

Homecoming

Laurelbrook

#0484

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—October 14, 1972

It is a real privilege for me to be here this homecoming service and visitors' day. It's made me think of the great homecoming that's coming soon when Jesus returns. You know, the reason that Jesus came the first time was so that He *could* come the second time.

In Hebrews the 9th chapter and the 28th verse, Paul puts these two comings together:

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" Hebrews 9:28.

He came the first time as the sin-bearer in Gethsemane and on the cross. He bore our sins. In the Heavenly Sanctuary, He's interceding for us. But when He comes the second time, it will not be as a sin-bearer. It will be to take home with Him those who are already ready, those that are looking for Him with joy.

And may I tell you friends, for 6,000 years God has set His heart on that reunion, that homecoming. You see, as we studied last Sabbath morning, man was made for fellowship with God.

"...God created man in His own image..." Genesis 1:27.

He says:

"This people have I formed for myself..." Isaiah 43:21.

And this is not selfish because His joy is in seeing us joyful. His pleasure is in seeing us happy. As a father and mother rejoice in the joy of their children, so our heavenly Father rejoices as we find His way blessed and happy.

You know, friends, no matter how much parents enjoy the babies and the little children, there's something that parents enjoy even more. And any of you who are older parents will agree with me. You young folks that just have your little ones in arms—you don't know what's ahead of you. But the greatest pleasure of parenthood is not the wee ones in arms, wonderful as that is. And that's all you can hold when you're parents of little ones. That's all your hearts can hold is that joy.

But as life goes on, if there is the fellowship that God intended, then as those children grow up and become adults, and you can sit with them or walk with them and talk together as adults, parents and children in fellowship, in counsel, just in enjoying one another's thoughts, this my friends is the height of fellowship.

I'm sorry to say that very few parents and children achieve that. Somewhere along the line there is brought in what some have called the generation gap. Do you know who invented that, the generation gap? The devil invented that.

God never intended there should be *any* kind of gap. But the author of the generation gap is the one that introduced the gap between man and God 6,000 years ago. I repeat, man was made for fellowship with God, for friendly intercourse, for visiting, communion.

And when Adam and Eve were first created, they were endowed with that ability to think with God and talk with God, to appreciate God and know that God appreciated them. And from day to day, not only the angels but God came and walked with Adam and Eve in the garden. And oh, what a wonderful time they had.

But one day, when God came to that garden home, there was no one there to greet Him, no one to run out and welcome Him. And God started looking, walking all along those paths, and calling, calling, calling.

"Oh Adam, where are you? Adam, Adam, where are you?"

And finally, as God drew nearer and His voice sounded closer, Adam and Eve came out of their hiding place. No longer could they be concealed.

And Adam said:

"...I was afraid... and I hid myself..." Genesis 3:10.

Oh, my friends, how that must have hurt the heart of God, that the ones that He had made for fellowship with Him were now afraid of Him!

Some parents have known a little bit of the sorrow and the pain that comes when that gap is made by the enemy, when the child that has been loved and cherished joins with the enemy in rebellion. And the gap is there, yawning deep and wide. But ah, what did God do? God so loved that He gave [a paraphrase of John 3:16].

God said, "I will cross that gulf. I will bridge that gap if it takes My own life."

That's what love is. This—don't miss it—this is how valuable to God fellowship with man is, that He will risk His life, *give* His life, in the hope of regaining what had been lost

through sin.

And so, my dear friend, for these 6,000 years, God has been working out His plan, looking forward to the day when man and God may live together in fellowship once more with no veil between. I repeat, that will be the real homecoming. And God has never forgotten it for a minute.

Coming on down past the patriarchal days, we see Israel encamped at Mt. Sinai. We hear the voice of God speaking to His people. We see Moses climbing that mountain. We hear God saying to Moses to tell the children of Israel:

“And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” Exodus 25:8.

Why did God want the sanctuary built? That He might dwell among His people.

What does “dwell” mean? To live, to abide. You mean God wanted to have His home with His people? This has always been His purpose. His delights are with the sons of men [a paraphrase of Proverbs 8:31].

I notice it sometimes with parents. I remember some parents that I knew out west. I saw them out there several years ago. Not long ago, they sold out there and moved clear across the country, clear across the country.

Why do you suppose that in their sixties, comfortably situated way out there in the west, they’d pick up and leave and move clear across the country and establish themselves in a new place? Well, you’ve guessed the secret. Their children were there. They moved so they could be close with their children, you see. Well, we all understand that. We don’t think that’s strange.

God said to Israel:

“...Make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them”
Exodus 25:8.

And there, in the types and symbols of the Levitical service, God sought to reveal to men the way back, the way home. From the bleeding lamb at the altar, through the sprinkled blood in the Holy Place, through the burning censer and the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat, in all of this God was seeking to reveal to men how sin could be separated from His children, and thus the gap be bridged and man and God brought back together again.

