

Science of Salvation

#0406

Study Given by W D. Frazee—June 30, 1972

Now, we turn to this message as given us in this book. The 26th chapter of Acts has our text for tonight. I'm impressed, dear friends, that we need to appreciate the fact that salvation is a science. It isn't some hocus-pocus. It isn't some magic. It's not a matter of superstition. It's a science.

"Ah but," somebody says, "salvation is the work of God."

So is everything in this universe the work of God, friends. Science discovers how God works and seeks to work with Him. And we shall find the more we study that not only does God have certain laws in the realm of natural things and in the realm of spiritual things, but they are parallel.

The more we learn of how God works in the natural world, the better we can cooperate with Him. And so it is in the realm of the Spirit. The more we learn how God works, the better we can work with Him.

Suppose I'm hungry. But suppose instead of going where the food is and partaking of it, suppose I say, "Well, I think I'll pray."

And so, I pray and I'm still hungry. Suppose I pray all night. If I'd pray long enough then, I wouldn't need food, would I?

You say, "That's ridiculous. It's absurd."

It *is*, friends. But people are doing things just as absurd in the realm of the Spirit, just as unscientific and just as unrewarding. Prayer has its place. The study of God's Word has its place. Human effort, human choice has its place. And all these must be brought to bear in a focused way upon the problem of man's salvation.

Our text this evening is Acts 26:18. Here God is speaking through Paul concerning His plan to save men. Perhaps, I should read, beginning with the 16th verse to get the setting. Jesus is speaking to Paul on the Damascus Road.

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive

forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me” Acts 26:16–18.

As you study this text, you will note three experiences that I would like to have us focus upon tonight, three experiences. First is:

“To open their eyes...” Acts 26:18.

The second is:

“...To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...” Acts 26:18.

The third:

“...That they may receive forgiveness of sins...” Acts 26:18.

On beyond that, there are some other things which we won’t study tonight, but those three things. Now, I’d like to read this part of the text from the Revised Standard Version, that you may catch just a shade of thought. It’s here in the King James, but this’ll bring it out a little more.

“To open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins...” Acts 26:18 (*Revised Standard Version*).

Note that the opening of the eyes is preliminary to, preparatory to the turning from darkness to light.

You know, my dear friends, a blind man can’t see, no matter how much light you put on the road. Do you agree with me? Yes, yes. God longs to open our eyes that we may see. He longs to give us vision. But what’s it all for? So that we can *do* something about it. The opening of the eyes is that we may *turn* from the way of sin to the way of righteousness. Learning is to precede doing, but doing must follow learning.

Jesus said:

“...Walk while ye have the light...” John 12:35.

Now, from the *American Standard Bible*, these same phrases notice:

“To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins...” Acts 26:18 (*New American Standard Bible*).

In order that they may receive forgiveness of sins.

Now, there is a teaching in the religious world today that forgiveness of sins is for everybody, and in fact, has already been provided, arranged. This teaching uses certain phrases from inspired writings, which taken by themselves might lead to that conclusion. But we need to have wisdom that we may rightly divide the Word of God [a paraphrase of 2 Timothy 2:15].

And it is always a misapplication of Scripture to take one expression and use it in such a manner that it contradicts some other plain statements of the Lord. So, let us study this, and if we find the truth in this text, it will help us to avoid some of these wrong teachings.

Notice the three steps here, or the three experiences: one is to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, from Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins.

Then, is forgiveness of sins for everybody? No, friend. It's provided for everybody. It's available for everybody. God would like to give it to everybody. But we have in 1 John 1:9 that often-quoted (never too often) text:

"If we..." 1 John 1:9.

Do what?

"...confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" 1 John 1:9.

It is true that God's forgiveness is an attitude as well as an act. And that His act of pardon for sin is from an attitude of love and mercy and grace. This is all true. But it is equally true that with all God's love and mercy and grace, His justice and His mercy alike make it impossible for Him to put the mantle of charity, the garment of forgiveness over the unconvicted, unrepentant, untransformed sinner. Forgiveness of sins is for those whose eyes have been opened and who have turned from darkness to light.

