

Finding our own sense of ?salvation?

by MARK PAVILONS

?We save ourselves by saving others. No one has ever been saved alone.?

This quote, with roots in biblical teachings, basically means that we must seek ?salvation? on our own, and help others do the same.

Now, ?salvation? can mean something different for everyone, but in strict terms it means being saved or protected from harm, or being saved or delivered from a dire situation. In religion, salvation is the saving of the soul from sin

?Deliver us from evil ...?

I take it as a bit of ?paying it forward??and ?doing unto others.?

My driving habits are slow and steady, according to results logged on my Presto app on my smart phone. The app is designed to track your driving and at the end of the trial period, it may result in a discount on one's car insurance premiums. In this regard, I?may very well save a life, perhaps my own!

Slow and steady may not be the ideal qualities in a human being, but they're just fine for driving. We all know that life is never slow and steady.

In fact, I can't recall an extended period over the last decade where my life and family could be deemed slow and steady. ?Rushed and unstable? are more accurate terms, or perhaps ?hurried and wobbly.?

If I go back to my opening quote, just what are we humans being saved or delivered from?

Salvation, in Christian teachings, is surrendering ourselves to the ways and cause of Christ. It's like reserving that seat in the VIP?lounge of Heaven.

So through deliverance, you guarantee yourself a contented life on earth where all your needs, not necessarily wants, are met by God. ?Deliverance? only comes through after salvation. So brothers and sisters get delivered and stop complaining!

Time and again we hear horrible stories on the evening news. Why do bad things happen to good people??This is a question that has plagued humankind since the beginning of time. Perhaps it's the old, survival of the fittest concept. Or the idea that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

Here's a question for all of us, believers and non-believers alike. Ask yourself from where do you draw your strength? The answer pretty much tells a tale all on its own, and summarizes who we are.

If we draw strength from the Good Lord and all of his teachings, then we abide by basic Christian fundamental beliefs. These are pretty good ones if you ask me, along the lines of being kind to others; showing compassion for your fellow human beings; being honest and sincere ...

I truly believe that most humans on earth, regardless of their culture and belief systems, abide by some of these codes.

Are we inherently good?

I?think so, yes. As babies, we're blank slates entering a new world. We know nothing. At the same time, we fear nothing and hate

nothing. We exude joy and love, the purest of human emotions. Babies cry, only to signal that they need something, and more often than not, it's the warm and comforting embrace of our parents.

We learn negativity from the world.

I love to highlight those Good Samaritan stories. We are too often bombarded with bad news that it's nice to celebrate the goodness in our fellow creatures.

On the whole, I think my fellow humans will do the right thing, given a choice.

We inherently know the difference between right and wrong.

One recent summer while heading to the Beer Store, I found a police officer's badge and ID on the ground. For some less scrupulous sorts, this was a find worth its weight in gold. I waited, presuming he would emerge from the store. I asked every man who walked past me if they were Officer X. I presented the owner with his badge and he hastily departed.

I imagine it was not only embarrassing but he would have been in a bit of trouble back at work had he lost this important item.

I routinely cut the neighbour's lawn when I'm out doing my own. Heck, I've been cutting grass since I was 10, growing up in rural Caledon, so a subdivision lawn is no biggie.

In my youth we lived roughly seven kilometres from Bolton so we headed into town regularly. In the summer months, we seldom locked our doors. Our screen doors were wide open, letting in the breeze. Anyone could have come and gone as they pleased. I don't think we'd do that today, but it was a nice feeling back then not to worry about being robbed or ransacked.

So, if we're all basically good, do we even need deliverance?

Most of us today are much too busy to give it any thought. We have places to go, errands to run, projects to complete.

I think deliverance, too comes in many forms.

My most favourite quiet times are in front of the back yard BBQ in the summer, glancing into the forest and simply listening to the sounds of nature. I become introspective as I relax in the sun. I am thankful for the fact I can cook up some burgers and steaks for my family. I am happy that I can enjoy the freedom of my surroundings and that my family comes together to share our love.

Here, in this place, there is no evil, no crimes against humanity. Until a

neighbour's lawnmower or chain saw breaks the silence, it's pretty much paradise. It's a way to cleanse the soul.

If I could impart this feeling of euphoria to everyone around me, it would be a sort of salvation. I hope from this you get just a glimpse of it, and it makes you smile and fills your heart.

Whether we attend church, pray, or simply close our eyes and hope, we are asking for a bit of salvation. If we fill our hearts with love and respect we're on our way to deliverance.

To live (and to die) will be an awfully big adventure.

M. Barrie, Peter Pan