

Salvation - great in its conception

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[0 : 0 0] welcome. I would like to read the word of God from the New Testament scriptures on the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. The epistle to the Hebrews and chapter 1 and just reading on into chapter 2 the first two verses there in which we find biblical light on the theme of these evening meetings, the theme of so great salvation.

So Hebrews chapter 1 at the beginning God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time passed unto the fathers by the prophets 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 world 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 in the right hand of the Majesty on high being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they for unto which of the angels said he at any time thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee and again I will be to him a Father and he shall be to me a Son and again when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world he saith and let all the angels of God worship him and of the angels he saith who maketh his angels spirit and his ministers a flame of fire but unto the Son he saith thy throne O God is forever and ever a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity therefore God even thy God has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows and thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of thine hands they shall perish but thou remainest and they shall all wax old as doth a garment and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed but thou art the same and thy years shall not fail but to which of the angels said yet any time sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip for if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that hurt him amen and may God bless to us and give us understanding in that portion of his word which we have just read now we'll join together in prayer and as Mr. Varne said we'll stand to pray help us to be still in thy great and holy presence oh Lord our God help us in thy mighty mercy to believe that thou art God and that thou art the rewarder of all them that diligently seek thee and help us to humble ourselves before thee because as we have just read thou art the creator of all the ends of the earth thou art the one who has made the universe and the world of which we are a part and they are running on towards a destiny a time when they shall be done away forevermore but thou remainest thou art the God who abides from everlasting to everlasting and who never changes and thou art the God who so mysteriously and so amazingly has given us life thou art our creator our breath thy word tells us is in thine hands and oh God we thank thee that we can take this mysterious transitory thing which is our life and bring it and bring it into the secret and the stillness of thy presence here in this place this evening and that we can ask thee because we are invited to do so by thee we can ask thee to meet with us and to bless us in Jesus Christ in his name we ask thee to come down amongst us to speak to us from thy word and to give us understanding in it we thank thee for the message that Jesus is the saviour of sinners and we pray that we may know our sin and come under the convicting power of the truth that thy word shall search our ways and our hearts and that knowing our sin we shall be cast over upon the mercy of God which he has shown in the life and death and resurrection of his son

Jesus Christ our Lord we thank thee that tonight Jesus reigns on the throne of heaven and that we can hear his voice say to us I am he that lives and became dead and behold I am alive forevermore

we thank thee O God that each person here is known to thee thou knowest the burdens that any one of us carry thou knowest the frustrations thou knowest the unbelief the difficulties the doubts the uncertainties which we entertain sometimes thou knowest the testings of the evil one and of Satan and we pray that thou overcome all these things in us and graciously meet us in thine own power to enlighten us and save us bless not only each one of us as individuals bringing us to know thee but bless the homes from which we come the communities to which we belong or the churches in which we live out our Christian faith and in which we seek to express our belief in thee and our adoration for thee and we pray

O Lord for all whom we represent here before thee bless this great city and this great land and pour out upon it the spirit of revival which it has known in the past that in these days thy spirit may move mightily among men and women and that their salvation shall be the glory of Jesus in days to come hear our prayer and be with us as we turn now to thy word and pardon and cleanse us from all sin for Jesus' sake Amen Now in Hebrews chapter 2 just at the end of our reading there Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 3 we read these words how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation and that so great salvation is the theme of these three evening meetings we want to think about the salvation of God in Jesus Christ and we're going to be thinking each night of a different aspect of it we want to see tonight especially that this salvation

[8 : 38] Christian salvation freely offered to us in the gospel of Christ known to us by acceptance of Christ by faith that salvation is great in its conception tomorrow night we'll be looking at how it is also great in its execution in the way God actually brought it about and then we'll be looking all being well on Wednesday evening at how it's great in its actual application to us as sinners its application to us by the power of the Holy Spirit so tonight then I want us to think especially of this salvation and its greatness in its conception its inception where it started out and I want to do that by focusing attention especially on the opening words we read this evening Hebrews chapter 1 and verses 1, 2 and 3 really although mostly it'll be just verses 1 and 2

