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## WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION

### I

STRABO, the ancient Greek geographer, who lived and wrote in the time of Christ, gives us some account of the once famous silver mines of Spain. The Roman imperial exchequer, he states,<sup>1</sup> was then netting out of them a daily revenue of 25,000 drachmae. When he thus refers to the "working out" of these mines, no reader of his supposes for a moment that he is speaking of the Romans' acquiring of them, but of their operating, exploiting, getting the most value they could out of, what was already securely in their possession. Why, then, in regard to the above Apostolic behest (Phil. ii. 12) should so many of us tamely accept the hackneyed unevangelical exposition that Christian believers are committed to some grim interminable, or at least lifelong, task of achieving or acquiring their personal salvation—in Romish parlance, of making their souls? Surely, the meaning is entirely different. We have here an inspiring clarion-call to us to operate, practise, act out, get the full virtue out of, the salvation already bestowed upon each of us by sovereign grace through faith; amply and thoroughly to draw upon, to educe, to bring into play and action, to utilise and exercise, all its spiritual resources, each for the benefit of his brethren as well as of himself, and for the honour and glory of Christ the Saviour. For the same Greek term is used in both passages—*katergazesthai*, the verb form of it in the Epistle, and the verbal noun form of it, *katergasia*, in Strabo.

### II

Let us, to start with, examine the Apostle's context. There was one fault in the Philippian Church, which, however, might happily not as yet be said to have passed far beyond the tendency stage, viz., discord. The fact that, in every single letter of his, except the little personal one to Philemon, Paul deprecates this weakness, expressly or by implication, indicates, not so much

<sup>1</sup> *Geog.* iii. 2. 10.

its widespread prevalence, as his keen anxiety to repress the very slightest appearance of an evil so peculiarly baneful and discrediting to the Gospel cause. So, after bidding the Church members already in ch. i. 27, to "stand fast in one spirit", acting with one soul like an athletic team, he again in this ch. ii calls for strict harmony, expressing it in four or five homologous terms. To ensure this happy outcome, he points to manifold mighty influences he was entitled to trust to. He could trust to their Christian love and affection for himself, and indeed such an outcome would fill his cup with joy. He could trust to the new and distinctive virtue which the Gospel had evolved, lowly-mindedness (with the definite article), diffusing itself among them, for it was a veritable spring of concord. Above all, he could trust to the infallible impression which the contemplation would make on them of their Saviour's wondrous self-sacrificing humility: how He, the Son of God, merged Himself in fallen humanity, aye, stooped to the most shameful death, to deliver man from sin's guilt and power—nor did He, as touching that human nature of His which He had assumed, go without commensurate reward and exaltation. The retrospect which Paul here enters into of Christ's self-sacrificing love is paralleled in two other places in his Epistles (Rom. xv. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 9), and in each place the connection is altruistic, nor evidently in any one of the three cases would that retrospect have been set forth at all but for its altruistic purport.

Here, at the opening of ver. 12, the expository divergence supervenes. The Apostle, in the light especially of this reminiscence of our Lord's altruistic redeeming mission, proceeds to enforce afresh the appeal he had been making for inter-Christian harmony. He starts off with the inferential conjunction, *hōste*, ("wherefore") which he employs ten times in his letters when linking on a command or exhortation to a foregoing argument or statement of fact. Before expressing this command, however, which cannot but be coincident with the previous imperatives of vv. 2-5 on the same matter, he bespeaks from them an obedience such as has always in time past been accorded, not to himself personally but to his apostolic Divine authority, as in 2 Thess. iii. 14; Philem. 21; 2 Cor. ii. 9; vii. 15. Then comes the command which is the subject of our review, and which, if understood as we represent it above, fits without question exactly into its setting. They had learned, while he

was among them, trustfully and prayerfully to lay hold on, to avail themselves of, the sanctifying grace and guidance and strength that flow from reconciliation and fellowship with God into the hearts and lives of those who come to Him through His Son, for the conquest of all fleshly and evil impulses such as mutual dissension and ill-feeling; let them not flag in that constantly needful spiritual exercise.

