

Middle of the Road

The Way to Hell

#0592

Study Given by W.D. Frazee—October 22, 1982

I know He hears and answers. He will break the bread.

One hundred thirty-eight years ago, October 22, 1844 (we're celebrating the anniversary tonight) is the most important date since the cross and Pentecost. It is the focus of the longest prophetic forecast in the Bible. It is the birthday of this denomination, this movement, this great second-advent message with its Sabbath emphasis and its pointing to the heavenly sanctuary. It's labeled in history as the great disappointment, but those that have eyes to see and hearts to understand, think of it as the day of His appointment. They change that "D" to "H."

It all comes, as you know, from that wonderful prophecy of Daniel 8 and 9. Daniel 8:14, will you repeat it with me?

"And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed"
Daniel 8:14.

A time, a work, a place: the time, 1844 at the end of the 2300 prophetic days or literal years, the place, the sanctuary in Heaven, and the cleansing.

I want you to notice that word "cleansed." It suggests to me a thorough work and a finished work, complete and completed. The same Savior that at the beginning rested in the joy of the new creation:

"...The heavens and the earth were finished..."
Genesis 2:1-3.

The same Savior who on the cross in His closing moments said, "It is finished," [John 19:30] is soon going to come forth from the Most Holy Place and say, "It is done" [Revelation 16:17]. God gets things done, and He gets them done right, and He gets them done thoroughly, and He gets them finished so that they don't have to be repeated.

I note that in your seminar this year, you're stressing the matter of wholeness, "Forward to Wholeness and Happiness." That's what God is interested in, friends. The whole man, and it takes the total message to reach the whole man and accomplish this work. That's why health reform is in the third angel's message. This is a fulfillment of that wonderful text in 1 Thessalonians 5:23:

"And the very God of peace sanctify you..."

W-H-O-L-L-Y, what's that? Wholly. Health and salvation are closely related.

“...And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Now, it's interesting in this movement in these 138 years how the pendulum has swung, first one way and the another on this. For dear friends, the truth of the matter is when we get everything where it ought to be, we see that the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary will never be accomplished, never be finished until the sanctuary on earth is cleansed also. And so, we read in Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians the 7th chapter and the 1st verse:

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from...

What?

“...all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” 2 Corinthians 7:1.

This goes with Daniel 8:14. God's bookkeeping in Heaven is very accurate. He never makes a false entry. Nothing phony or make-believe about it. When God says His people are ready for His coming, they'll be ready. They'll be cleansed from every defiling habit, every sinful lust. I want a part in it, don't you?

I say, it's interesting how the pendulum has swung. Back 80 years ago, there was a great emphasis on the body being cleansed, the body being the temple. In fact, one man wrote a book called The Living Temple. You've heard about it. But the Spirit of Prophecy pointed out (and don't miss this) that the concepts therein presented would eventually sweep away the vision of the literal real heavenly sanctuary. Why? Because it taught that man innately, inherently, naturally is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and this is not true. The rebel against God is not the temple of the Holy Spirit. It's only as the temple is cleansed by the blood of Jesus that man can be the place where the Holy Spirit dwells.

And so, that emphasis on the body resulted in losing sight of the heavenly sanctuary but equally true, dear friends, when there is a neglect of health reform, when there is a failure to respect the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, then we get a distortion and a perversion, both of the doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary and of righteousness by faith. The third angel's message is more than a combination of the Sabbath, the state of the dead, and the sanctuary and the coming of Jesus, the Spirit of Prophecy. The third angel's message is God's last effort to get the whole man ready for His coming. And what a privilege you and I have as medical missionaries to have a part in it.

I'm glad God led me to Loma Linda back in the days of John Burden, Luther Warren, R.S. Owen, G.B. Starr, and other stalwarts, every one of whom presented the sanctuary as the center of Christ's work in this closing generation.

Now, to all this, the cross is central. I want to repeat that. To all this, the cross is central. For the blood that is sprinkled on the mercy seat, as well as the blood that's sprinkled on the ark in the altar in the Holy Place, is the blood of His cross.

There can be no covering of sin in the first apartment. There can be no blotting out of sin in the second apartment without the sacrifice of Calvary. Therefore, the present emphasis on the cross must never be lost. The cross must be to us a daily, living experience, and in order that it may be so, Christ has invited us (don't miss this next point) not only to accept His death on the cross for us but to share His death on the cross in our own experience.

And so, Paul says:

"I am crucified with Christ..." Galatians 2:20.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" Galatians 6:14.

Christ spent the three years of His ministry publicly in seeking to train His disciples along with preaching to the multitudes. And seeking to inoculate in their hearts and minds these sweet and precious truths. Again and again, He sought to present the cross to them, but they were prejudiced against it. They wanted ease and the glory, the rewards and remunerations, the honor and prizes that go with earthly kingdoms. But Christ sought again and again to show them the cross.

