Genesis 10. Why are we seeing it again now in Genesis 11? Well, the reason is that we have in Genesis 11 the line of salvation, and it is importantly different from Shem's line that we find in Genesis 10.

What God is doing through Moses, Moses is writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and there is a point to be made by extracting, once again, the line of Shem and showing us his descendants.

Notice, first of all, that in Genesis 10.22, the name of Shem's five sons are listed, Elam, Asher, Apakshad, Lud, and Aram.

But the generations of Shem in Genesis 11.10, only one of Shem's five sons is listed, and that's Apakshad.

The other four are excluded, not even mentioned. And why is that? Why does Shem have five sons listed in the table of nations, in chapter 10, but when we come down to Genesis 11, only one of them, Apakshad, is listed.

[11 : 35] I'll answer that in a moment, but let's continue. Here's another important observation I want us to see. Notice, in Genesis 10.24-25, we read, Apakshad fathered Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eba.

To Eba were born two sons. The name of the one was Pelag, and in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. Now, if you have an ESV Bible, you will see a note, one at the bottom of the page, that says that Pelag means division, and this relates to the time of the Tower of Babel where the peoples of the earth were divided across the earth.

But the more important point is that although in the table of nations in Genesis 10.25, both Pelag and Joktan are listed as Eba's two sons in his line, in Genesis 11.16, only Pelag is listed.

And notice that in Genesis 10.26-29, the line of Joktan is listed, but Pelag's line is not listed. In the table of nations, Pelag's line is not listed.

It's not until we come to Genesis 11.18 that we see Pelag's lineage. He fathered Ru and then had other sons and daughters.

[13 : 22] Now, what's the point of all of this? And going back to my question, why is it that of the five sons of Shem, Pakshad is the one who is listed in his line in Genesis 11?

And we can actually take the question further back and we can ask, of the three sons of Noah, each of whose genealogy we find in Genesis 10, why Hashem, the son, whose genealogy is repeated in Genesis 11?

but in a streamlined and in a detailed way, leaving out the four who are listed in Genesis 10 while adding the descendants of Pelag who are left out in Genesis 10.

Why is it? the answer to all of these questions is that Genesis 10, in Genesis 10, sorry, in Genesis 11, 10 to 26, Genesis 11, 10 to 26, this is the answer to all those questions I raised moments ago.

In Genesis 11, 10 to 26, we have God's line of salvation and the people who are in that line are in that line for one reason.

[15 : 02] They're in that reason because of God's sovereign choice and God's sovereign choice alone. Brothers and sisters, this is foundational.

We cannot dispute what we're seeing in this passage. And the witness of the rest of Scripture tells us they're not here by merit. Because if any is here by merit, they can boast before the Lord.

And the Bible says no flesh boasts before him. Here in Genesis 11, the line concludes with the three sons of Terah in verse 26, Genesis 11, 26, Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

of these three sons, we're going to see that the line is narrow to Abram, whose name is later changed to Abraham.

And as we work our way through Genesis, we will see that the line continues through Isaac, the second son of Abram. Isaac. And then the line continues through Jacob, the second son of Isaac.

[16 : 25] And then it continues with one of Jacob's twelve sons, Judah. And this salvation line continues straight down to Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Isaiah. And you can see this line in the opening chapter of Matthew, starting with Abraham and ending down to Jesus Christ. And we want to take it a step further back to Shem's father Noah.

Why was Noah spared the ravages of the flood? We're given the answer in Genesis 6, 8. He was spared the ravages of the flood because he found favor or grace in the eyes of the Lord.

That's the only reason. Not because he was worthy of being spared the judgment of the flood. God gave him grace. It's the only reason.

And so the listing of Shem's line in Genesis 11 from Shem to Tira is the line of salvation. And it serves as a reminder that God was fulfilling his promise to bring salvation to his people by preserving a line through whom the Redeemer would come.

[17 : 51] And every person included in that line was included by God's sovereign choice and he elected them. And if you think this is getting hazy, just understand, when you look at certain people in the line, you realize that they were not there because of character and behavior.

Look at Jacob. none of us would pick Jacob. They were there because of the sovereign electing choice of God.

He included them because he elected them. And again, brothers and sisters, this is the foundation of the doctrine of divine election.

That God saves whom he chooses to save and he passes over others and leaves them unsaved to pay the just penalty of their sin, to pay the just penalty of their sin.

And if we don't grasp this doctrine here in the book of Genesis, starting in chapter 3, we won't understand and we will likely reject the doctrine and become squarely face-to-face with it in the New Testament.

[19 : 09] The people who were saved from God's first judgment, which is by the flood, were saved by God's electing grace. Those eight persons who made it into the ark, it was God's electing grace that caused them to be saved.

