

# That Not of Yourselves

By Evangelist Tom Palmer

“For by **grace** (all that God is for all that I need) are ye **saved** (spiritually born-again, which means eternal life in heaven) through **faith** (taking God at His Word and acting upon it), and **that not of yourselves**, it is the **gift** (an object freely given and received) of God.” –Eph. 2:8

- The gospel “from the beginning” can be summarized by these 4 simple words – “*that not of yourselves*”. It is at this point that human beings struggle the most when it comes to receiving God’s salvation. Though a beautiful and blessed truth, man must overcome his natural desire to earn the favor of God when addressing his own sinful condition.
- “The human tendency is to want to work for what we get, the feeling that what is not earned is undeserved, keeps many from understanding the gospel of the grace of God...Salvation is the gift of God. When we offer to pay for gift, it ceases to be gift at all...There’s only one thing to do with God’s offer of the gift of salvation: say ‘thank you’ and embrace it.” –David Jeremiah
- The gospel message is clearly seen in the early chapters of the book of Genesis even when there were only 2 people on the earth (Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden)
- There are many religious systems in the world and yet in reality there are but 2 religions: the first is based on human achievement and the other is based on divine accomplishment. Human achievement involves trying (what man can do) while divine accomplishment is based on trusting (what God has done)

## Rom. 10:1-4

- It is tragic to have “a zeal of God” that is “not according to knowledge” (v. 2)
- It is tragic to go about “to establish (your) own righteousness” without submitting unto “the righteousness of God” (v. 3)

## Titus 3:5

- “Not by works of righteousness which we have done” (what man can do) “but according to His mercy He saved us” (what God has done).

## Basic Essentials of the Gospel

❖ The “*gospel...which I preached unto you...which also ye have received...wherein ye stand*” ( I Cor. 15:1-4)

### 1. It must be Bible-based

- The Word of God must be given a greater priority than the word of the priest, bishop, rabbi, or minister
- Question – What is more important - what the Word of God says, or what the minister (bishop, priest, rabbi) says?
- Ps. 119:130 – “*The entrance of Thy Words giveth light...*”
- I Pet. 1:23 – “*Being born again...by the Word of God*”

### 2. It must be Christ-centered

- The work of Christ must be given greater priority than the structure of the church or religious system
- Question – What is more important - getting into heaven or staying in the church?
- John 14:6 – “*I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*”
- Acts 4:10, 12 – “*by the name of Jesus Christ...there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.*”
- Acts 16:31 – “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*”

### 3. It must be faith-focused

- Rom. 10:9 – “*...and shalt believe in thine heart...*”
- Rom. 10:10 – “*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness...*”
- Question – What is more important - doing what I can do or accepting what Christ has done?
- It is not enough to simply know the truth or even to believe that it is the truth; there must be a willingness to take action based upon the truth.
- Changes begin with choices!
- By grace, through faith, plus nothing!
- “Faith alone justifies, through Christ alone.” –Sinclair Ferguson
- “Faith is like the hand of a beggar that takes the gift while adding nothing to it.” –Thomas Chalmers

## So Great Salvation

*“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. 2:3)*

1. Great because of its **author** – Jesus
  - *“He became the **author** of eternal salvation” (Heb. 5:9)*
  - *“the **author** and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2)*
2. Great because of its **price** – blood of Christ
  - *“redeemed...with **the precious blood of Christ**” (I Pet. 1:18,19)*  
[Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12; Rev. 5:9]
3. Great because of its **object** – the world
  - *“the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of **the world**” (John 1:29)*
  - *“Christ, the Savior of **the world**” (John 4:42)*
  - *“God so loved **the world**...” (John 3:16)*
  - *“propitiation...for the sins of **the whole world**” (I John 2:2)*
  - *“sent the Son to be the Savior of **the world**” (I John 4:14)*
4. Great because of its **deliverance** – from Hell
  - *“shall not come into **condemnation**” (John 5:24)*
5. Great because of its **results** – eternal life
  - *“He that believeth on the Son hath **everlasting life**” – (John 3:36)*
  - *“whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have **eternal life**” (John 3:15)*

## “But God...” – Eph. 2:4-7

- *“who is rich in **mercy**”*
- *“His great **love**”*
- *“the exceeding riches of His **grace**”*
- *“His **kindness**”*

## What Does Salvation Mean?

- Regeneration – a change of **nature**, a new life from God
- Repentance – a change of **mind**, a new thought about God
- Conversion – a change of **character**, a new person for God
- Justification – a change of **state**, a new standing before God
- Sanctification – a change of **service**, a new separation unto God
- Adoption – a change of **family**, a new relationship with God
- Glorification – a change of **place**, a new condition in God

## Basic Elements of the Gospel (Rom. 6:23)

1. My Personal Sin – “I must turn...” (repent)
  - The condition of a sinner – “of sin”
  - The condemnation of a sinner – “the wages...death”
2. My Personal Savior – “I must trust...” (rely)
  - “through Jesus Christ”
3. My Personal Salvation – “I must take” (receive)
  - “the gift of God is eternal life”

