

What Saves Us

#0179

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 4, 1978

Our text this evening is one that I think you know from memory, the most quoted text in all the Bible; what is that? Let's repeat it together:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16.

God so loved that He gave. As we meditate on this, I bring you this wonderful statement from *Great Controversy*, page 489:

"We must by faith enter within the veil..."

That's the veil of the Heavenly Sanctuary.

"... 'whither the forerunner is for us entered.' Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption" *Great Controversy*, page 489.

There are some mysteries about redemption. In God's plan, the word mystery does not always mean something that nobody understands. It means something that *everybody* doesn't understand, but that God would like to make known. And the mysteries of redemption we shall be studying through eternal ages. It's not surprising then that we haven't fully grasped all of them tonight. Everybody here, I trust, knows something about the mysteries of redemption. At least we know some facts. But everybody here is invited by the Dear Lord to learn more, understand more, and experience more. Here within the veil of the Heavenly Sanctuary we can gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption.

Notice that sentence: "There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected." Those golden walls reflect the glory shining from Calvary. Why have the golden walls? Why have the altar and the table and the candlestick? Isn't the cross enough by itself without any ark and mercy seat and cherubim looking down upon the mercy seat, and the law enshrined? God delights to show us His character and His purpose in various ways, at various times. And as I say, we shall be studying and marveling all through eternity. It will be safe to follow His directions and to focus where He bids us focus, what do you say?

Where is Jesus now? He's in the Heavenly Sanctuary. He's been there since He ascended—18 centuries in the Holy Place, and now since 1844 in the Most Holy. He ascended after His resurrection to complete the work that He began upon the cross. And you and I, by faith, are to enter within the veil whither the forerunner for

us has entered. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. It is that light shining from Calvary that we wish to look at tonight, and I pray God that its saving, healing rays may shine into all our hearts.

Is there something being done for our salvation up there? Yes. Relating, referring to the type, you remember that in the ancient service, while there was blood sprinkled in the first apartment upon the altar of incense, and blood sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement, that that blood was shed in the court there by the altar of burnt offering. While blood was ministered within the veil, it was not shed within the veil. It was shed out in the court. In the antitype, we see Jesus laying down His life for us in that one all-sufficient offering of the cross. Then we see Him, by His own blood, entering the sanctuary. Let's turn to Hebrews 9 where Paul makes this plain:

“But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” Hebrews 9:11–12.

He enters by virtue of with His own blood. In the ancient service, it took more than one type to present the great antitype. It took an animal that died and a priest that lived to represent the work of Jesus Who dies for us and lives for us. He's the Lamb that dies; He's the Priest that lives. So as He presents His own life, His own death as the atonement for sin within the veil, we can rejoice that we have a complete offering and a perfect Offerer—Jesus is the offering, and He is the offerer. Praise His wonderful name.

As we think of Christ presenting His blood, it is the blood of His cross. So the apostle says:

“For it pleased the Father that in Him [in Jesus] should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven” Colossians 1:19–20.

The work that Jesus is doing there then is for the universe as well as for this little planet. The plan of salvation is a demonstration that men and angels, and all the intelligences of the universe are studying that they may understand the character of God. Peace through the blood of His cross.

Now, I want to ask you something: Is it to the cross we look for salvation, or is it to the Man on the cross? There were some other crosses on Calvary that day, weren't they? Who was hanging on that cross on the right? A thief. Who was hanging on the cross on the left? Another thief. The law of averages wouldn't bring you to the right cross, would it? No. And today, my friend, there's much talk about the cross. Much talk about the cross. But I want to be sure to find the Man on the cross who is my Savior and not a thief.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” John 10:10.

Both of those two thieves are long since dead, but the Man on that middle cross lives to make intercession for me. And it’s in His intercession that I rest tonight. He has made peace through the blood of His cross. But there is something back of His cross and back of His offering. Something provided that offering.

Let’s turn to Titus, the 2nd chapter, the 11th verse:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” Titus 2:11.

What’s the third word in this text? Grace. Whose grace? The grace of God. What does it do? It brings salvation. But what saves us—does the cross save us, or does the grace of God save us? I will not say that either answer is wrong. But I think we want to be sure that we understand that it is the grace of God that provided the gift of the atonement—the grace of God; the grace of God that bringeth salvation.