"Ah, somebody says, 'then you make forgiveness dependent upon perfection of character.'"

Well, I like the way someone has phrased it.

"In order to be forgiven, we do not have to be perfect, but we *do* have to be willing to be perfect."

We do not have to be perfect, but we have to be perfectly willing. The choice of choosing God's way of righteousness instead of the human way of sin, this must be clear. The order is always in this sequence: God gives us light, we turn by His grace toward that, and God's forgiveness is granted to those who choose with Him.

On the cross, Jesus died that men might be forgiven. How many did He die for? All. The Bible says He died for all. Well then, all men are forgiven, aren't they? Aren't they? Well, didn't He die for all?

Where was the debt for our sins paid? On the cross. How many did He pay it for? For all. Then, it's all paid, isn't it? How about it? These are the things we want to study a little bit tonight.

Let's turn to John the 12th chapter, the 32nd verse. Who's speaking here? Jesus.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die"
John 12:32–33.

What death did He die? The death of the cross. So, this "lifting up" He speaks of here refers to His death upon the cross. Now, He said that lifted up from the earth, hanging there on the cross, He would do what? Draw all men to Him.

Jesus on the cross is drawing all men. But our response to it, my dear friends, is what determines whether we're eventually drawn close enough to Him to get the full benefit of what He died to give us. It's our response that makes the difference between death and life, between eternal failure and glorious reward in the kingdom of God.

Jesus is drawing all men. As He draws us, what is the first thing that we need to see, friend? We need to see ourselves as sinners. We need to see His grace as offering pardon. And we need to turn *from* sin that we may receive His righteousness.

In the book *Mount of Blessing*, page 7, I find this sentence:

"Whom Christ pardons, He first makes penitent..."
Mount of Blessing, page 7.

Let me read that again. Then, I want you to say it with me:

"Whom Christ pardons, He first makes penitent..." *Ibid.*

All together:

"Whom Christ pardons, He first makes penitent..." *Ibid.*

Again:

"Whom Christ pardons, He first makes penitent..." *Ibid.*

Which comes first? Penitence. What does that mean? Repentance. What does repentance mean? It means being sorry for sin and sorry enough to what? Turn from it, give it up.

Another one, *Messages to Young People*, 115:

“Penitence at the foot of the cross is the first lesson of peace we have to learn” *Messages to Young People*, page 115.

What’s the first lesson? Penitence. Where? At the foot of the cross. We’ve just read it here:

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will...” John 12:32.

What?

“...draw all men unto Me” John 12:32.

How many is He drawing? Did they all repent? Why not? Ah, they resist that drawing. They are afraid that if they yield to the drawing, it will mean that they will give up the sin. And this is exactly what it *does* mean. And if I wish to hang onto the sin, how in the world can I yield to the power that would draw me to the place where the sin will be taken away?

Suppose it’s money. You know, money *is* some people’s god. Suppose now I have a great love for money.

“...The love of money is the root of all evil...” 1 Timothy 6:10.

And here I have my money in my pocket. And I feel that drawing. But something tells me—the Devil tells me, but in this case, he’s telling the truth—that if I yield to that drawing, it’s eventually going to come to the place where I’ll give that money up to God. But I don’t want to. I don’t want to. Is there anything I can do about it, or am I drawn irresistibly? Do I *have* to yield? Can I *choose*? What do you say? Can I choose? Yes.

Have you ever chosen, my friends? Have you ever chosen to resist that drawing? Look back in your life. Has there ever come a time when light from heaven shown into your soul, and instead of turning from darkness to light you turned your face away because the light was unwelcome?

And oh friends, as long as our hearts are in that attitude, there is no way we can claim forgiveness from God. We may be able to learn to glibly recite some formula that some well-meaning person has worked out. And if you say this and say that and say the other thing, then you can claim you’re saved.

But oh, my friends, that we may understand the science of this. What is it that God is after? If what God is after is to take sinners with all their sins and accept them *with* their sins, that’s something else. That’s not the Gospel of the Bible.

“Whom Christ pardons, He first makes...” *Mount of Blessing*, page 7.

