

The Chief Purpose of Salvation

Elder Bobby Poe

God's purpose in creating was to give expression to his glory. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev 4:11) "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." (Psalm 19:1) God's glory is in his person, but men cannot see it there. God reveals his glory by showing forth his attributes. An attribute is an inherent characteristic or quality in God, such as his love or power. When God created he displayed his glory of wisdom, knowledge, power and goodness.

The chief purpose of salvation is also to give expression to his glory. God has revealed more of his glory in salvation than one sees in creation. God could have made an outstanding display of his glorious holiness by sending all men to hell when they sinned; but the glory of his love, mercy, longsuffering, grace, goodness and forgiveness would have been covered.

Moses asked God in Exodus 33:18 "I beseech Thee, show me thy glory." God told Moses in verse 19 that he would show him his glory: "and he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." After Moses went into the mountain to receive the law, God showed Moses his glory. "And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that by no means clear the guilty..." (Exodus 34:5-7)

Moses was able to see the glory of God after he was placed in the cleft of the rock. The Scriptures tell us that the rock that followed Israel was Christ. (I Cor 10:4) The only person who can see the glory of God in salvation is the person who has been put in Christ by God's divine choice. When a person experiences, for himself, the reality of his personal relationship to Christ, then and only then can he see the glory of God in salvation.

Let us examine what God showed Moses when he placed him in the cleft of the rock:

1. God showed his mercy and grace. When a person has been blessed to see the horrible pit of sin from which God has delivered him, he will rejoice in the wonderful mercy of God. God did not deal with him according to justice, but mercy.
2. God showed his longsuffering. When a person's eyes have been opened to see, he will stand in awe that God, the Holy God, did not consume him with his wrath.
3. God showed his abundant goodness – his love. The one expression of goodness that exceeds all others is seen in what God did for the awakened sinner at Calvary's cross. A greater act of goodness or love toward man could never be displayed anywhere.
4. God showed his truth. What happened at the cross reveals God's truth about his hatred of sin. At the cross God put on display his truth about how he can be just and yet be the justifier of every believer in Jesus. (Romans 3:26).
5. God showed his forgiveness. Every believer in Christ is washed and forgiven from every sin by the blood of Jesus Christ.
6. God showed that by no means would he clear the guilty. These are the ones that are not saved by Jesus Christ – the ones not covered with his blood. This reveals the holiness of God.

As we started out to show in this devotion, the chief end of salvation was to manifest the glory of God. There are so many in religion today making the good of man the chief end of salvation. When the order of truth is reversed, wrong conclusions may very well be reached. It is true that man benefits from salvation, but God's chief design from the very beginning was to magnify His own glory. "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Saviour...Even everyone that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea I have made him." (Isaiah 43:3,7) If we can keep before our faces the glory of God in salvation, then how God saves man, and what he does in man, will be clearly seen. If God is the source of all good, should not God manifest his glory so that man, who is seeking that which is good, might see his glory and come unto him? What is this glory? It is his mercy, longsuffering, goodness, truth, forgiveness, etc.