Oh, I’m so glad, friends, for all that that represents. We’ve been studying it this week. We want to study some more tonight and tomorrow night, the wonderful way home, home to the homecoming, home to the homecoming.

This morning, friends, I want you to see how much Jesus has set His heart on this. I might almost say He has an obsession on this subject. This is the one thing that He wants.

Turn to the 17th of John. Jesus had finished His work, and He was just on the edge of Gethsemane, ready to enter that shadow of darkness as a sacrifice for our sins. He pauses on the edge of the garden and gathers His disciples about Him, and commits them to His Father. The 17th chapter of John contains this last prayer of Jesus.

Now, I want you to notice the climax of it here in the 24th verse. This is the great climax of His prayer:

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am” John 17:24.

What does He want? He wants His church, His people with Him where He is. That’s His desire.

Now, think of it, friend. He was about to suffer in Gethsemane. He was about to go to the horrors of the judgment hall and the scourging and the mockery, and the agony of Calvary. But nothing of this dims His desire or weakens His longing for the ultimate goal of it all. What is it? That you and I may be with Him in that grand eternity.

I want to read you something on this that I think you’ll be very much interested in. The thing I want to establish, friends, is that Jesus was thinking not only of Andrew and Peter and James and John and Matthew and Thomas, but He was also thinking of you. He was thinking of you. And I think this is wonderful, I think this is wonderful.

Volume 4, page 529, listen:

“Jesus pleaded, not for one only, but for all His disciples: ‘Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.’ His eye pierced the dark veil of the future and read the life history of every son and daughter of Adam. He felt the burdens and sorrows of every tempest-tossed soul, and that earnest prayer included with His living disciples all His followers to the close of time. ‘Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word’” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4, pages 529–530.*

That’s in the 20th verse of this John 17 you’re looking at.

“Yes; that prayer of Christ embraces even us” *Ibid.*

So friends, He was thinking not merely about those disciples gathered about Him. He was thinking about them. He was thinking about you. He was thinking about me. And He prayed that I might be with Him in Heaven. Oh, I want to help answer His prayer. What do you say? That’s the homecoming. That’s the real homecoming. That’s the homecoming that lasts. All right.

Well, He went on into Gethsemane, and there He took the bitter cup. He went on to the judgment hall and out to Calvary. And there He endured that awful agony of the crucifixion, that lingering death with the weight of the sins of the world upon Him, till His heart was broken and He bowed His head and died.

Early the morning of the third day, He’s awakened. A mighty angel comes down and rolls that stone away.

And the voice of the highest angel is heard saying:

“...Son of God, come forth; Thy Father calls Thee”
Desire of Ages, page 779.

Jesus is awakened from His sleep of death. He comes forth victor. He comforts Mary, and He’s on His way to the Father’s throne.

You remember He said to Mary:

“...Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father...” John 20:17.

Later that day, He met others and they did touch Him and embrace Him. So, that resurrection day, He went to Heaven.

Now friends, I want you to get the picture. Jesus had been separated from His Father for over 30 years. Now, He’s back in Heaven. What would you be thinking about if you’d been away from home for all those years? Well, you’d be thinking about reunion with the Father, and He was. But friends, there was something else that weighed upon His heart even more. I want to read it to you from an inspired source.

This is the old *Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 3, page 202–203:

“Jesus refused to receive the homage of his people...”
Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 3, page 202–203.

That’s when Mary wanted to worship Him.

“...until he knew that his sacrifice had been accepted by the Father, and until he had received the assurance from God himself that his atonement for the sins of his people had been full and ample... Jesus immediately ascended to Heaven and presented himself before the throne of God, showing the marks of shame and cruelty upon his brow, his hands and feet. But he refused to receive the coronet of glory, and the royal robe...until the Father signified that his offering was accepted. He also had a request...concerning his chosen ones upon earth. He wished to have the relation clearly defined that his redeemed should hereafter sustain to Heaven, and to his Father. His church must be justified and accepted before He could accept heavenly honor. He declared it to be his will that where he was, there his church should be; if he was to have glory, his people must share it with him. They who suffer with him on earth must finally reign with him in his kingdom. In the most explicit manner Christ pleaded for his church, identifying his interest with theirs, and advocating, with a love and constancy stronger than death, their rights and titles gained through him” *Ibid.*

I want you to see the picture. There are the angels waiting to welcome Jesus. There is the Father waiting with open arms to take Him in a loving embrace. But oh, there's something on Jesus' heart that He must have settled before He can accept the worship of the angels or even the welcome of His Father. It's this:

“Father, is it settled that I can bring all My friends from earth up here to be Your friends, and to be with Me always?” [a paraphrase of John 17:24].