Jesus said:

"If any man will come after me, let him..." Matthew 16:24.

Do what?

"...let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" Matthew 16:24.

This doctrine has never been a popular one. And as modernism has sought to destroy the atonement of the cross in the popular Religious world, so even among the professed Remnant, there is a tendency to avoid the cross in ones own experience. But tonight, I would like to have us face this fact, this central basic truth, that the cross in the individual experience is as vital as the cross in the plan of salvation as far as God's provision for us. What I mean is this, it is not enough, and the sanctuary makes it clear that Jesus died for me, He died for how many people?

[Audience] All.

[Elder Frazee] Will all be saved?

[Audience] No.

[Elder Frazee] Could all be saved?

[Audience] Yes.

[Elder Frazee] What makes the difference? There must be something. Unless we accept the alternative of universal salvation or else predestination. Unless we accept one or the other of those alternatives, there must be something in the individual's response, the individual's participation that makes a difference. Not there is any merit to it, not at all. But if we are in a vessel that has been torpedoed and we are drowning in the waters in the briny deep, that is not our fault. But if a lifeboat comes in sight and throws us a lifeline, then what's my part? Reach out and take hold. Then if I'm lost whose fault is it? Has God put the lifeboat and the lifeline in reach of every soul? We believe that, don't we? Thank God.

Oh, friends, I pray that our hearts may respond. But just as the disciples found it difficult to accept the message of the cross before Christ died, so today, there are millions that are perfectly willing to accept the historical facts that Jesus died, and they hope that takes care of them. In other words, Jesus bore the cross so they don't need to practice any self-denial.

In our little chart illustration, you notice three ways: the black way going down, that middle way and the upward way in red. I would like to look at those three ways in the light of the sanctuary and the cross for a few minutes. You all recognize that black downward way. That's where you find the murders, isn't it? That's where you find the auditors. That's where you find bank robbers and other thieves. That's where you find all manner of lawbreaking.

What about that middle row? That's where you find the good people—the law-abiding people, the people that are looked up to. Many of them are church members. They are respected citizens, church officers perhaps. But they are going to hell just as certain as the people on that downward road. Do you know why? They are selfish, selfish.

I wonder if we have faced up to the fact that it's possible to do right things from wrong motives. There are people so intelligently selfish and selfishly intelligent that they wouldn't touch a cigarette or a glass of whiskey. They think too much of themselves. You say, "Isn't that good?" It's good that they left the poison stuff alone, but friends, leaving poison alone will not get us into Heaven. Will it? No. There will be many total abstainers in hell, many of them.

You see, the idea that to abstain from outward sin and to do that which is outwardly right is a passport to Heaven, is all a mistake. There is only one way to come to Heaven, and that's the way of the cross. And that's that upward way, that red road, the blood-stained pathway that Jesus opened up.

And Jesus is saying:

“If any man will come after me, let him let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me”
Matthew 16:24.

What does deny mean? To say, “No.” You mothers sometimes have something you say to the baby when it wants something and it not to have it. What do you say? “No, no. No, no darling, no, no.” If the baby cries for the scissors because they are bright and shiny, what does the mother say? “Oh, he wants it. Let him have it.” Does she? What does she say? “No, no, no, no.” Oh, my dear friends, again and again I have to say to my natural tendencies and desires, “No, no.” Do you? That’s that cross. Don’t misunderstand me. That’s not the cross that saves me. The cross that saves me is the cross of Jesus where He died for my sins. Where He took my guilt and atoned for my transgressions. But listen, unless I’m willing to take my cross and share with Him the self-denial of saying, “No” to the natural tendencies, the fact that Jesus died upon the cross eventually does me no good. Am I correct? That is what the sanctuary shows. Because it was not enough that the blood be shed in the court, it must be sprinkled in the Holy Place for forgiveness, and the sin must be transferred there through substitution. But not only that, on the Day of Atonement that man must come back and do what? Afflict his soul. And join in that deeper work of repentance which cleanses the sanctuary and cleanses the soul. I want to share the finished work of Jesus. What do you say? Let’s see if we can get with the Lord’s help some very practical applications of this.

Several years ago, one of our educators decided that he would conduct a questioner. He sent out these questioners to our academies and church schools and got hundreds of answers. Among his questions were these, “What do you boys and girls wish to be when you grow up?” And do you know what the answers were? A great majority of the young people wanted to be one of four things: “I want to be a minister,” “I want to be a doctor,” “I want to be a teacher,” “I want to be a nurse.” These were the great ambitions of many of our children and young people.

We say, “Isn’t that wonderful?”