And those who will be saved from the final judgment, which is by fire, will be saved in the same way, by God's electing grace. And that should be good news to us, because if it was going to be dependent on merit, none of us would make it.

As righteous and as holy as we may think we are, I think anyone who thinks he or she is righteous and holy should be at least holy enough to know that they are not perfectly holy.

You should be honest with that at least. And if you are honest with that, then I mean you are even halfway holy. And so this is good news, brothers and sisters. This is good news that we are going to be spared the final judgment and the wrath of God, because in his mercy he chose to rescue us, to save us.

And so brothers and sisters, what we see here after the bad news of the Tower of Babel, Moses writing out the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gives the reminder of God's plan to bring salvation to rebellious, sinful people.

[20 : 44] by listing the line through whom salvation would come. And in this listing, his gracious purpose in election is seen.

And those in the list, they are not based on personal merit or order of birth. they are based on divine grace, which is rooted in God's sovereign election, God's sovereign choice.

That's the first point. That's the first point that we see in this passage, that God preserved the line of salvation.

He determined how the seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent would come. And every single person in that line is there by divine grace.

And when we go and we study them, we realize that the Savior didn't come because they were faithful. The Savior didn't come because they were righteous and holy and good, and they kept their end of the bargain.

[22 : 03] No, the Savior came because God was faithful and God persevered and God ensured that the Redeemer would come and he would live and he would die and resurrect so that sinners can be saved.

It was all because of a faithful God, not because of a line of faithful people. we look in that line, there were many who dropped the baton, humanly speaking. But that's not all that we see in this passage.

Not only do we see that God preserved the line of salvation, we also see that he called the man of salvation.

This is my second and final point. And this promises to be a short sermon, but it may not be fulfilled. The man of salvation.

this second section begins in Genesis 11, verse 27, with these words, Now these are the generations of Tira.

[23 : 27] In Genesis 11, 27, and 32, we have some basic information about Tira and his children.

again, we are told that he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran. And we're told that Haran fathered Lot.

We're also told that Haran died in his homeland of Ur of the Chaldeans. And then Abram and Nahor got married.

Abram married Sarai. Nahor married Milca, who was his niece. It's right there in the passage. She was the daughter of Haran who had died.

And sometime later we find out that actually Sarai was the daughter of Tira. We're not told it here, but later we're told it, that she was Abram's half-sister, so Abram married his half-sister.

[24 : 35] And this happened back then, and later the Lord prohibited these degrees of family in which you could not marry, but they certainly did it back then.

In Genesis 11, 31 to 32, we also see that Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, and Sarai, Abram's wife, and they left Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan.

But when they came to the land of Canaan, they settled there, and we're told that Terah died in the land, when they came to the land of Haran, sorry, they settled there, and Terah died in the land of Haran at the age of 205.

One of the things I think we should notice, just in passing, is notice the decreasing lifespan that's occurring. You start in Genesis 10, 11 to 12, sorry, Genesis 11, 10 to 11, we see that Shem died at 600 years old.

And now we come down to Terah in verse 26 of Genesis 11, he dies at 205 years old. Lifespan decreases, it's almost a third of what it was for Shem.

[26 : 09] And then in Genesis 12, verses 1 to 3, we have the call of Abram, and in verse 4 we're told that Abram was 75 years old when the Lord had him to depart, or when he departed from Haran.

So on the face of it, it seems like God called Abram out of the land of Haran. But there's several other passages that help us to see that that's not the case, and they help us to reconcile what's happening in this account with the call of Abraham.

One of them, which I'd like you to listen to, is the account of Stephen in Acts chapter 7 verses 1 to 4. He is defending himself before the, actually preaching before the Sanhedrin council in Acts chapter 7, and this is what we read in verses 1 to 4.

And the high priest said, are these things so? And Stephen said, my brothers and fathers, hear me, the God of glory appeared to your father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran and said to him, go out from your land and from your kindred, go into the land that I will show you.

Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living.

[27 : 51] So Stephen gives us some very clear details about God's appearance to Abram. He refers to him as Abraham, but Abram was when God would have appeared to him.

And he said it was in the land of Mesopotamia, Mesopotamia, it was when he was, before he had come to the land of Haran. So he was in Ur of the Chaldeans when God appeared to him.

It would appear, as we look at the account in Genesis 11 and 12, that it was in Haran that the Lord appeared to him.

But here's what I want us to conclude from these two accounts. First of all, what we are able to see is that Abram was the one that God called.

Abram was the one that God called, and his family went with him, and it just seems like, because Terah was the father, Terah was the head of the clan, well, he simply led the way.

