

THE HIGHER CALLING

By
Rev. Bertrand L.
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Aurel Duka

About Pastor Dr. Bertrand L. Comparet, A. B., J. D.

Upon reading these most interesting discussions one will quickly recognize that the author is an ardent student of the Bible and particularly eschatology or the study of the prophecies of the things which have already taken place, the things that are now taking place, and the things that are yet to take place in the future. He is an ordained minister. His studies in this area of thought extend back over a period of thirty years.

One will quickly appreciate also the straight forward manner of factual presentation and logical thinking. This is due to his professional training and occupation as a well recognized Attorney at Law. He not only writes in a clear, convincing style, but is distinguished in the pulpit, on the lecture platform, and over the air for his clarity of thought and profound logic.

Bertrand L. Comparet is a native Californian, born in San Diego. He was graduated from Stanford University with the degree of Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor. He was admitted to the California Supreme Court or California Bar in 1926 and by the United States Supreme Court in 1956. From 1926 to 1932 he was a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County and from 1942 to 1947 was Deputy City Attorney for the City of San Diego.

After that time he was in private law practice.

Quite obviously, he is a tried and true Christian and a loyal and patriotic American, a believer in a Sovereign America under Constitutional government.

Pastor Bertrand L. Comparet started teaching in 1933 and continued for over 40 years. He returned to the Father in August of 1983.

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AS CHRISTIANS, WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER LIFE: the doctrine of resurrection is fundamental in Christianity. But this is not the final answer to our questions: it is only the starting point for many questions. What sort of life will this be? Are there different grades or levels in that life? How can you know what your own place in that life will be?

The only "gospel" preached in our churches today is the Gospel of Personal Salvation. Is this the all inclusive answer? No: for some churches regard if salvation" as a temporary, changing thing: they say that you can be "saved" today and lose your salvation tomorrow and, I presume, regain it on the day after-tomorrow. (If that be true, you d better be very careful as to just which day you die). Other churches teach that once you have salvation r, you have it forever. Which churches are right? Let's find out just what "salvation" is, and what benefits it implies.

In the Old Testament, three Hebrew words are commonly translated "Salvation : these are **YESHUAH** (yesh-oo-aw), **YESHAH** (yeh-shah), and rarely--**TESHUAH** (tesh-oo-aw). The root meaning of all three is basically "safety", varying through "rescue" to "health". In short deliverance from danger. In the New Testament, two Greek words are trpslated "salvation" these are **SOTERIA** (so-tay-ree-ah) and **SOTERION** (so-tay-ree-on)---and their meaning is identical with the three Hebrew words I mentioned.

All five of these words can be used very correctly to describe the rescue of a person from drowning or any other danger in this life; but in our Christian doctrines, they have a special usage: to describe our rescue from a permanent death. This doctrine is not something new: It is clearly stated in both Old and New Testaments. Thus, in Hosea 13:14 God promises us this deliverance from death. In the Hebrew, it is clearer than in your King James Version translation. "From the hand of the grave I do ransom them,

from death I redeem them. Where is thy plague, O death? Where thy destruction, O grave?"

And in the New Testament, John 11:25-26 states it clearly: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." And in Hebrews 2:9,15 it says, "But we see Jesus, who was made for a little time lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Needless to say, this immortality comes only to Christians: it is clearly promised only to those who claim it in the only possible way: by faith in Jesus Christ. This was demonstrated as far back as the first Passover, in Egypt: none would be spared, even among the Israelites, except those who put the blood of the lamb on the door posts, outside the front door of their houses, as public proclamation of their faith that by the blood of the real Lamb of God, they would be saved. (Gen. 12:12-13) The same truth is again confirmed in the New Testament, in Acts 4:12 and Hebrews 2:..J. So it comes not merely from being an Israelite, one of the Chosen People, one of the Sons of God, but only to those who are Christians.

Also, note carefully this fact: just being "saved" promises you nothing more than that you will escape eternal death: it does not say that your future life will be in any particular rank or standard. Will you be among those who are great in the Kingdom of God? or will you be merely a sort of "low man on the totem-pole"? That is another question, and we will take up the answer to it in detail, a little later.

