

The Glory of the Cross

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

One day a man was walking down the sidewalk in an overseas land. He was selling all kinds of articles that the tourists of the area could buy. This particular day he happened to have several wooden and metal crosses that people were purchasing as souvenirs. He began yelling out to the people, "Crosses, crosses, who will buy my cheap crosses?" A missionary standing by stopped the man and said to him, "Old man, did you know that the cross of Christ was not cheap. It was on the cross that Jesus died for you, bearing your own guilt and sin, so that you might be saved from eternal damnation and Hell."

Friend, the cross of Jesus is not cheap in any sense of the word. It was on the cross where our salvation was won. We cannot afford to minimize what happened upon the cross and what Jesus actually accomplished upon the cross. We must with new freshness glory in the cross of Christ.

Galatians 6:14 says:

"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."

To glory in the cross means to rejoice in what Christ has done for you upon the cross. It means to boast in a good sense about what Christ has accomplished for you through His death. A person will glory in the cross as they revel or rejoice in the work of Jesus Christ on their behalf. They will stand by the cross and ponder its magnificence and splendor and display of amazing grace. They will glory or rejoice in the cross as they express wonder and amazement when reflecting upon what took place when Jesus died upon the cross.

"On a hill overlooking the harbor of Macao, the Portuguese once built a massive cathedral. Several centuries ago a typhoon proved stronger than the work of man's hands, and the huge stone building fell in ruins. However, the front wall of the old cathedral still stands, with its wide steps leading to the ancient cobblestone street bordering the harbor. High on top of that jutting wall, challenging the elements down through the years, is a great bronze cross. In 1825 Sir John Bowering sailed his ship into Hong Kong harbor and caught a glimpse of that great cross, towering about the ruins of the old Cathedral of St. Paul in Macao. Sir John was deeply moved. Retiring to the cabin of his ship, picking up a quill, he dipped it in ink and wrote these words in his journal:

"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;

All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.”

We were the sinful wrecks of time who were headed toward an eternal hell. And it was the cross that towered above all the debris or sinful wreckage of lost humanity. This is because Jesus died upon the cross to put our spiritually wrecked lives back together through His provision of salvation. I believe that some Christians are losing sight of the glory of the cross. They are failing to rejoice in what Jesus Christ actually has accomplished for them upon the cross. One reason why many believers have lost sight of the glory of the cross is because of the lack of sound theological preaching on the subject of the cross. We must return to theological teaching on the cross instead of just sentimental teaching. We must understand that mere sentimentality about the cross because of Christ's sufferings does not save anyone. Pounding nails into His hands and His feet, scourging Him, crowning Him with thorns and mocking Him is only what men did to Him. That only condemns us. Unless we understand and personally believe that Jesus, as He hung there on the cross, became the sin offering for the world which pleased Jehovah, then we are not saved. He took the penalty of judgment that we deserved. If we don't believe this, then we cannot be saved.

Through sound Biblical exposition about the cross, we can understand about the true message and actual events that took place while Jesus hung upon the cross and died in our place. Only when we learn what actually took place upon the cross can the message of the cross effect us in a true sentimental fashion. Our hearts can only be stirred or moved, as we understand what Christ actually did and accomplished for us upon the cross. Therefore, in order to glory or rejoice in the cross, we must first understand what happened upon the cross.

Another reason why many have lost sight of the glory, wonder and amazement of the cross is because of the present day false teaching concerning the cross. There are those today who have lost sight of the holy and righteous sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross and what He actually accomplished for them while hanging upon the cross. People are being taught that Jesus became literal sin while hanging on the cross and that he died spiritually. Others are being taught that Jesus failed to win the battle over the devil upon the cross and had to descend into hell in order to win the victory over the devil. These teachings are heretical. The glory has gone out of the cross for some Christians today because of false teaching. In this series of messages, we want to once again see the glory of the cross. We want to get a fresh glimpse of Calvary. We want to know what took place upon the cross when Jesus hung there and died.