[29 : 03] And then they got to Haran, and when they got to Haran, they settled there. The second thing we're able to see is that from the age of Terah, which we have in Genesis 11 and 26, he died at age 205.

Now, according to Acts 7 and 4, it was at that point that God removed Abram from Haran and brought him to the land of Canaan.

And so according to Genesis 12 4, Abram was 75 when the Lord told him to move, or when his father died, at 205, Abram was 75.

And therefore, sorry, sorry, let me back up. We're able to see from Genesis 12 4, that Abram was 75 when his father died at the age of 205.

So Abram was born when Terah was 130. The point I seek to raise with this is to help us to see that Abram, though he is listed as the first son, he's not the first son.

[30 : 28] Notice in verse 26, it says, when Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Now, it just tells us that when he was 70, he had these three sons. They're not triplets. He didn't have triplets and didn't have three born in the same year.

And what we're able to see is that he obviously had one son, at least, when he turned 70. But that son could not have been Abram because when Terah died at 205, Abram was 75.

So, Abram had to be born when Terah was 130, so it means that another son, either Nahor or Haran was born, we don't know which one, but was born before Abram.

The point is, Abram was not the first son. He is listed here as the first son, really just because of prominence and priority and God's choice, but he's not the first son.

[31 : 37] Why do I say that? I say that to help us to see that in the same way that God was sovereignly at work in the line of salvation, determining who would be there, it is the same as he narrows it down now and he chooses a man of salvation.

He chooses Abram, not the oldest son. And as we're going to see a little later, not a man of stellar character.

It underscores God's electing grace. God sovereignly chose the man of salvation from Tyrus' three sons and didn't choose the eldest.

And we know that Abram had no merit, none whatsoever for God to choose him. Again, because of his merit, Abram could boast.

But the scripture again is clear, no flesh will glory or boast before the Lord. And so as we're working our way through Genesis, what we're seeing now is this line of salvation is now shifting to a man of salvation.

[32 : 54] This line that God sovereignly preserved, Shem's line, is now moving to the man of salvation that God has sovereignly called.

And that man is Abram. Now let's look at how God called him. Look at Genesis 12, 1 through 3 again. Now the Lord said to Abram, as a matter of fact, if you have an ESV Bible, you will see a note to the bottom where it says, had said.

So it would read, not the Lord said to Abram, the Lord had said to Abram, go from your country. And that is a reading that would indicate that he spoke to him when he was in the land of Ur of the Chaldeans.

But we read it as it is. Now the Lord said to Abram, go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you, I will curse.

[34 : 14] and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Now we have a very helpful explanation by the apostle Paul in Galatians 3, 7-9 that helps us to understand what was happening in this promise from God to Abram that he was going to bless all the families of the earth through him.

Something big was going on here. This was a major moment in salvation history. We've moved from this line and we have now narrowed it down to one man.

And what you're going to notice as we work our way through now is the narrative is going to slow down. We've been moving pretty fast through thousands of years in these early parts of Genesis.

But now when it comes to this man of salvation that God has sovereignly chosen, things are going to begin to slow down in his life and in his family and that will take us to the end of the book of Genesis.

Then take us into Exodus. We're not going to do Exodus after this but the sequence is into Exodus the children of Israel in Egypt their slavery and how God delivered them out of all of that.

[35 : 33] But listen to what the Apostle Paul says about this promise that God gives to Abram that he is going to bless the families of the earth through him.

And let me just pause and just say this for a moment. I'm so glad that the Apostle Paul explained this. I'm really glad. Because if he didn't people would insert all manner of things about what this blessing is.

cars and you're not supposed to be sick and you're supposed to be rolling in money and your path is supposed to be buttered and everything.

I mean all kinds of things that put in here but he doesn't have any of that in view. Listen to what he says. Galatians 3, 79. Know this, know then that it is those who, those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

and the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham saying in you shall all the nations be blessed.

[36 : 55] So then those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham the man of faith. the blessing that was promised to Abraham was the gospel.

The good news that we sang about this morning that holy God became perfect man and took our sin and our blame so that we could live again.

This is what God did when he chose this man of salvation. He said you're going to be the one. And so when you go to the New Testament and you start to look at how the gospel of Mark starts of Matthew starts for example starts with Abraham.

He's the man of faith. He's the man of salvation. He's the head of our faith. The most important person in our salvation and our faith is the Lord Jesus Christ followed by Abraham.

And I want us to let this settle in our head. You remember they used to sing this song and we probably sang it as well Father Abraham has many sons and many sons as Father Abraham. It's a wonderful song. Because what it says and I am one of them.

