

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)*

Volume 13, Issue 11

NOVEMBER 2015

## Saved For What?

### Introduction

I heard a rather famous preacher tell a story from his childhood in Los Angeles about seeing the huge sign on top of one of the downtown skyscrapers that said in massive red letters “Jesus Saves”. He thought to himself, “saves what?”. That is a good question.

I don't think that there is a more overused word in Christian dialogue than “saved”. It has become a Christian cliché without real meaning or application because everyone assumes that they know what it means when, in fact, they don't know the scriptural definition. We should remember that when God does something relating to us it is always simple and straightforward but it is never simplistic; that is, shallow and inane.

The simplistic answer to what Jesus saves is that Jesus “saves” us from hell and takes us to Heaven. We have equated “being saved” with “being born again”; however, they are not the same scripturally. (See [\*“Salvation of the Soul”\*](#) for further explanation of this). Since I have spoken to this topic in other teaching lessons, I think that, for the purposes of this Present Truth Teaching Letter, the better question is “For what reason does Jesus save?”

### Saved to Fulfill Purpose

The fundamental Western Church has made the purpose of Jesus' death and resurrection to be very simplistic: Heaven or Hell; yes or no. However, Jesus never said anything about coming so we could go to Heaven. He made a number of statements about why He came (look them up in your concordance) but saving us from Hell so that we could go to Heaven is NOT one of them. In our simplistic assessment is it possible that we have missed the fullness of why Jesus came?

The so-called Spirit Filled culture has become very simplistic by only concentrating on what God has done *for me*, the individual. It seems that the focus of all of the preaching that I am hearing is on how to get all that God has given or done *for me*. Many of the conferences and other programs present a positive, success oriented agenda that would rival any of the sales motivation meetings that I attended as the head of a national sales force back in the 80's. Jesus is presented as the key to health, wealth and prosperity and we all need to get our share because we are king's kids and it all belongs to us. Is this what the Lord intended? Did Jesus come so that I could live

the American Dream? Is it all about *me and my need* or about *God and His purpose*?

Maybe we should be concerned about what God intended to begin with when He made Adam. We have gotten so self-centered that we can't see the forest for the trees. It is time for us to change our perspective and quit looking at things with the focus of how they relate to us. We need to re-focus on how things relate to God and His intention.

The dimension of spiritual reality is Eternity. It is the habitat of God and His angels and is invisible to our dimension of physical or natural reality, which we call our space-time continuum. Our physical reality is like a soap bubble floating in Eternity. It has its own self-contained structure and operates by its own God established physical laws. Time is part of the structure of our universe. Einstein illustrated this with the Theory of Relativity—space, time, mass, and speed are all related to each other mathematically. Time is not a constant but is affected by mass and speed, proving that it is a construct of God for our universe and has no application to Eternity. It is not that Eternity is just a long, long time; it is that there is no relation between time and Eternity.

In Eternity, before time or our universe existed, God purposed something within Himself that He intended to accomplish. The fullness of this intention is something that God has kept hidden in Himself. [*I Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 3:9*] It is a mystery to the rulers and authorities of Heaven. [*I Corinthians 2:8; Romans 16:25*] While there are a number of books in Heaven, including the Book of Life, where various things are recorded, God did not record this mystery in any of the books of Heaven.

This mystery has to do with what God had purposed in Himself in Eternity before our space-time continuum even existed. Now, this mystery is unfolding in time and, as this occurs, it is being revealed to all in Heaven and earth.

This is something that we need to understand. God has intended to accomplish something that He purposed before He made man. All that God is doing in the earth is working toward the fulfillment or completion of His intention. There are no extraneous or hap-hazard moves of God. No emergency add-ons or changes to God's plan. He will accomplish that which He intended from the very beginning.