I am reminded of what A.J. Gossip said: “Get the people in the sight of Calvary. Pause there... hushed and reverent; enable them to look, to see it, make it real to them, not just an old tale that has lost its wonder and its stab, but a tremendous awful fact.”

Dear friend, let us glory in the cross as we go through the Scriptures and discover what Jesus has accomplished for us on Calvary.

“I love the cross of Jesus,
It tells me what I am
A vile and guilty creature,
Saved only through the Lamb;
No righteousness nor merit,
No beauty can I plead;
Yet in the cross I glory,
My title there I read.”

We must now ask the question, “What really happened to Jesus on the cross?” Our answer must be clear, to the point and Biblical. When the person and work of Christ upon the cross becomes hazy, then we are in deep trouble and in danger of losing our own soul!

There were two notable events that occurred when Jesus was hanging upon the cross.

1. Jesus became our substitute upon the cross.

Webster’s Dictionary defines the word substitute as “a person or thing acting or serving in place of another.” This is what Jesus did for as He hung upon the cross. Jesus became our substitute and took our place. He acted in our place and died on our behalf. This is what the word substitute indicates.

There are several themes that are connected with the substitutionary death of Christ.

a. The Universal Provision of Substitution

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 says:

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”

The preposition translated “for” in these verses is “huper” and can have the understanding or meaning “in behalf of” or “for the sake of” another person. The whole idea of substitution is taken from these words. In this case, we see that Jesus died as a substitutionary sacrifice for everyone (“died for all”). As we will see, this means that Jesus became a substitute for you by dying in your place and bearing the judgment for your own sin on Calvary’s cross.

"The story is told of two brothers who once lived completely opposite lives. The older was a God-fearing man, good to everyone. The younger was rebellious, even violent. The older brother tried to influence him, but in vain. "One evening, while the older sat quietly in his home, the younger brother stormed in with blood on his clothes, shouting, 'Save me if you can! I have killed a man, and the police are after me!' "The older replied, 'Quick! Let's change clothes.' "They did so. The murderer donned the white garment, and the innocent put on the blood-stained one. Scarcely had they finished when the police arrived. Seeing the older brother in bloody clothes, they knew they had found their man and dragged him from his home. They had no doubt he was the one they sought. "Brought to court, the accused admitted his guilt. The judge bowed to what seemed clear evidence and sentenced him to death. He had one last wish: 'At the moment of my execution, please give my brother this letter.' His wish was granted. "Later, when the brother opened the letter, he read: 'I died in your place, in your bloody garment, for your guilt.'" Dear friend, this is what Jesus did for you. He died in your place. He took upon Himself your own sins and bloody garment and died in your place. He suffered because of your own guilt. This is the glory of the cross as seen in the Biblical doctrine of substitution.

1 Timothy 2:6 reveals the same truth:

"Who gave himself a ransom for ("huper") all, to be testified in due time."

Once again we see that Jesus died as a substitute for every person in the world. His substitutionary death covered all mankind and was in no way limited to only an elect company of people. There is a universal provision attached to Christ's substitutionary death upon the cross. He died "for the sake" of the entire world and "on behalf of" the entire world (John 3:16). This means that Christ made provision for every person in the world to be saved through His substitutionary death upon the cross.

Mark 10:45 then speaks about Christ's substitution from a personal standpoint:

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

The word "for" is the Greek preposition "anti" and can also mean "on behalf of," "instead of" or "in place of" someone else. Hence, we once again see the wonderful truth about Christ dying on the behalf of other people ("many"). There is the personal provision of Christ's substitutionary work, which He provides for all those who receive Him as Savior (Matthew 20:28). The "many" are those who personally turn to God in saving faith and therefore receive the benefits of Christ's substitutionary work on the cross (Romans 10:13). Until the actual value of Christ's sacrifice is accredited or applied to your life, you cannot be saved. This can only occur at the time when you place your faith in Christ.

