

Crisis in Heaven

Revelation 7: 10

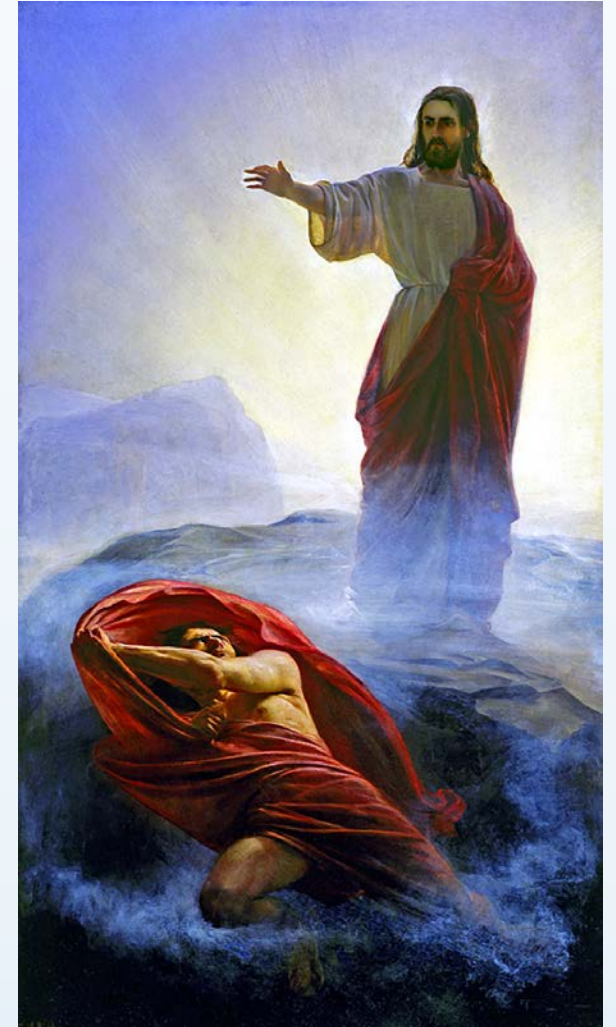


'Salvation belongs to our God who sits
on the throne, and to the Lamb!' "
Revelation 7:10.