What?

“...penitent...” *Ibid.*

Do you know why? Because (listen, don't miss it) God will never force us to be separated from evil. Forgiveness is not the covering of our rebellious acts with the garment of Christ's righteousness. Forgiveness is God's mercy and love covering that which we have given up to Him, that which we have repented of, that which we have said, "Lord, I'm sorry I did it, and if I had a chance to choose over again, I would choose not to do it instead of choosing to do it."

This is repentance. And whom God pardons, He first makes what? Penitent. And penitence is a lesson we learn at the cross. When we see what sin has done to God, then we discern how awful sin is, and we long to be rid of it. We see how loving God is, and we long to make Him happy.

Selected Messages, Book 1, page 394:

"Christ pardons none but the penitent" *Selected Messages*, Book 1, page 394.

Whom does He pardon?

"...None but the penitent..." *Ibid.*

And how those who advocate something else can deal with this statement, I do not know. But there are those who teach that Christ has already forgiven everybody. We just need to *tell* everybody so they'll know it and so they can get the joy of it, but that God has already forgiven everybody. He has done no such thing, my friends.

He has made *provision* to forgive everybody. He *wants* to forgive everybody. He *longs* for the opportunity of forgiving everybody. That's His attitude. We don't have to beg Him or change His attitude. But we do have to meet the conditions.

"Christ pardons none but the penitent, but whom He pardons He first makes penitent" *Ibid.*

Can we make ourselves penitent? How can we meet the conditions? Well, we can come to Him and seek for that penitence. We can seek for that sorrow for sin. We can choose to work with Him.

"Penitence at the foot of the cross is the first lesson of peace we have to learn" *Messages to Young People*, page 115.

Now, notice how this is so forcibly brought to view in the Scriptures. Psalm 66:18:

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"
Psalm 66:18.

He won't hear me? If I ask Him to forgive me, won't He do it? Not if I regard iniquity in my heart.

"Oh, but I'm so weak. And the Lord knows I'm weak."

Yes, He knows you're weak. But as I studied with you recently, He says:

"...My grace is..." 2 Corinthians 12:9.

What?

"...sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness" 2 Corinthians 12:9.

And what God is telling us is *not* that He knows we're so weak that He's going to forgive us while we keep on sinning over and over and over and over, that He's going to forgive us even though we have no intention to quit. No. He's seeking to teach us and tell us that no matter how weak we are, friends, His grace is sufficient to take sin out of our lives, to forgive us for the past, and to give us victory for the future.

Now, if I'm *willing* for that to be done, then I can have His forgiveness right now. But if I'm *not* willing for that to be done, if I regard iniquity in my heart, that is if sin is on the throne of my life and I'm not willing to cast the idol out, break it to pieces, then what? The Lord will not hear me.

No use for me to pray for forgiveness, friends, if I'm still hanging onto the sin. Forgiveness implies and involves the separation of the sin from the sinner. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. And if I want to get rid of the sin, He'll take it away. He'll do that right now. He'll give me forgiveness for the past and victory for the future.

But I must meet the condition, and the condition is that I must give it up. And that doesn't mean I have to wait a while and prove by my life that I *have* given it up. I can make that choice when? This moment. And even if I've failed a thousand times, this moment I can choose.

I was talking with somebody the other day, and they used this expression, "I'm always doing this."

And they were talking about something bad.

I said, "No, no. You didn't always do it. You mean you *used* to do it."

This is important. We are never to acknowledge present defeat. It's perfectly honest to acknowledge past defeat. We may have been bowled over a thousand times by the Devil and his imps. But this moment in Christ I'm victorious. Why? Because He says:

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to...” 1 John 1:9.

What?

“...forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us...” 1 John 1:9.

Well then, if I've confessed, I'm what? I'm forgiven, and I'm what? Cleansed. Thank the Lord, friend. So, I don't have to say I'm defeated now. I may have been defeated yesterday. I may have been defeated this morning. But this moment, by grace, I choose the life of Jesus instead of my life. I choose His death to cover my sins.

