

WHY GOD ALONE COULD SAVE US

(Ephesians 2:1-5)

J.C. Ryle once said, “*Christ is never fully valued until sin is clearly seen.*” Unless we realize the depth and magnitude of our sinfulness, we will never truly appreciate the glory of our salvation in Christ. It’s only when we grasp how sinful we are and how desperate we are apart from Christ could we truly confess with our mouth and believe in our heart that God alone could save us. As we reflect on Paul’s message to the Ephesian believers, we will consider three fundamental reasons why our salvation could be credited to God alone.

1. ***Outside of Christ, we are spiritually _____.***
Man’s condition, apart from Christ, is characterized by spiritual death. Paul stresses the truth that every person is spiritually dead in trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1). This means that in our fallen nature, we are unable to save ourselves, unresponsive to the things of God and separated from the life of God (1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 4:18). The Lord Jesus Himself affirms the total inability of every sinner to come to God on his own and believe God in a saving way (Jn. 6:44,65).

2. ***Outside of Christ, we are spiritually _____ and bound for _____.***
Man’s sinful condition is also marked by spiritual bondage or enslavement. Paul explains that every sinner, outside of Christ, is enslaved to the evil worldly system, captive by and obedient to Satan and driven by the pleasures of his sinful flesh (Eph. 2:2-3; Jas. 4:4; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 5:19-21). Such spiritual enslavement condemns every sinner to be the objects of God’s holy wrath and righteous judgment (Eph. 2:3; Rom. 2:5-6; Rev. 6:15-17).

3. ***Through Christ, we can be saved from _____ by _____.***
The gospel of Christ declares every sinner as spiritually dead, enslaved and destined for wrath. The wonder and glory of the gospel shines forth against this hopeless condition of every sinner through the proclamation of God’s gracious intervention. Paul joyfully announces: “*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved*” (Eph. 2:4-5). God’s rich mercy meets us in our sin’s misery. God’s great love causes Him to sacrifice His own Son to bear His wrath upon our own sin. And God’s amazing grace in Christ saves us and grants us new life as His beloved children.

Closing Reflection:

Charles Wesley captures the wonder of our salvation in Christ in the words of the hymn he wrote: “*No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in Him, is mine. Alive in Him, my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine. Amazing love! How can it be, that Thou, my God, should die for me?*” For all eternity, we shall declare what a glorious Savior we have in Jesus and shall never cease to proclaim, “God alone did it all, it is unto Him I give my all!”