

We See Jesus: The Source of Our Salvation

Hebrews 5:1-10

Introduction

This past week as you were completing your daily 5x5x5 readings, you read the story of the baptism of Jesus in John chapter 1.

- Front and center in this story is a man named John – a different John than the man who wrote the words of the Gospel you were reading.
- The John in the text was actually a cousin of Jesus and is known to most of us today as “John the Baptist.”
- John had a very specific role to play in the story of Jesus. The Gospel tells us:

He came as a witness to testify concerning that light (Jesus), so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. (John 1:7-8)

- In other words, his job was to pave the way for Jesus. We might say:

The job of John the Baptist was to help people see Jesus.

That is also our goal in this series of sermons. To see Jesus.

In your reading people kept asking John the Baptist if he was the Messiah. After all he was a unique character, and he was pretty bold in his preaching. But John knew his role. He wasn't the Messiah. And that's what he kept telling the people who asked:

Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, “I am not the Messiah.” (John 1:19-20)

Then, one day (as you read this week), as John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing, he looked up and ...

... saw Jesus coming toward him and yelled out, “Here he is, God's Passover Lamb! He forgives the sins of the world! This is the man I've been talking about ... (John 1:29, The Message)

He did it. He did what he was sent to do. He pointed the people to Jesus. And he also told them that Jesus came for a specific purpose: to forgive the sins of the world.

That is the same message in our Hebrews text today. In our quest to see Jesus in the pages of Hebrews, we are brought today to this verse:

He (Jesus) became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ... (Hebrews 5:9)



From that verse let me emphasize three points:

POINT #1: THE SOURCE

Look at the first part of verse 9:

He (Jesus) became **the source** of eternal salvation for all who obey him ...
(Hebrews 5:9)

The source is important.

A man was scheduled to be the keynote speaker for a national business convention. Hundreds of people were in the banquet room, having come to hear him speak.

But, as he was eating his meal, he bit down on a chicken bone and he broke the dentures that were in his mouth. In his panic, he muttered to the man next to him, "I can't believe this!" he says, "I just broke my dentures, and I have to speak in a few moments!"

"No problem," the man whispered back at him. "I think I can help." And with that, the man reached down into his briefcase pulled out three sets of false teeth.

The speaker tried the first pair. They were too tight. The second pair was too loose. The third pair was just right. A perfect fit. Now totally relieved, the speaker sat back and greatly enjoyed the rest of his meal and afterward delivered an excellent speech for which he received a standing ovation.

At the end of the evening, the speaker walked up to his benefactor and thanked him for his help. "You really did me a great favor tonight," he said. Then he added, "You know, I've been looking for a good dentist for quite a while. Where is your office located?"

The other man smiled and replied: "Oh, I'm not a dentist... (pause) I'm an undertaker!"

It is important to know as much as you can about the source. The text describes Jesus as the "source" of eternal salvation. But what does that mean?

The source is the point of origin. The place where it all starts.

- The source of the great Mississippi River is a small lake in Central Minnesota, Lake Itaska. (eye-task-ah)
- Jesus is the source – the originator – of the salvation we need.
- That's how John the Baptist identified him back in that first chapter of John.
- It was why God told Joseph and Mary to name Him Jesus – because that name means "Savior."
- In fact it is how God the Father described Him in the very beginning, right after the first sin was committed. Read about it in Genesis chapter 3.

You are always wise whenever you hear something to ask: "What is the source?" Lots of people claim to know or be something, but they are just relaying something they heard. And usually it is wrong.

In Harvard University's manual about writing academic papers, they tell the students:

No matter what you're working on, keep in mind that not all sources are appropriate for your project; just because someone has written something down doesn't mean it is a reliable source. (Harvard University)

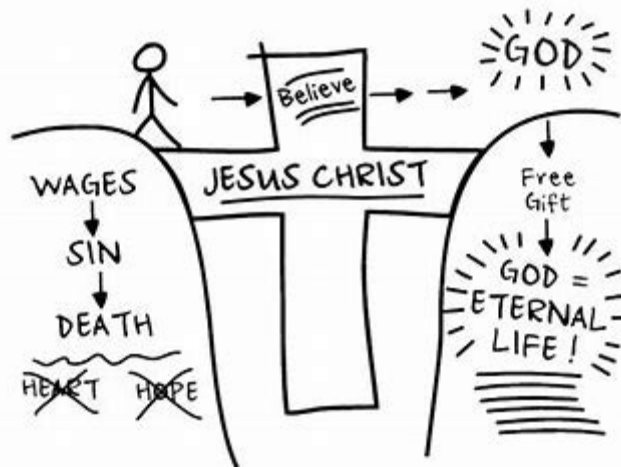
Look closely at Jesus. When you do, you will find Him to be more than appropriate as a reliable source. And when comes to your salvation, you need a VERY reliable source.

POINT #2: ETERNAL SALVATION

We look at the next phrase in Hebrews 5:9:

He (Jesus) became the source of **eternal salvation** for all who obey him ...
(Hebrews 5:9)

Our friends at the Navigators Discipleship Ministry have created this simple little tool to help us understand the concept of salvation. It is something you can easily use in your own conversations with people. Just sketch it out on a napkin or piece of paper.



It begins on the left hand side of the illustration.

- There we see all of humanity. Because of sins we all do, we are separated from the right hand side where God is.
- When it comes to eternity, we are lost, victims of the penalty (or wages) for our sin, the result of which eternal death.
- Through Jesus – the source of our salvation – and only through Him can we cross to where God is.
- It is because of Jesus, our source, that we find eternal life.

The salvation that Jesus offers is a “crossing over” from the sinful ways our life into a life with God.

If any of you would like to talk more about this, let me know. I would love to have that conversation with you.

POINT #3: FOR ALL WHO OBEY

Which brings us to the final part of verse 9:

He (Jesus) became the source of eternal salvation **for all who obey him** ...
(Hebrews 5:9)

This part of our Scripture verse reminds me of the old conundrum:

Which came first: the chicken or the egg?

In this verse the question is:

Which comes first: obedience or salvation?

Does obedience result in salvation? Or does salvation result in a life of obedience?

We have never been able to solve the chicken and egg riddle, but the obedience and salvation issue is easy.

The whole Old Testament along with our own personal experience, tells us that we can never be obedient enough to gain the salvation we need. No matter how hard a person tries, they will never obey enough to be worthy of salvation.

Salvation is all God's idea, and all his work. All we can do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving.
(Ephesians 2:8-9, The Message)

But after salvation comes, the natural result is that we want to do those things that please God. That is what the text means when it talks about the life of "obedience."

So picture again the mighty Mississippi River.

- It starts at its source, Lake Itaska (EYE-TASK-AH) in Central Minnesota, and flows south until it empties in the Gulf of Mexico
- Our salvation begins with our source, Jesus, and it flows into a life of obedience.

APPLICATION

In our world today there are a lot of people who think they have the ultimate answers for the important questions of this life.

- Some of them are running for political office

- Some are writing opinion pieces for newspapers and magazines
- Some create social media posts

But unless what these people offer us ultimately points us to Jesus, they are pointing in the wrong direction.

In the words of Psalm 20:

Now this is what I know:

The Lord gives victory to his anointed.
He answers him from his heavenly sanctuary
with the victorious power of his right hand.
Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

Jesus alone is the source of eternal salvation for all who put their trust in Him and follow His teaching. Look to Jesus. Make sure you always See Jesus.
Amen.