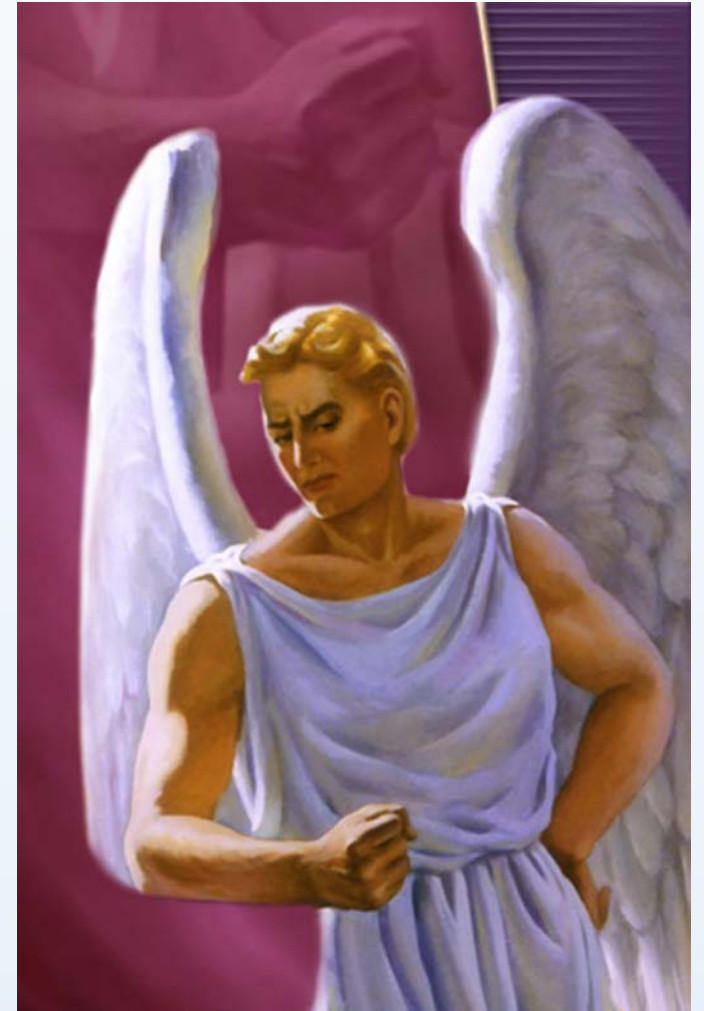
I. Introduction

There is a great conflict between good and evil on this planet. The reality is that, without an external contribution, human beings are condemned to live, to suffer, and to disappear. But the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ means that evil will not have the last word. The love of God provides strength, forgiveness, and victory. This is the foundation of our certitude that good will triumph. This is also the promise that we are part of this wonderful plan of salvation.



“The Bible takes us to the origins of this great conflict between good and evil and introduces the personalities responsible for them. It opens a window through which we can view the struggle in the context of cosmic reality. It deepens our understanding of the issues involved. It does not set out to explain evil any more than it sets out to prove God. It simply tells the story of how evil began, how it operates, and how it will end.”

Aleta Bainbridge



“If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?”

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



"If there is no God, the labels 'good' and 'evil' are merely opinions. They are substitutes for 'I like it' and 'I don't like it.' They are not objective realities."

Dennis Prager



“And this is the forbidden truth,
the unspeakable taboo - that
evil is not always repellent but
frequently attractive; that it has
the power to make of us not
simply victims, as nature and
accident do, but active
accomplices.”

Joyce Carol Oates



“I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.”
Martin Luther King Jr.



"The true friend of God has nothing to fear in that dark valley. His great Shepherd will accompany him there, and can lead him safely through, however dark it may appear. The true believer has nothing to fear in the most gloomy scenes of life; he has nothing to fear in the valley of death; he has nothing to fear in the grave; he has nothing to fear in the world beyond."
Joseph Benson



“Satan’s rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan’s rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God’s government and His law is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin and suffering its punishments.”

Ellen G. White, p. 499.

II. Context



The Structure of the Revelation chapter 7

A	7: 1	FOUR ANGELS (from all the Earth) Four Angels of destruction holding four corners of the Earth
B	7: 2 – 3	ONE ANGEL Another Angel, having the seal of God. Loud voice.
C	7: 4 – 8	AUDITION OF THE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO ARE SEALED I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000
C'	7: 9 – 10	VISION OF THOSE WHO ARE SEALED I looked. A great multitude, without number. Loud voice. SALVATION
A'	7: 11 – 12	ALL ELDERS All the Angels, 4 living creatures, and the elders worshiped God
B'	7: 13 – 17	ONE ELDER One of the elders: Who are they?

"The evidence [from the Rev. ch. 7] suggests that the 144,000 and the great multitude are one and the same group. This view is based on the fact that John uses a special literary technique that comes into play here. According to this literary technique, what John first hears in the vision and what he subsequently sees is actually one and the same thing. What he sees is actually the explanation of what he heard before. For instance, in the prologue of the book, John hears 'a loud voice as of a trumpet' behind him. (1: 10) when he turns around, he does not see a trumpet but Jesus walking in the midst of the seven lampstands (1:12. 13.) In chapter 5, he hears that the Lion from the tribe of Judah has overcome; when he turns to see the lion, he sees the Lamb as having been slain (5: 5 – 6). Later, in chapter 17, he hears of 'the great prostitute sitting on many waters'. What he later sees is 'a woman sitting on a scarlet beast' whose name is Babylon (17: 1 – 5). In the last vision, John first hears of 'the bride, the wife of the Lamb', but he actually sees 'the holy city Jerusalem' in its glory symbolized by precious stones (21: 9 – 12)..." *(continued on the next page)*

“... This literary technique is the clue for understanding these two groups of God’s people in chapter 7. John first hears the number of 144,000 as God’s embattled, sealed people on the earth. Then, in 7: 9 – 14, when he sees this same group, they appear to him in actual fact as a great multitude that no one can number. We concur with those scholars who rightly conclude that the 144,000 and the great multitude are the same group of God’s people in their different roles and circumstances.”

Ranko Stefanovic, Revelation of Jesus Christ, Berrien Springs, Andrews University Press, 2002, p. 264.

