

Salvation Beyond Reason

Texts: Job 1:1; 2:1-10
Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12 (Series B) Ps 26
Mark10:2-16

Let us pray:

We must clearly acknowledge the place of reason and logic in our lives. Reason is a gift from God, and a great gift for us. We use it constantly throughout the day in setting schedules, using technology, reading, constructing, working with others.

Common sense keeps us from touching the hot stove or overextending our finances. All of this is good and right, and we give thanks to God for the gift and use of reason. However, we must also acknowledge that our reason has its limitations.

For one thing, our minds are finite, while God's is infinite; therefore, we must not presume to know better than God. For another, our minds are sinful and unreliable, while God's thoughts are holy and wholly trustworthy. Therefore, we must acknowledge that our limited minds cannot only not comprehend God; but, far worse, our minds will actively seek to contradict God's holy plan.

Thus, we must always subordinate our reason to what God's Word says. I saw a bumper sticker slogan which says it well in this case, "*God says it. I believe it. That settles it.*" Actually, we'd better shorten it up: "*God says it. That settles it.*"

There will be times when God's Word just doesn't make sense, doesn't say what we want it to say. When tempted toward something, clearly prohibited by Scripture; and at such times we will want to rationalize how Scripture can be made to fit with our desire:

"Sure, the Bible says '*Thou shalt not;*' but that was then and this is now." After all, God wants me to be happy, and this will make me happy. That is what really counts.

The list of excuses goes on and on, and none of them stand up before God. Each time we rationalize like this, we declare that our common sense, by nature sinful and unclean, is better and truer than God's word.

This is not the worst of it, because doubt comes as a package deal: If you doubt that parts of God's Words no longer apply to you, then how will you be certain that all of God's forgiveness still applies to you?

Sometimes it's not that the sinful mind connives to find a way around God's Word; instead, it's that trials, illnesses, and troubles hammer the Christian until God's Word no longer seems reasonable.

Affliction can oppress us until God seems horribly silent to our prayers and uncaring to our suffering. At such times, the sins of anger at God and doubt in His mercy begin to creep in: "The Lord says He works all things for my good, but I don't see that right now.

And since I don't see that right now, the Lord must not be working all things for my good." We know it is unwise to make rash decisions when under severe stress; it is far more foolish to decide that God is unfaithful when under a severe stress.

There will always be attacks from outside of us, and these are troubling as well. Scholars seek to dazzle us with arguments to convince us that the *creation accounts of Genesis* are just legend, and that the stories of the *Flood* or of *Jonah* aren't actually true. They will seek to persuade us that Jesus wasn't born of a *virgin*, that He didn't do miracles and that He didn't rise bodily from the grave.

How do they determine these things? By their own scholarship and intelligence; and in doing so, they declare their minds to be greater and superior than the Word of God. Be warned, because all the while they teach this, they will also say that they still believe in Jesus.

But what is left to believe? If the Bible is wrong about so many things, then how can it be right about your salvation, my salvation? If the Bible is wrong on *creation*, why would it be right on your *redemption*, my *redemption*?

If the Bible is wrong about the Flood, then how can it be right about Baptism? If Jesus didn't feed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish, how can He feed you with His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins?

Every argument which seeks to overturn the Word declares that human reason is truer than Scripture. It seeks to say that God must work according to our rules, or else what He does isn't real. It seeks to say that we are greater than God is.

Object lesson of the gospel: Jesus places a little child in the midst and says: *'anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it'*. That is a bold statement isn't it? Several years ago, this congregation went through a sever drought, I mean financial drought. We had cheques bounced, we couldn't send a delegate to church conventions, we had roof and other infostructure problems etc.

But we stacked together as a community of faith. Finally, we saw the light at the end of the tunnel and it was a train charging in! Things turned around for better. Now, I would like to ask you this morning how many of you believe it was a blessing, gift from God or it is just a coincidence? I leave that to you to reflect on.

Where God doesn't make sense to us, we confess-we say what He says. We confess that we naturally follow our finite minds and doubt far more readily than we follow God, and we confess that such doubts are sin.

Where God doesn't act the way, we want Him to, we confess before God that we often try to take control and turn God into what we want Him to be. Against the logic of the world, we acknowledge that God the Father almighty is the maker of the heavens and the earth.

Against those who declare it nonsense, we gladly confess that Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried.

We declare that He descended into grave, rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven. He has done all of this for us and for our salvation. And thus, we rejoice. We rejoice in what God's Word declares.

“Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word”.

We rejoice that, in His infinite wisdom-which is *far greater, superior, and holier* than ours, He sent His Son as the Bread of Life to show his infinite mercy to us. In His incomprehensible love, the Lord has come as the Bread of Life to feed us.

He feeds us with faith this day, so that we might have eternal life with Him. He feeds us with these marvelous words of faith, love and hope. *“Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”* Amen.

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