Well, it is provided. Listen to the next question. “Why do you want to be what you wish to be?”

And with disarming frankness, the children and young people responded, and many of them, hundreds of them, came back with answers like these: “Because the doctor is looked up to.” “Because the minister has influence.” “Because the teacher is looked up to and respected.” “Because being a nurse is an honored profession.” Do you see what I’m getting at, dear friends?

You say, “Isn’t that alright?”

Yes, it’s alright in the middle road. It will get what it’s aimed to get the respect, but it is not the way of the cross. Is it? How much honor was Jesus getting when He hung on the cross of Calvary? How much?

And then there was another reason that the boys and girls gave why they wanted to be doctors, or nurses, or teachers or preachers. It was this, there is no

particular financial problem to a Seventh-day Adventist who is a minister, or a teacher, or a doctor or nurse. Don't misunderstand me. I don't mean that the young people felt that they would be millionaires necessarily, but they meant they had security, you understand. No Sabbath problems and no problem getting a job. Again we will not say those are wicked motives; we will just say they are not the way of the cross. Jesus invited Matthew to leave his good government job, with social security included. He invited Peter and John to leave their fishing nets and join Him in His self-supporting, sacrificial, medical missionary work. And He offered them no inducements or worldly praise or compensation. Am I correct? But that was 2,000 years ago, and now we've learned how to do it all and still have the honors of the world and the remuneration of the world, haven't we? We have learned how. Yes, we have, friends, in the middle road.

But oh, somebody is going to hear Jesus call:

"If any man will come after me, let him let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" Matthew 16:24.

You remember there was a young man walking this middle road, making a great success of it, but he felt a lack in his life. Dear friends, the people in the middle road, when they wake up from the tranquilizing or exciting influences they are under, they feel a lack. There is a lack. You know what the lack is? It's a lack of fellowship with Jesus.

One of old wrote, "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee." [Augustine, Bishop of Hippo] Enoch walked with God. And can two walk together except they be agreed? But the sanctuary shows us that Christ is still experiencing the pains and the sorrows and the burdens of a lost world. The cross reveals to us the great fact that the blood that was shed on Calvary is still ministered and must be ministered in the sanctuary until the sin problem is solved. Are you with Jesus in this?

Christ is longing for companionship, for fellowship with Him. And some people are going to gather at the sanctuary on this antitypical Day of Atonement and afflict their souls. They are going to make God's work first. They are not going to let any party or any fun, any amusement, any money-making, any prestige, any position, or any reputation keep them from accepting the invitation of Jesus to come and take the cross.

The amazing thing is this, and this is a paradox—those who do this with all their hearts are the happiest people in all the world. Jesus, Who bore the sorrows of a lost world who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," was never the less "anointed with the oil of gladness." How? "Above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:9).

Oh, friends, what little I have tasted of this way, I know what I want. I want more and more and more. If I died tonight, my relatives would not have to hire lawyers to unscramble the legacy. [Audience laughed] But oh, I thank God, friends, for the life He has given me in sharing with others these precious principles of loving sacrifice in medical missionary work. Oh, I pray this group of medical missionaries here tonight (doctors, nurses, teachers, ministers, lay members of all kinds) I pray

that God will help you to turn away, not merely from the wicked downward road, but from that middle road of self-complacency in being like those around you.

The people in the middle road never go to the penitentiary; they are never caught in some Watergate scandal. They are law-abiding. They have a good reputation in the world and in the church, but they don't know the joy of sacrificial fellowship with Jesus. They don't know that joy. And it's nothing that somebody else can impose upon you, my dear friends. And if you just do it as a duty, it becomes a yoke of bondage. And therefore, you are constantly seeking to get a bargain. And there are bargains in the basement but not upstairs, I can tell you that.

This rich young man that came to Jesus, that we were mentioning, what did he feel? A lack. And Jesus told him if he wanted to enter into life to do what? Keep the commandments. What did he say? "I've done it all." He was in that middle road. He kept all the commandments. He hadn't broken one as he saw it. "What lack I yet?" he said. Jesus said, "You lack just one thing." What was it?

"If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor... and come and take up the cross and follow Me"
Matthew 19:21.

Did he do it? He was what? Sad at that saying.

"...he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions"
Matthew 19:22.

Anybody who turns away from Jesus and the way of the cross is missing the greatest opportunity of life, dear friends. There are men and women, yes, boys and girls here tonight who are facing decisions. I'm not confronting you, Jesus is confronting you. Oh, my friends, will you buy the Devil's trap to learn how to do medical missionary work and still keep up with the Jones (in honors, in remunerations) or will you accept the invitation of the Great Medical Missionary to come and take up the cross and follow Jesus?

