

Salvation — How is it Gained? Once Gained, Can it be Lost?

Part Eight

Last Week we spoke about the nature Jesus had while on this earth. It is little understood probably because it is forbidden subject matter in much of our denomination. The General Conference president preceding Elder Wilson spoke out strongly in disfavor of teaching or speaking about Jesus' human nature. So, this corruption comes from the very top. Before our Sabbath School Class was removed from us, we were forbidden to study the subject of Jesus' human nature. The giants in our denomination, one in particular, Andreasen's materials were also forbidden for use. We were told our goals were not acceptable, those being to bring truth to the forefront and the exposing of error. This is total dictatorial. In many SDA churches you are encouraged toward mainstream protestant thinking. It is frowned upon to be different. Have we lost our first love? Many have, even among pastors. One such Adventist pastor, on his face book page had this to say.

Life is long, Christians, so there's no sense in living today for a more elaborate life sketch, a posthumous monument, and a bigger tombstone. The interim rest should not define us; we are people who will live forever. So don't "play the game" anymore ... play a new game, with new rules, and you will be free, you will be, alive.

Nothing urgent, no breaking news, no panic buttons, no DEFCON 5 alerts, no guilt-inducing, stress-producing, adrenaline-abusing religious rants. Just this: may you rest in the security of Jesus, may you play in his park and upon his playground this Monday (Memorial Day). Sweet dreams.

So he is telling his church to just go back to sleep. This isn't just a little backwoods church somewhere but is a university church where students go to become future pastors and church leaders. Yes, he's into spiritual formation and one of the leaders in "the One Project" we warned our own church about to which they ignored. However, on the positive side another church in the area had a speaker, Kok Tho Yip an Adventist businessman from Singapore, a former Buddhist, who had been exposed to the same type of spiritualism as is in Spiritual Formation. Yip has been an Adventist for the past 30 years. Yip said that the centering prayer or contemplative prayers are a form of self hypnosis. Is it any wonder when you attempt to warn people they are unable to see or understand what you are trying to relate to them. They cannot understand because it doesn't make sense to them. Are we into the OMEGA of apostasy? I'll let you decide.

Now on to the "forbidden" topic of Jesus' fallen human nature, same as ours. Will we fully understand the incarnation? No! But that we can understand we are to understand. As early as 1890 people were rebelling against the idea Jesus shared in our nature. In a talk "at Battle Creek, Michigan on January 29 1890" Sister White said "letters have been coming to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had He would have fallen under similar temptations.". To this she continues to write.

If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn

reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature. {1SM 408.1}

Again we need to understand that his divine nature is not some mixture of pre-post fall nature. Did you notice we can have it! In fact we must have it. So what is it? Basically, it is an app, to use a computer term. It is a gift from God instilling in us a dislike, distaste and hate for sin. Just as we avail ourselves of a computer application, we pray for the Holy Spirit to give us this new birth into Jesus so we can be sealed. How bad do we wish to be freed of sin in our lives? When we partake of the divine nature we are protected from sinning as Jesus was. The difference is that Jesus never tasted sin in the first place. We have acquired a taste for it. We savor sin and then it dawns on us the bitterness as a result. Why are we so naive?

Last time we discovered; “Here is the separation made. God will work in mysterious ways to save the true, honest ones.” {18MR 250.3} What a promise! What can we do? Well, for one thing, we can avoid the contamination of errors in apostate churches. We need not join in their follies, going to them for instruction in evangelism, for instance. If we examine the history of Israel during Jesus’ sojourn we get a glimpse of what not to do. I hesitate to make an application here but we must. We’ve studied it in Patriarchs and Prophets, so it’s not new information.

The history of Israel was to be placed on record for the instruction and warning of coming generations. Men of all future time must see the God of heaven as an impartial ruler, in no case justifying sin. But few realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Men flatter themselves that God is too good to punish the transgressor. But in the light of Bible history it is evident that God's goodness and His love engage Him to deal with sin as an evil fatal to the peace and happiness of the universe. {PP 420.2}

If the leaders in Israel had received Christ, He would have honored them as His messengers to carry the gospel to the world. To them first was given the opportunity to become heralds of the kingdom and grace of God. But Israel knew not the time of her visitation. The jealousy and distrust of the Jewish leaders had ripened into open hatred, and the hearts of the people were turned away from Jesus. {DA 231.3}

What is the equivalent to the Sanhedrin today? Remember what you read earlier? If you reject the fact of Jesus’ true human fallen nature, you are rejecting his offering to us. This is rejecting Jesus just as surly as did the leaders rejected Him then. If leadership rejects who Jesus is, then who will give the gospel? I dislike writing this but it is not my words.

The Sanhedrin had rejected Christ's message and was bent upon His death; therefore Jesus departed from Jerusalem, from the priests, the temple, the religious leaders, the people who had been instructed in the law, and turned to another class to proclaim His message, and to gather out those who should carry the gospel to all nations. {DA 232.1}

We ran out of time and space this week but will pick up where we have left off next week.

Bill Eichner