


# Moments for YOU

Volume 52, Number 4

Theme: Jesus the Saviour

JESUS



To: You  
From: God

## THE PERSONAL SAVIOUR

There is a special blessing in the Christmas message which is frequently missed by many. The birth of Jesus is not simply an interesting fact of history wholly unrelated to your present life ... but rather it has a direct bearing upon it.

When the angel announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, the personal importance of His coming was emphasized. He said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10,11).

Have you ever thought that it was for *you* the Saviour was born? Do you realize that when God sent His Son into the world, He sent Him to become *your* Saviour? Listen to the word of the herald angel, "I bring you good tidings of great joy ... for unto you is born ... a Saviour." Yes ... it was for *you* that Jesus came.

He did not come to be the inspiration of sacred art, nor to be the theme of glad song, much less to be merely a good man and a great teacher ...

Jesus Came to be the Saviour, and as such He was born to *you*.

Bound inseparably together are the Saviour's birth and His death. He came to save, and to save He must die ... die in the sinner's stead, bearing the full penalty of divine wrath of sin. This too was personal—it was for *you*.

And such a very personal message of God's love and grace demands a personal response. The Saviour who was born was God's gift to you. And He wants you to receive that gift. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

To receive the gift of God by faith you must believe that Christ actually was born to be *your* Saviour and that He died for *your* sins. Because He arose victorious over death, He offers you abundant, everlasting life.

Won't you receive the gift of God this year? It can be your best Christmas yet!

—From "Christmas Blessings to You" by Dr. Willard M. Aldrich. Used by permission of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, IL 60187 USA.

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## NO SAVIOUR!

Many years ago a striking card was published with the title, "If Christ Had Not Come." It told of a preacher falling into a short sleep in his study on Christmas morning and dreaming of a world into which Jesus had never come.

In his dream he found himself looking through his home, but there were no little stockings in the chimney corner, no Christmas bells or wreaths of holly, and no Christ to comfort, gladden and save. He walked out on the public street, but there was no church with its spire pointing to heaven. He came back and sat down in the library, but every book about the Saviour had disappeared.

The door-bell rang, and a messenger asked him to visit a poor dying mother. As he reached the home he sat down and said, "I have something here that will comfort you." He opened his Bible to look for a familiar promise, but it ended at Malachi, and there was no Gospel and no promise of hope and salvation, and he could only bow his head and weep with her in bitter despair.

Two days afterward he stood beside her coffin and conducted the funeral service, but there was no message of consolation, no word of a glorious resurrection, no open heaven, but only "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and one long eternal farewell. He realized at length that "He had not come," and burst into tears and bitter weeping in his sorrowful dream.

Suddenly he woke with a shock, and realizing that it was only a dream, a great shout of joy and praise burst from his lips. Let us also be glad and rejoice today, because "He has come."  
—From *Streams in the Desert*

## THE SAVIOUR'S PURPOSE

No child of God can visit Calvary too frequently; and in these days of coldness and carelessness and marked indifference, there is a tremendous need that we should journey often in our thoughts to Calvary and be reminded of the purpose of our Saviour in going there. You and I will never have a warm heart toward the Saviour, and we will never have a warm heart toward a world for whom the Saviour died, unless we go often to Calvary.

### TO BRING US TO GOD

As a starting point, consider 1 Peter 3:18: "*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.*" Notice carefully—"Christ also hath once suffered for sins." It is impossible to divorce sin from suffering. It matters not whether it is the sinner committing sins, or whether it is the saint committing sins, or whether it is the Saviour acting as a substitute; there is always suffering. Because sin always entails suffering, we find it was necessary for our Lord to suffer—not for His sins, for He had none; but for yours and mine. The Just One voluntarily suffered for us, the unjust ones.

We could not bring ourselves to God. But what we were unable to do, thank God, He was able to do. Our Lord died upon the cross in order that He might bring us to God.

### LORD OF ALL

I trust that all of us know what it is to be brought to God and are safe in His arms. If so, having settled the matter of our relationship to God through faith in the Lord Jesus, let us read Romans 14:9: "*For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that*

*He might be Lord both of the dead and living.*” Not only did He die to become our Saviour, He died to become our Sovereign; He died that He might be the Lord of our lives.

What does the Lordship of Christ involve? It means implicit obedience on the part of the believer. “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it” (John 2:3-5). Not “Question it”; not “Think about it”; but “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.” Why? Because He suffered, He bled, He died, and He came out of the grave that He might be Lord, Sovereign, Master of your life and mine.

I like the testimony of that dear saint of God who stood up one day and said, “If the Lord told me to jump through a brick wall, it would be mine to jump; it would be His to get me through.” That is obedience.