Reassuringly he adds: "Why! (which in many places is better as a rendering of *gar* than "for") God it is that worketh in you both the willing and the working", reproducing a couplet already used by him in a Christian altruistic connection (in virtually the same form) in 2 Cor. viii. 10. Then, straight away, without the slightest resumptive or transitional token, since no occasion called for such, the imperatival note sounds out again, and more concretely: "Do all things without murmuring or disputing." "Murmuring" (*gongusmos*) has a manward or social import in the other three N.T. places where it occurs: "disputings" are clearly inter-human. He goes on: "Be blameless" (in men's eyes—*Speaker's Comm.*) "and harmless" (the word used by Christ when sending disciples out into the world, Matt. x. 16); "children of God" (Matt. v. 44f.) in a crooked era; light-bearers (*phōstēres*, drawing out, working out, and diffusing, illumination from the central Light) in the world; upholders of the Word—no mere silent examples, in whose open and edifying Gospel loyalty the Apostle might glory in the great Day. The whole section is altruistic and of a piece.

How does the salvation-earning exposition chime in with the context? 1. At the diverging point, ver. 12, the opening inferential mark, *hōste*, is by the generality of such expositors quietly slurred over. None of them is at ease in the disposal of it, and we can see why. 2. Handling as he had been just then a Christian-social or altruistic theme, Paul in recalling the Incarnation and Atonement had, somewhat in contrast to his general practice, signalled the ultra-selflessness, rather than the propitiation, in Christ's work; hence just then no reader or listener would be looking out for an immediate application to follow of the urgency devolving on everybody to secure his own personal salvation. 3. Certainly no reader or listener would fail to wonder at his being bidden to enter on this enterprise without any express further concern with or approach to that exalted Lord of salvation. 4. It will be agreed that to the

Apostle the lack or loss of salvation (whatever be the theories we hold of it) was the gravest of all mortal concerns. It meant "the wrath of God" (sixteen times), "the power of Satan", perdition, death, darkness, blood on one's own head, affording "no hope", but evoking apostolic "tears" and "anguish of heart". This stern and awful doom these Philippians are urged to avert from themselves—to show what a biddable set of people they are! Aye, biddable in his absence as well as in his presence! Could there really be a bathos more egregious? 5. Then, at an instantaneous hop without any relieving particle, we get switched back again in ver. 14 to the previous topic, so relatively minor, of contentiousness. No wonder the Latin Church's versions smuggle in an innocent "and" or "but" to weaken the continuous identity of subject. It is by this abusing of the context that, as McCheyne Edgar maintains, advocates of work-salvation, absolute or modified, obtain their favourite slogan, and that from the Apostle Paul.

### III

Let us have a further look at the word *katergazesthai*. Besides here and in Rom. vii (where it is six times repeated), it is found in a dozen places in Paul's Epistles.<sup>1</sup> It is always there transitive, always governs an object, and is normally rendered "to work". In English to "work" a thing is a most familiar usage, though we are prone to forget it when reading this text. We work a pump, a typewriter, a scheme. In this passage we have "work out". The "out" is an adverb, more expressive doubtless of thoroughness than of exteriority, as when we wear out a coat, tire out a horse, burn out a candle; this is certainly the case here where "out" represents the Greek prefix *kata*—so that the antithesis, so favoured by some evangelists, between the "working in" of ver. 13 and the "working out" of ver. 12 derives no support from the original. Now every object (be it abstract or concrete or metaphorical) of the verb *katergazesthai*, wherever it occurs in the Epistles is, it may fairly be claimed, already in being, not at all waiting to be acquired (or incurred), but here and now available or liable to be operated on or with, exercised, drawn out, brought

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 27; ii. 9; iv. 15; v. 3; xv. 18; 1 Cor. v. 3; 2 Cor. iv. 17; v. 5; vii. 10, 11; ix. 11; xii. 12; Eph. vi. 13. Also James i. 3, 20; 1 Pet. iv. 3.

into action, enhanced as to its good or aggravated as to its evil. Antecedently to N.T. times, likewise, Bezaleel is not said to have laboriously acquired the wood which he works out (*katergazesthai*) into carvings for the Tabernacle (Exod. xxxv. 33 Sept.).