God says that verse at the beginning God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days or in this final age spoken unto us by his son whom he hath appointed heir of all things by whom also he made the world who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his passion and upholding all things by the word of his power when he had by himself Pudge Darlison sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high one of my earliest memories I'm not sure exactly when it took place but one of my earliest memories and it took place before I went to school and I went to school I think about six months before I was five years of age so I must have been under four and a half when this particular event happened and it's something which I have never forgotten

I was the youngest of a family of six and we were brought up on the west coast of Scotland the highlands of Scotland in the north northern part of the biggest county in Scotland the county of Argyleshire my father was a building contractor and he was also a small farmer now one day when I was still a very little boy somewhere under four and a half all the rest of the family my brothers three brothers and two sisters came up with a what I thought was a brilliant suggestion there was a little river went down through a valley below our house and they all suggested that we should follow the little river until we found where it really began we wanted to trace its way back up into the hill and for a little boy that was a marvellous adventure off we set and I don't remember much of the journey except that it seemed to take years and years and years and I thought

I would never get back home and the river as we followed it up into the mountains it got smaller and smaller and smaller until at last we did find almost unbelievably a little well that seemed to be the beginning of it all now I learned a very important lesson when I was just that age that if you want to find out about something you follow it to its source now we want to find out about the Christian faith one thing I want to do tonight as we think of the greatness of salvation I want us to look at its source where does it all begin now if you are already a Christian believer and I hope you are I hope that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ that he is your Redeemer and your Saviour and that by faith in his name you know and walk with God that is what Christianity is all about brings God into human experience and brings links man into the life of God now where did all that begin when we talk to many Christians they talk about a special day a day when they were converted or a day when they came to understand that they really did believe in Christ and therefore were Christians they placed their Christian faith their salvation in Christ back to a personal experience of them and we don't argue with that but the Bible says that salvation is great because it goes even further back

than that and when we stop to think about it of course it does because conversion regeneration God's work with us as sinners just brings us to believe upon something which happened long ago didn't it 2,000 years ago almost now a Christian is brought to trust in Jesus Christ and we know that Jesus Christ lived 2,000 years ago but when we come to the Bible the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ lived and died 2,000 years ago because of something which happened even before that so we have to go back beyond a person's conversion for the beginning of his or her salvation and we have to go back beyond even the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ for the beginning of their salvation we have to go back to the very beginning and in fact we have to go back beyond the beginning we have to go back to the source of everything and that is where our [14 : 51] Bible text this evening starts off from it begins with God and of course everything begins with God everything we know the universe of which our world is a part is the creation of God I certainly believe that it is impossible for me to believe that they indicate the marvellous universe of which we are a part and some scientists believe that there is not one but many universes in creation I believe that it all had to have an originator you don't get a marvellous thing like that without someone having made it and the Bible says that God is its creator everything begins and salvation begins with God and that is where our text begins

God who at different times sundry times and in diverse manners God who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets has in these last days spoken unto us by his son why why has God spoken why did he speak by the prophets why has he spoken by his son and in his speech what in essence is he saying we begin to ask these questions the moment we begin to read this don't we what on earth is all this about it's about salvation the son is God's message to the world the son is God speaking to the world the son is God speaking to you and to me all that the son is as well as all that the son did speaks to you and to me as individual passions and the message is vital and important now this book can I take a time just a moment to explain this book the book of Hebrews it tells us that it was written for a very special people it was written for Hebrews for Jews and it was written for Jews who had been converted from Judaism which had lasted for many many years they had been converted out of Judaism into Christianity in a sense the Judaism had come full circle it had blossomed into a full blown faith in the Messiah that had been promised and for whom they had looked for many years to come those are the people to whom this book is written and the book all through it this lovely little book does two things it compares the new with the old all the time the writer is comparing and comparing and contrasting he is comparing in order to contrast and every time he makes a comparison he draws a contrast now

I'm not going to spend much time on this but notice at the very beginning that he is comparing two different kinds and eras of revelation of God revealing himself that's all I want to say about that at the moment this is how the book starts off with a comparison God who spoke to the prophets in different ways various ways and at different times in the past has now spoken unto us in his son a higher fuller more complete way that's a comparison and contrast and if you were to go right through this book and it would take us a very long time if we were to go right through this book we would find that these comparisons and contrast go on right to the very end almost he speaks about a better covenant this is why he makes the comparison and contrast to show the superiority what's been called the super excellence of the