Oh, beloved, out of some twenty-five years of pastoral experience, out of twenty-five years of dealing with men and women, I have come to the conclusion that here lies the crux of the whole situation. The reason why people are defeated, why lives are frustrated, and why divine plans are missed is because there is a hesitancy in being willing to do whatever He tells us to do. “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.” If your heart responds and says, “I will, Lord,” I can tell you that there will never be a time in your life when you will stand in need of divine guidance and it will not be there.

As you stay your mind upon Him and say, “Lord, Thy will—nothing more, nothing less, nothing else,” there comes that blessed response of His heart of love, “I will guide thee with Mine eye” (Psalm 32:8).

#### **DELIVERANCE FROM THIS WORLD**

Next, read what Galatians 1:4 says: “*Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil*

*world, according to the will of God and our Father.*” There is Calvary; there are the nail prints; there is the brow that wears the crown of thorns. Why is He dying upon the cross? “That He might deliver us from this present evil world.” You and I were in the clutches of unbelief. We were not able to extricate ourselves from this awful bondage; but, thank God, He came to deliver us. And what a Deliverer He is! That He might deliver us from what? “This present evil world.”

D.L. Moody once said, “Many of God’s people talk cream, but they walk skim milk.” Think it through. Our Lord went to the cross and died that He might separate us from this present evil world. This is not the separation of the Pharisee who draws aside his garment and says, “I am holier than thou.” This is not the separation of the monk who hibernates and says, “The world is too evil; I cannot live in it.” But it is the separation of a bride to the bridegroom; it is the separation of a lover and the object of his love. I do not believe that we are called to separate from this present evil world out of a sense of legality, but rather that our love for the Saviour will purify us and cause us to rise above the things of the world.

Are we separated? I believe we need to examine every part of our lives to determine whether we are identified by our Saviour or whether we have the stamp of the world upon us. He died that He might deliver us from this present evil world.

#### **A CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE**

Now let us look at 2 Corinthians 5:15: “*And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.*” We never live until we are saved. The world says that life begins at forty; the

Word says that life begins when we are born again.

Now there are only two principles which govern the Christian life: one is a sacrificial principle, and the other is a selfish principle. Your life and my life are governed and driven one of these. Man by nature is selfish. Man by nature lives an egocentric life. And it is possible, beloved, that as saved ones we are governed largely by the same selfish principle of life. But as redeemed ones, this need not be.

Our Lord went to the cross and died that “they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.” Dear children of God, hear me. He wants us for Himself. He doesn’t want anything else or anyone else ever to lay a hand upon us. He wants us for Himself. Listen, beloved, if we can say, “I believe,” we must go on to say, “I belong.” “Ye are not your own.” We are His. “My Beloved is mine, and I am His” (Song of Solomon 2:16). May God forbid that there should be anything or any one between us and Him.

#### **A LIFE OF FELLOWSHIP**

“*Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him*” (1 Thessalonians 5:10). The reference here to wake or sleep should be considered in the light of 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17. Whether we live until His coming, or whether we fall asleep (die), the ultimate purpose of His death upon the cross is that we might live together eternally with Him. “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so

shall we ever be with the Lord.”

The dead in Christ shall say, “O grave, where is thy victory?” and the living in Christ shall say, “O death, where is thy sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:55), and together they shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with Him. Together we will shout, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57).

#### **A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE**

“*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*” (Galatians 3:13,14). No Calvary, no Pentecost; no outpoured blood, no outpoured Spirit. The Lord Jesus went to the cross, bore the awful penalty, and paid the supreme price, making it possible for the second of all the great gifts of God, namely, the gift of the Holy Spirit. And, beloved, what does the Spirit of God do in your life and mine? It is His purpose to take all the purposes for which Christ died on the cross and turn them into facts and into forces in your experience and in mine.

If the Holy Spirit has His way in our lives, what will He do? He will lead us, first of all, to see Christ as our Saviour, who died—the Just for the unjust—that He might bring us to God. He will lead us to the place where we will crown our Saviour the Lord of our lives. He will lead us to a separation from this present evil world. He will dominate our lives and motivate them with a sacrificial principle which will send us out to live for Him. And when the Lord comes, He will present us to Him to live eternally with Him, and to be like Him.

—Condensed from “The Program of the Cross” by Ralph Stoll.

## THE SAVIOUR'S GIFT

**SALVATION MEANS** to be rescued from sin and its punishment and set free to know, love, and serve God. Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:34,36).

**ALL PEOPLE HAVE** turned away from God and broken the law of God. The Bible calls this sin. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

**LEFT TO OURSELVES**, there is no rescue, and the justice of God requires our eternal damnation in the terrors of hell. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

**VICTORY OVER SIN** was obtained when God sent His Son Jesus to earth. Jesus obeyed God’s laws perfectly, yet He died to pay for the sins of all who believe. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

**ADMITTING THAT** our sin has put us in a desperate situation is the first step in our rescue. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8,9).