IV

Is a gold mine an infelicitous thing whereunto to liken our salvation in Christ? The Apostle would never say so, he who—like his Lord in Rev. iii. 18—speaks of its riches in ch. iv. 19 here, as often elsewhere, 1 Cor. i. 5; 2 Cor. ix. 11; Eph. i. 7; ii. 7 (“the exceeding riches of His grace”); iii. 8 (“the unsearchable riches”), 16; Col. ii. 3 (“hid treasures”). How untiringly he adverts to the spiritual resources of the Christian! the Word in the knowledge of which we may unceasingly increase; the example of the Lord Jesus (and especially in regard of forbearance); the sense of His ownership of us; His sustaining intercession on high; the assurance of His unfailing promises; the potency of the Holy Ghost, and His accruing fruits! Even a rapid scanning of this brief Epistle proves impressive. We learn of God’s sovereign purpose of grace (ii. 13); His peace (i. 2; iv. 7); His “energising” of His people with “the supply of the Spirit” (i. 19; ii. 13); of Christ’s pattern (ii. 5); and His imparted resurrection and power and our co-suffering fellowship with Him (iii. 10); of apostolic example (i. 14; ii. 25; iv. 8, 9); of the Divinely bestowed gift of heavenly citizenship (iii. 20); discerning and persuasive inter-Christian love (i. 9, 17; ii. 1); effectual prayer (i. 19; iv. 6); faith (i. 25); joy (the Epistle’s keynote); fortitude (i. 14, 29); humility (ii. 3); and liberality (iv. 16)—all crowned with the two great statements: “I can do everything in Him that strengthens me” and “My God shall supply every need of yours”.

Truly does Alex. Maclaren say: “Christian people do not sufficiently bring the greatest forces of their religion to bear upon the homely task of curing hasty tempers.” Very many sincere Christians know and claim for themselves a very small part of that which God has made possible for us in Christ. Suppose an acquaintance of ours had some time ago been endowed by his multi-millionaire uncle with a Peruvian silver mine, staffed and in full working order, and we observed him, notwithstanding, continuing in the same pinched and seedy

condition in which he had been before that endowment came to him, should we not most naturally urge him to work out his mine? This is just what the Apostle does here, in the spiritual domain. He is "looking diligently lest any fall short of the grace of God" (Heb. xii. 15, R.V.). Yet who has ever heard a holiness-convention speaker make use of this telling watchword? It has been handed over as a present to legalists and merit-mongers.

## V

This is how Bishop Moule succinctly states it: "The man decisively accepted in Christ is the man also fully endowed in Christ, and needing only to discover his wealth".<sup>1</sup> "Decisively accepted"—here, however, we come up against the question, Is soul-salvation decisively and definitely bestowed in this life by God on him who, in a penitent sense of need and in simple trust, looks for it? and is it bestowed, possessed and enjoyed, there and then without further delay? To pass over the rest of the N.T., is the Apostle in harmony with our Protestant view of salvation being "free, instant, and entire"? Undoubtedly, he is. His writings lend not a tittle of support to the legalist and the neo-Evangelical notion of a soul-salvation reached as a "goal", "after a lifelong progression", "gradually attained" and "achieved by our efforts".<sup>2</sup> He uses the Greek aorist tense, which expresses factualness and shuts out all action commenced and not accomplished, in setting down the verb "save" in Rom. viii. 24; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. iii. 5; the perfect in Ephes. ii. 8; not to speak of the numberless instances of his aorist use of this verb in non-indicative moods. He employs the aorist also with other words tantamount to save—"reconcile", "justify", "forgive", "set free", "cleanse", "bring nigh". It is he, too, who calls out to man, "now is the day of salvation". So much for instancy, and, in the twofold aspect in which our Apostle guarantees it, we hold our salvation here and now to be also entire. First from sin's guilt (Rom. viii. 1); then, from sin's domination (vi. 14, like 1 John v. 4); it can no longer master us, though it will not fail to molest us; no longer bully though it will continue to buffet. How could men and women, with their salvation still undecided, respond to his

<sup>1</sup> *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> *The Churchman*, lviii (1937), p. 75. See article "Is Salvation a Process?" by the present writer in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, xii (1940), pp. 223ff.

call to "rejoice" in Christ (ch. iii. 1; iv. 4)? The Church of England catechism rightly instructs its sincere scholar to say: "I heartily thank my heavenly Father that He hath called me to this state of salvation through Jesus Christ, and I pray unto God to give me His grace that I may continue in the same unto my life's end."