The fact that Jesus died for “many” does not limit His death to a certain company of people. However, it does limit the application of Christ’s death to those who believe on Him for salvation.

Norman F. Douty said:

“The blessings purchased by the blood of Christ do not become our own until, or unless, we put our trust in Him.”

These passages (Mark 10:45; Matthew 10:28) may also carry the simple thought that Christ actually died so many others would not have to die. He took the place of many others so that they would not have to die and suffer the consequences for their sins. This is also a wonderful truth to rejoice in today.

Romans 5:8

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for (“huper”) us.”

1 John 3:16 says:

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for (“huper”) us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Paul and John, speaking from the standpoint of all saved believers, recall how Christ had died for them and the other believers and brought this wonderful salvation into their lives. We can all say as believers that Christ died for “us” in a personal way. We can look back and realize that Christ died upon the cross in order to save us. This is the normal way to address other believers as we talk to them about Christ’s great sacrifice for us.

John 10:15

“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for (“huper”) the sheep.”

Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”

Acts 20:28

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

Calvinists make much about these sheep and church statements. They will ignore the passages that clearly speak about Christ’s provisional death for all people and try to

push the passages that address the elect of God. They also try to force passages that mean “all” to mean the elect. This lesson is a lesson on substitution and not a lesson on election. However, what I want to say about these passages is that Christ did die for the sheep and the church in a special sense. In the day when Paul and Luke were writing, Christ’s blood was applied to those people within the church. The fact of the matter is that Christ’s death will be applied to any man who turns to Christ and becomes part of the church. There does not need to be any “limited” overtones in these verses. If we will just realize that God’s salvation is extended to all and all who respond to the worldwide conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8) become part of Christ’s fold and church, then we will understand of God’s universal love and grace.

In other words, Christ’s death becomes efficient to save whosoever becomes part of the church. Since “whosoever will may come” (Rev. 22:17), then “whosoever” comes will become one of Christ’s sheep and part of His church by having the blood of Christ’s sacrificial death applied to their lives. It’s to all these people who are now saved and part of the sheep and church that Christ’s death is efficient and special. This is why these passages draw attention to the sheep and church. They are not teaching limited atonement but efficient or applied atonement for whosoever responds to Christ and becomes part of His fold and church. Christ’s death simply takes on special meaning to this saved group of people. It has special meaning to you and me today who are saved and part of His church.

1 Timothy 1:15 says:

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

Blessed noonday truth! Blessed Calvary! Jesus died for sinners! The word sinners nowhere means church, sheep or elect. It means all of lost mankind. Jesus died for everyone. His death is sufficient to save everyone. However, His death only becomes efficient to save any man who turns to Christ and wants to become part of Christ’s fold or the church. To say that Christ only died for the elect is to miss the point and read between the lines. Christ died for everyone but in a special and efficient sense His death upon the cross only has saving value for those who put their faith in Him. The death of Christ is special to all those who respond to the Gospel call in faith. This is because it makes them one of Christ’s sheep for which His death has been applied. It also places them in the church through the application of Christ’s death to their life.

Robert Lightner has said:

“But it (the Bible) speaks with equal emphasis about the absolute necessity of faith before any of the benefits of that finished work are personalized.”

Remember:

“The death of Christ is sufficient to save every man, but only efficient to save those who believe.”

As you witness to others about Christ you can confidently tell every man, woman and child that Christ died for them, in their place and as their substitute. To deny that Christ died as a substitute for all mankind is to rob God the Father of His greatest display of grace, mercy and love. The problem with the Calvinist is that he attempts to limit the death of Christ, but in doing this he also limits God’s love! The Bible does not limit God’s love. Rather it maximizes God’s love in that God’s love is extended to all of lost humanity (John 3:16). God’s love is not limited in any way. It’s deeper than any ocean and wider than any sea.

“Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus,
Vast unmeasured, boundless, free!”

b. The Sins of the World and Substitution

1 Peter 2:24 also speaks of the substitution of Christ:

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

The word “bare” means to “take up” and denotes the substitutionary work of Christ on our behalf. To bear sins means to be punished for them. Jesus took your own sins upon Himself and was punished for them instead of you. He incurred the sin debt of judgment that you had before God and set you free from the penalty of your sins. Your sins were actually poured upon Christ and He was punished because of your sins. Jesus became your own replacement or substitute on the cross in that He took your sins upon Himself and bore the punishment that those sins deserved. And Jesus did this in order that God could grant you forgiveness for those sins, which you have committed throughout your entire life and make you acceptable in His holy presence.

This then is the Biblical teaching of substitution. A substitute is someone who takes the place of another person. The idea behind the substitutionary work of Christ is that He died for lost sinners by taking their own sins and their own judgment for those sins upon Himself.

In Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, there is the grave of a Civil War soldier. The stone bears the date of his birth and death, and then these words: “Abraham Lincoln’s substitute.” In the woe and anguish of the war, realizing that thousand upon thousands were falling in his place on the field of battle, Lincoln chose to honor one particular soldier as his substitute and make him a symbol, as it were, of the fact that the soldiers who perished in battle were dying that others might live.

This is exactly what Christ has done for each one of us. He has taken our place of judgment upon the cross and died that others might live! He became our dying substitute there on the cross. Thank the Lord for such wonderful grace and mercy.

Substitution might also be described as vicarious which comes from a Latin word meaning “one in place of another.” The death of Christ is vicarious in the sense that Christ is the Substitute who bears the punishment rightly due sinners, their guilt being placed upon Him in such a way that He representatively bore their punishment.”

“Upon that cross of Jesus,
Mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of One
Who suffered there for me;
And from my smitten heart, with tears
Two wonders I confess;
The wonders of His glorious love,
And my own worthlessness.”

1 Corinthians 15:3 says:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”

Christ dying for sin. It is like a breath of fresh air in the cool of the morning. Sin is what separates us from God (Romans 3:23) and brings the wrath of a holy and righteous God upon our lives (Romans 6:23). But Jesus died upon the cross “for our sins” freeing us from the judgment connected with those very sins. The idea of the word “huper” can also mean with “regard” or “concerning” our sins. Jesus not only died for sinners, but He also died for their sins. The understanding of this substitutionary concept is that Jesus actually died upon the cross having some relationship with our sins. The death of Jesus is related to our sins in that He bore our sins while hanging upon the cross, receiving the very wrath and judgment of God, which those sins required.

“My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had spilt
And helped to nail Him there.
Alas! I knew not what I did,
But now my tears are vain:
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?
For I the Lord have slain.”

In the famous painting of the crucifixion by Rembrandt, your attention is drawn first to the dying Savior. Then, as you notice the crowd gathered around that scene at

Calvary, you are impressed by the various attitudes and actions of the people involved in putting the Son of God to death. Finally, your eyes drift to the edge of the picture and catch sight of a long figure almost hidden in the shadows. He represents the artist himself, for Rembrandt realized that his sins had helped nail Jesus to the cross!

This verse in 1 Corinthians 15:3 is teaching that Jesus actually became a substitute or replacement for us by taking all of our sins upon Himself and the judgment for those sins as He hung upon the cross. Jesus hung upon the cross as the substitutionary sacrifice “for” our sins in that He received the judgment for our own sins. The sins of all your life that you would ever commit were placed upon Christ. It was these sins that brought the sentence of God’s judgment against you. However, it was these very sins that were placed upon the substitute (Jesus Christ) and which brought God’s judgment upon Him there upon the cross instead of your own life. This substitutionary work was all a fulfillment of the Old Testament. It was all “according to the scriptures” (1 Cor.15:3). The Old Testament Scripture will bear this out.