May I tell you something, friends? Jesus could not be reconciled to take His place in Heaven unless you and I could share that Heaven with Him and share that place with Him. That's how much He thinks of us. Oh, isn't that wonderful love, friends?

Well, the heart of the Father is as the heart of the Son.

And when Jesus said that, the Father at once said:

“...Let all the angels of God worship Him” Hebrews 1:6.

...indicating that Christ's sacrifice was fully accepted and that His plea was granted.

And it says:

“The innumerable company of angels prostrate themselves before the Redeemer. The request of Christ is granted; the church is justified through Him, its representative and head” *Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 3, page 203.

So, thank God. Well, Jesus, having received that assurance, came back to earth later that day. He met with His disciples a number of times through the 40 days that He tarried on earth. Finally, He led the 11 out over the brook Kidron, up the Mount of Olives, and there at the topmost part of Olivet, as He stretched out His hands in blessing upon them, He was slowly taken up, up into the sky.

You remember that as He disappeared from view, the voices of the two angels recall the disciples to the fact that Jesus had promised to come again, this same Jesus.

Now, what did Jesus do when He went to Heaven in this ascension? I want you to see this is still on His heart. I’m going to read it here now from *Desire of Ages*, page 833–834.

“Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music” *Desire of Ages*, page 833.

This is the homecoming for Jesus with all the saints that He has brought with Him from the grave—that multitude of captives, you remember, that came with Him at His resurrection.

“There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts... the representatives of the unfallen worlds... all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King” *Ibid.*

Think of it! The whole universe with its representatives is there. The angels, the representatives of all the worlds in creation, they’re all there on this great occasion to celebrate the homecoming of Jesus.

But listen:

“He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His Father. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails... He approaches the Father...” *Ibid.*, page 834.

He shows Him these that have come with Him from the grave, this multitude of captives. Now, Jesus says:

“Father, it is finished. I have done Thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, ‘I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am’” *Ibid.*

You see, it’s still on His mind. He can’t take His place on the throne until He is assured before *all* the universe that He can bring you and me up there with Him to share that throne. He wants us to have whatever He has, and He’ll not take it unless He has the assurance that we can share it.

“The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied... Christ’s toiling, struggling ones on earth are ‘accepted in the Beloved’... Where He is, there His church shall be... The Father’s arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him’” *Ibid.*

Oh friends, I’m glad somebody loves me that much.

Now, watch. There in the shadows of Gethsemane, we heard Him praying:

“...I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am...” John 17:24.

Early the resurrection morning, we hear Him pleading that same prayer, “Father, I want My church with Me here in Heaven” [a paraphrase of John 17:24].

And now, the Ascension Day, weeks later, with all the retinue of redeemed from this earth with Him, and all the representatives of the universe present, He prays again. And what is it?

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am...” John 17:24.

Now, let me show you something that is simply wonderful. He’s been there now for 2,000 years. He ascended to enter upon His work as Priest and Advocate in the Heavenly Sanctuary. He prays there for us as an interceding Priest. What’s He saying? What’s the burden of His prayer?

Let me give you a little glimpse as if we had a tape recorder, and we listen in on those prayers of Jesus within the veil in the sanctuary. I’m going to read this from the comments on John 17 in the commentary. This is *Book 5*, page 1145. Listen:

“This chapter...” *SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 5*, page 1145.

The 17th of John.

“...contains the intercessory prayer offered by Christ to His Father just before His trial and crucifixion. This prayer is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil. Our mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the Heavenly Sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him” *Ibid*.

What’s He praying, then? He’s praying as John 17 illustrates. And what’s the great climactic plea of that prayer?

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am...” John 17:24.

This is still the burden of His heart. This is what He’s praying for in the Holy Place. This is what He’s pleading for at the mercy seat. And as the time grows longer, His desire grows more urgent! He wants us with Him. Oh, what a homecoming that will be!

Now friends, soon His work there will be finished. We’ll study more about it tonight. *Soon* He will throw down the censer and take up the scepter. He’ll lay aside His priestly robes and clothe Himself with kingly garments. With the royal crown upon His head He will come, victor in Heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead, to take His ransomed people home.

But in between that day when probation closes and that day when we see Him in the east coming with all the angels, there is that short period which the Bible speaks of as the time of trouble. And during that time of trouble, our faith will be anchored in Jesus, and we shall know *by* faith that He has accepted us because He said so and that He’s coming to get us.

But all will be dark as far as this world is concerned. God’s people will be under a death decree. And as the hour for that draws near, their prayers ascend. At midnight comes the hour of execution. At midnight comes the hour of deliverance, as the voice of God sounds down through Orion, and the wicked are thrown in confusion, and God’s people, praise His name, rejoice in the fact that their Savior has appeared to deliver them.