Occasional occurrences in the Apostle's writings and elsewhere in the N.T., of "save" and "salvation" in the *future* form range themselves under two heads. 1. No Scripture promises us exemption from sin's buffeting and molestation while life lasts. And we shall be also in lifelong subjection to the general aftermath of sin's entrance into the world, the ills that sinful flesh is heir to (enumerated, say, in Rom. viii. 35; Rev. xxi. 4). But as soon as ever we are taken hence, to be with Christ which is far better, we look for a release from these, as instant as was the previous one down here from sin's guilt and mastery. Matt. xxiv. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb. i. 14; ix. 28; 1 Pet. i. 5, ii. 2, R.V.; iv. 18, are thus accounted for. 2. There is a usage of grammar, not solely Greek, whereby *an established rule or law* is proclaimed as immediately operative, in each several case concerned, from that moment henceforward: hence John x. 9; Acts xv. 11; xvi. 31; Rom. v. 9; x. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 15.

As to "save" in the *present* tense, for a convincible mind it should be enough to note that the N.T. may be searched in vain for an instance of, or a reference to, a single or separate individual person in process of being saved.<sup>1</sup> And we may say that "present salvation" is now a phrase to be held suspect. Once it signalled the blessed permanence and assured constancy and continuity of the soul-salvation already in the past bestowed on the sincere believer. But it has come to be employed to insinuate an incompleteness, a hand-to-mouth unsettledness, a wobbly incertitude, in regard to salvation in all its aspects.

<sup>1</sup> In the plural there are four passive participles, all (except that in Luke xiii. 23) rendered in R.V. "they that are being saved", which "gradual salvation" advocates avail themselves of for their second favourite slogan (Acts ii. 47; 1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15). They confuse a continuing *series or class* of persons, each of whom once for all and for an instant experiences some identical thing, with a non-integrated mass of persons each of whom experiences that thing indefinitely. If "those being saved" pass through a lifelong or protracted process, is that also true of "those being circumcised" or "baptised", for the construction is exactly the same (Gal. vi. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 29)? The counterpart "those being lost" in 1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15, are recognised by Ellicott to be "a class continuously developing". Hastings' *DB* sees in "those being sanctified" of Heb. ii. 11 similarly "no progressiveness but a constantly growing class" (iv. 393). With this continuous class in mind, the remaining 1 Cor. xv. 2; Heb. vii. 25; 1 Pet. iii. 2; iv. 18 (generic); Jude 23; cause no difficulty.



## VI

What manner of persons are these Philippians to whom Paul is writing? Is their past sin's guilt still unlifted? Those people for whom he bespeaks God's peace, whose faith-joy was such a factor, whose prayer so effectual! Does the domination of sin lie still upon them when they are inwardly energised by God, endowed with "the supply of the Spirit"; most loving and liberal to His apostolic servant; in Gospel witness imbued with fortitude and humility alike! Surely it cannot be that, whereas their Ephesian fellow-Christians "have been saved", salvation for these lingers still beyond their grasp.