I want to go a bit back of that. You say, can you get back of that? Yes. There was a time when grace was unknown in this universe. But that from which grace proceeds was always here—that’s the love of God.

You say, “How do you distinguish between grace and love?” Let me read it to you here in this beautiful explanation in *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 519:

“God loves the sinless angels, who do His service and are obedient to all His commands; but He does not give them grace: they have never needed it; for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute shown to undeserving human beings” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 519.

What causes God’s to give us His grace? His love. But if sin had never entered, friends, love would have been revealed by God to all His creatures, and there would never have been any interruption in the divine harmony. But when sin entered, love was given shall I say, the opportunity to reveal itself in a new dimension, in a new direction, in a fresh manifestation. And that is the manifestation of what? Grace, unmerited favor, as is often defined incorrectly.

Grace is an attribute shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it; it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow grace upon all who hunger and thirst for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are unworthy” *Ibid.*

I met a little girl one day. She looked up into my face and I said, “Does Jesus love you?”

She said, "He loves me when I'm good." Somebody told her that Jesus loved her when she was good.

Well, He does love children, and grown folks, too when they are good. But I am so glad He loves them when they're bad. What do you say? That's how I got in. That's how the thief on that right-hand cross earned salvation as he cried out for mercy.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

Grace is an attribute then, shown toward undeserving creatures, undeserving human beings. God rejoices to bestow grace upon all who hunger and thirst for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are *unworthy*. If we were worthy, we wouldn't need grace. We'd need love. Everyone needs love. We would die without it, wouldn't we? But grace is a manifestation of love toward people who are unworthy.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that
we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"
Hebrews 4:16.

Oh, I'm thankful for the throne of grace. I'm thankful for the mercy seat. I'm thankful for the cross. All of these are places where God delights to *reveal* His grace and bestow His grace—His favor toward the undeserving. Those who merit nothing but death are extended to them this wonderful provision. The grace of God brings salvation. I ask again, what is it that's back of the grace? Love.

Now we're back to our text. Let's repeat it again together:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him
should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16.

And so looking at Calvary, we can say, "Thank God, I'm saved because Jesus died for me." But back of that God provided that gift because of His grace, and back of that, the reason He did it all is that He loves me, He loves men. Notice this wonderful comment in *Steps to Christ*:

"...this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in
the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing
to save. No, no! 'God so loved the world, that He gave His
only-begotten Son.' John 3:16. The Father loves us, not
because of the great propitiation, but He provided the
propitiation because He loves us" *Steps to Christ*, page 13.

Do you see the difference? It isn't that the cross changes His attitude, whereas before He was a stern Judge, now He's a loving Father; oh, no. It's

because of His infinite love that He found a way, and provided a way that you and I might be redeemed. I'm thankful for that, aren't you? So I'm trusting tonight in that love. I'm trusting in that love which supplies the grace, which provided the cross, which opens the veil of the sanctuary, which presents Jesus standing there at the throne, lifting up His wounded hands as He prays for me. I'm thankful for the love which is back of it all.

Our little minds are so little that it's very natural for us to focus on one or another of these waymarks, these stations in the revelation of God's love. But friends, we need them all, and thank God He's provided them all. It takes all of them to redeem us, and we'll be studying it all through eternity.

Because of this, it is our privilege to accept Christ in simple faith, believing that Christ is not divided, but that He in Himself has everything we need. Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 1:31:

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord" 1 Corinthians 1:30–31.

Do you think we have anything that wasn't a gift from Jesus? No. If I have anything that didn't come from the gift of Jesus, and in the gift of Jesus, I want to get rid of it fast, friends. What do you say? Yes.

Notice that Jesus is made unto us wisdom. Without Jesus my wisdom is foolishness. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Any true wisdom that I have, I have it because I have Jesus. Wisdom is not something He gives me apart from Himself. He doesn't give us what we need to know without our accepting Him. It's accepting Him that provides this wonderful gift of wisdom and righteousness.

Are we righteous? We're righteous if we have Jesus. If we don't have Jesus, we're unrighteous. It's that simple, dear friends. Just that simple. If we have Jesus, He's made unto us righteousness and sanctification. Do we have sanctification? Well, that depends on whether we have Jesus or not. If we have Jesus, we have wisdom and righteousness and sanctification, and what? Redemption. Do we have redemption? That depends on whether we have Jesus or not.