Revelation 7: 9 – 10 describes God's children before God's throne, worshiping His name and giving Him honor and glory. They are there because of the fact that God is love. They are with palm branches in their hands, which symbolizes the triumph of God against the power of evil.



Characteristics of those who are worshiping God before His throne:

1. They are sealed
2. They are from the Great Tribulation
3. They washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb
4. They are in God's presence (before the throne, cf. Zechariah 3: 7)
5. They serve (worship) Him day and night



Two promises for those who are part of the great multitude:

1. The Lamb shall feed them
2. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes



Structure of the Book of Revelation

Introduction	7 Churches	7 Seals	7 Trumpets	Central Vision	7 Bowls	Babylon	Jerusalem	Conclusion
1: 1 - 8	1: 9 – 3: 22	4: 1 – 8: 1	8: 2 – 11: 19	12: 1 – 14: 20	15: 1–16: 21	17: 1 – 21: 8	21: 8–22: 5	22: 6–22: 21
Jesus Alpha And Omega “Things which must take place”	Ephesus Smyrna Pergamos Thyatira Sardis Philadelphia Laodicea	White Horse Red Horse Black Horse Pale Horse Souls under the altar Earthquake 144.000 Silence	1/3 of destruction Earth Sea Rivers/springs Moon/stars Sun/smoke Hour/day/month Voices/heaven	Message in 10 parts about the judgment	Total damage Mark/beast Earth Sea Rivers/springs Sun/smoke Throne/beast Euphrates Earthquake	I will show you... Babylon the Great Come out of her “New Earth”	New Jerusalem No sinners No temple “They shall see His face”	Jesus Alpha And Omega “Things which must take place”
“Behold, He is coming with clouds”	The Church is protected	The Church is sealed for the time of the crisis	Warning of the Trumpets Context of Yom Kippur	The Judgment has come	The Result of the judgment	“I will show you the judgment of the harlot... Babylon	“I will show you the bride, Jerusalem	“Surely, I am coming quickly”

III. The salvation is the essence of God's character. It is the expression of His love and affection for His creatures.



1. The marvellous
outcome of God's plan for
our future is salvation in
Jesus Christ
"Salvation belongs to our God"



The message of salvation is the quote of the Old Testament. In the Psalm 3 there is a statement of confidence and trusting relationship with God, shield and guardian:

"Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people."
Psalm 3: 8.



Two other texts in the Book of Revelation use the same expression:

After the victory over the accuser of brethren

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

Revelation 12: 10

After the Fall of Babylon

After these things I heard^[a] a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God!

Revelation 19: 1.

In the crucial moments of the conflict between good and evil, there is a statement of confidence that God is on His throne, that evil will disappear very soon, and that He is the source of salvation.

1st text: Rev. 7: 10, right after the opening of the six seals, and the vision of the 144,000: "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne..." (6: 16.)

2nd text: Rev. 12: 10, right after the unsuccessful attempt of the dragon to devour the Child: "And her Child was caught up to God and His throne." (12: 5.)

3rd text: Rev. 19: 1, right before the description of God on His throne: "And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne." (19: 4.)

“Self-sufficiency is the enemy of salvation. If you are self-sufficient, you have no need of God. If you have no need of God, you do not seek Him. If you do not seek Him, you will not find Him.”