But may it be that a degree of task-work of some sort must be kept up in order to qualify for the retention of salvation already bestowed? Without a doubt we may look for good actions from truly saved men, for Newman said with perfect correctness that "Protestants do not think the inconsistency possible of really believing without obeying."<sup>1</sup> But if Paul has emphasised anything more than another in his Epistles it is that salvation is no outcome of our works. It is enough to refer to Phil. iii. 6f., appending to it such other passages as Eph. ii. 8, 9 ("saved . . . not of works lest anyone should boast"); Rom. iii. 24 ("justified freely by His grace"); vi. 23 R.V. ("the free gift of God is eternal life"); xi. 6 ("if it be of works, then it is no more of grace"). Yes, salvation is free, as well as instant and entire: so reiterates the Apostle. Now, in the judgment of Marcus Dods, Paul was "probably on the whole the most richly endowed man, morally and intellectually, the world has seen". And must we believe that, nevertheless, he could, even in a short epistle like this, unwittingly perpetrate the most palpable of self-contradictions?

## VII

There are a couple of parallels to this Philippians dictum in the Apostle's letters—one centring on the verb *katargazesthai* and one on "salvation"—which, if conventional parrot-exegesis be not allowed to cow us unduly, throw light for us upon it and one another.

<sup>1</sup> *Difficulties of Anglicanism*, p. 223.

Eph. vi. 10, 13: "Keep strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on . . . take up the panoply of God (all the *hopla*, pieces of armament, which God provides), that, by *plying* (operating, exercising, bringing into action) *all of them*, ye may be able to stand your ground." Paul then at once proceeds to specify these, one by one—shield, belt, helmet, sword, etc. Now who is quite satisfied with the familiar "having done all" (having put forth your utmost endeavours)? It is vague and indiscriminate, and thus discouraging; and sounds humanistic. But more, it is as a rendering inconsistent: in all the rest of its twenty occurrences, the R.V., in text or margin, renders *katergazesthai* "work"; here alone we get the bare "do", which does not do for a candid student. *Hapanta*, "all", agrees with *hopla* (neut. pl.) which underlies the collective *panoplia*. It has a relational or definite tinge ("them all") as compared with the ordinary *panta* form (see Luke v. 11; xv. 13; Acts x. 8; xi. 10). And it is given an emphasis by being placed in front of its governing verb, which is unique for either it or the general *panta* in the Greek N.T.<sup>1</sup>

Rom. xiii. 11-13: "Now is salvation nearer to us than when we (first) believed; . . . let us put on the armour of light." Since our first acceptance of it, the meaning of the Gospel has penetrated continuously deeper into our hearts, and we have acquired and now enjoy a more matured and intimate experience of what it can do for life and character than we realised in the first raw moments of our conversion (cf. Heb. v. 12). The prophet Isaiah's martial figure of speech (lix. 17), which that Ephesian passage amplified, is here on the other hand compressed, whilst at the same time the terms of other cognate utterances of his are allusively pressed into service. No less than eighteen times has he been already drawn upon in this Epistle for quotation or allusion. When he proclaims in lvi. 1—as does the Psalmist (lxxxv. 9)—that salvation is near for God's people, the prophet means that they are in veritable contact with it in all its blessed potency. Whereas our English "near" entails some slight interval of time or space, the Hebrew "near", "come near" (*q-r-bh*) quite commonly does not so. Deut. xxx. 14, quoted already in this very Epistle (Rom. x. 8), interprets "near" as signifying "in one's heart". Isa. l. 8, "He is

<sup>1</sup> It may be added that the verb forms, *katergasamenoi* and "stand" (*stēnai*), being both aorist, are *synchronous*, as well as conjoined: that is to say, the working is ceaselessly essential to standing one's ground.