Christian age over against the earlier pre-Christian age of God's grace and mercy he's wanting to assure these Christian Hebrew believers that although all the glitter and the ceremony and the marvelous kind of temple sacrifices and worship that they had although all these have now gone because they've been fulfilled in Jesus Christ they have lost nothing the fuller clearer revelation of God's grace and mercy that they have in Jesus is better than what they had before so somebody has called the book of Hebrews a book of better things better revelation better covenant better promises a better priesthood better sacrifice why is he able to do that when we trace it back it's all to something that moves in the mind of

[21 : 12] God and it's focused for us in the thought that God has spoken now before God speaks something else happens before anyone speaks if they're intelligent and it's intelligence that lies under live speech before speech there is thought and there's not usually only thought there is determination and purpose and plan even somebody who preaches the way I do and the way Mr.

Varns does we would be very foolish if we didn't think about what we were going to say before we stood up to preach and you know in order to express our thought to anyone else we do have to

speak now I could stand here and I could think absolutely wonderful thoughts to myself and you would know nothing about them if I put my hand over my mouth you no longer know what I'm thinking do you I hope that when I keep on talking to you personally you do know what I'm thinking you know what's working inside all these grey cells that are supposed to be in there now it's the same with God God speaks because God has been thinking God speaks because God has been purposing and God speaks out of infinite wisdom we believe that God is infinitely wise all we have to do to believe that is to look at the universe around us it's a marvellous universe behind it is the most marvellous intellect and the most marvellous mind now what am I saying

I want to do basically now four things I want us to see that the Christian salvation is great salvation because it begins with a divine determination and it's a marvellous determination it begins in divine determination now what do I mean I mean that behind the speech of God that we have in the prophets first of all and then in his son Jesus Christ there is a determination or a purpose of God ok now it's because I believe that determination and purpose that I speak it's because Christianity the Lord Jesus Christ the one in whom God has spoken to the world it's because I know and love him that I preach in fact because I know and love him and believe him

I cannot but preach I've been doing it almost since I came to know him and that's more than 30 years ago now the same thing determination not merely of mind but of heart moved God to speak through the prophets prophets in fact he came himself first of all to preach or to speak to men and he came to speak to men the Bible tells us as soon as men needed to know that their God was not silent even although they had sinned against him the Garden of Eden the fall of man the mystery of iniquity cutting off man from fellowship with God and every generation ever since then has felt it and we read this that God came in the cool of the morning or perhaps even in the spirit of the day God came by his spirit the spirit of that day of grace and he spoke to man he called Adam where are you Adam was hiding then you got the very first promise deal with sin and rescue man now why did God speak because he was determined that evil would not triumph he was determined that the creation that he had made and which evil had invaded would not succumb to evil he would banish evil and he would save the race through which the curse of his own righteousness came upon the world now I want to do something I want to do a very short bible study with you alright here's what I am saying too I want to do this basically from the new testament scriptures scriptures

[26 : 18] I want first of all to quote from the book of acts chapter 2 and verse 33 this is Peter on the day of Pentecost preaching the Christ Jesus who has died and who has risen again and who has now ascended into heaven and who has poured out the Holy Spirit upon the world and Peter is preaching this Jesus and he is preaching him to Jewish people to the very people who crucified him and he is talking about Jesus being crucified alright now this is what he says who was delivered by the determinate counsel and fore knowledge of God him you have taken and by wicked hands you have crucified and slain now I just want to isolate these two words determinate counsel we know that men were involved in the crucifixion of Jesus we know that Roman soldiers were involved we know that Jewish priests were involved but this text tells us that someone else was involved it tells us that behind the work of men there was the purpose of God and it was a predetermined counsel it was a purpose that would not be set aside for any reason at all and it was foreknowledge it was something which God had determined to do beforehand now I'm not going to comment any further than that the cross of Calvary was not a surprise to God the very opposite is true it was there because God had determined it should be there okay