## What it Means to be Saved

1. I am **TRUSTING** instead of **TRYING**  
\*“that not of yourselves” (Eph. 2:8,9)
2. I am **HELPED** instead of **HELPLESS**  
\*“when we were yet without strength” (Rom. 5:6-9)
3. I am **HOPEFUL** instead of **HOPELESS**  
\*“we are saved by hope” (Rom. 8:24,25)
4. I am **LIVING** instead of **DYING**  
\*“you hath He quickened who were dead” (Eph. 2:1,5)

## The Joy of Thy Salvation (Ps. 51:12)

- He bore **our sin** that we might have **His righteousness**
- He took **our guilt** that we might have **His grace**
- He took **our shame** that we might have **His smile**
- He took **our punishment** that we might have **His peace**
- He took **our death** that we might have **his life**
- He took **our penalty** that we might have **his pardon**

## Religion or Salvation

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Religion is what man does for God                  | Salvation is what God does for man                |
| Religion says: Something in my hand I bring        | Salvation says: Nothing in my hand I bring        |
| Religion is trusting in a work we do               | Salvation is trusting in a work that is done      |
| Religion depends upon behaving                     | Salvation depends upon believing                  |
| Religion depends upon the sufficiency of character | Salvation depends upon the sacrifice of the cross |
| Religion is striving for a better attainment       | Salvation is secured through a perfect atonement  |
| Religion tries to bring us from darkness to light  | Salvation does bring us from death unto life      |
| Religion is a man-centered effort                  | Salvation is a God-centered experience            |

“My theology now,” said the dying Charles Spurgeon to a friend, “is in four little words: **Jesus died for me**. I do not say that this would be all that I should preach were I raised up again, but it is enough to die upon – **Jesus died for me**.”  
-Source Unknown

### Salvation is:

- Not man’s work for God, but God’s work for man.
- Not turning over a new leaf, but taking afresh a new life.
- Not “churchianity”, but Christianity.
- Not keeping the law, but love keeping you.
- Not by water, but by the blood.
- Not feeling, but fact.
- Not trying, but trusting.
- Not man’s method, but God’s miracle.
- Not head knowledge, but heart belief.
- Not man’s anything, but God’s everything.

## Genesis 3

- 2:17 – “*thou shalt not eat of it*”
- Eve – “*she took of the fruit thereof and **did eat***” (v. 6)
- Adam – “*he **did eat***” (v. 6)
- James 4:17 – “*...to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin.*”
- **The Subtlety of Sin**
  1. Sin attracts our **attention**
  2. Sin presents an **appeal**
  3. Sin stimulates our **appetites**
  4. Sin develops an **action**
  5. Sin creates an **addiction**
- Knowing they were guilty of sin, Adam and Eve experienced the shame of sin for the first time (v. 7, 10-11). They began to make desperate attempts to deal with the sin that completely separated them from God.
  1. Cover-up (v. 7) \*they tried to use plants for their covering
  2. “Hide and seek” (v. 8)
  3. Blame (v. 12-13) \*Adam blamed God and Eve while Eve blamed the serpent
- Adam and Eve were forced to deal with the consequences of their sin. In verse 15-19, words are used like “*enmity, sorrow, cursed*” and there is the thought that ultimately death will come (“*unto dust thou shalt return*”).
- In verse 21, God provided “*coats of skins*” as a covering. This covering (“*clothed*”) came through a source other than the best efforts of Adam and Eve. At this point God introduced **the necessity of a substitute, a sacrifice, and a savior** when dealing with sin.

“I assure you that I would not knowingly spend an hour in any church that refuses to teach the necessity of the blood atonement for sin through the cross and the merits of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.” -A.W. Tozer in *Whatever Happened to Worship*

## Genesis 4

- *“If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?”* (v. 7) – This story is another lesson regarding the inability of man to be right with God as the result of any of his own efforts. Adam and Eve had already been forced to learn this truth, and now their sons are learning the same thing.

### Cain

- *“Cain was a tiller of the ground”* (v. 2)
- *“Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord”* (v. 3)
- *“But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect”* (v. 5)
- *“Cain was very wroth”* (v.5)

### Abel

- *“Abel was a keeper of sheep”* (v. 2)
- *“Abel, he also brought of the firstling of his flock”* (v. 4)
- *“The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering”* (v.4)
- Heb. 11:4 – *“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous...”*
- When Abel brought a lamb, **he too recognized the necessity of a substitute, a sacrifice, and a savior** when dealing with sin.

The message of John the Baptist was *“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”* (John 1:29)

Up until then there had been many lambs, but now there is just one lamb – **“the Lamb”**.

Up until then there had been many lambs chosen by men, but now there is one lamb sent by God – **“Behold the Lamb of God”**.

Up until then there had been lambs for covering sin, now this lamb cleanses sin – **“takes away the sin”**.

Up until then there had been lambs for the nation of Israel, now we have one Lamb for **“the sin of the world”**.

In **Genesis 4** we read about one lamb for one person. In **Exodus 12** we read about one lamb for the whole family. In **Leviticus** we read about one lamb for the whole nation. In Christ we see *“the Lamb of God”* for the sin of the whole world.