Now, I want to give you a glimpse of what we’re going to hear at that moment, *Great Controversy*, page 636. Oh, listen:

“By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is

heard, saying, 'Look up'... they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds... are parted... they look up steadfastly into Heaven and see the glory of God and the Son of man seated upon His throne. In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation..."
Great Controversy, page 636.

Now, watch:

"...and from His lips they hear the request presented before His Father and the holy angels: 'I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am'"
Ibid.

Oh! Is it still on His mind? Yes, yes. What does He want? He wants you and me *with* Him. That's what He wants. That's *all* He wants. That's why He came to earth to live, to suffer and to die. That's why He went back to Heaven. That's why He's been carrying on that work in the sanctuary. That's why He's coming back again. He wants you with Him. He wants me with Him.

"Ah," somebody says, "what does He see in me?"

Love does some strange things, friends. Doesn't it? Doesn't love do some strange things? And I know friends, it seems strange to me that my Lord should love *me* this much, but I believe He does, friends. I believe He does.

I was telling you about that boy down in Venezuela whose father paid \$900,000 to get Him back when he'd been kidnapped. I think the father wanted the boy with him. What do you think? Yes, I think the father wanted the boy back. And I think the son thought so, too, when they got back from the kidnappers and found out it had cost his daddy \$900,000. What do you think?

Friends, Jesus wants you with Him. He wants you to join in the great homecoming. This homecoming day, let's settle it that we're not going to disappoint Him, that He shall have what He wants. What do you say? Shall we do it? We can, we can.

What do you do? Have this homecoming day up here once in a while? How often?

[Man from audience] Once a year.

[Elder Frazee] Once a year. All right.

Suppose I should say to you, "Will you make an appointment with me to be here at homecoming, and I'll meet you here next year."

You might want to, but could you be sure to meet that appointment? Oh, no. Are there those who were with us a year ago that aren't here today? Yes. I think of the dear man who's been a father to many here, whose funeral I preached here, dear Brother Peterson. And there are others. A year ago, my dear father was living. I've laid him to rest.

No, friends, we cannot make an appointment here in this world and know for certain that we can keep it. But bless your heart, the appointment for the homecoming with Jesus we can make and be certain of.

And Frank, your daddy will be there. And my daddy will be there. And a lot of other folks are going to be there. Let's be there. What do you say, friends?

You know how? Well, the first thing's to get ready, and then stay ready, and then we'll *be* ready. And it isn't by works of righteousness that we've done [a paraphrase of Titus 3:5]. Oh, no, no, no. The prodigal son, when he came home, he didn't know he was going to have a homecoming celebration. He thought he'd be lucky if he got a job as a hired hand. But they had a homecoming that night. The music played. There was joy, a great feast.

Supper is being spread at the great table in Heaven, friends. The homecoming is just over the hill. Jesus is coming to get us and take us home. And by His precious blood, whatever our failures have been, we can come home and receive a royal welcome. Oh, I must be there, friends. I must be there; you must be there. Remember, each one has a special place in the heart of God.

I wonder, dear ones, is there anyone on this special day that knows that for you, this is decision day? Is there somebody here that has never known Jesus, but today as you see how much He loves you and how much He's set His heart on you, you're going to give Him what He wants? You're going to give Him your heart.

If there is, I want you to stand right now. Somebody that has never given your heart fully to Jesus, but you will this morning. But oh, as you see His great love, how much He wants you, you're going to send Him the word this morning that you're going to let Him get your ready. Would you stand?

Somebody that once knew the Lord and you've let something else come between you and Him. Just make a full surrender, my dear brother, my dear sister. Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you. He wants you home. And the good news is, friends, before we join in the homecoming up there, we can have a homecoming right here. He wants to live with us that He may get us ready to live with Him.

Is there one this morning that says, "Yes, Jesus is talking to my heart about a new decision? I need to come back. I need to come home."

Another question: is there somebody here this morning that as you hear this message, you recognize that there's something that has been in your heart that ought not to be there? Perhaps, it's a hard feeling toward some brother or sister? Perhaps, it's some barrier in the home between husband and wife, between parents and children. Perhaps, it's been in the church, some coldness, some bitterness, some criticism. Perhaps, it's been a failure to pay your tithes and offerings as you know God wants you to. Perhaps, it's been not keeping the Sabbath as you know God wants you to.

Perhaps, it's been something of the world that has gotten in—worldly amusements, worldly reading, worldly music, something that you know that Jesus wouldn't be pleased with.

Whatever it is in your heart and life, just now dear friends, as you think of Jesus' great longing for you to be with Him, will you this morning give up that thing which His Spirit convicts you of, something I've mentioned, perhaps something I haven't mentioned? Is Christ calling you to make a full surrender right now of that thing and other things? If He is and you'll answer, would you stand where you are?

[Recording ended in progress]

Copyright 2021. All rights reserved.

W. D. Frazee Sermons
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org