I want to go to another text this time go further back than Peter I want to go back into eternity before Peter or any other man never lived at all I want to go back to one of the Psalms Psalm 110 and verse 4 Psalm 110 and verse 4 and this is what we would call one of the oracles of God it takes us beyond time back into eternity and we hear the Lord God Jehovah speaking and he is speaking to another one who is with him he is speaking we believe to the pre-incarnate son he is speaking to one who is with him from all eternity he is speaking to one who is his fellow he is speaking to the one that we know as the son now this is what he says the Lord has sworn

Jehovah has sworn and will not repent thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek now I don't want you to get worried about Melchizedek that's a similitude a simile that's used of a very shadowy figure that we find in the Old Testament what I want you to focus on is this that Jehovah is talking to his son the father is talking to the son and he is saying that he is going to set him up he is setting him up he is establishing him as a priest forever now why would God want a priest well a priest has to do with sin a priest a priest has to do with sacrifice a priest has to do with making

peace between God a righteous holy God and sinners that's really what priesthood is all about this is Jesus the son the one who is to become Jesus this is the son of God being fed up as priest before time began you say perhaps you're going too far you perhaps say I'm going too far well if you think I'm going too far I want you to come to another text with me I want you to come to Titus chapter 1 Titus chapter 1 and verses 1 to 3 this is Paul he's a servant of God an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledging of the truth that's after godliness in the hope of eternal life and this is what I want you to listen to in the hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised promised when when did the God who cannot lie promise the hope of eternal life he promised it before the world began now if he promised it before the world began that means that he promised it before there was actual sin even God was looking ahead

God is never taken by surprise okay before the world began before time is God is planning things that will take place in time and especially he is planning for our salvation this is why salvation is a marvelous thing it goes back beyond Jesus of Nazareth it goes back beyond the suffering of Calvary it goes back beyond the beginning of time itself it goes back into the councils of eternity we don't have time to look at all the texts I want to look at just one more the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians way back behind Titus a bit Ephesians chapter 1 and again at the beginning Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God to the saints that are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord

[32 : 30] Jesus Christ blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus according as he hath chosen as in him when when we decided to follow him when we first heard the gospel when Jesus died on the cross no according as he hath chosen as in him here's the same thought again before the foundation of the world now of course we're dealing here with our great mystery God looking at things which are not as though they were that's how it's put elsewhere God looking at things which have not come into existence yet as though they were in existence God seeing the mystery of iniquity at work God seeing the man that he makes is to make in his own image become become the tool of evil fall in temptation and become alienated from him and God purposing and planning over against that to save a great multitude of them who would be a people to the glory of his own name we're dealing here with something that's known as election elect according to the foreknowledge of God in Jesus

Christ some people don't like the doctrine of election but you know what the doctrine of election does it enables us to take salvation back into the heart of God and the mind of God and it tells us that the salvation we have and enjoy the saviour whom we know and trust and love we have him and we have all that he gives us not because of something we have purposed first of all but because of something God has purposed first of all that's why it's marvellous and great don't allow the mysterious yes it is a mysterious doctrine don't allow the mysterious and yet the marvellous truth of God's electing love to push you away from its greatest truth and its greatest reality that he not only chose our people in Christ but he chose

Christ for our people electing people in Christ and this is what Paul is talking about there in Ephesians 1 and 4 chosen us in him meant that Christ was chosen Christ was set up from all eternity to be the saviour of sinners and it meant that even there in the councils of eternity God was giving his son there is determination behind what God has done one more text and then this part of our bible study is over for us we're looking at the determination of God and nothing will stop that determination he stands up as it were in his throne stands up in this council of eternity and he says I will save them and when God says it who will stop who will stop him who will hinder him none because he is God one more text 2nd

Timothy 2nd Timothy chapter 1 verse 9 Paul speaking again to Timothy the young minister of the gospel speaking of the marvellous things that God has done in Jesus speaking of God and Christ he says who has called us and saved us who has saved us and called us with a holy calling Christian man Christian woman to be a holy person separate and different 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 given us in Jesus Christ when was given us in Jesus Christ oh the day I believed no my friend that's not what Paul said what was given us in Jesus Christ the day he rose from the dead no that's not what he said it was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began now I've only given you a handful of texts just a handful

