

## Salvation is for All

### Bill Aumack

Good morning. How's everybody doing? Everybody have a good week? Yeah. I had a good week. It was vacation week. That's a good week. Linda and I got a chance to get away for a little bit, go to Cambria. People go, "What do you do there?" "Nothing." That's a good vacation, right? That's funny. We went with a little kind of a belated anniversary. vacation, and we've been married 36 years. My friend who's been married 35 years is in Cambria now. Now I was in his wedding. He was in my wedding, you think we could do a little better on the planning and be there at the same time? You know, but no,

Sometimes things like that happen. They're kind of outside of our thought process. And we don't even consider it. Ever had that happen? Let me give you an example. Suppose you have to plan kind of a large outing of people that are going out to eat to maybe celebrate something I don't know, maybe it's a family birthday or something. There's like 30 or 40 people going. Or maybe it's a work thing. And somebody is retiring, and you're going to go out to eat and you know, have a retirement party for this person. So you had a plan this event? What are some of the things that you might think of? Like, where are we going to go? What kind of food are we going to have? We're gonna have Mexican, or we're gonna have Chinese, we're gonna have Italian? what are we gonna do? You might consider that some folks might have dietary restrictions, you know, maybe somebodies vegan or vegetarian or low salt or whatever, you know. And so you would maybe consider that maybe somebody in the group is handicap you got to make sure they can get in. Maybe somebody's got kids, you got to make sure there's something on the menu for kids. Right? There's a lot of things you might consider. But I guarantee the one thing that you do not consider is, oh, we can't go there because my friend Pete is black, and they won't let him in. Oh, we can't go there. Because my friend Joe is Hispanic, and they won't let him in. Oh, we can't go there. Because my friend Kim, you know, she's Asian, they won't let her in. Right? We don't ever think about that. Because everybody can go. Now, it hasn't always been that way in the world. But in our lifetimes, it has. Maybe the very, very oldest amongst us, if you lived in certain parts of the country could remember something different. But for us, it's always been that way for our whole lives. And we don't ever even think about it.

And the Jews were kind of facing a similar thing. Except it had been that way for 1000s of years, almost since the beginning of time. And they couldn't even think of anything else. And what they were thinking of was "we are God's chosen people." Oh, that's true. They were absolutely positively true. But when you go down that path, it's easy to end up in a bad spot. See, because one might logically think, well, if we're God's chosen people, and those people aren't, well, then we go to heaven. And they don't. Right. Right. I mean, you end up there very easily, very easily, right? And it's very easily turns you into a racist, or at least an uppity snob. Right. And this was a problem that they were dealing with. And it was based on faulty logic. And if you really questioned many of the Jews and backed them into a corner, they would admit That was not true. They knew it. Because remember the exodus out of Egypt? Who was that for? The Jews, but other people went along with them, right? So it was available to anybody who

wanted to go. But you kind of had to reject your culture and join the Jewish culture to get it. Right. But but they understood it, but they didn't often act like it. They didn't often kind of represent what they believed in their actions, right.

And so I want you to be aware of that background as we go through this message. It's hard for us to comprehend that, because for our whole lives, salvation has been for everybody. Right? You might have been in Cradleroll as a little kid and you sang the song. Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world, red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in his sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world, right? We've been taught that our whole lives. And so it's hard for us to comprehend where the Jews were coming from, and it's hard for the Jews at that day to comprehend what we're in.

But I want you to keep that in mind, because sometimes we're not all that different than the Jews. Okay, right. As Seventh Day, Adventists what are we? What are we sometimes call ourselves? The remnant! See and if we're the remnant, and those people are not... right. So sometimes, you know, we're hard on the Jews, but we aren't all that different. So we're going to look at a couple things here. Matthew really tries to drive this point home, that salvation is for everybody. Okay. And he uses two parables and two events that we're going to highlight today and talk about so let's go to the first one, Matthew, chapter 8.

Matthew 8:5-13. Obviously, in the gospels, they don't record everything that Jesus said, or did or acted on, or maybe even parables he told, I don't know. But Matthew chooses to record these for some very particular reason. So Matthew 8:5-13, the faith of the centurion. Now, when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him asking for help, Lord, he said, My servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly. Jesus said to him, shall I come and heal him?