To begin to see God's intention we need to look at why God created man and chose him for His own purpose. The Scriptures tell us that the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world [*Revelation 13:8*]. Why was it necessary for the Lamb to be slain before man was created? Think about the context in which such a statement would be made. This says that God, in His foreknowledge, knew that man would sin, that he would need a savior; therefore, God made provision to correct the sin problem before there was even a man to commit sin. Jesus offering His blood as an atonement was a part of the purpose of God before creation, before He made man. It was a necessary part of God accomplishing His intention. The blood of Jesus was not an emergency add-on to fix a problem, but, instead, was a part of the original plan of God.

When God made Adam, he had the *potential* to fulfill God's ultimate intention, the reason or purpose for which man had been created. The obedience of Adam's heart was tested by a single, simple command of God. Adam failed by his disobedience, which resulted in him being cut off from God and losing the potential to fulfill God's intention for man. Therefore, God sent forth the Last Adam, the second man, to atone for the first Adam's sin (and our sin in him) and restore man to the *potential* of fulfilling God's intention. Unlike the first, the Last Adam had a heart of

obedience, which He learned by the things that He suffered [*Hebrews 5:8*].

While salvation is necessary and blood atonement is necessary, this is not the ultimate intention of God, but, steps to restore man to a place where he can move into the fulfillment of God's intention. We must look beyond the trees in order to see the forest. While salvation and all of the things that accompany it are wonderful and necessary, they are means to an end, not the end itself. We must see that if we are to mature.

God created man in such a way that He, Himself, as the Holy Spirit can dwell in man and *make him capable* of fulfilling the purpose of God so that the excellency may be of God and not of ourselves. We stand on the stage of time with all eternity watching the outcome, the resolution, the completion of God's ultimate intention.

## The Mission of Jesus

Jesus understood His mission and that it was greater than just atoning for man's sin; even though, from our perspective, that is the most important part. From God's perspective the atonement was only one part, a means to an end.

Even by the age of twelve Jesus understood that He was to fulfill the purposes of the Father—that He should be about the Father's business. When Jesus' natural family had to travel to Jerusalem to be counted in a census, Jesus was inadvertently left behind when the family started its trip back home. After a time of traveling, they realized Jesus was not with them and returned to look for Him and found Him in the Temple discussing things with the Rabbis. Of course, Mary and Joseph were upset and chastised Jesus for putting them through the turmoil. His answer is very interesting.

### Luke 2:49 NASB

(49) And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?"

### Luke 2:49 KJV

(49) And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

### Luke 2:49 ALT (Analytical-Literal Translation)

(49) And He said to them, "Why [*is it*] that you\* were seeking Me? Did you\* not know that it is necessary [*for*] Me to be [*occupied*] in the [*things*] of My Father?"

Listed above are three renderings of Jesus' answer. The NASB translated the underlined portion as an idiom and adds "house" to help make it clear. (The italics means that "house" is not in the original and was simply added by the translators.) The KJV doesn't translate the original as an idiom but rather as a normal phrase "my Father's business". The Analytical-Literal Translation (ALT) treats it as a phrase also and renders it with the most literal translation—"occupied in the things of My Father". The italicized words are added to help complete the phrases in English usage.

I like the Analytical-Literal Translation best because it makes it clear that Jesus understood His mission—His natural life was fully occupied in the things of the Father. He even stated that he

only does what He sees the Father doing [*John 5:19*]. The easiest way to say this is that Jesus was fully devoted to the accomplishment of the Father's business and all of His work was to bring the purpose of the Father to completion. [*John 5:17*] This is what He did then and is what He is doing now as our High Priest in the heavenlies.

The intention of God is not complete; it is still on-going. We are “saved” as part of His intention and we continue in Him to fulfill His purpose

## 2 Timothy 1:9 NASB

(9) who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

We are saved and called according to His own purpose not according to our need. Let us not be satisfied with a simplistic “Jesus saves”.

You have permission to copy and distribute these materials provided:

1) no changes are made to the content, and, 2) they are not sold.

© 2003-2015 by Art Nelson and [Lifestream Teaching Ministries](http://Lifestream Teaching Ministries)

For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:

[artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com](mailto:artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com)