I could give you a basket full but I'm not going to do that surely I don't need to do surely we see that our very salvation begins with the determination which arose let me say in the mind and in the heart of God that's where it all began that's why it's great it is God ordained and God determined salvation let's never get away from that I'm tired and the older I get the tired I get of hearing men preach that our salvation depends just upon a decision or a determination of our minds and our hearts oh that's involved by the grace of God but our salvation first of all depends upon a determination and a decision of God way back there before the world began isn't that marvellous now I want to go on and say that salvation is great salvation in the second place because it's brought to us in a divine revelation it begins for us with a divine determination and then it begins with a divine revelation of that determination do you see now I'm trying to make this as simple and straightforward for you and for me as I as I possibly can and I want you to put words into your mind that you'll not forget when this sermon is over but you'll remember tomorrow and the day after tomorrow and for weeks and

[38 : 49] I hope for all eternity if God lays hold of you God determined determination divine and then revelation divine God you see and ultimately God is the final one who ultimately determines everything God but God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke oh isn't that marvelous God and revelation God speaking God making his mind known this is very significant you know men talk about the dreadful silence of the universe that's what they talk about the dreadful silence of the universe there are some people today and they believe that they live in a closed system even some who believe that there is a creator God behind the universe they believe that God has left it he set it like a machine he set it running and now he leaves it severely alone well I'm glad that that's not the kind of God and that's not the kind of universe that the

Bible sets before us we do not live in a silent universe into all the sadness and the pain and the wounds of the world in which we live and into all the silences and the pain and the wounds of your day and my days God speaks oh let's be thankful that God has spoken I've said it already he spoke at the very beginning and it was a call of grace Adam where are you Adam wasn't Adam who went looking for God it was God who came looking for Adam and the story has been the same ever since with Noah I have found the righteous in this generation I have found you one who trusts in me he said to Noah

Abraham the God who spoke at different times and in various ways to our fathers I want you to see a kind of balance here he spoke to the fathers that's what the writer is saying to these Jewish Hebrew believers he's saying ah yes your fathers had God your fathers knew God because God made himself known to them he spoke to them you know he even called his name by your fathers he called himself the God of Abraham of Isaac and of Jacob he he spoke to Abraham and he spoke to Isaac and he spoke to Jacob and he made a covenant with them to be their God and the God of their children forevermore yes he's the God who spoke to your fathers can I stop the sermon here and ask you if you're here tonight perhaps without

God and without Christ and yet your father had him he was the God of your father and the God of your grandfather and you could go back some more he spoke to the fathers and over against that Paul makes a comparison he spoke to the fathers he speaks to us my friend this is still true God is the God who still speaks to his people I bless God for that we have his word and in here we have the voice of God but he's making that comparison in order to emphasize that God also speaks in the present he spoke to the fathers he speaks to us he spoke to the fathers in the past he speaks to us today in our need and then he spoke by the prophets but now he has spoken by the son and the son is greater than the prophets do you remember the parable that the Lord Jesus told he spoke about a man who had a vineyard and he let it out and the people to whom he let it and rented it took advantage of him so he sent some of his best workers to go and collect the rents and they took these workers and they beat them up and they gave them no money and they sent them back and he sent some more he was very patient and then eventually he sent his son oh he said I'll send my son that's what any good businessman would do in the last resort he would send the person that was closest to him and that he trusted most and they took the son and they killed him this is the heir let us think it was Jesus who told that story and the story illustrated the mission on which Jesus himself had come God has spoken unto us by his son he has spoken now I'll emphasize that again in a moment or two if God has spoken then it means that God is not silent we do have revelation of God and we have two types of revelation revelation we have revelation of God in the world around us all you have to do is stand up and look look up and stand outside and look

up into the sky on a starry night and in Australia I notice you've got nearly as many stars as we have in Scotland when you look up into the stars you feel what David the psalmist felt long ago don't you you feel who am I and what are these and

