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An Uttermost Salvation

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Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God" (Hebrews 7:25).

Bible salvation implies deliverance. And it is deliverance from sin unto a life of righteousness or holiness. This is the full implication of the apostle's word that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." And as if to elaborate upon a statement that is itself profound, he says that old things have passed away, and all things become new. A converted person is one who lives a converted life. And it is the life lived that proves the truth of any profession of faith a person may make.

Christ can save every penitent sinner from the depths of sin. No one is too bad but Christ can meet his need and save him. Sin may abound, but God's grace super-abounds. Sin may be wide and deep in its outstretch, but grace is wider and deeper still in its outreach. However far you may have wandered off into sin, God's grace can go farther and save you. However deep into the pit of iniquity your feet have floundered, God's grace can go deeper and lift you up. And it can then place your feet firm on the bedrock of the Word of God. However high into supposed moral self-righteousness you may have gone, the grace of God can go higher, bring you down to earth level again, and reveal to you anew the real and sinful condition of your inner heart. It can bring you afresh face to face with reality, reveal to you your need, then assure you of the all-sufficient remedy God in love has provided.

We could tell you of Tony the tipster who was saved by sovereign grace on Doncaster (England) Market place back in 1935. Once a famous tipster, Christ has since come into his life, and he has found a better vocation: preaching the gospel himself. We could tell also of my dear friend Percy the wife-beater. He has a wonderful story to tell of the love that sought him out when he was down in the depths, also of the grace of God that bought him, and the blood that cleansed him. These, and others, would unite in declaring that the Lord Jesus had saved them to the uttermost, although, as we shall see in a moment, it would be more scriptural for them to testify to be saved from the uttermost.

Holy Scripture teaches the universality of sin. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All come therefore under the just wrath and condemnation of high heaven. But the Bible that teaches the universal condemnation through sin also shouts from the housetops that the fact that Christ died for all, and that through him all may find life and eternal salvation, for they are offered to every penitent sinner. It was with this assurance in mind that Peter said, "Repent ... and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." God's Word also says that "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Christ can fully meet every penitent sinner's need. His grace, his love working itself out, is more than sufficient; and one young people's worker made an acrostic

on the word "grace" as: Grace Reaches All Creatures Everywhere.

An uttermost salvation, we call it, with Hebrews 7:25 in mind. But as I hinted above, it would be more in keeping with the actual teaching of the Word if we described the redemption of those who have been lifted from the depths of a salvation from the uttermost. The salvation to the uttermost of Hebrews 7:25 is a word for those who are already converted to Christ, those who know saving grace, those who are already new creatures in Christ. It is a salvation to the heights of holiness and spiritual attainment, from the gutter, but also to the palace of the Eternal.

The American Revised Version translates our text as, "He is able to perfect for evermore." Dr. Gill, commentator, says: "So that nothing can be wanting in the salvation he is the author of." The Arabic version has: "To the uttermost perfection," while Delitzche, another commentator, says "perfectly, completely, to the very end, in all respects, so that every want and need is utterly done away." "He can save fully and completely those who approach God through Him" is how J. B. Phillips translates the verse, while Dr. Moffatt put it over as, "For all time He is able to save those who approach God through Him."

The word "uttermost," itself, is a compound of two other words: "utter," meaning total, complete, or entire, and "most," implying fullest extent, highest degree, and furthest point. Personally, I have found Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas very helpful. For many years he was principal of the Wycliff Hall, in the city of Toronto, Canada. He was appointed to that institution from a similar post in Wycliff Hall, Oxford University.

Here are his words, which I came across many years ago, and entered in the back of my Bible. "It means completely, that is, to the uttermost of our need through sin, whether this be ours through inherited disposition or through acquired characteristic, and to the uttermost of our circumstances whatever they may be, in all their difficulty, complexity and pressure; to the uttermost of our time, covering past, present, and future. ... Not least the phrase means to the uttermost of place, so that wherever His obedient children go they experience His salvation, regardless of locality, since He is the same everywhere in His saving, sanctifying, and satisfying power."

This uttermost salvation embraces time and eternity, and manifests itself in relation to the past, present, and future of life. In 11 Corinthians 1:9, 10 Paul speaks of the One who delivered, doth deliver, and will yet deliver us. Salvation in three tenses. "By grace are ye saved through faith" said Paul in that letter he addressed to the believers at Ephesus. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed," said Paul again, this time referring to the

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