[38 : 21] And that's a wonderful thing that Gentiles, people who were a part of the covenants of promise can sing that song because long before there was a nation of Israel God promised that he would give Abraham's sons and daughters that he would bless them through the gospel.

We are children of Abraham. We are his children. We Gentiles are Abraham's children by faith. and you are only Abraham's child by faith, whether you are Jew or Gentile.

It's not by natural lineage or the lack of it. It is by faith. And so we have this very helpful explanation by the Apostle Paul to tell us there's a big deal going on in this call of Abraham.

God calls him and says this is what I'm going to do through you. Not through Nahor. And I didn't do it through Haran.

He is dead. And I didn't do it through your daddy who is Terah. I'm doing it through you. I've chosen you to be this one. I believe that part of in the providence of God that he would choose people like Abraham is to help us to see the grace of God because you cannot follow Abraham's life and say he was chosen because of merit and character and goodness.

[39 : 59] No, brothers and sisters, he was chosen because of grace to show that salvation is of the Lord. God would go into the earth of Chaldeans and choose one man.

So you are going to be the father of faith. The account of Abraham's journey in the land of Canaan and we find it in verses 4 to 9 in Genesis 12.

And we see that he came to a place called Shechem. The Lord appeared to him then. The Lord confirmed the promise to him and said, I'm going to give you, give your offspring this land.

And here Abraham is a 75 year old man who at this stage knew that he could not have children, knew that he and his wife couldn't have children.

His father had his first child when he was much younger. And Abraham now has lived 70 years, 75 years, sorry.

[41 : 17] He has no children and God comes to him and God says to him, I'm going to give this land to your offspring. I mean, on the face of it, that sounds like selling someone land in the ocean.

would you mean you can give me the land to my offspring and me and my wife can't have children. But Abraham believed God.

The Bible says he built an altar. He built an altar at Shechem, an altar of worship and sacrifice. And Shechem, he's in the land of Canaan.

This is a wicked land. This is a land that is so wicked and their wickedness is going to increase that the Bible says that God is going to cause the land to vomit them out. And so this was no place of light.

This was a place of darkness. And this tree would have been a typical idol worshipping spot. And here we have this man who is fresh out of worshipping idols.

[42 : 25] And now he is building an altar. This is the second altar that we have recorded in the book of Genesis. He is building this altar before God.

He goes further and he builds another altar at Bethel. And what we see is the conversion of an idol worshiper into a worshiper of Yahweh, the true and the living God.

And why does it happen? does it happen because God appeared to Abraham and had a conversation with him and said, would you like me to be your Lord and your Savior?

Would you like to accept me into your heart and follow wherever I lead you? No. It is because God worked as only God can.

and God converted this idol worshiper into a worshiper of Yahweh. God did that. God sovereignly did that.

[43 : 31] And brothers and sisters, in Abraham's gracious call, all of us who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ should see our own gracious call of salvation.

we don't come to Christ because of our own merit. We didn't come to Christ because we got tired of living the lives we were living in sin, and so we decided that we were going to change our lives and accept Jesus into our hearts.

Even though some of us may have been led to believe that, I certainly believed it for many years. But one day I came to realize the most amazing truth about my own salvation, that I came to follow Jesus because God made a promise to a man named Abram blessing, that he would bless the nations with salvation through him.

And God fulfilled that plan, that promise, by sending Jesus Christ, his son, to bring that salvation through his sinless life and through his substitutionary death and through his resurrection.

And because of Christ's atoning work on the cross, his perfect life that he lived, God called a gracious, God graciously called a sinner like me and like the rest of us to himself.

[45 : 24] And he did it the same way he called the man Abram. He did it by his own gracious election and power. And he didn't leave it to him.

He acted upon us in a way that only God can act to bring his salvation to us. I can still remember where I was the night the lights went on and I realized that as a 13 year old boy, God was acting in a way that I was not aware of.

And he did for me what I thought I was doing for myself. And he sovereignly rescued me and saved me.

I remembered that particular youth camp. faith. And it was early in the week and Fay is here, Fay would remember how youth camps went.

We'd go to youth camp and you just have fun and ignore every message you hear and you do whatever you want to do the first three days and then maybe Thursday, Friday or so, you settle down and you listen and you run to the altar and get saved for the 50th time.

[46 : 59] And I remember that particular night. Early in the camp when I should have been doing what we always did, waste time the first three days and then get serious at the end.

But that night was different. And that night I responded to a message that I heard. And looking back on it, I don't know I missed it at the time, but I certainly missed it.

I thought I was doing that for myself. But I look back and I see that God, God saved me. God worked in my life and then God preserved me.