But in all of it I'm choosing to do what with my sins? To give them up, to be separated from them. And if I regard iniquity in my heart, if I cherish it, if I love it, if I hold onto it, then what? God won't hear me, and that's what this says, and this is the truth.

All right. Another one, Proverbs 28:9:

“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination” Proverbs 28:9.

You mean there are times when prayer can be an abomination? That's what the Bible says. We just read it, didn't we? Is that what it says?

Will you all read it with me? Let's all read it together:

“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination” Proverbs 28:9.

“Ah, but I don't want to hear about the law. Just talk to me about Jesus. I don't want to hear about doctrine. Doctrine never saved anybody. I just want to hear about Jesus. Talk to me about Jesus. Don't talk about the law.”

And if I turn away my ear from hearing the law, my prayer is what? Abomination. You mean Jesus won't hear people that talk about Him and that reject His law? That's what He says. He won't hear them. He won't hear them. Oh, my friends, that we might believe it.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I don't mean that we have to go out and judge and condemn everybody else. There are doubtless people in all the religions of the earth that don't know any better than they're doing. And if their hearts are inclined to follow the light God gives them as far as they get it, Jesus can accept them.

But listen, no matter what church a man belongs to, even if he belongs to the true church, or any other church, no matter what church a man belongs to, if God gives him light and instead of walking in the light, he rejects it, and he depends upon faith in Christ to be a substitute for acknowledging what God says, friends, he's just deceiving himself.

And so, John says, 1 John 2:4:

“He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a...” 1 John 2:4.

What?

“...a liar, and the truth is not in him” 1 John 2:4.

This is serious business. Someone has put it this way. “Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner.” That’s what cheap grace is. That’s not the grace of Christ. That’s people’s perversion of the grace of Christ. “Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner.”

And as long as men are looking for a way in which they can be saved in the kingdom of God, or saved now and still hang onto their transgressions of God’s law, that’s cheap grace, that’s cheap grace. They justify sin, but they’re not justified. They may claim it. They may claim they’re not only justified but sanctified and have the Holy Spirit, but it’s pretense, it’s false, it’s contrary to the law of God.

“...If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is...” Isaiah 8:20.

What?

“...no light in them” Isaiah 8:20.

Now, with these three plain texts of Scripture, two from the Old Testament and one the New, that we have just referred to, I want to go to some of the inspired statements in *Selected Messages*, Book 1, page 366, put the magnifying glass on this. And what I’m going to read now from this book is the same thing I’ve read from the Bible. But notice how it’s worded here:

“While God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, page 366.

So, if I say, “Yes, I lose my temper every few days.”

“You mean you lost your temper last week?”

“Yes.”

“You mean you’re going to lose it next week?”

“Probably. I lose it every few days, sometimes every day. Oh, I wish I didn’t, and I’m praying about it, but then that’s my habit, that’s just me, and people have to put up with me. My family has to learn to get along with it or get out of the way.”

Am I justified? No, my friends. You say, then, does a man have to get the victory over temper and go six months without losing his temper before he's forgiven? No. He doesn't have to go five minutes. He can be justified now if he's willing to do what? Give up the wicked thing.

If he's willing to get down at the cross and say, "Oh Lord, did you die because of my wicked temper? Did this awful anger—is this what nailed you to the cross? Will you change my heart? Will you give me a hatred for that thing? Oh, Lord, I give it up. I don't want to ever do it again. I'm sorry I ever did it, even if it lets me get my way sometimes. If, like a skunk, people got out of my way because of the way I stink, Lord, I'm sorry. I don't want to get my way *that* way. No, no. Lord, take it out of my life."

Do you see, friends?

Now, if I take that attitude and somebody says, "Are you going to lose your temper next week?"

"No, by God's grace."

"But," somebody says, "suppose I do."

Well then, let me come back to the cross and go through the operation all over again, my friends. Let me give that thing up to God and ask God to forgive me for the thing. I want to tell you something. If a man does that, one of two things will happen. He'll either quit losing his temper, or else he'll quit seeking repentance. You can't do both. You can't do both. If you continue to take the cure, you can't keep breaking the heart of God with that continued transgression.