near that justifieth", has likewise been cited in this Epistle (viii. 33) as "It is God that justifieth". Young's Concordance gives twenty-three cases of the Hebrew verb "come near" being rendered simply "come" in the A.V., and of these the more pedantic R.V. retains eight (Exod. xxxvi. 2; Num. ix. 7; Deut. xxv. 1, 9; Ruth ii. 14; 1 Kings ii. 7; Ps. xxvii. 2; Jonah i. 6). "Come near" and "arrive" are treated as synonyms often enough (Isa. v. 19; Eccl. xii. 1; Lam. iv. 18; Ezek. vii. 12, xxii. 4). And who would attempt to qualify God's "nearness" to the believing and seeking soul, so frequently expressed? It is much the same with the Greek "near" and "come near" (*engus, engizō*), especially in vivid, non-prosaic contexts (*e.g.* Eph. ii. 13; Luke xxi. 20, R.V.). "Nearer" here then means "more of a reality": not time or space is in mind, but efficacy and virtue. The Gospel daylight has actually arrived, ver. 13 (= 1 Thess. v. 5, 8). Salvation can be truly described as light (Isa. lxii. 1) or paralleled with it (xlix. 6; li. 4, 5; Ps. xxvii. 1; Luke ii. 30, 32): Paul might have as readily spoken of "armour of salvation" as of "armour of light"—could have represented salvation as a repository of spiritual artillery as readily as Isaiah represented it as a fount of refreshment ("With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation"). As regards the conventional exegesis of the passage (which ignores all prophetic source or suggestion), whilst the relevance can at once be accepted of a monitory reminder of the imminence of eternity or of the Advent (as in Heb. x. 25; James v. 8, 9), surely a harking back to the lapsed interval, between their conversion and "now", must fairly be pronounced pointless and unnatural.

1 Tim. vi. 12 (cf. ver. 19): "Fight the good fight of the faith: lay hold on the eternal life." This, another martial passage of the Apostle's, is familiarly adduced in support of salvation being something earned and achieved: prosecute this fight and ultimately you will be saved. Now in the Greek N.T., in a dozen places, we meet this kind of couplet. Something is ordered of a continuous nature, and is naturally expressed in the indicative present: then, to *clear the road* for it, something helpful is ordered to be summarily performed, or something obstructive to be summarily removed, and this is couched in the aorist (momentary or peremptory) imperative. Already the above Ephesians passage—of which probably enough this is a mental echo—

has afforded an instance.<sup>1</sup> Here, the fight is to be persevering; the laying hold immediate because preliminary. Again, "lay hold" (*epilabesthai*) implies no attaining or achieving, yea, no exertion or endeavour; the entity (thing or person) laid hold on is always accessible and available; the action is never an end in itself, but for the utilising of something appertaining to the entity for some further (good or bad) purpose. In Luke at least a dozen examples of this appear. The Septuagint affords many also, e.g. in Ps. xxxv. 2; 1 Kings i. 50. The Ephesians passage above has the cognate *analabesthai*, twice over. "The eternal life" is identifiable with Christ Himself (John vi. 33, 48; xi. 25; xiv. 6; Col. iii. 4). "Lay hold on (*epilabesthai*, Sept.) my instruction," says Wisdom (Prov. iv. 13), and Christ's words are life, eternal life. Must we think that Timothy was still without a decisive possession of it? He was called thereunto, the verse before us states. But, for the lifelong fight of faith-witness, he needed to equip himself at once with all its provision of sustaining grace. Further on, again, in *vv.* 17, 19, he is bidden to stimulate to their abiding special duty the wealthy believers, in view of their being inevitably tempted to mistake earthly pleasures for life, so that they too may not delay (aorist again) to requisition for service the same all-essential grace inherent in "the real life".<sup>2</sup>

## VIII

There is just one other passage of the Apostle's to which a similar unevangelical sense is attached, that is entitled to a passing notice—1 Cor. ix. 24, "so run that ye may obtain". The metaphor here is likewise drawn from the arena, not, however, of warfare, but the kindred one of athletic context. In an earlier chapter Paul has already spoken of a type that do not fail of soul-salvation, yet fail to stand certain Divine testing (*dokimazein*, iii. 13-15), like those addressed in 1 John ii. 28, whilst others receive an Advent reward; and the context there shows the testing to be that of Gospel-witnessing service. In a re-echoing context, in 1 Cor. ix, a "prize" (*brabeion*) is also held out to be won, the rules of the contest for which

<sup>1</sup> Plus Matt. vi. 23, 24; Luke xvii. 3; John ii. 16; vii. 24; xx. 27; Eph. iv. 30, 31; James v. 9, 10; Rev. ii.-5; iii. 2, 3, 19 (and cf. Rom. xiv. 13).

