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*“None
Other
Name.”*

J. C. Ryle

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BASIS

1. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as originally given, as the inspired and infallible and inerrant Word of God, and as the sole, supreme, and all-sufficient authority in every matter of Christian faith and practice.
2. THE TRINITY. One living and true God, Sovereign in creation, providence and redemption, subsisting in three Persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the same in substance, and equal in power and glory.
3. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. The Eternal Sonship and the essential, absolute, and eternal Deity, and true and sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ; His virgin birth, death, and burial; His physical resurrection and ascension into heaven, and His coming again in power and glory.
4. THE HOLY SPIRIT. The personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit, through Whom the sinner is born again to saving repentance and faith, and by whom the saints are sanctified through the truth.

(continued on inside back cover)

“NONE OTHER NAME.” (II)

JOHN CHARLES RYLE, D.D.

Bishop of Liverpool, 1880-1900.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv: 12)

THESE words are striking in themselves but they are much more striking if we observe when and by whom they were spoken. They were spoken by a poor and friendless Christian, in the midst of a persecuting Jewish council. They were spoken by the Apostle Peter, who a few weeks before had forsaken Jesus and fled, the very man who three times over had denied his Lord. There is another spirit in him now as he stands up boldly before priests and Sadducees, and tells them the truth to their face: “This is the stone that was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Let us make sure that we rightly understand the Apostle's words. What does he mean? He means that no one can be saved from sin's guilt, power and consequences, except by Jesus Christ. He means that no one can have peace with God the Father, obtain pardon in this world and escape eternal wrath in the next, except through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ. In Christ alone God's rich provision of salvation for sinners is treasured up; Christ's blood alone can cleanse us; Christ's righteousness alone can clothe us: Christ's merit alone can give us a title to heaven. Jews and Gentiles, learned and unlearned, kings and poor men, all alike can only be saved by the Lord Jesus.

The Apostle declares emphatically: "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no other person commissioned, sealed, and appointed by God the Father to be the Saviour of sinners except Christ. The keys of life and death are committed to His hand, and all who would be saved must go to Him. Accordingly the XVIIIth Article of Religion affirms: "Holy

Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved."

There was but one place of safety in the day when the flood came upon the earth: that place was Noah's ark. All other places and devices—mountains, towers, trees, rafts, boats—all were alike useless. So also there is but one hiding-place for the sinner who would escape the storm of God's anger; he must venture his soul on Christ. There is but one name that will avail us when we stand at the gate of heaven; we must name the name of Jesus as our only hope, or be cast away. Such is the doctrine of St. Peter. No salvation but by Jesus Christ; in Him, salvation to the uttermost, salvation for the very chief of sinners; out of Him no salvation at all.

We are to venture the whole salvation of our souls on Christ, and on Christ only. We are to cast loose completely and entirely from all other hopes and trusts. We are not to rest partly on Christ and partly on doing all we can. In the matter of our justification Christ is to be all. Heaven lies before us, and Christ is the only door into it; hell lies beneath us, and Christ

alone is able to deliver from it; the law stands against us, and Christ alone is able to redeem us; sin weighs us down, and Christ alone is able to put it away. This is the doctrine taught by the Apostle Peter.

(i). The doctrine must be true *because man is what man is*. What is man? There is one broad, sweeping answer which takes in the whole human race: man is a sinful being. All children of Adam born into the world, whatever be their name or nation, are corrupt, wicked and defiled in the sight of God. Their thoughts, words, ways, and actions are all, more or less, defective and imperfect.

Is there no country on the face of the globe where sin does not reign? Is there no happy valley, no secluded island, where innocence is to be found? Is there no tribe on earth where, far away from civilisation, commerce, money, gunpowder, luxury and books, morality and purity flourish? No! there is none. The most solitary islands of the Pacific Ocean, islands cut off from the rest of the world, when first discovered, have been found full of impurity, cruelty, and idol-

atry. The footprints of the devil have been traced on every shore. The veracity of the third chapter of Genesis has everywhere been established. Whatever else savages have been found ignorant of, they have never been found ignorant of sin.

Look over the biographies and lives of the holiest Christians; mark how the brightest and best of Christ's people have always had the deepest sense of their own defectiveness and corruption. Patriarchs and Apostles, Fathers and Reformers, Puritans and Evangelicals, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, all are alike agreed in feeling their own sinfulness. The more light they have, the more humble and self-abased they seem to be; the more holy they are, the more they seem to feel their own unworthiness.

Now what does all this prove? To my eyes it seems to prove that human nature is so tainted and corrupt that, left to himself, no man could be saved. Man's case appears to be a hopeless one without a Saviour, and that a mighty Saviour too. There must be a mediator, an atone-

ment, an advocate, to render such poor, sinful creatures acceptable with God; and I find this nowhere, except in Jesus Christ.

It is one of the hardest things in the world to realise the sinfulness of sin. To say that we are all sinners is one thing, to have an idea what sin must be in the eyes of God is quite another. Sin is too much part of ourselves to allow us to see it as it is, we do not feel our own moral deformity. But this we may be sure of, if we could see our own lives with the eyes of the angels who never fell, we should never doubt this point for a moment. In a word, no one can really know what man is and not see that the doctrine of our text must be true. We are shut up to the Apostle Peter's conclusion. There can be no salvation except by Christ.