[44 : 43] David the psalmist said to God long ago oh God what is man that you are mindful of him when I look up to the heavens which thine own fingers frame and to the moon and to the stars which were by thee ordained then say I what is man that thou so kind to him shouldst be what indeed we have a testimony to God in the world around us and yet the world around us tells us of a great God one who is of great power tells us of a God who appreciates beauty it tells us of a God who is of tremendous intelligence he makes all these worlds and universities work together so neatly and so closely that mathematicians can work out how and when to send a man so that he can land on the moon or

Mars or well they haven't done that quite yet but eventually we'll try and get around you I suppose maths are possible because of the kind of world we live in and yet all that doesn't tell us what God really is like it takes special revelation it takes the revelation that we have in the word of God and there in his word in the Bible God is unfolding his mind he is speaking to us we have a record of what God said to the fathers through the prophets that's what we have in the Bible and we also have a record of what God said to this last age in his own son now all that we know or can know about God depends upon revelation either upon natural revelation or special revelation and we therefore are thankful that

God reveals himself he is not a God who hides himself but who intrudes into the world and makes himself known and then I want to go on and say that God has revealed himself supremely in the man Christ Jesus his own son he has spoken unto us in these last days in by by or in his son perhaps in his son is the the better expression God has given us sonship revelation that's what the man is saying here this last age the speech of God in Christ splits time in two that's what this writer is saying there is the past and there is the present and you know even our calendars work that way about three weeks before

I left home somebody came to see me and they told me that they were dealing with another person who didn't believe that Jesus of Nazareth had ever lived and he said Mr. how can I how can I begin to show the historicity of the man Christ Jesus go back I said and ask that guy if he uses a calendar and then ask him why he uses a calendar you know that everything is dated for us in the western world from the birth of Christ from the life of Christ I said go back and ask that man why the Christian church weekly or quarterly or annually remember the death of Christ the death of Jesus you can't remember the death of a man who never lived Jesus was very wise God is wise and he left a tender sacrament in his church which would testify to the fact that

Jesus of Nazareth lived the son of God was among men because death was the culmination of his life and his mission two ages and the implication is that God has said his last word to us isn't it there's finality and completion and completeness God finally sent his son to speak to us that's what the man is saying here he finally sent his own son for many thousands of years for many years God had something in reserve he spoke by the prophets he spoke by angels sometimes the angel of the covenant came and yet God had a greater revelation held in reserve he was yet going to speak to men by his own son but you know God now has nothing in reserve God in a very real sense has nothing new to add to the message he has given the world in Jesus his son

[50 : 07] God has said his last word to this world revelation has been rounded out and completed and we bless God for that nothing left now to reveal can I put it like this because of all that he has said to us by his son there is nothing more for God to say in a very real sense there is nothing more for God to say God has nothing more to say to you or to me or to any sinner on the face of the earth regarding his salvation than what he has already said in the life and the death and the resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ it's all there isn't it amazing I was preaching at evangelistic meetings in the city of Glasgow just about a month ago and the minister in whose church I was preaching the Reverend

William MacLeod he said to me Douglas he said there are people in here who have never been in a church before there are people in here tonight who know absolutely nothing about Jesus of Nazareth and I was stunned he said keep it simple man forget you're a professor now that wasn't what stunned me not quite do you know what stunned me the fact that God's son lived and died in this world two thousand years ago and that there has been a stream of continual testimony about him all through the years until now the fact that God has spoken so clearly so amazingly so

graciously by his own son and that there should be men so steeped in sin that they know nothing about

Jesus men so deaf that they are deaf to the voice of the eternal one himself is that not sad of the people around this church tonight and God has been speaking in his son for almost two thousand years and they only know the name of Jesus to blaspheme isn't it amazing that God doesn't sweep men like that off the face of the earth but he doesn't do it does that not stun you let me ask you are you one who perhaps doesn't know what God has said in his son and you know the fact that God has spoken in his son is very significant for this other reason that when we speak to someone we want to get to know them we want to fellowship with them we want to have their heart move to us and have our heart move to them let me put it very simply speech is the vehicle of fellowship God if I can put it in his amazing grace and mercy is reaching out to you and me in Jesus Christ he has spoken to the world in Jesus Christ in order to make himself known salvation what is salvation what is this eternal life that Christians talk about and that ministers preach about and that the Bible holds out to us what is eternal life Jesus put it like this this is eternal life that they may know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent that is eternal life to know God Paul the apostle when he had been a Christian for a long time prayed this prayer that I may know him Jesus to know Jesus is something which goes on for a lifetime let me try and illustrate that if I came to your home and sat down beside you tonight and began to talk to you