And again, I repeat, nobody can impose upon you. And if you want a bargain, somebody will help you find it so you won't have to be so sacrificial. But oh somebody is going to say with Jesus, "Lord, there is just one thing I want. I want to share with you the cross. I want the blood that was sprinkled on the mercy seat in Heaven to be sprinkled on my heart. I want to learn the meaning of self-sacrifice and the joy of it."

But you see here, friends, the reason it works this way is because it's meant to work this way. As I tell the boys and girls, the reason dogs and cats need four legs is because they were made that way. They run around and do fine, but if you and I try it, it doesn't work so well, does it? Two is enough for us. We need two. They need four. Why? There's just one good reason, they were made that way, and we were made that way. And you and I were not made like animals, and just hunt what we eat, what we want, and our instincts. We were meant to have fellowship with Jesus. And Jesus is on the cross. Jesus is on the cross. Look at Him there in the 5th chapter of Revelation. See the Heavenly Sanctuary open to

view. There the elders assist Jesus in His priestly work. There the angels with court records. And there in the midst of it all is the lamb as it has been slain (Revelation 5). The dying lamb is the center of the heavenly picture.

Ah, dear ones, I remember how dear old elder Luther Warren used to tell us. He'd say, "Suppose we get up to Heaven one Sabbath afternoon under the Tree of Life, we see a group gathered around the apostle Paul. We come and listen to his experiences, how he was stoned and beaten and shipwrecked. How he was ostracized and lost his money, and lost his reputation among his people. And finally was beheaded. We say that is wonderful, Paul, and Paul turns to us and says, "Tell us some of your experiences, will you." What shall I say? "Well, Paul, one hard experience was every now, and then my wife burned the toast, and it was all I could take to endure." [Audience laugh]

Ah, friends.

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" Revelation 7:14.

Millions today, in theological circles, are being sold on the idea that because Jesus took the cross, we don't need any. We don't have to deny ourselves. As one wife of a faculty member in a distant educational institution said she was so glad when she got hold of the new theology because now she could eat a pound of chocolates without bothering her conscience. That's it, dear friends, that's it.

God save us from that. What do you say?

[Audience] Amen!!!

[Elder Frazee] But there is only one way to avoid it. That's that way of the cross. Not, I repeat, to gain merit, Jesus paid it all. But oh the response of the loving heart, the response of the grateful heart is, "Dear, Lord, if you have done all this for me, then what can I do for You? If You've given everything for me, what can I give for You?" What shall we give Him? All. And the highest honor, the greatest privilege that can come to any doctor, any nurse, any minister, any teacher, any layman is to walk with Jesus in the path of sacrificial service for humanity.

The Holy Spirit must lead each person to know what that is. Don't judge somebody else. Don't lose this precious opportunity of this message to measure somebody else, dear friends. But oh, in your own heart, know the joy of saying, "Lord, anything, everything."

You know, several years ago, I was down in the great city of New Orleans holding a medical evangelistic effort. Among those who attended the meetings, was a man and his wife and two teenage young people. They accepted the health message with which we started item by item. They gave up their beer. They gave up their pork and other meat, tea and coffee. And experience an increase in health. They accepted the Sabbath and began to keep it and other parts of the message. And then finally one night I noticed they weren't there. I said to the Bible worker,

“Let’s go down and see them.” We went down, I noticed they seemed a little reserved. And finally, as we visited the man asked me a question, and then I knew the problem. He said, “Mr. Frazee, is it true that when people join your church, they have to sell all their property and give the money to the church?” What did I tell him? What should I have told him? Should I have told him, “No”? That’s what I told him. That happens to be the truth, isn’t it?

Did any preacher ever tell you before you were baptized, you had to sell all your property and turn all your money into the church? No, nobody told you that. And so I made that very clear to him that he was the steward of God, and he was just as much God’s steward after he joined the church as before. But I didn’t stop there, and I’m glad I didn’t. Because I don’t think I would have done right if I had stopped there. I said, “Now, friend, what I have told is the truth, but I should tell you something else. If you do accept this message and become a part of this movement, it will eventually take everything you’ve got. Did I tell him the truth?

[Audience] Amen.

[Elder Frazee] Do you believe that? Ah, friends, what a privilege. Jesus didn’t leave all the bad things so He could be saved; He left all the good things, so you and I could be saved. He wasn’t content to merely keep out of trouble with the law because of being a transgressor. He went to bear the cross and beckoned us. Let’s take the blood sprinkled way. What do you say?

“I can hear my Saviour calling,
In the tend’rest accents calling;
On my ear these words are falling,
Come and follow, daily follow me.”

“Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
and all the world go free?
No, there’s a cross for everyone,
and there’s a cross for me.”

[Dona sings these words, and the congregation joins in the end]

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