That's just, that's just a great question. Right? Hey, man, my servant is really sick. Jesus is want me to come healing. Yeah?! He almost wanted like, Duh, yeah, that's why I came. Except that's not what the centurion says. The Centurion replied, Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word and my servant will be healed. For I, myself, a man under authority with soldiers under me, I tell this one go when he goes, I tell that one come and he comes, I say to my servant, do this, and he does it. When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. And he said to those following him, truly tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. And usually, when we talk about this parable, we stop right there. But this is the interesting part, verse 11. I say to you, that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Ouch. And then Jesus said to the centurion, go Let it be done just as you believed it would. And his servant was healed at that moment.

Now, this is a very interesting story was a centurion a Jew? No, he was a Roman. Right. And, of course, the Romans were generally hated because they were an occupying force. You know, again, that's

difficult for us to deal with. Because we don't think of that, you know, imagine if Mexico or Canada raised up an army and invaded and we had to pay taxes to one of those governments. We wouldn't be happy about that, would we? I see you guys giggling cuz that's even difficult to comprehend, right? That's where Israel was, right? And so even if the centurion was a nice guy, he still is a Roman. Right? He can only be so nice. But he has this faith. And you know that verse 11. And 12 is kind of interesting. Jesus says, I tell you that many will come from the east and the West, and will take their places at the feast of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Who is Jesus talking about? The Jews, right? The leaders who are not listening to him who are not following him, they're out. You're going to be out in the darkness, where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth. And who's going to take your place? Folks from the east in the West, who knows who they are. Right? Other people, those guys over there, that aren't God's chosen people. Very, very powerful. Very, very powerful. Very blunt as well. What do we learn from this? You are saved by faith, not because of your family line. You might be able to look back and say, Well, my dad, he was a preacher and his daddy was a preacher and his daddy before him was a preacher. I'm home free. No. No. Well, my mom and dad were great Christians. They came to church every week, paid tithe. They man they were they were they just.... good for them. I didn't do anything for you. Okay, I'm being very blunt today. Okay. We're just being very blunt today.

You are saved by faith, not because of your family line. And anyone can have faith. Including those guys over there that aren't God's chosen people. They're not part of the remnant. How can they have faith? Very interesting.

In Matthew 15, let's turn to Matthew 15. He drives this point home again with another encounter. Matthew 15:21 to 28 says the faith of a Canaanite woman leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon (I don't know how to say that) a Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him crying out, Lord, son of David, have mercy on me. My daughter is demon possessed and suffering terribly. Jesus did not utter a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, send her away for she keeps crying out us. She's driving us crazy. He answered, I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. And the woman came and knelt before him and said, Lord help me. She said, he replied, It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs. Yes, it is Lord. She said, even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off their masters table. Then Jesus said to her woman, you have great faith, your request is granted, and her daughter was healed at that moment.

I wish we had the whole sermon to talk about this story. Because man is all kinds of cool stuff going in here. And when we read that the first time to our Western ears, Jesus comes off a little rude. He calls somebody a dog, right in our politically correct society where you don't want to say anything that triggers anybody or make anybody upset or does anything. You don't call people dogs. Right? And I don't speak these ancient languages. But in my research, the word that is used there is really would be almost better translated as small pet. So this is an indoor dog. You know, this is not a rabid wolf. This is... Fluffy. That's sounds better doesn't. This is Fluffy and Fluffy lives inside. And Fluffy gets, you know, little scraps off the table. You know, when mom looks that way, you know, the kids don't like this. And Fluffy gets to

