

LESSON ESSENTIALS

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 7: JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

Is it easy or difficult for you to ask for and to receive help? If you need assistance, are you willing to seek it out, or are you determined to fix things on your own every time?

The Bible teaches that salvation is through Christ alone, by grace alone. There is nothing we can do to earn our salvation or to undo the sin that infects and enslaves us. Apart from Christ we are trapped in our sin.

When we considered the doctrine of sin and salvation, our greatest need was identified as sin. Our sin has separated us from God and has made relationship with Him impossible. We come to see that we are not living in a way that pleases God and that our disobedience to His laws is what has brought judgement upon us.

As a result, we need salvation from our sins. We need to be released from the enslavement to sin that keeps us separate from the Lord. The Bible teaches that there is only one way to receive that salvation: the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

However, many people really struggle with this doctrine of Jesus being the only way to salvation. Even whole-hearted, Bible-believing Christians who claim to adhere to this doctrine struggle to live it out. The Bible teaches that salvation is through Christ alone, by grace alone. There is nothing we can do to earn our salvation or to undo the sin that infects and enslaves us. Apart from Christ we are trapped in our sin. And yet, the temptation is great to try to impress God with our obedience or our piety or our sacrifice so that we can save ourselves.

In addition to the false doctrine of thinking you can earn your own salvation, there is the false doctrine that there are more than one 'saviors'. Many people will say that it is closeminded to believe that only Christ can save. The world is offended by the notion that with all the religious options available that Jesus would be so selfish to claim to be the only way.

But, of course, we need to examine again our greatest need. Our greatest problem is that we have broken God's laws. If that is true, then we need to also consider what the remedy for that specific problem is. If you have a physical illness, the doctor will prescribe the specific treatment to meet that specific sickness. Taking vitamins, eating healthy foods, and exercising regularly is very good for you. However, it won't heal your broken leg. In the same way, there are many good things we can add to our lives that will add to our happiness or that will enable us to be a blessing to others, but they cannot cancel our debt of sin against the Lord. Only Christ's perfect life and sacrifice can do that.

If you had fallen into a deep pit, with no way to climb out, you would be well-aware that your greatest problem was being trapped in that hole. If a person came to the edge of the pit with a long rope and the willingness to save you out of the pit, would you really say that you were hoping you had other options for getting out? Would you really ask if there was anyone else with a different kind of rope? Would you stubbornly say that you

thought you could get out of the pit yourself by just being a better person? No. You would accept the help as it came. You would take that rope in that hand without accusing it of being a close-minded, exclusionist solution. And so it is with Jesus as our only salvation. The one who created you is the solution to your problem. Why look to anyone else? If you had a car, appliance or tool that was broken would you take it to a different manufacturer for repairs? No, you would go to the inventor or designer of the object to get the solution. God made us; He fixes us. Seeking His help, instead of trying to fix ourselves or instead of trying some other solution before we turn to Him, is the most reasonable and God-honouring choice we can make.

We have a great need for salvation. And we have a great Saviour. Let's with confidence turn to Him, seeking His help, His way, in our time of need.

Seeking His help, instead of trying to fix ourselves or instead of trying some other solution before we turn to Him, is the most reasonable and God-honouring choice we can make.

IN REVIEW

- While there may seem to be many solutions that we can pursue that make our lives better for a time, only Jesus has the solution to our greatest need.
- When we rely on ourselves or on some other source to save us, we are not only not helping ourselves, but we are also widening the gap in our relationship with God which increases our need of His salvation.
- It is not closeminded to pursue the one specific remedy for a specific need. In every area of life people apply the proper fix for a particular problem. With our sin problem the only solution is Jesus.

HAVE YOUR SAY

- If you are a Bible-believing, whole-hearted Christian who holds to the doctrines of the Christian faith, it may be saddening to you to see that you are still, albeit unintentionally, pursuing other means of salvation. Pray and ask the Lord to show you what alternate ways you are trying as means of salvation (good works or self-punishment, for example), and then ask Him to forgive you.

- Meditate on the gospel accounts of the particular remedy that Christ is, and how He meets our greatest need. Find someone that you can talk with regularly to encourage one another to pursue Christ only as your salvation.

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