



Salvation is a gift, but the anointing is costly

by Beth Jones

Aren't you thankful that we don't have to earn our salvation in Christ? That we don't have to perform for God's love, acceptance, and forgiveness, but only have to come to Him, repent of our sins, and receive Christ's redemptive work on the Cross? That we don't have to do penance each day for our sins, but just feel thankful that Jesus finished the work through his obedience to the Father so we could have eternal life with God the Father?

We have all heard the expression, "Salvation is a free gift, but the anointing has a price." That isn't true. Our salvation is not free. It cost God dearly to save us - the blood and death of His only Son Jesus. However, what God offers us is a GIFT that we ourselves don't have to pay for - Jesus paid the price FOR us!

The anointing of God, however - flowing in the unrestrained power and presence of God's Holy Spirit = does cost us. It is very expensive, in fact, because it costs us everything - our perfect obedience to God's word.

Each and every one of us is ordained by to fulfill a unique purpose and a great destiny in Him. God has a specific blueprint for your life, which He created even before you were born. Jeremiah 1:5 says, "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations."

First and most importantly, God wants to save us from our sins through Jesus' atoning work at Calvary and fill us with His Holy Spirit, so that we can have an intimate relationship with and live with God forever.

“Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38-39)

Secondly, God wants us to go out into all the world and disciple others. He doesn't want His people staying within the four walls of a church building in Christian, comfortable cliques.

Notice, God said to GO - not to STAY. Just as Jesus told Peter to get OUT of the boat - his comfort zone - to walk on the water toward Him, facing his fears and overcoming his doubts - Jesus wants us to get out of our little, religious comfort zones, whether it's at home, work, church, the post office, or Walmart.

God wants us to use our spiritual gifts for His glory, to minister to one another and the lost. “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19)

We should never treat the anointing lightly

God desires for us to be empowered with His presence, His Holy Spirit - His anointing. **The anointing of God is precious, and we should never take it for granted or treat it lightly.**

“But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the **same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true**, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.” (1 John 2:27, NKJV)

The word *anointing*, found in 1 John 2:27, is from the Greek word *chrisma*, which means “anything smeared on, unguent, ointment, usually prepared by the Hebrews from oil and aromatic herbs. Anointing was the inaugural ceremony for priests.” (Strong's Concordance G5545).

The word “unguent” in the above passage means “semi-solid preparation (usually containing a medicine) applied externally as a remedy or for soothing an irritation. (wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)

That was very interesting to me – the anointing of God can be used to soothe an irritation! And how many irritations and frustrations do we face each day?

What is the purpose for God's anointing? Where do we first see the word *anointing* in the Bible? It is when God was giving Moses instructions for building the tabernacle and the pattern for its furnishings in Exodus 25:6. Aaron and his sons must first wash with water, symbolic of the Word of God (Jesus).

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. And this *is* the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and **spices for the anointing oil** and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.” (Exodus 25:1-10)

The anointing oil was for the purpose of consecrating Aaron and his sons as holy priests, because God is holy. (Leviticus 11:44, 1 Peter 1:13-16) The anointing of the Holy Spirit is for the purpose of consecrating us to God as His ministering priests and empowering us to continue His work here on earth until Jesus comes again.

God commanded that the anointing oil with spices be put on the heads of the Levite priest Aaron and his sons who were priests. Later in Exodus 29, God gives Moses instructions for Aaron and his sons to be sprinkled with blood from the ram, symbolic of the blood of the perfect Lamb Jesus.

“You shall also take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram. ²⁰ Then you shall kill the ram, and take some of its blood and put *it* on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. ²¹ And you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle *it* on Aaron and on his garments, on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; and he and his garments shall be hallowed, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.”

They were to be consecrated (made holy) for seven days. **Consecration is serious to God. Later we see Aaron's sons judged by God for offering a different kind of fire than He had commanded, and they died.**

“Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died

before the LORD. And Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the LORD spoke, saying: ‘By those who come near Me, I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.’” (Leviticus 10: 1-5, NKJV)

We can be set apart by God to minister to others, but make the fatal mistake of disobeying God. Obedience to God’s word is crucial. **Disobeying God can result in us not only losing the anointing, but even our very lives!**

But we’re under New Testament grace!

