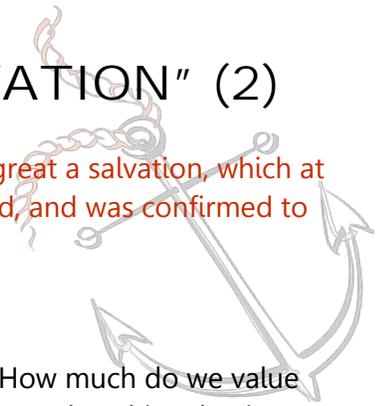




"SO GREAT A SALVATION" (2)

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him" (Heb. 2:3).



HOW great is the salvation which Jesus Christ has brought to us? How much do we value what the Son of God has provided unto us? What exactly is it that makes this salvation "great"? In the first article we submitted that salvation is great because of who called it great—the Holy Spirit.

A second reason why our salvation is *great* is because of whom it originated—God!

James said, "Known to God from eternity are all His works" (Acts 15:18). We noted that Paul said salvation is obtained through our Lord (1 Thess. 5:9). Yet what is surprising to many is that what was done through the Lord was known to God before the creation of the world. In fact, before time began (as we know it), God had not only conceived the plan to create but also to redeem man. He foreknew what kind of people would be saved, despite the fact that the majority would reject His ways. Paul told the young evangelist, "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 to us in Christ Jesus before time began" (2 Tim. 1:9). Before time began God knew that man would use his liberties to rebel and walk away from Him. He also knew that Jesus would come to die for our transgressions. Peter stated, "He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Pet. 1:20). The apostle John wrote in harmony, "...the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

A third reason why salvation is great is because of who spoke of it—the Lord and the apostles!

Jesus preached on the topic of salvation frequently, "For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost" (Matt. 18:11). "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mk. 8:35). "...I say these things that you may be saved" (Jn. 5:34). After the Lord's death He commissioned the apostles to preach salvation: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mk. 16:16). The terms of forgiveness were clearly given to the apostles and received by men who humbly wanted the remission of sins. These included belief (Jn. 3:16; 8:24), confession of faith (Matt. 10:32, 33; Rom. 10:9, 10), repentance (Acts 2:37, 38; 3:19), and immersion in water (Acts 2:38; 8:12–16; 36, 37; 10:47, 48). The book of Acts shows the apostles preaching repentance and the remission of sins beginning in Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria, and then to the end of the earth. *Have you obeyed the "great" salvation of our Lord?*

More reasons will be added in the next article.

—Steven J. Wallace

