

# Salvation by langston huges

Linguistics, English



Salvation The article Salvation by Langston Hughes describes the personal experience of the author who was forced to “accept Jesus” as he relates it, under pressure. Although there was no physical force employed, the expectations of the people, his friends and his own aunt who begged him to “come and be saved” forced him against his own convictions. The author has been told by his aunt how it felt to be saved. She had described to him the inner feelings and light that he would experience when Jesus came into his life. The innocent twelve year old, who had heard these things very often from other people too, believed this and waited to “see and hear and feel Jesus” in his soul. Unfortunately none of these things happened to him.

The author’s vivid description of the preacher’s sermon, where he relates stories of the fires of hell, and then of the sheep who came to the fold, and only one lamb left out in the cold; frightened most of the young children into being “saved”. The little girls were in tears and hurried to be saved, and finally, all but the author and his friend Westley remained, still waiting for Jesus to come to them. The pressure of the people, the deacon and the sisters is graphically described as the two young boys wait in the heat and noise of moaning and praying and singing in the church for some sign from Jesus. Finally the author describes how his friend Westley, gets tired of waiting and decides to be “saved.” The author, however in his innocence still waits. As his wait for Jesus moves from anticipation to confusion and finally, shame at making so many people wait for him, he decides to give in to the pressure. The fact that God had not harmed Westley, despite the fact that he had lied, added to his own conviction that it was better to lie than make so many people wait, and make more trouble for them.

The guilt of his deceit and the lie that he had told, however, kept eating away at his conscience, and finally in a flood of tears, he wonders if there was Jesus, then why did he not come to help him? The piece is an illustration of how the innocence of a child is preyed upon by older people who try to force their views and opinions on the young, instead of allowing them to experience things for themselves and take their own decisions. The irony is that all the elders who brought pressure to bear on the author may not have been very honest about their having seen Jesus. When adults tell children to be honest, it is their first duty to set a good example, otherwise the young lose faith in their elders, and finally begin to question the basic concepts of life.