God is the same God in the New Testament as He is in the Old Testament. As my pastor friend Marcheta DeVries says (who has done intense studies of the original Greek and Hebrew root words and of the Jewish culture, attaining numerous seminary degrees), ALL of the Bible is God’s grace. He even chastens those He loves! (Hebrews 12:6)

Also, remember Ananias and Sapphira in the New Testament in Acts 5, who fell down dead from lying to the Holy Spirit about their property. It’s never a good idea to lie to God! Didn’t they realize God would know and they couldn’t hide it from Him? After all, He’s God!

And God is holy. We are to be holy, too. **His anointing** - His Holy Presence and Holy Spirit that consecrates us, sets us apart, and empowers us for ministry of His word and His miracles - **is to be treated with the utmost respect and reverence. This especially holds true for teachers, who the Bible says have a stricter judgment.** (James 3:1)

To have the anointing, you simply receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and His Holy Spirit seals and fills you. (Ephesians 1:13-14) To continue to walk in the full power of His anointing, the price is obedience to God’s word.

In a book on walking with God, there is a final word I want to share. There is a cost to truly live the yielded life to God, and to walk with Him in deep, fulfilling intimacy. There is a price to fulfilling our higher calling, our destiny in Christ. That price is obedience...I learned the hard way how costly sin is, and how devastating its consequences. It is so much better to avoid sin, than to have to repent of it and then pay the hard consequences of it...The fruit of sin is rotten! It is death to our souls. How much better to live in obedience to God’s word and receive His blessings, His goodness, and His favor!

Walking With God, Beth Jones, pp. 57-58, <http://www.bethjones.net/my-products/walking-with-god-ebook-now-available/>

We can't continue to carry the anointing of God's holy presence when we continue in sin. We now belong to God, so out of love for Him, we should obey Him:

“Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not! Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.”
(Romans 6:15-18, NLT)

But nobody's perfect!

The only perfect person who has ever lived on earth is the Lord Jesus Christ. Again remember that we can do nothing to earn forgiveness of our sins and our salvation; we must receive it by grace - by believing in Jesus.

We are just humans, sinners saved by grace, who daily fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23-26) We can't do anything apart from Jesus. (John 15:5) This means it's impossible to obey God's word without His help!

When we received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we were born again, sealed by the Holy Spirit, our spirits made righteous by the blood of Jesus. **But our souls - our mind, will, and emotions - weren't *instantly* transformed.**

1. **Our minds** must be daily renewed by the word of God. (Romans 12:2)
2. **Our will** must be conformed to God's will through obedience, just as Jesus had to surrender His own desires and learned obedience by doing His Father's will, (Hebrews 5:7-8, Luke 22:42)
3. **Our emotions** must be surrendered to God and come into alignment also with God's will, even as Jesus cried out in the garden, “He pulled away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, remove this cup from me. But please, not what I want. What do you want?" At once an angel from heaven was at his side, strengthening him. He prayed on all the harder. Sweat, wrung from him like drops of blood, poured off his face.” (Luke 22:42, The Message)

Every day we have to make a choice to obey God, to refresh and preserve God's anointing. You see, we leak! That doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit literally, physically drips out of us. It does mean that because we have to contend every day with our carnal, sinful flesh, and that we have to crucify it daily. (Galatians 5:24-25)

We must stay continually filled up with God's presence through prayer, worship of God, and studying His word. It is only in God's presence that we can be transformed, renewed, refilled to overflowing with His anointing.

His anointing is never about us. Think of someone who is very anointed - say, Joyce Meyer or Beth Moore. **Joyce and Beth didn't do anything to deserve or earn that anointing. It's God's grace. And the anointing in them is *always* for the purpose of pointing to Jesus!** We read of the disciples who did miracles and saw that people were trying to worship them instead of Jesus, and they quickly corrected them (Acts 3:1-26, Acts 10:26)

If Peter and the disciples had taken credit for what was Jesus' power and work, they may have died just as quickly as Aaron's sons and Ananias and Sapphira. The disciples knew there was a cost to the anointing of God. Peter had already experienced denying Jesus three times, and he didn't want to ever do it again. **He knew what kind of sinful life he had lived, and that it was absolutely God's grace that God chose to use him in such an incredible way.** For that, he was very grateful and faithful to the end.

To summarize, the anointing:

- Is from the receiving of our salvation and the filling of His Holy Spirit
- Is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit
- Is to consecrate believers as holy priests and to set us apart from the world
- Is never to be taken for granted or treated lightly
- Is refreshed and refilled by prayer, worship, and study of God's word
- Is very costly
- Is always for the purpose of glorifying Jesus Christ
- Is never earned or deserved, but is from God's grace.

