

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINTS

It was lovely recently to have had our friends from Australia. It has been a personal privilege to have been and visited churches in Israel, preaching just outside of Jerusalem. It's a privilege also to have taken part in meetings throughout France and into Belgium ... attended meetings in Italy and of course, preached across in the US. The privilege is not simply to have been in those countries but the beautiful privilege is that the Church to which we belong transcends nations, languages, colours of skin and all other divisions this world has. The Bible draws the picture of countless numbers of the Redeemed encircling the Throne ... [out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation \(Rev. 5:9\)](#). We are all ...

SAVED BY THE SAME SAVIOUR

[Rev.5:9](#) And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation

* There is no other Gospel that saves except the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; it calls out to the lost, [Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved \(Acts 16:31\)](#).

* It leaves no room for doubt, [Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved \(Acts 4:12\)](#).

* The means by which the murdering criminal on the cross beside Jesus was saved was the exact same means by which a righteous man like Nicodemus was saved.

* The lowest-of-the-low wretch that Mary Magdalene was ... she was saved the same way the high-society Lydia was saved in Philippi [\(Acts 16:14\)](#).

* It was no less a work of grace just because Lydia was wealthy and did well for herself. God's grace saves from the lowest to the highest, from the 'guttermost' to the uttermost.

* I am saved by the same work of grace Paul was saved with. It has never lost its power. It continues to save today as it has always saved.

* Salvation is the good pleasure of the Almighty and holy God towards fallen sinners and, - in sovereign and saving grace, - [Num. 16:5](#) [even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him](#).

STANDING BY THE SAME GOSPEL

[II Cor. 4:5](#) We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.

* Have you ever thought, "Surely we can't be the only ones who have the only Gospel that saves?"

- * Well, yes, we do have the only Gospel that saves. Yesterday I was put to shame as I drove along Hayfield Road. There was a man standing at the bus stop, and two young Mormons were standing talking to him. I have no doubt at all they were trying to convince him of their doctrines.
- * But their doctrines are altogether false. They have a false idea of who God is and consequently they hold a form of salvation that can not save.
- * Paul wrote to the Corinthians, [We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord](#). We don't preach Joseph Smith, or Billy Graham ... or even Charles Spurgeon. Only Jesus saves and only He is the One we preach.
- * What about the people in the hills of Afghanistan who have never heard His Name? What about the people in India, and in Thailand?
- * What about the people in Kirkcaldy, - in Smeaton and in the Links, in Anderson Street and Lady Nairn Avenue, - who would not listen to you when you present them with how Christ died on the cross?
- * You see, we don't have one gospel for one set of people and another gospel for another set. The kind of society doesn't matter or the colour of the skin.
- * Every child of God in every part of this world stands upon the same Gospel we are standing upon.
- * There is no confusion, there is no uncertainty ... it is plain and it is clear ... the Redeemed Church of Christ stands by the same Gospel ...
- * [Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved \(Rom. 10:13\)](#) – *that* is our Gospel, upon which we stand.

SERVING THE SAME LORD

[I Cor. 9:16](#) For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

- * The hymnwriter wrote, “He paid a debt He did not owe, I owe a debt I could not pay, I needed someone to wash my sins away And now I sing a brand new song, Amazing Grace; Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay!”
- * The Bible speaks about having a master; it says that your master is either God or mammon (possessions, material goods, prosperity). It's quite easy to understand ... either you serve God or you don't!
- * What He gives me (i.e. by way of material goods) I have a responsibility to serve Him using those goods.
- * If God has blessed a believer with riches He expects the believer to use those riches to His glory (we wouldn't have them but for Him!)

- * If God has blessed you with talents He expects you to use them for His glory ... and not to hide them away.
- * The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews wrote, [12:28](#) *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*
- * Don't ever think you are not up to the task ... for you are! Herbert Carson was correct, "There are no insignificant members in the church".
- * It is a privilege that God has granted to us by grace to be His children and to serve Him. ... It is a privilege not granted to everyone, therefore we should treasure Whose we are.
- * We are serving the same Lord no matter where we are in this world, and no matter what we have or haven't got.