eat. Right? And the woman knows that because when she says when he calls her dogs, she says, even the dogs eat the crumbs off the Masters table. She knew he was referring to a small indoor pet. Not a rabid wolf. Okay. But still, it comes off a little rude. That's why does Jesus do this? Jesus has already shown that salvation and faith is for everybody with the centurion. But I don't think the point, made it all the way home to the disciples and some of the people that were around him. Because here's this woman asking for help. And Jesus ignores her. And the disciples are okay with that. Right? Jesus doesn't answer. And the disciples are like, Hey, get her out of here, man, she's driving us nuts. Jesus has been busy showing compassion to 1000s and 1000s and 1000s of people, but this woman doesn't deserve any. How come? She was a Canaanite. Remember who the Canaanites were? When Israel came out of Egypt, they went to the promised land, where did they go? Canaan. Who was there? Canaanites. How does your logic go If you are God's chosen people? We're God's chosen people. God took the land away from you, and gave it to us. How low Are you on the totem pole? Way down? Right? Because you were so bad, God took your land away from you and gave it to us. This woman doesn't deserve anything. Jesus. She's a Canaanite you already dealt with them. And Jesus wants to make a point. Now, one thing I want you to think about. Did Jesus know she was gonna be there? Absolutely. Do you think Jesus may be arranged that meeting, I'm going to be in the right place at the right time to meet with this woman. So that the kingdom of God can be revealed to these dense headed lug heads I'm walking around with. Right? Because they're not getting it. And so Jesus makes a point.

Now, if Jesus had just come along and said, okay, woman, daughters healed, see ya. And on to the next one. The story might not even be recorded in the Bible. It would be one of the 1000s, 10s of 1000s of interactions that Jesus had every day where you just healed people all the time, and it would be lost to history. But Jesus stops and makes a point. And 2000 years later, we're still talking about it. It's a very important point that he wants to drive home there. Okay. What do we learn from this? It's faith that matters. Doesn't matter whether you're a Canaanite or an Israelite, or an Adventist or a Baptist? Did I really say that? Right. What matters is your faith. What matters is your faith. I mean, I wish we could talk about that story more because there's so much cool stuff in that story.

But we want to look at a couple of parables that Jesus told. Okay, and Matthew records two parables for us back to back Matthew 21. The bottom of Matthew 21, then going into the top of Matthew 22. So Matthew 21, verse 33, to 46. He tells a parable. This is a little bit long, so I'm going to kind of do my best imitation of auctioneer and go through this pretty quick.

Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who had planted a vineyard he put a wall around it dug a wine press and built a watch tower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached. He sent His servants To the tenants to collect his fruit. The tenant sees the servants they beat one killed another in stone the third, Then he sent other servants to them more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them, they will respect my son, he said, but when the tenant saw the son, they said to each other, this is the heir Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance. So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to

those tenants? He will bring those wretches to a wretched end they replied, and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time. And Jesus said to them, have you never read the scriptures, the stone builders rejected has become the cornerstone. And the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Therefore, I tell you, that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on the stone be broken to pieces, anyone on whom it falls will be crushed. And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus parables, they knew who he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but we're afraid of the crowd because of the people held that he was a prophet.

Did the Pharisees and the chief priests understand what Jesus is talking about? Yes. And Jesus says, I am going to take the kingdom away from you, and give it to those people over there that you don't think are deserving. Because they will share the produce the fruit. They will produce and you are not. The Jesus is being blunt. Right? There's no oh, what's he mean? What's he talking about? He's being very, very blunt. And they were not happy.

And then the next parable that Matthew records to us right there at the top of Matthew 22. 22:1-10. Jesus spoke to them again, in parable, saying that kingdom of heaven is like a king, who prepared a wedding banquet for his son, he sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet telling them to come, but they refuse to come. Then he sent some more servants and said, Tell those who have been invited that I prepared my dinner, my ox and my fat cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready come to the wedding banquet. But they paid no attention and went off one to his field, and other do his business. The rest siezed his servants and mistreated them and killed them. And the king was enraged, and he sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burn their city. And then he said to his servants, the wedding banquet is ready. But those I invited not deserve to come. So let's go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find. So the servants went out into the street and gathered all the people they could find the bad, as well as the good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Now Matthew doesn't record the reaction to that parable. But based on what happened to the last one, the chief priests knew who he was talking about, right? This is getting taken away from you and given to the bad people. Right? Not only it's not about your family line, it's not about how good you were. I'm going to give it away to the people that don't even deserve it.