I would be revealing myself and if we sat and if you were kind enough to give me a cup of tea or have your wife give me a cup of tea over the cup of tea we would talk more and you would get to know quite a lot about me and if I came back tomorrow at breakfast time and said have you got any ham and eggs you said yes son and you made the ham and eggs and I sat down began to talk to you again you would get to know me a little better if I stayed till five o'clock in the evening you would know me quite well and then if I came back the next day you would say are you back here again now if you didn't say that if you said oh come in more ham and eggs you would know me better by the third day or let's use a different message if you were working alongside me for three years or ten years or thirty years your knowledge of me would be growing all the time what am I saying [55 : 41] I am saying that knowledge between two persons is not a static thing it's dynamic and it's the same with God I have Christian friends in here tonight some of them have known God in Christ for many many years and tonight they know him far better than they knew him the night they were first introduced to him and they love him far more deeply you might not love him you got to know me really well you might not love me too much but if you got to know God you would get to love God and the better you got to know God the better you would get to love him that's the kind of God he is Jesus is the son in whom God has spoken to us and God has spoken to us only in Jesus God has spoken savingly to us only in

Jesus but Jesus said no man comes to the father but by me he was exclusive of any other way but he went on to say this no man comes unto the father but by me but him that cometh unto me I will in no eyes cast death divine determination divine revelation God has spoken unto his son salvation salvation is great thirdly because it belongs to divine incarnation it belongs to us in God's grace and God's offer by divine incarnation he has spoken unto us in his own son I want you to be patient because I'm going to do a little more bible study with you Galatians chapter 4 back from from Hebrews to Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4 and there

Paul is talking to the Galatians about something God did he says when the fullness of the time had come what does he mean by the fullness of the time he means when the time that God had set out and he did that before there was time at all he did it before the foundation of the world when the fullness of the time or when the time appointed had fully come God sent forth his son he sent out his son now I want you to look at this there is the pre-existence of the one who came or the one who was sent this son was with God I believe he was God also but he was with God before the father sent him now if God sent forth his son the sender was the father his son therefore the son's father so you can say but

God the father when the fullness of the time was come God the father sent his son because as professor the late professor John Murray would say put it only of the son is the father the father you see it it was the father who sent forth the son made of a woman made under the law why to redeem them that were under the law to redeem who did the redeeming the son the son who came the son who was sent to redeem them that were under the law that we who were under the law might receive the adoption of sons and because you are sons God has sent forth somebody else who his

spirit Christianity believes in a triune God not three gods but one God who is three persons father son and holy spirit and there is the trinity there in Galatians 4 4 to 7 4 to 6 he has sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts crying Abba father now

God before he spoke by his son sent that son into the world ok now 1st Timothy 3 16 there are some great 3 16 in the bible 1st Timothy is one of them here Paul is talking about what he speaks of as the mystery of godliness and he says the mystery of godliness is tremendous for God was manifest in the flesh the one who came was God he was not merely the son of God he was God also great is the mystery of godliness for God was manifest God was enfleshed he was seen as clearly as you can be seen and I can be seen he could be touched and handled can I put it like this in Jesus Christ God could be had and he was he was a disciple who lay upon his breast and who embraced the son of God

[60 : 54] I'm sure many did it it was a Jewish treaty to embrace one another in Jesus Christ man could embrace God in Jesus Christ man can still do that embrace God in Jesus Christ by their faith God John 3 16 you don't even need to look it up do you God so loved the world why did the son come why was God manifest in the flesh because God so loved the world he loved the world in this way now who's the world you and me every one of us in here yes and the people outside and around us too that's why we have responsibility to them God loved the world in this way he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life much ratified for us again by