Isaiah 53:6 says:

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

God hates all sin and must punish it. Instead of God punishing us for our sin, He sent His own Son and punished Him for our sin. That my friend, is substitution. Christ dying in our place, in our stead, on behalf of us, for us and instead of us! Jesus hanging upon the cross and dying for me, as me, instead of me and because of me. He bore our sins upon Himself and the very penalty or judgment for those sins which God required.

“I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agony and blood;
He fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood.
Oh, can it be, upon a tree
The Saviour died for me?
My soul is thrilled,
My heart is filled,
To think He died for me!”

When Charles Spurgeon lay on his deathbed, he testified to a friend, “My theology now is found in four little words: “JESUS died for ME.” I don’t say this is all I would preach if I were to be raised up again, but it is more than enough for me to die upon.”

John Newton, at age 82, said these dying words:

“My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior!”

c. The Judgment of God and Substitution

The well-known southern preacher R. G. Lee was visiting Gordon's Calvary, near Jerusalem, possibly the site where Jesus was crucified. Lee told his Arab guide he wanted to walk to the top of the hill. At first the guide tried to discourage him, but when he saw that Lee was determined, he went along with him. Once on the crest, the minister removed his hat and stood with bowed head, greatly moved. "Sir," the guide asked abruptly, "have you been here before?" "Yes!" replied Dr. Lee. "Two thousand years ago."

This great preacher was referring to the fact that Christ had taken his own sins upon himself some 2,000 years ago and paid for his own judgment. Indeed, he had been there before! He was seen to be there in God's eyes as Jesus bore the weight of his own sins and judgment upon the cross. We have all been there to Calvary. This is because the world of lost humanity was in the mind and plan of God when Jesus died upon the cross. We have been studying about the substitutionary work of Christ upon the cross.

Galatians 3:13 says:

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Sin had brought the curse of the law upon our life. A curse speaks of invoking evil or judgment upon some person. The Law demanded that we suffer the righteous judgment of God for our sins and in doing so, invoked a curse of judgment upon our lives, exposing us to the divine vengeance of God. This specific curse was a mandatory death sentence in hell for all eternity. Oh the wonder of it all! The Lord Jesus actually bore our own curse of judgment as he hung upon the cross. This judgment was again related to our sins because sin demands judgment (Romans 6:23). This then speaks of a curse of judgment placed upon Christ instead of upon you and me. Jesus bore our judgment and hell upon the cross by taking our place and suffering the wrath of the holy God. This wrath and judgment was placed upon Christ when our sins were poured upon Him. Jesus actually took our sins upon Himself as He hung upon the cross and the wrath of God connected with those sins. In some measure the wrath of God was executed upon Christ as He hung there upon the cross in those dark hours. We must simply believe it by faith.

Here is a simple story that drives home the point very well. The law cursed or evoked its proper sentence of judgment upon a certain person sitting within the courtroom of God. The case dealt with the matter of God's justice and holiness. This individual was guilty of offending God's holiness and was deserving of spiritual death and judgment forever in the eternal agonies of hell. The law cried out, "Guilty as charged!"

Galatians 3:10-11 reveals why this person was in the courtroom, when it says: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."

Because this person did not keep God's Law perfectly, he had to be judged in the sight of God's holy presence in order to satisfy the holiness and justice of God. There was no way out of the guilty charge! The individual in the courtroom had broken the Law of God many times and could not wiggle out of the guilty charge. The individual cried for mercy but the Law had no mercy. It kept saying, "Guilty as charged, guilty as charged!" The person stopped talking and hung their head low. There was nothing more to be said. The guilty person was speechless.

Romans 3:19 describes the courtroom scene of terror and trembling: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty (held accountable) before God."