What? Just wait a minute, you know, you got to be holy to go to heaven, right? You got to study the Bible. You got to get baptized. You have to do a Bible study with Pastor and learn all 28 fundamental beliefs. Anybody know what fundamental belief 24 is? Me either. Wait a minute, the bad people get to go to heaven? We don't like that so much. already read a story online about a lady whose son had been killed, murdered by another young man. And as that man, he was convicted, sent to prison. And as he was in prison, this lady began writing him and visiting him, became friends with him. And when he got out of prison, she was the one that took care of him gave him a place to live. He helped me get back on

his feet and stuff. Now that is forgiveness and love I don't know if I could do that. Right, to the person who killed my son? maybe killed something, you know, one of y'all sons, maybe not my son. Right? But that's Jesus says, Listen, it's not who your family is. It's not how good you are. That isn't it. Well, then, what's it? It's the faith. Do you have faith in Jesus? Not did your parents have faith in Jesus? Not did your Bible teacher or your youth pastor have faith in Jesus? Not does your spouse have faith in Jesus? Do you have faith in Jesus? And anybody can have faith. Canaanites, undeserving people, bad people, invading armies. They can all have faith. And we say, Yeah, I know that. I've heard that Bill. Yeah, tell me anything. I don't know. But we're like the Jews. We don't always act that way. Right? Because, you know, there's somebody at work that drives you insane. Right? That person just is so annoying. You're like the disciples with the Canaanite woman tell her to go away. Right? Somebody make that person go away. You're driving me crazy. But salvation is for them too. Salvation is for everyone. And when Jesus says everyone, he means everyone. That means that neighbor that annoys you. You know, the guy. He thinks he's gonna be in the next heavy metal band and likes to practice at three in the morning. Yeah, that guy. That means the street racers who are doing burnouts at the corner, 2 am. That includes them. Wow. Now do we really act like that? Cuz like I said, we can be dangerously close to the Jews. Say, you know, we're good. We go to church, we keep the commandments, we pay our tithe. Heavens for us. And it is. But it's for other people too.

And this ties in beautifully with our small group series we're going to be doing starting October 16 called My 12 People. You guys, if you've been around and paid attention, you've heard me say, I want to go to heaven. I want to drag as many people along with me as I can. So here's your opportunity to drag 12 people along with you. There's gonna be an opportunity to pick some people and start praying for them very intentionally. Okay. This book is written by an Adventist pastor whose name eludes me at the moment... What was his name pastor? Roy Ice. I was watching a video we'll probably we'll make that video available for everybody. We'll share it. And he was talking about one of his experiences and he started praying for his neighbor I think was a sheriff. And so he's he's praying for his neighbor. And his neighbor comes over and says, you know, I'm trying to take out some bushes, but I need some tools like a big pry bar to pull these bushes out you have something? Pastor says I don't have anything but I've got something that might work. So it goes gets tools comes out. And the the sheriff the neighbor reaches for me does Oh, no, no, I'm coming over to help you. So they go over to his backyard and they're working on these bushes. grunting and groaning and the sheriff after just a few minutes goes, you're a pastor, aren't you? Yeah. He goes, could you tell me something? Pastor goes, this is like a dream come true. I got people asking me to preach to them. Right. And he had several stories like that. So that's what we're going to be doing, we're going to be looking for people we can pray for very intentionally, that we can try and drag along to heaven with us, it's gonna be a lot of fun. So really looking forward to, we're gonna do something a little different, we're gonna be handing out the books earlier. And we'll talk a little more about that. So there's a little part we want you to read to be ready for when it starts on the 16th. So be ready for that. But it's going to be very good. And I'm very much looking forward to that.

And for those of you that are sitting here today, and have never made a decision to follow Jesus on your own, because you always thought it was enough that mommy and daddy were good. Or it was enough that you came to church, I encourage you to make a decision to follow Christ. Your own decision to

follow Christ. And if you want to do that, but you don't know how to do that, talk to pastor he's here. Talk to me or Gustavo, Edwin, Tomas, there's several people here, we can help you get started on that journey. Because it's the faith that matters. Amen.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you so much for these stories that are in there to show us that salvation is for everybody. It's not just for people of a certain family line, or people who are somehow good enough or holy enough, righteous enough. It's for everybody, Lord, no matter what you've done. It's for the people that may be sitting on death row, and have had done some horrible things. But I had a change of heart. Lord, help us to open our hearts to you. And to understand Your love, Your mercy, your compassion for everybody. Even the people that sometimes we have a tendency to say they're not worthy. Those people matter to you, maybe the most Lord. Help us to have your heart to love the people around us even more. Be with us now. keep us safe. bring us back again. Jesus name Amen.