**MAKING THE FREE GIFT** of Jesus’ payment for our sin makes us “not guilty” in God’s sight. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

**LIVING IN GRATITUDE** for such love, we follow Him in obedience and sacrificial service. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

**ONLY JESUS** has provided the way to salvation. “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).

**NOW IS THE TIME** to see your need of Christ and to make your decision for Him. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

How do we receive salvation? Salvation is a gift, pure and simple. God offers us salvation on the basis of who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for us. We receive God’s gift through repentance and faith—by turning from our own ways to God’s way: believing God’s truth that Jesus is the Son of God who died for you and rose again.

—Adapted from “What is Meant by Salvation?” Used by permission of The Tract League.

## NO OTHER SAVIOUR

*"I've got my own religion."*

*"Whatever you believe is alright."*

*"Everybody has their own beliefs."*

*"Just so you believe something."*

These are sayings which you will hear from many people today. They sound nice, and help to make people feel good, since their own beliefs are said to be as valid as those of anyone else. "After all," some say, "can you really know anything for sure?" People who claim to have "the truth" are looked down upon as being arrogant and intolerant. For some reason, people can accept the idea that any religion is valid as long as it doesn't claim to be the only true religion! Do you know why that is? It's Satan's way of getting people to believe *anything* but the *one thing* that will remove his grip on their souls.

It is *not true* that all religious beliefs are of equal value. It is *not true* that "Whatever you believe is alright." The very fact that "Everybody has their own beliefs" is what God says is man's biggest problem—we have exchanged *His truth* for *our beliefs*. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to *his own way*" (Isaiah 53:6). Man's confused religions stand in opposition to God's simple way to life. Man's ways are the wide, tolerant, sin-ignoring way that ends in destruction. "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction ... narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13,14).

There is one sense in which it is true that what you believe doesn't matter. What you believe, or what religious men have taught, does not change the truth of God's Word! Just

believing something doesn't make it so. Jumping off the top of a skyscraper onto the street below will kill you, no matter how strongly you believe otherwise. Entering into eternity with the firm belief that there is no God, or that your beliefs or your works are good enough to merit His approval will not change the outcome: "Who-soever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

Truth is not a matter of opinion. Either something is true or it is false. Jesus Christ claims to be the truth. He did not say "I am a way," but rather, "I am *the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me*" (John 14:6). When it comes to faith, it is not, "Just so you believe something," but "Just so you believe Christ." Faith in Jesus Christ, who laid down

His life on the cross of Calvary and rose victoriously from the dead, is the only way to everlasting life and forgiveness of sins.

Just as everyone has turned to his own way, each of us must individually turn from our rebellion. No one can save himself, since salvation is "not of works" (Ephesians 2:8,9). Because God is the One who saves, salvation is as certain as His promise: "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Jesus Christ is the only way. Stop rejecting Him, and by faith receive Him as your Saviour today. "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). —Ron Melick



## JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR

You see the symbol of the fish all the time on cars, lapel pins, jewelry, etc. What does the fish represent?

Because of the intense persecution early believers faced, when two complete strangers met they would be hesitant to reveal their faith. After a

few minutes of conversation, one of them would take his foot and draw an arc on the ground. If the other person were a Christian, he would take his foot or finger and draw another arc, completing the symbol of the fish. Then they would take turns putting the five Greek letters IXOUS (ΙΧΘΥΣ) inside the fish. This word is pronounced “ichthus,” and is the normal word used in the Gospels for “fish” (Matthew 7:10, 14:17, etc.).

Why a fish? The early Christians gave the Greek word for “fish” a hidden meaning, because its letters form an acrostic proclaiming many of the great truths of Christianity.

**I** represents Iesous (Ιησους), which is the Greek word for “Jesus.” An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and told him that his fiancée Mary “shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). The Hebrew form of His name is Jehoshua, meaning “Jehovah saves.”

**X** stands for Kristus (Χριστος), or “Christ,” meaning “anointed.” Jesus is God’s “Anointed One.” When Jesus was born, the angels announced Him to the shepherds as “Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11). Peter declared, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). The Hebrew form of “Christ” is “Messiah.”

**Θ** stands for Theos (Θεου) which is translated “God.” Jesus the Messiah is none other than the eternal God revealed in human flesh

(John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; 2:9). In Paul’s letter to Titus, he proclaims the divinity of Jesus Christ: “the

great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

**Υ** represents Uios (Υιος) which means “Son.” Jesus is “the only begotten Son” of God (John 3:16). “God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” (Hebrews 1:1-3).

**Σ** stands for Soter (Σωτηρ), meaning “Saviour.” “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11). He is the promised “Saviour of the world” (John 4:42). The idea is deliverance, a saving from disaster, rescue from a hopeless situation, and breaking the chains of bondage. Indeed, the Bible tells us, “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 next time you see the sign of the fish, remember that Jesus is the Christ, the very Son of God, who gave His life as a sacrifice in order to be our Saviour. Have you put your trust in Him to save you for all eternity?

—Wil Pounds, adapted