Now I want to ask you something, to repeat in a different way what we looked at last Friday night. Do you suppose that I could as a little child, or an illiterate man, hear the story of the love of Jesus revealed on the cross and accept Him as Savior, and not know the names of all these different things that I get in him and still be saved? Do you think so? Do you really think so? Do you *really* think so? Oh, yes.

Do you remember the illustration I gave you last Friday night? What did I have up here? A loaf of bread. We agree that there are many things in that loaf of bread—protein, starch, fat, minerals, and vitamins of various kinds. I suppose the food chemist could identify perhaps 50 things in there, maybe more, I don't know. As I told you, there's some more they haven't found yet. They're all in there.

We agreed that you and I could get all those minerals and vitamins and protein, and all the rest whether we knew the names of those things or not, didn't we? If we did what? If we ate the bread. We also agreed that the best-educated scientist in this world that could take that bread all apart and analyze it, and tell us the names of 50 different ingredients in it, would starve to death unless did what? Unless he ate it!

Do you see, dear friends? Oh, this is so important. Mere analysis will not save us; in fact, analysis in itself won't save anybody. Jesus says:

"I am the living bread which came down from Heaven:
if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever..."
John 6:51.

I'm thankful for the gift of God in Jesus Christ. What was it that was back of that gift? Grace. Why was it that God provided His grace? Because He loved us. God so *loved* that He gave. Does He love us more now than He did before the cross? Does He? No, no. Does Jesus love us more? No. Hebrews 13:8:

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and
for ever" Hebrews 13:8.

You and I can see that love revealed better now since the cross and as we look at the light from the cross reflected on the golden walls of the sanctuary, we get fresh evidence of His love because He not only came to this world and lived for us and died for us, but He went back and has been spending all His time interceding for us there. It indicates a deep passion, an undying yearning for our salvation. So the more we look at all He's done past and present and on into the future, the more we echo what the apostle John says:

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed
upon us..." 1 John 3:1.

Oh, let's keep looking at that love, what do you say? But let's remember that salvation is in Jesus. He's made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Salvation is not through some formula or through some definition or through some analysis. Salvation is in a Person.

"...as many as received Him, to them gave He power to
become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His
name" John 1:12.

So the grace of God brings salvation, and it's appeared to all men. Do all men get saved because of that? Could they? I wonder what makes the difference.

Do you suppose that if we were a thousand times wiser than we are, we could explain why one man is saved and another lost; we could give the reason for it? Why one chooses to go the right way, and the other goes the wrong way. Some men have got that all figured out, friends. Do you know what they say? That God willed it from eternity—predestination. They argue that since it's the grace of God

that saves men, therefore there's nothing that man can do, has done, or could do that enters into his salvation. So since it's nothing but the grace of God that saves a man, God saves everybody that He chooses to. What an extreme position. What a misinterpretation and misapplication of this beautiful doctrine of predestination.

Would you like to read about God's predestination? Turn to Ephesians 1:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" Ephesians 1:3–5.

Let's stop there a minute. I was reading this letter from Japan a few minutes ago. Do you know why this letter got here? It was predestined. The destination was written right on the front of this envelope way over there halfway around the world. Doctor wrote the predestination of that letter; it got here. Aren't you glad?

My dear friends, is your destination written on you? What is it? Why, it says:

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself..." Ephesians 1:5.

How many did He do that for? What did our text in Titus 2 say?

"...the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to..."

What?

"...all men" Titus 2:11.

You mean all men are predestined to be saved? Oh, yes. I want to tell you something, friends: You can do what the envelope can't do. You can decide whether to go on to your destination or quit, get out, leave. Well, doesn't that give the glory to man then, if man is the one that chooses? No, friends. Do you know why? I'll tell you why: because the *choice* is the gift of God too. The choice is the gift of God. God offers me salvation, and He gives me a will, a choice, that I can use to accept it. The gift is His, and the power to accept it is all His.

Who do you think ought to get the glory? Does that make man's choice unimportant? It's tremendously important, friends, because God offers the gift to how many? Everybody. So it is not the difference we're missing, it is not the difference in the predestination of God, because there's one to be saved and another lost.