All right. Now, let me go back to my reading:

"But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place..."
Selected Messages, Book 1, page 366.

What has to happen before a man is justified?

"...The entire surrender of the heart..." *Ibid.*

Whence comes this idea, then, that all men are already forgiven and justified, they just need to be told about it, so they get the good news? Where does that come from? It comes from a misunderstanding of this whole Gospel, my friend.

"Christ pardons none but the penitent, but whom He pardons He first makes penitent" *Ibid.*, page 394.

We must seek Him for forgiveness. But before we're forgiven, God must help us to reach that point in our attitude that we give up the sin, we break with it. We surrender all.

"God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul"
Ibid., page 366.

What does "retain" mean? What? To keep it. You mean a man could lose justification? That's what this says.

"Oh, no, you couldn't lose justification. Once you're saved, you're always saved."

Is that what the Bible teaches? No, it doesn't teach that. The Bible teaches salvation is something you can get and something you can lose.

"For we are made partakers of Christ, *if* we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end"
Hebrews 3:14.

How does a man *get* justification? Through accepting the grace of Christ, making a full surrender to Jesus. How does he *lose* it? By turning from his surrender. By laying hold of the sin that he *had* given up, he loses the righteousness that he had accepted. You can't have both, friend. God isn't in the business of being the minister of sin.

So Paul says:

"...Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein" Romans 6:1.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" Romans 6:14.

How strange then that people will argue that there *is* a way to accept the grace of Christ, and then no matter what you do, you've got a life insurance policy. No, friends, no. God is not the minister of sin.

Now, another statement from this same wonderful book. By the way, those of you that would like to read something more, I'm just mentioning a few statements here tonight, but if you want to read something wonderful, read the chapters from which I have taken these few excerpts in this book, *Selected Messages*, Book 1.

Page 396:

“We are to say: ‘Christ died to save me. The Lord’s desire is that I should be saved, and I will come to Jesus just as I am without delay. I will venture upon the promise. As Christ draws me, I will respond.’ The apostle says, ‘With the heart man believeth unto righteousness’” (Romans 10:10)
Selected Messages, Book 1, page 396.

Now, notice:

“No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, while continuing the practice of those things which the Word of God forbids, or while neglecting any known duty. Genuine faith will be manifested in good works... It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, pages 396–397.

That’s it, friend. All right. Take a case. Here is a man; he’s an alcoholic. He gets drunk every now and then. He comes, he hears the Gospel. We tell him there’s salvation in Christ. We tell him he can be forgiven and cleansed. He’s got a bottle of whiskey in his pocket. He comes to the altar. He gives himself to God. What shall he do with that bottle of whiskey? Can he be saved tonight and carry the bottle of whiskey home with him to take care of the craving that might come back on him tomorrow? Can he, friends? What about it?

“Well,” you say, “that’s hard on him.”

No, friends, that’s the only easy way out. It’s not hard. Wouldn’t it be a terrible thing to talk about salvation from something and yet being in bondage to it at the same time? Wouldn’t it be an awful thing to go to men in prison and tell them the good tidings that they’re free, and yet acknowledge that they’re probably going to have to stay within the bars there all the rest of their life? Wouldn’t that be awful? I don’t call that easy. I call that hard. I thank the Lord for the privilege of proclaiming the Gospel that sets the prisoner free. But he must *choose* to be free. Christ can open the doors, but the man must walk out through faith in Christ.

And so, my dear whiskey-loving brother, leave your whiskey with Jesus. Don’t take it home. You dear men and women that are slaves to tobacco, leave your cigarettes with Jesus. Don’t carry them around in your pocket in case you might want them.

Ah, but why have I said all that? I’ve said that, friends, because the same formula applies to every other sin in the catalog, every other sin. There is no way to hang onto it and still be saved from it. But that doesn’t mean (don’t miss it, and don’t misquote me, and don’t misunderstand me), that doesn’t mean that you have to live for a while without sinning in order to be forgiven. Not a bit. You can never do it that way.