The greatest example in the Bible I can think of about the high price of the anointing is Moses. Moses was one of the meekest men on earth and one of the greatest leaders in the Bible, an unforgettable, powerful man of God.

However, his disobedience to God, His light treatment of the anointing of God upon his life, cost him dearly. Because he disobeyed God, he was not allowed to go into the Promise Land. How devastating! How he must have regretted and grieved his sin!

Let's read from Numbers 20:6-12 (The Message) to see what terrible thing Moses did to deserve this loss:

“Moses and Aaron walked from the assembled congregation to the Tent of Meeting and threw themselves face down on the ground. And they saw the Glory of God.

God spoke to Moses: "Take the staff. Assemble the community, you and your brother Aaron. **Speak to that rock that's right in front of them and it will give water.** You will bring water out of the rock for them; congregation and cattle will both drink."

Moses took the staff away from God's presence, as commanded. He and Aaron rounded up the whole congregation in front of the rock. Moses spoke: "Listen, rebels! Do we have to bring water out of this rock for you?"

With that **Moses raised his arm and slammed his staff against the rock—once, twice.** Water poured out. Congregation and cattle drank.

God said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you didn't trust me, didn't treat me with holy reverence in front of the People of Israel, you two aren't going to lead this company into the land that I am giving them."

What? You've got to be kidding! Moses couldn't go into the Promise Land just because he hit the rock twice instead of speaking to it?

We have to understand that God is a holy God. He means what He says. We are not to question His Word, but to simply obey. The anointing of God has a high price.

Moses had seen God's hand move mightily, had seen all His miracles, had spent time with God on the mountains as His finger wrote the 10 commandments, had seen God's backside as He passed by. Moses had seen the glory of God. Moses knew better.

When Moses and Aaron went to the Tent of Meeting and laid face down on the ground, **they SAW the Glory of God!** How awesome! God promised them that water would come out of that rock so the people of Israel and their cattle could drink.

It's interesting that even though Moses struck the rock twice instead of just speaking to it, God had grace and mercy on the people and water came out anyway. **Yet Moses wasn't allowed to get away with his disobedience, as we read in Deuteronomy 34:1-6:**

“Moses climbed from the Plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, the peak of Pisgah facing Jericho. God showed him all the land from Gilead to Dan, all Naphtali, Ephraim, and Manasseh; all Judah reaching to the Mediterranean Sea; the Negev and the plains which encircle Jericho, City of Palms, as far south as Zoar.

⁴ Then and there God said to him, "This is the land I promised to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with the words 'I will give it to your descendants.' I've let you see it with your own eyes. There it is. But you're not going to go in."

“Moses died there in the land of Moab, Moses the servant of God, just as God said. God buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth Peor. No one knows his burial site to this very day.”

In contrast to Moses, Jesus obeyed God perfectly and now sits at the right hand of God the Father. (Acts 2:33) Jesus knew how precious the anointing was, just as it was for Aaron's two sons who offered strange fire and died. Jesus showed us that obedience to God can be done through God's power, surrender to God's will, and crucifying the flesh daily.

Obedience is not a suggestion by God. It's not an option for those who belong to God to:

- Be rebellious (Adam and Eve, Cain, King Saul, Jonah)
- Have pride (King Saul, King Nebuchadnezzar, Peter)
- Indulge in sexual immorality (King David, King Solomon)
- Give over to fear (King Saul, Peter)
- Be depressed (Elijah, Jeremiah)
- Doubt God (Thomas, the other disciples, father of the child with epilepsy)
- Lie (Ananias and Sapphira)
- Murder or have murderous thoughts (King Saul, King David, Saul)
- Worship other gods (King Solomon and many of the Old Testament kings)

Other things that just aren't options for believers are watching immoral or violent t.v. shows/movies, cussing or speaking crudely, gossiping or slandering, indulging in pornography, lustful thoughts, fornication, or adulterous affairs, gambling, being insincere, becoming greedy, overeating or eating the wrong kinds of foods, being lazy, acting rude to others, controlling others, etc. All of these things can affect the anointing on your life, cause the anointing to decrease. To whom much is given, much is required. (Luke 12:48)

What will *your* choice be? Will you love and prize the anointing of God on your life, so that you can do the great things He has called you to do and be who He created you to be from the very beginning? Or will you lightly esteem the anointing of God, His precious Holy Spirit within you, disobey God's word, and experience the sobering, sad reality of loss and regret as Moses surely did?

Today, dear friend, choose life. Choose to treat God's anointing as precious and a great gift with a high cost. Because it is.

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