But is even this much uncertain? Will God, after having given you eternal life, change His mind and take it away again? No, you need not fear that. Salvation is not something that you have earned, or could possibly earn: no man is good enough to achieve that. It is purely the gift of God, and He does not take back His gifts. We are assured, in Romans 11:29 that "God does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His

blessing or sends His call. So we may safely conclude that no-one ever loses his salvation. But again, this is not the full answer to our problem. We find the great Apostle Paul highly worried that he might lose something very precious. Remember that Paul had been selected and called by Jesus Christ, personally; he had received direct revelations from time to time; he had even been caught up into the third heaven, for special revelations. Surely, Paul had no fear of losing his salvation: no one understood more clearly than he that his salvation had been bought for him on the Cross, given to him by God, and nothing could frustrate the will of God to save him. Let us, therefore, carefully examine Paul's words, to see what he feared he might lose.

In I Corinthians 9:24-27, as it reads in the Greek, Paul says: "Know you not that those in a race-course running, all indeed run: but one receives the prize? Thus run, that you may obtain. And everyone therein contending, in all things has self-control: they indeed, therefore, that they may receive a perishable wreath; but we, an imperishable. I therefore thus run, as not uncertainly; I thus box as not beating the air. But I severely discipline my body and keep it under control: lest possibly, having as a herald summoned others, I myself should be disappointed.

His reference was to the well-known Greek games. The winner was crowned with a wreath of olive, laurel, pine, or parsley. The contestants were kept under strict training rules --- just as modern athletes. When the games opened, a herald sounded a trumpet and summoned the contestants.

So Paul knew that he was in a contest wherein there could be losers, as well as winners; and he was determined not to lose. What was this contest in which he was entered? In Philippians 3:11-15 he explains it (and again it is much clearer in the Greek than in most translations). "If possibly I may attain to the resurrection **OUT FROM AMONG** the dead (Exanastasis, resurrection **OUT, EK nekrod, OUT FROM** the dead). Not that I have already received it, or have already been perfected; but I pursue, if indeed I may lay hold on that for which Christ also laid hold on me. Brethren, I do not reckon myself to have laid hold on it; but one thing I do: forgetting the things behind, reaching out toward the things ahead,

I pursue along the line toward **THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS**. As many, therefore, as are mature should be of this mind; and if in anything you think differently, even this will God reveal to you."

Paul knew that he was certain to be at least in the resurrection **OF THE DEAD** (anastasis nekros): but he was trying hard to be in a special resurrection **OUT FROM AMONG** the dead--- leaving most of the dead behind. **THIS WAS NOT A GIFT: HE HAD TO WIN IT** ---and this he might fail to do. This higher calling was a great prize, indeed-if he obtained it. Paul well knew what our Savior Himself had said: "Many are called, but few chosen." So with the calling went a heavy responsibility; and failure to meet this responsibility would surely lose him the great prize, although he would still retain his salvation, his resurrection along with the other dead. This responsibility was repeatedly emphasized by Jesus Christ—for example, in Luke 12:48 "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.' Paul states his realization of this duty in I Corinthians 9:16 (and it is stated more clearly in the Greek): "For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, have been entrusted with a stewardship.

Again, this is nothing new: the same responsibility was placed upon the prophet Ezekiel to whom God said, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the House of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, "Thou shalt surely die and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity: but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity: but thou hast delivered thy soul."

So we see that mere salvation alone is not the complete answer for everyone: he who aspires to be rewarded with a special place, a higher calling, must earn it, and must expect to have his performance judged with a critical eye.

We see that salvation does not promise you anything more than continued life, after death of the body; if you want that new life to be on a high standard, then this is a matter of rewards which you must earn, and which you can lose if you fail to meet the requirements for them. This is something which the churches have completely overlooked in their concentration on teaching only the gospel of personal salvation. As usual, this is because they won't read the Bible: for this principle of rewards to be earned is emphasized in many places in the Bible.

For example, in Isaiah 40:10 we read, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm He shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. As always, the New Testament constantly states this same theme: in Matthew 16:27, Jesus Christ says, "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." And again, in Revelation 11:18 it says, "And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."