You’ll need to be forgiven in order to walk the Christian way. You’ll need to have that load of sin taken from your back in order that you may run the way of

God's commandments. You must know that you're accepted in order that you may have freedom in Christ to live His way. And He forgives you the moment you surrender all to Him and ask for His grace. It hangs right on that point. Will you surrender? Will you give it up? Will you see that Jesus died for you? Will you give up the sin?

"Those who are justified by faith must have a heart to keep the way of the Lord. It is an evidence that a man is not justified by faith when his works do not correspond to his profession...The faith that does not produce good works does not justify the soul" *Selected Messages*, Book 1, page 397.

And the Bible texts are quoted here from James 2. We studied them some weeks ago. My point is, dear friends, as I said at the beginning, salvation is a science. God has principles that work. He's not dealing with a mystical make-believe. He's not counting us righteous and then allowing us to just keep right on doing the same wickedness over and over again.

The man that used to swear, by the grace of God he gives up the swearing. When is he forgiven? The moment he surrenders, not after he lives a week without swearing.

But listen, if when he gives his heart to God he says, "I want to be forgiven, but probably I'll be swearing again before I get to bed tonight because that's my nature."

I say, there's no forgiveness for him. Why? Because he hasn't given it up. Forgiveness involves separating the soul from sin and sin from the soul. You can have that separation right now, my friends, if you choose it. But there is no power in the blood of Christ to grab that thing and take it from you against your will and against your choice. No matter how weak you are, you can be forgiven if you choose to give up the sin. No matter how bad the sin is and no matter how many sins:

"...The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" 1 John 1:7.

Now, let's turn to our text in Acts 26 again, and I want to notice the how of it again. First, just a further thought on this matter of repentance shown by works. In the chapter, we were reading from, but down to the 20th verse, Paul says that he:

"...showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should..." Acts 26:20.

Do what?

"...repent and turn to God..." Acts 26:20.

And then, what?

“...and do works meet for repentance” Acts 26:20.

“Oh, no, Paul, you mustn’t talk about works. You’ve fallen from grace if you talk about works.”

Well, this is Paul talking, and he says he showed everybody:

“...that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance” Acts 26:20.

What does “meet” mean? Suitable to, appropriate to, becoming. As Phillips translates this:

“...To live lives to prove their change of heart” Acts 26:20
(*J. B. Phillips New Testament*).

If Jesus has accepted me and forgiven me, if He has taken my sin and covered me with His life, then if I’ve been swearing, I’ll quit swearing. Is that right? Not in order to be forgiven but because the power of God is working in my heart.

And so, with Sabbath-breaking, lying, perjury, stealing, adultery, disobedience to parents, coveting, criticism, gossip, all the long list, the black catalog of sin, every sin can be forgiven if I’ll give it up. And then, I’m to do works meet for repentance. I’m to show it, not that I need to prove to God, but *God* is wanting to prove to men and to the universe that His grace can keep me.

Now, back to the 18th verse, our opening text on the how. And I’m going to read it again from that American Standard Bible to make it more clear. It’s right there in your text in the King James:

“...To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins...” Acts 26:18 (*New American Standard Bible*).

What comes before forgiveness of sins? Turning from darkness to light. What comes before that? To open our eyes. Oh friends, let’s let the Word of God into our hearts and lives so that we’ll see what God sees and then choose what He chooses. What do you say?

God’s ready to forgive. He’s plenteous in mercy. God informs the mind that He may *transform* the life. God informs the mind that He may transform the life. Do you want your life transformed? You’re to be transformed, Paul says to the Romans, by the renewing of what? The mind [a paraphrase of Romans 12:2].

And so, as we study the Bible, as we look to Jesus upon the cross, our minds become changed. We see what we didn’t see before. We see what sin is, and we learn to hate it. We see what righteousness is, and we learn to love it. And as fast as we see, we’re to walk. As fast as we get a clear view, we are to choose. And as

we do that, Jesus puts His righteousness to our credit to cover all our failures, and He puts His Spirit in our hearts to enable us to *do* that which He has revealed to us. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now, I want to ask you something. Is there anybody here tonight, and I'm not asking just for a mass response, is there anybody here tonight that got something clear in your soul about this matter of how to be forgiven? May I see your hands if there's somebody that did? I'm so glad. I'm so glad.

