



Defining Truths of the Assemblies of God: Salvation

By: Thomas E. Trask

Salvation is the foundation stone for who we are. God has called us, as a Fellowship, to be in the redemption business. Jesus said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).¹ It is through God’s plan of salvation that people come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

People need to understand they are sinners. Some churches today are uncomfortable with saying to the unsaved, “You are a sinner.” But Scripture says, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). People cannot know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior until they first realize they are sinners and that their sin separates them from God. Pastors do unsaved people a disservice when they allow them to become comfortable in church, continue to live in their sin, and never confront them with the claims of Jesus Christ. Jesus’ death at Calvary purchased our salvation and atoned for everyone’s sin.

There is a proper way to share with people their need for salvation. Jesus was confrontational in dealing with the unsaved. If Christians know that on Sunday morning, Sunday night, or Wednesday night their pastor will give opportunity for people to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, then they can feel comfortable in inviting the unsaved to come.

It is also essential for pastors to emphasize that the purpose for the local church as the body of Christ is for people to come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. If the church does not fulfill its purpose, all we have done is window dress the sinner. Scripture teaches that their blood will be on our hands. We must tell people they need to know Christ. They need to experience salvation so their names can be written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

When people are saved, they become a new creation in Christ Jesus. “Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Salvation is a life transforming experience. The things we once loved, we now hate; and, the things we once hated, we now love. Every person must have the life transforming experience called salvation.

Salvation is not found in church membership; it is found in a relationship. Scripture says “all we like sheep have gone astray” (Isaiah 53:6). Pastors must give people opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. Pastors cannot assume people in their churches are saved. Pastors often look at their congregations and say, “Everybody here is saved.” We do not know that. We are only looking at the veneer. We do not know their hearts. Only Christ knows their hearts. The Holy Spirit brings people to realize they need Jesus.

Those in leadership must give people opportunity to publicly confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Everyone that Jesus called, He called publicly. He said, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32,33).

As a pastor, I never closed a service without giving people opportunity to accept Christ. Even now, when I travel, I want to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing. Pastors deal with the eternity of people’s souls. If a person goes into eternity without knowing Jesus Christ, he is lost forever. We may not be able to fully comprehend this, but that is the reality.

Pastor, ask God to give you a burden for the lost. Open the altars of your church. Give an invitation. You ask, “Brother Trask, what if nobody comes?”

Do not worry about that. A pastor’s responsibility is to invite people to come. If they come, pray with them, introduce them to Christ, and pray the sinner’s prayer with them. Keep a record of their decision. Follow up with them, baptize them in water, and disciple them.

Discipleship is important because they have just begun a new journey, and they are new babes in Christ. If you give people opportunity to accept Christ, I promise you, you will please the heart of God, and people will come know to Jesus Christ. There is no greater thrill in the ministry than to introduce people to Jesus Christ.

I will pray and believe with you that the Lord will give you the unsaved for your labors. May God richly bless you. Thomas E. Trask is general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.

© Thomas E. Trask

Reprinted from *Enrichment* journal Q1, 2007, used with permission.

Reverend Thomas E. Trask is former general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.

ENDNOTE

1. Scriptures are KJV.