I know that most of the ministers and their unfortunate congregations who have been misled by them, will say: "But this can't apply to us, for we have been told that Christians are no longer subject to any judgment." This is a mistaken and false doctrine, as the clergymen would know if they only read the Bible ---yes, even just the New Testament: For the Apostle Paul tells us plainly, in II Corinthians 5:10., "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

The best Christian that ever lived will be judged: not a judgment of condemnation for punishment, but a judgment to decide how small or how great his reward shall be. This is what Paul was speaking of when he said in I Corinthians 9:24-27, "Know you not that those in a race-course running, all indeed run: but only one receives the prize? Thus run, that you may obtain. And everyone therein contending, in all things has

self-control: they indeed, therefore, that they may receive a perishable wreath; but we, an imperishable. I therefore thus run, as not uncertainly; I thus box, as not beating the air. But I severely discipline my body and keep it under control: lest possibly, having as a herald summoned others, I myself should be disapproved." Paul knew that the prize of the Higher Calling could be won---or lost; and he would do nothing that would risk its loss. John also gives the warning, in II John 8 "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

Faith alone cannot bring you the great rewards. Habbakuk 2:4 which Paul quotes in Romans 1:17 does say, "The just shall LIVE by his faith"--but notice that merely life is all that this promises: if you want more than that, it is up to you to show yourself worthy of it. Therefore, Paul, who stressed the value of faith more than any other writer in the Bible, worked for his reward; and finally felt that he had gained It, for he says in Timothy 4:7-8 "we have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord , the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

Jesus Christ, Himself, discussed this idea quite thoroughly. Of course, there are many varieties of good deeds, and each of them has its own value--some great, some small. In Matthew 10:42, Jesus Christ said, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward." Yet we certainly cannot compare the reward for this simple deed with the reward of such works as those of Matthew, John and Paul: the higher quality of the work done, the reward must be proportionately great.

The cost of the great deeds is high: men will hate you for it, even those men who are receiving the most benefit from what you are doing; it will take more and more of your time and effort, crowding out many things which you formerly liked to do; it will become your life itself. But the claims of this world are strong: it is not easy, can you take it? In Luke 14:27-34, Jesus Christ gave the warning, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you,

intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish . Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can. not be My disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?"

The path to salvation is smooth and easy: faith is all that it requires, not much in the way of deeds. This way has been left open for those who could not climb the steep and rocky path which is the only way to the great rewards. If you are satisfied merely to be in the Kingdom of God, but not to be a part of Jesus Christ's administrative s: Ea_ff with which He governs the world, then salvation may be all you need. But if you aspire to a higher calling, then you must prepare for it in this life, as the next one will be too late to begin.

But if you consider taking the difficult and thorny path to the Higher Calling, then count the cost and frankly estimate your own ability to pay it, as Jesus Christ warned. Be sure that you will be tested, to see what sort of metal you are made of only the finest steel will make a good sword blade. Not all can take it. Remember Jesus Christ's own saying, that "Many are called, but few are chosen." In Luke 9:61-62 we read, "And another also said, 'Lord, I will follow Thee; but let me first e bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.' And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

Is it worth it? Yes, it is. In this world, it means plenty of trouble, of course. To make a fine sword blade, the metal is heated red hot, then laid on an anvil and heavily beaten with a hammer, forging it into shape and compressing the metal to give it a strength it could never get any other way; then it is again heated red-hot and suddenly plunged into cold water

to harden it; finally, it is heated again, to draw the temper enough that it will not be brittle, no longer easily broken. So your troubles when you seek to become a follower of Jesus Christ may well be compared to the making of a fine sword-blade, really fit to do battle with the Devil and his children. It certainly isn't a pleasant process: but don't you want to become the man which this process will make? There is no easy, cheap, financially profitable way. If you start on this hard path, be sure to hold out to the end: remember in Hebrews 10:38 it sums up the whole point: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in Him." Don't be laughed to scorn because you have started to build, but could not finish.

Paul reviews it all in I Corinthians 3:11-15, "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet through the very fire." If you are really one of God's elect, then build something which can stand the fire, and receive your reward for it.



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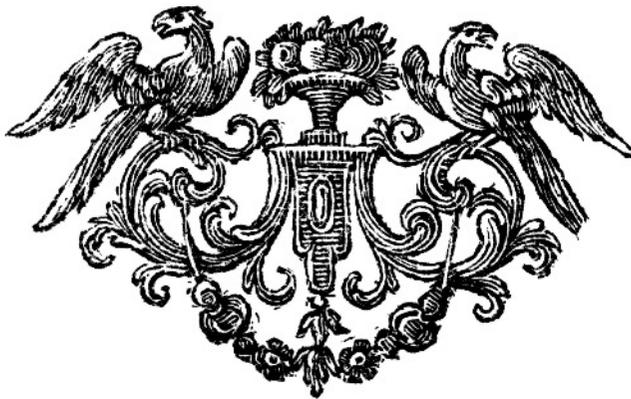
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