There they sat as guilty as could be and condemned in the chair of God's absolute justice. God as the Moral Ruler has given His righteous code to the world. God's standard of righteousness cannot be broken without His divine wrath and punishment being displayed upon the individuals who break His Law. This individual sitting in the chair was speechless (Romans 3:19)! Nothing more could be said or done. They were guilty as charged and ready to be led to the electric chair of God's wrath and justice, which would send them into the eternal torment and agonies of hell.

The court was ready to adjourn with all the demons of hell and the devil himself applauding. Then suddenly a Lamb appeared in the back of the courtroom and said; "I love this sinful, guilty and condemned person and have already died for them. I have already taken upon myself their curse and judgment of hell." The Lamb in the back of the courtroom was of course the Lord Jesus Himself! He is personified as the lamb throughout the Scriptures (1 Peter 1:19).

The sinful and guilty person sitting upon the bench then jumped to their feet and cast themselves upon the mercy of the Lamb, realizing that Jesus had already paid for their judgment and bore the awful weight of their own judgment of hell when He died upon the cross in their place. A substitute had walked into the courtroom and saved the hopeless and condemned sinner! There was much rejoicing in that courtroom after the arrival of the Lamb! The once poor and condemned person who was on the brink of Hell itself left without any sentence of judgment. He walked out of the courtroom a free man because someone else had already paid for his debt of judgment before God!

That Someone was Jesus Christ. We can all relate to this story because each one of us was really that person sitting in the courtroom! We were all in the same court and were sentenced to eternal judgment. Then Jesus came! And the half has never been told!!

“Death and the curse were in that cup,
O Christ, 'twas full for Thee;
But Thou hast drained the last dark dregs,
'Tis empty now for me.”

Galatians 3:13 says that a curse or judgment rests on everyone who does not fulfill the law perfectly. But Christ died in such a way as to bear the curse of judgment on our behalf. The result is that we who should have been accursed can now go free and escape the dreadful wrath of God's judgment.

John 3:14 describes the judgment that Jesus bore for lost mankind in picture form: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”

We discover that Jesus was likened to the serpent that Moses placed upon the pole in the wilderness long ago. You will remember the account in Numbers 21. God was judging His people with poisonous snakebites. A remedy had to be given in order to save the people physically. The remedy was placed upon a pole in the form of a serpent.

Numbers 21:8-9 says:

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.”

The typology of the snake is easy to see. The snake simply represents the form of judgment that the children of Israel received long ago in the wilderness because of their sin. The snakes and their inflicted bites became the way that God judged them in the wilderness because of their sin. Thus, the snake on the pole represented the form of judgment that God had judged them with in the wilderness. The snake upon the pole pictures the judgment of God being placed upon another, the judgment that the people actually deserved and faced because of their own sin.

John takes the picture of the snake on the pole with the physical results of healing and turns the entire scene into a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and spiritual salvation. He was the One, who died on the cross in order to heal lost people spiritually, which are inflicted with the spiritual virus of sin. The pole represents the cross. The serpent of brass, which symbolizes God's judgment for sin, represents Christ. Christ had to bear

their sin and judgment, which the serpent represented to the people. The serpent on the pole was a constant reminder of the sin of the people and the judgment for that sin which came in the form of the biting snakes. The Old Testament picture of the snake on the pole beautifully illustrates that Christ, as our substitute, had to bear our own sinful virus of sin and the spiritual judgment which sin brought into our lives.

Jesus was represented upon the cross as the serpent of God's own judgment. Jesus took the judgment, which was intended for the people upon Himself. This of course teaches in a very clear fashion that Jesus actually took the form of God's judgment upon Himself, which was intended, for the people. Jesus is clearly our substitute because he bore the sin and judgment for those sins upon Himself as He hung upon the cross.

"Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned he stood,
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah, what a Savior!"