God kept me during those years. And it affected my own soul as I studied and I saw Abram's call and I was reminded this is my call.

God called me out of darkness. He called me to follow him. And in many ways my journey, just like Abram's journey, where he stumbled and fell and at times you'd wonder is he saved?

[48 : 12] God told Abram that he was going to have to leave his father's house, leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house.

And these are just levels of separation and sacrifice that he was being called to make. And this is the Christian life, brothers and sisters. We have to leave a life behind and pursue the one that is in front of us.

And thank God that he doesn't just tell us to do that and fold his arms. Because if he told us to do that and fold his arms, we'd stay right where we were. But he works to bring us on that journey and to take us where we need to go.

Brothers and sisters, God has always, sovereignly elect people for salvation.

And he does it because if he didn't elect, no one would be saved. None of us wants God. The Bible says there's no one who seeks after God.

[49 : 31] We don't desire God left to ourselves. But God comes to us and he reveals himself to us as he revealed himself to Abram, the idol worshiper, the one who was living in darkness and God brought him to light.

I pray this morning that if you belong to Jesus Christ, by the present of watching my live stream, that God will reveal to you that you belong to him for one reason.

He's been gracious to you. he has been sovereignly at work in your salvation from day one and he will be there until that final day.

Brothers and sisters, salvation is of the Lord from start to finish. And thank God for that. as a 40 something year old pastor, I used to struggle with the idea that I would somehow commit a sin, die, and go to hell.

because I thought my salvation was in my hands for my keeping. And I had to finish the race and make it into heaven.

[50 : 57] And I can't tell you the torment of that. I can also tell you of the peace and the rest of knowing that I will make it because he who began a good work in me and in you is faithfully completed to the day of Jesus Christ.

He will make sure that we make it in. He not only calls us to persevere, but he is the one who preserves us and he will preserve us to the very end.

Because salvation is of the Lord from start to finish. this is one of the most important foundational truths of Scripture.

Genesis is where we get our bearings for the rest of God's Word. And I can tell you that if you don't get your bearings, your foundational bearings about salvation, starting in the book of Genesis, you're going to be unstable in understanding the salvation that is revealed in the pages of Scripture as it unfolds.

When we see this truth, that salvation is of the Lord from start to finish, that he sovereignly and graciously elects whom he will save, and he can do that because it's his salvation, and no one can say, what have you done?

[52 : 33] it changes how we view and serve the Lord when we see this.

We live as that is to mercy. We live with grateful hearts because we realize that salvation is all of grace. and in his divine providence, sometimes the Lord allows us to stumble on our face, to obviously that it's not about us, but it's all about him.

And even in our sin, even in our failures, God shows himself as the God of our salvation. May this be true for all of us.

Amen. Let's pray. Well, thank you for your gracious salvation. Thank you that salvation is of the Lord.

Thank you that you sovereignly preserved the line of salvation from Shem to Tira. And then, Lord, you sovereignly and graciously call the man of salvation, Abram, from among Tira's three sons.

[54 : 08] And Lord, once again, will you help us to see our own gracious call and salvation in the same way that we are saved because salvation is of the Lord.

Lord, amen. I'd like you to please stand and join along as we sing grace. Grace. Your grace.

Your grace that leads this inner home from death to life forever to every tribe and nation has called my heart to enter!

far and wide to every tribe and nation has called my heart to enter in the joy of your salvation.

! By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored, and now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

[55 : 45] Your grace, your grace that I cannot explain, not by my earthly wisdom.

The prince of life without a stain was traded for this sinner. By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored, and now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Let praise, let praise rise up and overflow my song resound forever for grace will see me welcome home to walk beside my Savior!

By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored, and now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored, and now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

[57 : 22] By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored, and now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Lord, thank you for your sovereign grace. Thank you for your sovereign electing grace by which you call and bring sinners to yourself.

Lord, we cannot explain it, but in our hearts we know it, that we have been rescued from darkness, and we have been translated into the kingdom of your dear son, all by your grace, all by your undeserved mercy, and Lord, we are aware that if you gave us what we deserved, we would all be dead, we would all be burning eternally in hell, but God, you had mercy on us because you chose to have mercy on us.

And we are mindful, oh Lord, that you haven't done that for everyone. thank you for your amazing grace this morning.

And I pray, Lord, that each one who belongs to you will leave this place humbled and rejoicing at the same time, to know that you've saved them, you have preserved them to the very end, because you keep their salvation preserved, that it will be undefiled, that it will be unfading.

[59 : 39] let's hear these words from Jude, the very last two verses, and may they encourage us this morning.

And now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority before all time, and now, and forever more.

Amen. Amen. God bless you.