

SALVATION

1 Three things are necessary for the salvation of man: to know what he ought to believe, to know what he ought to desire, and to know what he ought to do. **Thomas Aquinas**

2 It is not the task of the Christian leader to go around nervously trying to redeem people, to save them at the last minute, to put them on the right track. For we are redeemed once and for all. The Christian leader is called to help others affirm this great news, and to make visible in daily events the fact that behind the dirty curtain of our painful symptoms there is something great to be seen: the face of Him in whose image we are shaped. **Henri Nouwen**

3 The transformation of the individual into God-likeness is the means and the end of Christian salvation. To become God-like — that is, to image the divine in one's body, emotions, mind, and spirit — is to reflect the glory of the Risen Christ. **Maria Jaoudi**

4 It is not humility to insist on being someone that you are not. It is as much as saying that you know better than God who you are and who you ought to be. How do you expect to arrive at the end of your own journey if you take the road to another man's city? How do you expect to reach your own perfection by leading somebody else's life? His sanctity will never be yours; you must have the humility to work out your own salvation in a darkness where you are absolutely alone...

Thomas Merton

5 Don't be an art critic. Paint. There lies salvation. **Paul Cezanne**

6 I invite you to think about what is saving for you. Then think about defining salvation as something you make happen. Ask yourself how you can ignite that sacred spark that is inside you to bring salvation to our world. How can you answer the call toward a vision of the common good? Consider how you will do salvation as an activity in the here and now. **Nancy**

Pellegrini, The Unitarian Church in Charleston from 2015 sermon, Salvation Redefined

7 If you want what you're saying heard, then take your time and say it so that the listener will actually hear it. You might save somebody's life. Your own, first. **Maya Angelou**

8 Put in its simplest terms, salvation is feeling safe, living without fear, living with the serenity in confidence that we are the objects of God's unfailing love, and that we will always be safe whatever happens, in life or in death, if we have a complete and childlike trust in God's love and tender mercy.

"This is a great leap of faith, which does not come easy, which deserts us continually, and which we achieve only by the greatest pain and effort — every day a trial, every breath a prayer. Salvation does not mean that we will avoid suffering, shame, humiliation, or defeat. It does mean that we are not alone — God's love, which was poured out for us in Jesus Christ, is always with us, to strengthen and save us in every situation, if we have trust in his love. **Pauli Murray**, Pauli Murray: Selected Sermons and Writings

Salvation Is Journey and Destination

9 . . . salvation is both a journey and a destination. This journey — itself God's gift — includes four phases. Desiring the unknown treasure / pearl, we search for the person whom God intends us to be. We find the treasure / pearl: our true or fuller selves. At this moment, we experience our personal identity not as invented by us but as discovered in God. In response, we sell everything that gave us fleeting security; in particular, we relinquish our controlling egos. And, we buy the treasure / pearl, our true selves, so that we may give ourselves for the benefit of others and the earth.

As we make this "saving" journey, we move during our lives toward our destination — also, God's gift — which is personal wholeness, beyond death, in community with God's people in union with the risen Christ. Raised by God to new life, we enter into what Jesus called the "kingdom of God."

The term salvation (Latin, "to be made safe") comes from its root *salus* which means "health," "well-being," "wellness," "personal wholeness." This

medical metaphor of being healed functions to describe God's gift of our whole, unique persons, our salus. Paradoxically, our maturation gradually occurs as we move closer to God; the greater our union with God, the greater our individuation. (See Ex 15:2; Lk 3:30.)

Robert A Krieg, for the website, Theology 101

10 Salvation should not be about the bliss we hope to attain, but living fully in the relationship that establishes that bliss. **Stephen Okey**

Salvation and Social Transformation

11 Martin Luther King says that human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted. The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists will we be? The nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists. Consider your offering as a beautiful way of supporting the heart opening. Consider it an anticoagulant and a heart transplant that we all need in this vast skinless body of awareness. It's a way to nurture and heal each other. **Ruth King**

12 "The responsibility lies with all of us. At times it is challenging but it is not without moments of joy, love, and dance. Salvation is found as we participate in teaching and healing communities that promote the social transformation of the world." **Monica Coleman**

13 Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal. It is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us. **Joanna Macy**

Salvation and Music

14 Good Friday yearns for Easter, and eventually Easter comes. Blues singers, even when groaning about the worst of times, know to cry out for mercy; they know that, despite appearances, Sunday's coming. **Stephen J. Nichols, Getting the Blues: What Blues Music Teaches Us about Suffering and Salvation**

15 Time is important to me because I want to sing long enough to leave a message. I'm used to singing in churches where nobody would dare stop me until the Lord arrives! **Mahalia Jackson**

For Reflection and Discussion

A. How do you think about/talk about salvation? Or do you think about, talk about salvation at all? What does believing or not believing in salvation have to do with how you live your life?

B. How do you react to the question, "Are you saved?" Do you have an answer?

C. What do you think of the idea of salvation as both journey and destination? Does that make sense or is it so broad the word loses its meaning?

D. Does the music at All Souls help you understand or experience salvation? Are there other aspects of your experience at All Souls that help you with "salvation"--at Vespers, or even in your covenant group?

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