❖ The “substitute – sacrifice – savior” concept of salvation is again demonstrated in Genesis:

1. Noah - Gen. 8:20-21

*\*“Noah builded an altar unto the Lord”*

- Substitute – *“and took of every clean beast and every clean fowl”*
- Sacrifice – *“and offered burnt offering on the altar”*
- Savior – *“the Lord smelled a sweet savour”*
- At this point God made a promise that He would never again “curse” the ground or “smite” every living thing because of sin.

2. Abraham - Gen. 22:13

*\*“Abraham built an altar there” (v.9)*

*(“God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering” - v.8)*

- Substitute – *“a ram caught in the thicket by his horns...”*
- Sacrifice – *“and offered him for a burnt offering*
- Savior – *“in the stead of his son”*
- James 2:21-22 – *“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?”*

Each of these individuals was looking ahead to the cross on which the “Lamb of God” would eventually die to “take away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The Passover (Exodus 12) and the Jewish sacrificial system (The Burnt Offering – Lev. 1,6) also continue to picture and portray this concept. Hebrews 9 is the passage that so thoroughly presents Jesus Christ as the substitute, sacrifice, and savior for the sin of mankind.



## The Curse of Sin

1. The **damnation** of sin – Mark 16:16 (**penalty** of sin)
2. The **dominion** of sin – Rom. 6:14 (**power** of sin)
3. The **defilement** of sin – Titus 1:15 (**presence** of sin)

Rom. 3:9-12 – *“they are all under sin...guilty before God”* (v.19)

- *“none righteous”*
- *“none that understandeth”*
- *“none that seeketh after God”*
- *“none that doeth good”*

## Conditions Created by Sin

1. Death – *“dead in trespasses and sins...dead in sins”* (Eph. 2:1,6)
2. Disease – *“they that are sick...sinners”* (Mark 2:17)
3. Destitution – *“that ye through His poverty might be rich”* (II Cor. 8:9)
4. Defilement – *“their mind and conscience is defiled”* (Titus 1:15)
5. Darkness – *“men loved darkness...because their deeds were evil”* (John 3:19-20)
6. Dimness – *“the god of this world hath blinded the minds”* (II Cor. 4:3,4)
7. Dictatorship – *“whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin”* (John 8:34)

## Darkness and Light

1. **Mankind is in a state of spiritual darkness**
  - *“men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil...every one that doeth evil hateth the light”* (John 3:19,20)
  
2. **God is the source of light**
  - *“God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all”* (I John 1:5)
  
3. **Jesus is the light of the world**
  - *“I am the light of the world”* (John 8:12; 9:5)
  
4. **Salvation transforms from darkness to light**
  - *“he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.”* (John 8:12)
  - *“to turn them from darkness to light”* (Acts 26:18)
  - *“who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”* (I Pet. 2:9)
  
5. **Believers are to become light in the darkness of the world**
  - *“Ye are the light of the world...let your light so shine”* (Matt. 5:14,16)
  - *“ye shine as lights in the world”* (Phil. 2:15)
  
6. **Walking with God is walking in the light**
  - *“let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light”* (Rom. 13:12)
  - *“walk as children of light”* (Eph. 5:8)
  - *“If we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another”* (I John 1:7)

## Assurance of a “Know-So” Salvation

❖ *“I know whom I have believed” – II Tim. 1:12*

### **#1 Reason for Doubt – Uncertain Details**

-can't remember when, where, who, what

-some ask “Was I too young?”

\*Matt. 18:2,3 – *“except ye become as little children”*

### **#2 Reason for Doubt – Unstable Feelings**

-“I just don't feel saved”

\*I Pet. 1:23 – *“being born again by the Word of God”*

### **#3 Reason for Doubt – Unconfessed Sin**

-relationship is permanent, fellowship must be maintained

-sin will keep a person existing but not enjoying their relationship with God

\*I John 1:7,9 – *“we have fellowship”*

### **#4 Reason for Doubt – Unclaimed Promises**

-who said I am saved?

-did He mean what He said?

\*John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 6:40; 10:27-28

## Genuine Assurance of Salvation

1. **The Word of God** – I Pet. 1:23,25

2. **The Work of Christ** – II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 2:24

3. **The Witness of the Spirit** – I John 4:13

4. **The Wonder of a Transformed Life** – II Cor. 5:17

## Elements of a Personal Salvation Experience

*“For the wages of sin is death,  
but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

**Romans 6:23**



### **Repent** – “of sin”

#### ***“I Will Turn”***

I must recognize my condition as a sinner, and the condemnation that is the result. Repentance involves agreeing with God about my sin.



### **Rely** – “through Jesus Christ”

#### ***“I Will Trust”***

I must trust Christ to do for me what I cannot do for myself. By faith I must accept His finished work on the cross for me as the only way to salvation.



### **Receive** – “the gift of God is eternal life”

#### ***“I Will Take”***

Eternal life is a free gift which must be accepted without any attempt on my part to earn or pay for it. A gift can only be received with gratitude.