<sup>2</sup> The loosely appended purposive clause following "that" (*hina*) in ver. 19, can be paralleled in 2 Cor. x. 9 (ii. 5). And "for the time to come" need not primarily demand any *post mortem* sense, since a simple "thenceforth" represents the same Greek phrase in Luke xiii. 9.

would be duly published by an announcer or herald who could also himself participate; and a person who fails to pass the testing is described (ver. 27) as *adokimos* (negative adjective related to *dokimazein*), what we would call a non-prizeman. The awesome impression, however, which the translation "castaway" long since given to this adjective by the A.V. (the R.V. has "rejected") makes on the minds of casual readers, has rendered most difficult the task of disabusing many of the idea that the Apostle is treating of the alternatives of gaining or of missing personal soul-salvation. The counter-considerations are there before them—the pointer afforded by the earlier passage; the foregoing context here; the consistent association of athletic metaphor with witness-service, and of the *positive* form of that adjective with witness-probation; the exceptionalness of a testing of soul-salvation by God the Giver (in 2 Cor. xiii. 5 it is a self-testing); the unexampled baldness of the expression "having *preached*", which would be entirely natural if "announced" or "heralded" (the contest rules) were the rendering. Yet, forsooth, Paul is to be understood as unsaying here what he so constantly asseverates and as teaching that men are saved only at the end of a lifelong tug and struggle.<sup>1</sup> He, forsooth, carried about with him a perpetual misgiving that his soul might yet be finally lost, despite his strong expressions to the contrary (Rom. viii, etc.), not to say his Lord's assurances, such as that "him that cometh to me I will (after his admission)<sup>2</sup> in no wise cast out"!

## IX

It remains to be added that "your own salvation" suggests no supplementing of Christ's saviourship, but alludes to the simple, though to them salient, circumstance of Paul's absence, referred to not only in the opening part of this verse, but earlier in i. 27. "Your salvation is completely independent of me and of my whereabouts. Almighty God Himself indwells and energises each one of you. I look to the withdrawal of my personal stimulation proving an incentive to increased reliance on your part, for His glory, upon His cleansing and sustaining grace

<sup>1</sup> The sense of this passage must also determine that of its later parallel, Phil. iii. 12-14, with its like references to the race, the prize (*brabeion*), and its attaining (*katalabein*). "Fellowship with His sufferings" is no inevitable factor in simple soul-salvation, nor, for that matter, in any merely private or self-related extra-sanctity.

<sup>2</sup> John vi. 37: *ekballein exō*—not "repel" (at the outset), any more than in ii. 15; ix. 34; Matt. vii. 4; viii. 12; ix. 25; xxii. 13; xxv. 30, Acts xxvii. 38; Gal. iv. 30.

alone. Cease ye from man. Let it not be with you as with the Israelites after Joshua's death, or Barak, or the Kings Joash and Uzziah " (Jud. ii. 7; iv. 8; 2 Chron. xxiv. 2; xxvi. 5). Priestism knows what it is doing when it bandies about the four or five words, while carefully slurring over their context; indeed even the monosyllable "own" must have a sinister sound to the sacerdotal ear. Then, further, "with fear and trembling" is no description of the fittingly quaking feelings of souls still consciously unreconciled with God. This synonym-couplet occurs three times elsewhere in the N.T. (1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 15; Eph. vi. 5), always with a Godward reference. Those who are, or should be, so affected are true Christians: once it is the Apostle himself, he who so often, especially in this letter, acclaims the Gospel joy. The phrase having already appeared numbers of times in the Greek O.T., we are entitled to deem it to have been an established colloquialism, denoting less physical-mental trepidation, though not less true solemnity, in apostolic days as compared with ours. Paul looks for what is removed a whole hemisphere from carnal conscience-dread, for what God Himself instils into the hearts of all His true people (Jer. xxxii. 40)—that gracious sensitive solicitude lest, by any discrediting of the blessed upholding and sanctifying power attendant upon salvation in Christ, they should occasion displeasure to their loving heavenly Father.

What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.  
 Shall he, for such deliv'rance freely wrought,  
 Recompense ill? He trembles at the thought!  
 (Cowper)

*Dublin.*

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