The *whole* difference—the thing that makes the difference all the way through; from Adam and Eve, Cain and Able, Jacob and Esau right on down to the present

time—the one thing that makes the difference is the choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. But remember, this doesn't make us worthy because we choose. I thank God that He gave me a choice, but the choice He gave me is His. I choose—with the choice that He gave me—I choose to accept the gift He offers me. Don't you think that's good sense? Then how foolish it would be for me to boast. As we read there in 1 Corinthians, according as it is written: He that glories let him do what? Glory in the Lord."

Now, I want to tell you something, friend: Nobody who understands *anything* about the Gospel ever boasts of anything he ever did, past, present or will do. All through the eternal ages, we'll sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." But mark you, that doesn't mean that human choice was left out. That doesn't mean that human choice isn't *the* decisive factor. Because the gift is offered to how many? Everyone.

Oh, that God might help us then to plead with souls to accept something which is offered. But which, if they reject it, means their eternal destruction, their eternal loss. But if they accept it, it means their eternal salvation. No wonder that the Spirit and the bride say:

"...Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" Revelation 22:17.

Oh friends, I pray that the urgency of this may grip our hearts. We're made messengers of the Gospel. The good news of salvation offered through the sanctuary service in Heaven, through the cross that provided the blood that's ministered there, to the grace that arranged all this, and from the loving heart that gave it all because He is love.

And remember, God would go through it all over again if it were necessary to save just one of us here tonight. That's how much God thinks of us. That's how much He loves us. I'm thankful for that love, aren't you?

Now back to our verse we're reading in Ephesians. When did God plan this all out for you and me? Before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Wouldn't it be a shame to spoil His plan; to disappoint His purpose? Can we do it? Oh, yes. Millions do. They don't have to. They don't need to. The Bible speaks of this predestination here, but never once does it say God predestined anybody to be lost. He didn't. He predestined us to be saved. Let's keep on to our destination, what do you say?

Now notice what this brings about:

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved" Ephesians 1:5–6.

This brings praise to Him, brings joy to His heart. Why, if somebody would give you a million dollars, what would you say? I've heard people say thank you for less than that. But here is an *infinite* gift—the gift of life and pardon and salvation, redemption, justification, sanctification, glorification—all given us in whom? In Jesus Christ. What shall we say? Thank You, “to the praise of the glory of His *grace*, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

Have you been accepted? If you've accepted *Jesus*, the Father has accepted you. There is no acceptance apart from Him—past, present, or future—no acceptance, *couldn't* be. The gift of God is eternal life through, and in, and by Jesus Christ our Lord. He has made us accepted in the beloved. And if we have Jesus, we're accepted. If we don't, we're not—it's that simple.

“In whom we have redemption through His blood,
the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches
of his grace” Ephesians 1:7.

Which is it His grace or His blood that makes possible His forgiveness? Well, as you can see, it's His grace that provided the blood. Without the blood, there's no remission of sins, but without the grace, there would have been no blood shed. It's God's grace.

So tonight, as a poor weak man who needs the grace of God, I'm thankful that I know that I can count on His finishing what He started in my life. What do you say?

A great theologian was asked what was the greatest thought that had ever gone through his mind. He stopped and thought, and His answer was, “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

It was love that provided the grace to save me. It is love that provided the blood that covers and blots out my sins. It's God's love, His wonderful grace, all the way through from beginning to the end. That's what I'm trusting in, friends. I'm trusting in that tonight.

Rest weary soul, the penalty is born, the ransom paid,
For all thy sins, full satisfaction made;
Strive not to do thyself what Christ has done,
Claim the free gift, and make the joy thine own.
No more by pangs of guilt and fear distressed,
Rest, sweetly rest.

“...the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men” Titus 2:11.

“...God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” John 3:16.

“...He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be [like His glorious Son]...”
Ephesians 1:4

Oh friends, let's accept the wonderful plan in its fullness, what do you say? And as I said, a million years from now we'll be studying it further, get new insights. Let's get all we can tonight and press on to more tomorrow, or next week. For as we behold, our hearts become charmed away from ourselves and from sin, and we become like the glorious One whom we love. Praise His wonderful name.

[Testimony service]

Dear Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing. Keep us looking where the light is, and the revelation of Thy love—on the cross, and at the mercy seat. For Jesus' sake, amen.

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