William Nicholson,
Shadowlands

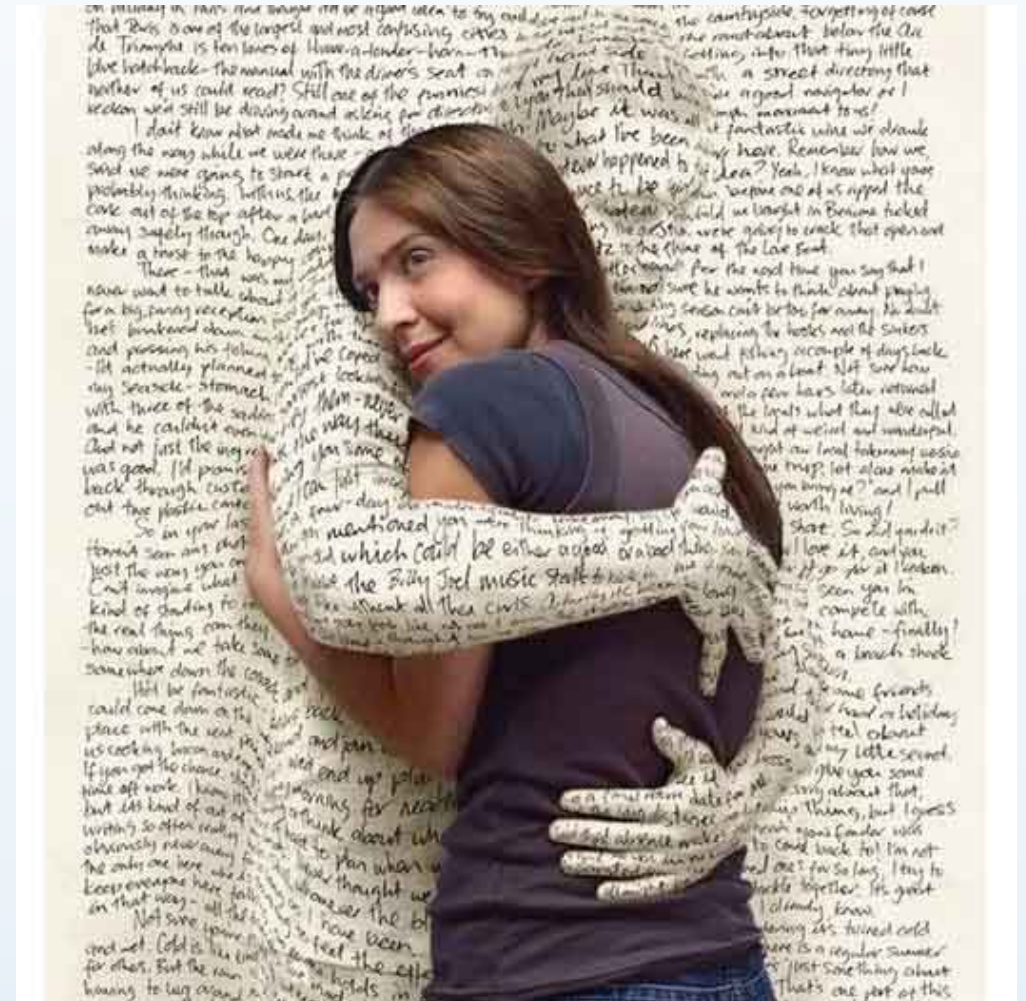


“I take leave to contradict those who say that salvation is an evolution! All that ever can be evolved out of the sinful heart of man is sin-and nothing else! Salvation is the free gift of God, by Jesus Christ, and the work of it is supernatural. It is done by the Lord Himself, and He has power to do it, however weak, no, however dead in sin, the sinner may be!”
Charles Spurgeon