All right. I have another question. Is there somebody here tonight that realizes that there's something in your heart and life that needs to be given up, and you see that God has given you the privilege of making a full surrender of that thing without any reserve? And you believe that Jesus is strong enough to give you the victory over that thing. You don't need to tell us what it is, but if you mean business and God has spoken to your heart tonight about something definite that needs to come out of your life, and you're willing to give it up and believe that God will accept you and forgive you, would you stand. Somebody that God has been dealing with. Somebody that means business. God's spoken to your heart tonight.

Oh, I'm so glad, friends, that the Holy Spirit is dealing with souls and helping them to be in earnest. Aren't you? Just remain standing a moment while somebody else that God may be speaking to makes up his mind.

Ah, my dear friends, when I think of all that God has paid to make salvation possible, when I think of all He's done to bring it within reach, I long to see men and women reach out and get what has been brought within their grasp.

Is there still another that says, "Yes, God is talking to my heart tonight about something that needs to come out of my life, and by God's grace I'm giving it up, I'm giving it up."

All right. Now, we're going to go to the Lord in prayer, and I'm going to invite all these who are standing to kneel, and the rest of the congregation doubtless you'd like to kneel with us.

But before we kneel, is there somebody here tonight that says, "Brother Frazee, the arrow from God's quiver has reached my heart. I'm convicted. I know there's something I ought to give up, but I haven't had what it takes to do that. At least, I haven't done it. But I want you to pray for me in this prayer tonight that God will help me to do that."

Would you raise your hand, somebody like that? All right.

Now, dear ones, while we pray *for* you, will you pray *for* yourself? And listen. Don't pray that God will forgive you while you keep on cherishing the sin because God won't hear that prayer. I'm not going to pray that kind of a prayer for you. I'm going to pray that God will help you to give it up. Will you pray that? That's what we need to pray for.

Shall we kneel together?

Our heavenly Father, we thank Thee with all our hearts tonight for the revelation of Thy cross. Help us to understand why Jesus went to the cross. Help us not to be misled. Help us to see what the Gospel is all about.

We've heard in Thy Word the wonderful message:

“...Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” Matthew 1:21.

Tonight, Lord, we're not asking to be saved *in* sin. We're not asking for some tranquilizer that'll make us feel happy while we go on transgressing. We're praying for the drastic surgery that'll cut sin out of our hearts and lives. We're giving Thee the right to operate on us.

Oh, Lord, we pray that Thou will bless all who stood tonight, and just now we pray that Thou wilt take them at their word, Thou wilt take their sins away and forgive them through the blood of Jesus Christ. As they go from this chapel, may it be knowing that Christ has accepted them and they're forgiven, not because of anything good they ever *have* done or ever *can* do but just because Thou art Love.

And Lord, bless these who have raised their hands that are fighting a battle, having a struggle. We do not pray for them that they shall be tranquilized and led to feel they're saved when they're continuing in transgression. We pray, rather, that Thou wilt help them before they leave this chapel tonight to know that their sins are on the altar. Help them to tarry and get the help they need.

Then, Lord, take us all very close to Thy heart tonight. And just now, we thank Thee that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. We thank Thee that as we give ourselves to Thee we're accepted. And we rejoice in Thy saving, saving power. Oh, we thank Thee Thou has laid help on One that's mighty, and we're trusting in Jesus for salvation. We thank Thee in His wonderful name, amen.

Let us stand.

“I hear the Savior say,
‘thy strength indeed is small;
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in Me thine all in all.

[Refrain] Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain;
He washed it white as snow.”

Since nothing good have I
Whereby Thy grace to claim,
I'll wash my garments white
In the blood of Calvary's Lamb.
[Refrain.]

And when before the throne
I stand in Him complete,
I'll lay my trophies down,
All down at Jesus' feet."

[Refrain.]

Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, #184, first, third and fourth stanzas.

Good night and God bless you. A happy Sabbath to all of you.

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