Romans 8 32 again you don't even need to look at that God spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all and there we'll really we'll leave our Bible study I've just been trying to show you that God spoke through one whom he sent into the world and the one he sent was called Jesus thou shalt call his name Jesus the angel said because he shall save his people from the sins in Jesus God was there now I want to go on to the last main thing I want to say and that is that this is so great salvation salvation is great because it provides people like you and me with divine purification divine determination in the mind and heart of God to move out to touch the lives of people like you and me divine revelation focused in the manifestation of God that we have in Jesus Christ and all this towards the reality of a divinely provided purification here it is in the text I would have loved to have taken time to go through the glory of this son who came into the world he was the one whom the father had appointed as the heir of all things verse 2 there in Hebrews 1 he was the one by whom also he made the worlds at the very beginning the worlds were created through Jesus through the son it's marvelously fitting that the one who was especially the instrument of creation should be the one who was sent into the world in order to recreate it in righteousness and to banish evil from it it's marvelously fitting let me say it again God's ways are wonderful and he was the brightness he was the outshining literally of the father's glory you know the only way that you and

I know that the sun is the sun in the heavens is is is is is is light is because that light shines out its brightness shines out and it shines on you even more in Australia than it does in Scotland I'm told quite a bit more and it's almost the same idea that the outshining of God was in Jesus he was the brightness of his glory he was the express image selfish substance he was the same substance as the father and he was upholding all things of his by the word of his power he is God and when he had by himself purged our sins there it is he came to purge our sins and that's the way God has spoken to us you know he's spoken to us in the coming of Jesus he's spoken to us in the marvellous ministry of Jesus in the marvellous compassion of Jesus he's spoken to us in the marvellous philosophy of life that Jesus left with men do you remember how Jesus put it it's so wonderful and yet it's so simple and because of our sin it's so impossible he said you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your soul and you'll love your neighbour as yourself imagine what Estalia would be like if everybody in Estalia tonight began to do these two things to love the Lord God with all the heart and mind and soul and the next door neighbours as themselves you wouldn't have to lock your car you wouldn't have to lock your home you need any insurance anymore just think of the kind of place that still you'll be some of you might think it'd be chaotic no it'd be marvellous it'd be wonderful wouldn't it so would Scotland there's only one thing that makes that impossible and that's the kind of creatures we are we are sinners and God has to change that

[66 : 24] God will change it only on the basis of what Jesus did in the cross and here God spoke more loudly than ever he spoke before or ever will speak again one more text you don't even need

to remember where it is it's Romans 5 and 8 God commends and literally the Greek would translate God placards you know how people advertise things that would up notices that placard them all over the shop as I say God has placarded he has advertised his love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us you know men talk today about God being love and they talk about it very lightly and easily

I believe that once we know ourselves as unlovable once we assess ourselves as what we really are sinners and enemies of God there is only one place in which we will really be convinced that God loves us I believed for many years that if there was a God then he certainly loved me and then for three years the most impossible thing in the world for me to believe was that God loved me because my mind was at enmity against him my heart had betrayed him and broken his commandments all down the years of my life I had trampled underfoot precious parental teaching I had abused the privileges of a Christian home God could not possibly love somebody like me and you know what it took to show me that

God did love someone like me took the death of Jesus and Calvary to show me that God demonstrates proves advertises his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us let me try and summarize the whole thing there are three movements of gospel grace given to us in the gospel of John that summarize everything I've been trying to say to us tonight John chapter 1 begins like this begins with the one who is the voice of God through whom God spoke his final word to people like you and me it says this you don't need to look at that by this in the beginning not from the beginning but in the beginning before the beginning began in the beginning was the word and the word was with

God there were two of them at least and the word was God and the two were one in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth and then go on to John chapter 9 verses 17 and 18 it's the same one and men took him and he bearing his cross went forth into a place called Golgotha where they crucified him and two others with him on either side one and Jesus in the midst they took the God who came out of eternity into this world and became man and who revealed the father's glory they took him and they crucified him why on one level because man in sin will always crucify

God on another level because of the predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge of God end that in the death of Jesus he will prepare a way in which you take away the guilt and the punishment due to human sin to the sin of people like you and people like me and now God says of so great a savior he says none perish who trust him God bless you and help you to help all of us to understand how great our savior Jesus is now we're going to close by singing death and

[72:16] JOB