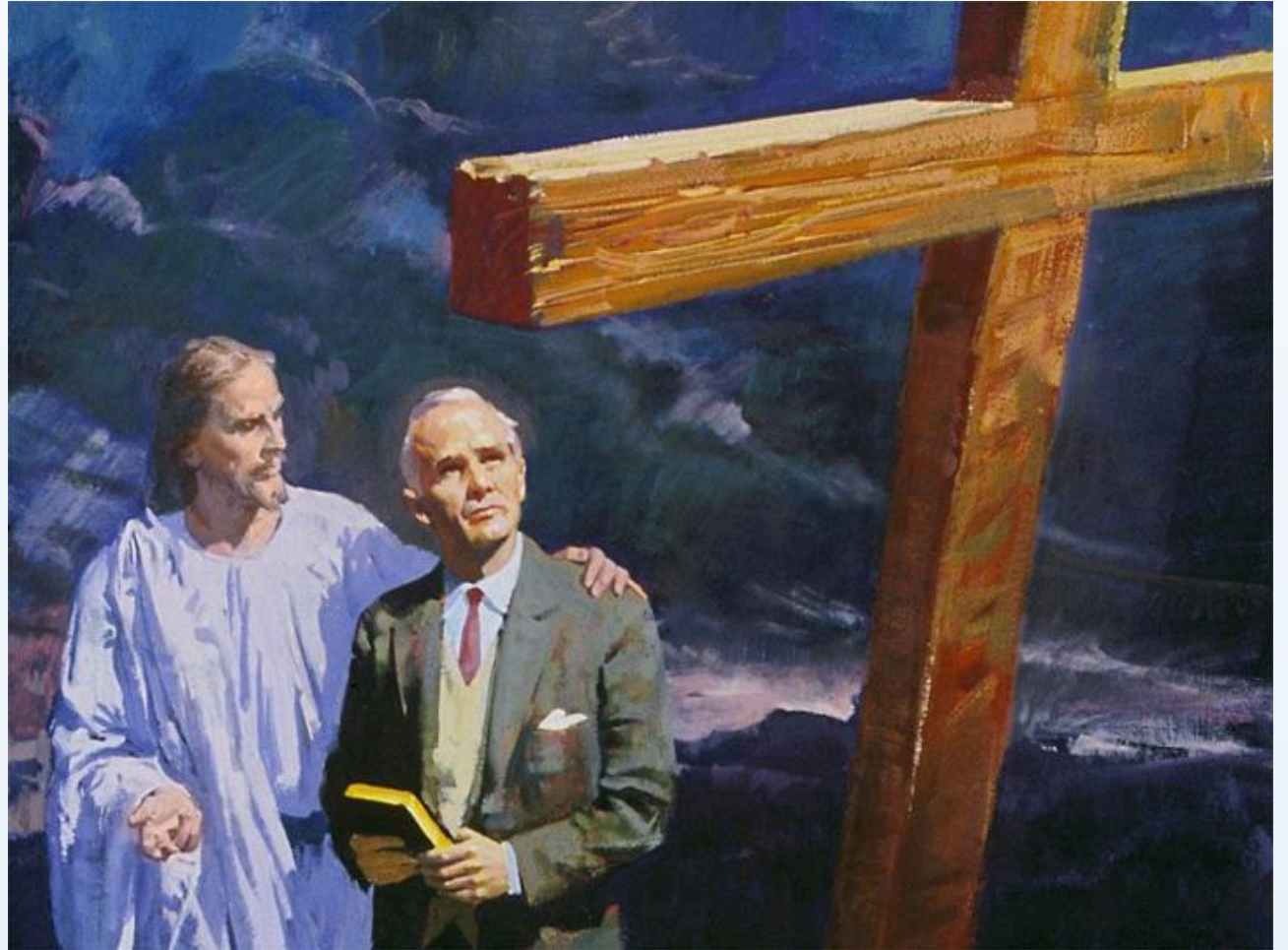
“Salvation is more than a word, It is His Word. His word became flesh so we have the opportunity to live.”

Tabitha Robin



2. God is the exclusive 'owner' of the plan of salvation. No one else can provide eternal life.

"Belongs to our God"



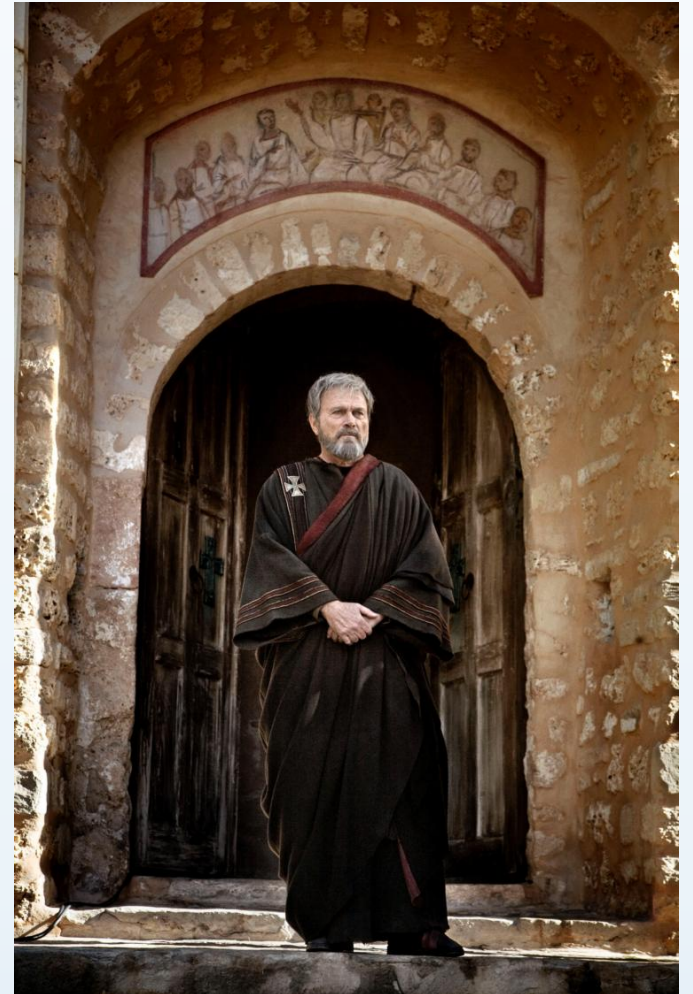
“To be “in Christ” is to place one's trust in Him for salvation from sin. To be “in Christ” is to trust His goodness, not our own; to trust that His sacrificial death on the cross paid the complete debt of death we owe for our sin; to trust that His resurrection gives us eternal life instead of relying upon our own ability to please God. To be “in Christ” is to claim, by faith, the free gift of salvation. To be “in Christ” is to enjoy a completely restored relationship with our Father in heaven by virtue of His Son's righteous standing.” Charles R. Swindoll