SUPPORTING THE SAME FAMILY

[Gal. 3:28](#) *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

- * Yes, the countless body of people standing round the Throne all belong to the same family. It is the same grace by which God wrought their salvation; it is the same blood of Christ that atoned for their sins.
- * It didn't take any more to save me than it did to save you ... and it didn't take any less to save me than it did to save you.
- * I too was saved out of sin; I too have a home prepared for me in Glory; I too have the company of the Holy Spirit each day and night.
- * You folk have the same Heavenly Father as I have. Yes, we have made 'walls' for ourselves and we often hide behind obstacles of doctrine that we have constructed ... but at the basis of belief of every born again member of the family is the fact that Jesus Christ died at Calvary and was risen again for our salvation.
- * Like any other family we *do* see things differently sometimes, sadly some believers 'fall out' and stoke disagreement ... but it just demonstrates the fact that God has more work yet to do with us.
- * My brother and I are 'chalk and cheese', - we always have been ... but he is my brother, and I would always watch out for him.
- * I love you folk, not because I have to or because you say nice things to me (sometimes ☺) but it's because I belong to the same family of God that you do.
- * And something else also, there is a problem with someone who says they are a Christian but they prove so hard to like ... the Bible says, [1 Jn. 3: 14](#) *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the*

brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. ... It is one of the 'proofs' of salvation how you get on with fellow-believers in the church.

*** Saved by the same Saviour, Standing by the same Gospel, Serving the same Lord, Supporting the same family ...**

SAVED FOR THE SAME PURPOSE

Phil. 3:13 this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.

* It is the one and only reason Christ has saved you, - to give the Father glory.

* It is the number one priority for the child of God to desire and work towards doing that which brings pleasure to our Saviour.

* When He saves you the Holy Spirit comes and abides in your heart and He directs your understanding to do that which is pleasing unto Him.

* The Holy Spirit *never* encourages you to sin; He never leads you to disobey the Word of God; He never leads you to strive to bring down your true brother or sister in the Lord.

* The only reason you are saved is that you will, - with every fibre in your body and every desire in your heart, - ... you will **press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

* If there is an absence of that desire ... there is a problem ... for God saves us for the purpose that we would enjoy Him and live towards His standards.

* When you look at just about every church Paul wrote to you find the most of them were involved in some sort of disagreements, - God didn't save His people for that!

* Neither did He save them to feel as if they are always defeated.

* On our way to achieving glory for His Name He saved us to be united to one another in love, to enjoy fellowship in the gifts and graces of one another and to promote mutual well-being, in both spiritual and temporal matters (*Confession, para. 1*).

* Donald Grey Barnhouse, one of the great Bible preachers in the US in the early half of the nineteenth century, explained it like this, "The church of Jesus Christ is not a building where people come together for a religious service, but it is a gathering of people who come together in order to worship God and to build each other by mutual faith and strength."

Conclusion

- * **The Fellowship of Saints.** It may be hard working towards it sometimes, - it shouldn't be, but we often find it is.
- * For example, John found it difficult with a man called Diotrephes; Diotrephes loved to have the pre-eminence (III Jn). He thought far more of himself than he thought of Christ and His work.
- * Paul found too that the church members in Corinth were the same. Even though he had brought the Gospel to them they looked down on him as being old-fashioned, out-of-date and out of touch.
- * The fellowship of saints is hard to maintain sometimes but I believe when you keep your eyes focussed on the One Who has saved you and called you into His service you tend to see less of the distractions ... or at least you see them within the context that Christ had his 'distractions' also.
- * **The fellowship of saints** ... It is significant this subject is included in our *Confession of Faith*, - it is important, isn't it?
- * Something Matthew Henry wrote that makes us smile, - but it's true, - "When we take God for our God, we take His people for our people".
- * May God bless our fellowship; may it ever become an increasingly more beautiful garden to His glory ... and may He weed out that which would hinder its growth.