(ii). The doctrine of our text must be true *because God is what God is*. What is God? That is a deep question indeed. We know something of His attributes: He has not left Himself without witness in creation, He has mercifully revealed to us many things about Himself in His Word. We know that God is a Spirit, eternal,

invisible, omnipotent, the creator and preserver of all things, holy, just, all-seeing, all-knowing, all-remembering, infinite in mercy, purity and wisdom.

Alas, how low and grovelling are our highest ideas when we come to put down on paper what we believe God to be! How many words and expressions we use whose full significance we cannot fathom! How weak and inadequate are our poor, feeble intellects to form any conception of Him who is perfect in all His works! How little can our busy helplessness comprehend a Being who is ever ordering all things in heaven and earth, by universal providence; ordering the least step in the life of the humblest among His people, and all for His own glory.

The blind man is no judge of the paintings of Rubens or Titian; the deaf man is insensible to the beauty of Handel's music; the Greenlander can have but a faint notion of the climate of the tropics; there is no faculty in their minds which can take in these things; they have no set of thoughts which can comprehend them; they have no mental fingers to grasp

them. And in just the same way, the best and brightest ideas that man can form of God, compared with the reality which we shall one day see, are weak and faint indeed.

One thing is clear, however; the more any man considers calmly that God really is, the more he must feel the immeasurable distance between God and himself; his conscience will tell him that God is perfect, and he imperfect; that God is very high, and he very low; that God is glorious majesty, and he a poor worm; and that if ever he is to stand before Him in judgment with comfort, he must have some mighty helper, or he will not be saved.

And what is all this but the very doctrine taught by St. Peter the Apostle? With such an one as God to give account to, we must have a mighty Saviour. To give us peace with such a glorious Being as God, we must have an almighty mediator, friend and advocate on our side—and advocate who can answer every charge that can be laid against us, and plead our cause with God on equal terms. We want this, and nothing less than this. Vague notions

of mercy will never give true peace. And such a Saviour, such a friend, such an advocate is nowhere to be found except in the Person of Jesus Christ.

(iii). This doctrine must be true *because the Bible is what the Bible is*. If we do not believe the doctrine we must give up the Bible as the only rule of faith. All through the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, there is only one simple account of the way in which man must be saved. It is always the same: only for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, by grace, through faith; not for our own works and deservings.

We see it dimly revealed at first: it looms through the mist of a few promises, but there it is. We find it more plainly afterwards. It is taught by the pictures and emblems of the law which was "our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." We have it still more clearly by and by: the prophets saw in a vision many particulars about the Redeemer yet to come. We have it fully at last, in the sunshine of New Testament history: Christ incarnate, Christ

crucified, Christ rising again, Christ preached to the world.

One golden chain runs through the whole volume—no salvation except by Jesus Christ. The bruising of the serpent's head foretold in the day of the Fall; the clothing of our first parents with skins; the sacrifices of Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the passover, and all the particulars of the Mosaic law—the high priest, the altar, the daily offering of the lamb, the holy of holies entered only by blood, the scapegoat, the cities of refuge; all are so many witnesses to the truth set forth in the text. All preach with one voice, salvation only by Jesus Christ.

In fact, this truth appears to be the grand object of the Bible, and all the different parts and portions of the book are meant to pour light upon it. I can gather from it no ideas of pardon and peace with God except in connection with this truth. If I could read of one soul in it who was saved without faith in a Saviour, I might perhaps not speak so confidently. But when I see that faith in Christ—

whether a coming Christ or a crucified Christ—was the prominent feature in the religion of all who went to heaven; when I see Abel owning Christ in his "better sacrifice" at one end of the Bible, and the saints in glory in St. John's vision rejoicing in Christ at the other end of the Bible; when I see a man like Cornelius, who was devout, and feared God, and gave alms and prayed, not told that he had done all and would of course be saved, but ordered to send for Peter and hear of Christ; when I see all these things I feel bound to believe that the doctrine of the text is the doctrine of the whole Bible. The Word of God, fairly examined and interpreted, shuts me up to the truth laid down by St. Peter. No salvation, no way to heaven, except by Jesus Christ.

Let me close with the words of old Robert Traill, to which I desire humbly to subscribe: "I know no true religion but Christianity; no true Christianity but the doctrine of Christ: the doctrine of His divine person, of His divine office, of His divine righteousness, and of His divine Spirit, which all that are His receive. I

know no true ministers of Christ but such as make it their business, in their calling, to commend Jesus Christ, in His saving fulness of grace and glory, to the faith and love of men; no true Christian but one united to Christ by faith and love, unto the glorifying of the name of Jesus Christ in the beauty of Gospel holiness. Ministers and Christians of this spirit have been for many years my brethren and companions, and I hope shall ever be, whithersoever the hand of God shall lead me."

SOLI DEO GLORIA

(continued from inside front cover)

5. THE FALL OF MAN. The fall of mankind in Adam, by which they have totally lost their original righteousness and holiness, and have come under the righteous condemnation of God.
6. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. The personal eternal and unconditional election in Christ of a multitude which no man can number unto everlasting salvation, out of God's pure grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works in them.
7. PARTICULAR REDEMPTION. The personal and eternal redemption from all sin and the penal consequence thereof, of all God's elect, by the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. EFFECTUAL CALLING. The effectual calling of all the elect by the irresistible grace of God.
9. JUSTIFICATION. The justification of sinners by faith alone, through the atoning death and resurrection and imputed righteousness of Christ.
10. FINAL PERSEVERANCE. The final perseverance in the state of grace of all those who have been elected by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, so that they shall never perish, but have eternal life.

In reference to the above, consult the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England, the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration.

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