“Salvation is from our side a choice, from the divine side it is a seizing upon, an apprehending, a conquest by the Most High God. Our “accepting” and “willing” are reactions rather than actions. The right of determination must always remain with God.”
A.W. Tozer



"Salvation is God's way of making us
real people."
Augustine



3. God is in control of events in the universe. He stills have all power, honor, and glory.
“Who sits on the throne”



“Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. The seat and throne on which he sits; all the administrations of his kingly power in the government of the world, in the salvation of his people, and in the punishment of his enemies, being according to the strict rules of justice and judgment... The throne of an earthly king is established by righteousness; and so the throne of God, and of Christ, is ordered and established with justice and judgment in the exercise of righteousness for evermore.”
John Gill



"God's throne is the command and control center of the universe. This is the seat of government of human history, and the government is at work. There is the world to run, strategies to be planned, decisions being made, and messages to be sent. This is God in control, God at the center, God on mission, God getting on with God's business."
Christopher J. H. Wright



"There is something behind the throne,
greater than the king himself."
William Pitt 1770, British House
of Lords



“Only those who accepts today to have
God’s throne in their hearts will be able
to worship Him at the foot of His throne
in Heaven.”
(DS)



4. Jesus Christ, who
gave Himself as
sacrifice for His
creatures, is the
author of our
salvation

"And to the Lamb"



“Either sin is with you,
lying on your shoulders, or
it is lying on Christ, the
Lamb of God. Now if it is
lying on your back, you are
lost; but if it is resting on
Christ, you are free, and
you will be saved. Now
choose what you want.”
Martin Luther



“In the Israelite encampment, even though there were iniquities, sins, and wickedness, God did not see any of them because the blood of bulls and goats, which they offered up to the Lord daily, covered the children of Israel. How much more true that is for us today, we who are washed clean forever by the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, our beautiful Savior.”
Joseph Prince



"Faith is not a once-done act, but a continuous gaze of the heart at the Triune God. Believing, then, is directing the hearts' attention to Jesus. It is lifting the mind to 'behold the Lamb of God,' and never ceasing that beholding for the rest of our lives."

Aiden Wilson Tozer



V. Conclusion



“Ministers need to have a more clear, simple manner in presenting the truth as it is in Jesus. Their own minds need to comprehend the great plan of salvation more fully. Then they can carry the minds of the hearers away from earthly things to the spiritual and eternal. There are many who want to know what they must do to be saved. They want a plain and clear explanation of the steps requisite in conversion, and there should not a sermon be given unless a portion of that discourse is to especially make plain the way that sinners may come to Christ and be saved. They should point them to Christ, as did John, and with touching simplicity, their hearts aglow with the love of Christ, say, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Strong and earnest appeals should be made to the sinner to repent and be converted.”

Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 157.

"I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

John Wesley



“Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost to “the Lamb of God.” Lift Him up, the risen Saviour, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who “hath loved us, and hath given himself for us” (Ephesians 5:2). Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication.... Show forth the grace and completeness of the Saviour.”
Ellen G. White, Gospel Workers, p. 160.



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