Oh friend, the curse of our judgment, which was hell itself, was placed upon Christ when He died upon the cross. Jesus did not bear the curse of our own judgment by physically suffering in hell at the hands of the devil as false teachers are claiming today. Jesus became the serpent of judgment upon the cross. Jesus bore our judgment upon the cross and not in hell. Dear friend let me remind you that Jesus had to first become the serpent before He could become the Savior! And it was upon the cross that Jesus died incurring all of God's dreadful judgment because of our sin. That my friend is substitution!

A young man in Switzerland had been brought up in a home where God and the Bible were revered. Although the Gospel was often presented to him with loving urgency, he refused to believe and became increasingly rebellious. Finally, he said, "I'm sick and tired of Christians. I'm going to look for a place where I can avoid them." His mother wept as he packed his suitcase and left home. He boarded a train, only to find that two passengers seated behind him were discussing the Scriptures. "I'm not going to stay here," he muttered. At the next stop he left the coach and entered a restaurant. To his dismay, some elderly ladies were talking about the return of the Lord. Knowing a ship was docked nearby, he decided it might be a way to escape the "religious chatter" he encountered at every turn. But when the steamer embarked, he discovered that it was filled with happy young students from a Bible academy. Thoroughly disgusted, he made his way downstairs to find the bar. Approaching the captain, he exclaimed, "Say, can you tell a man where he can get away from all these cursed fanatics?" The skipper looked up and said with a grin, "Yes, just go to Hell. You won't find any Christians there!" These startling words caused him to realize his eternal peril, and when he returned home, he soon found peace by receiving the Savior. Today this man

seeks to help others by sharing his testimony with them how Christ had saved him from hell by taking his own judgment upon himself.

Colossians 2:14 says:

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way (the sentence of judgment), nailing it to his cross.”

This verse is teaching that Jesus erased the condemning legal sentence that the law brought against people. The law had shouted “Guilty as charged.” It had cursed our life and justly condemned us as sinners who are worthy of judgment. The Law was “against us” and “contrary to us” bringing the just sentence and condemnation of God upon our lives. But the lamb, the Lord Jesus, actually took this lawful sentence of condemnation and nailed it to His own cross in order that He might become the substitute for us and be judged as a guilty and condemned man in our place. Jesus took the guilty sentence that was ours and we were left to go free! We are now free from the sinful debt of judgment that we owed to God. We have been freed from the weight of our sin and condemnation.

We can now sing:
“Hallelujah, Hallelujah,
The song of the soul set free!”

What exactly was this legal sentence of guilt? Colossians 2:14 explains that the written code, the Law, was like a handwritten certificate or document of debt. This is explained by the word “handwriting.” It was all legal and lawful as indicated by the word “ordinances.” What the Law pronounced in this legal document was absolutely true! We were all guilty sinners who violated God’s righteous code and holy standard.

The Greek word translated “handwriting” refers specifically to the handwritten certificate of debt by which a debtor acknowledged his indebtedness. All people (Rom. 3:23) owe God an unpayable sin debt for violating His law (Gal. 3:10; James 2:10). Because they are sinners before God, they cannot pay God back in any measure to satisfy His righteousness and holiness. There will always be sin in their lives no matter what they do. Therefore, because we are sinners, who have broken God’s holy Law, we are all under the sentence of spiritual death and damnation (Rom. 6:23, 2:5-6).

Someone pictured the Law sending a letter to the sinner who had repeatedly broken God’s holy Law. The letter was brief and to the point and appears on the next page.

Sad Greetings Lawbreaker,

You know that the Law demands perfection. Therefore, you are guilty upon the grounds of breaking God's holy Law. You cannot pay God back because there is sin in your life. Therefore, you must suffer the curse and be judged for breaking God's holy Law. The judgment is Hell for all eternity. Away to judgment you cursed sinner!

Just and True & Without Mercy,

The Law

This legal and lawful certificate of debt that we owe to God is a sin debt, which results in the judgment or punishment for our sins. Because we have already broken the law and have continuing sin in our life, we cannot pay God back by living in perfection. Therefore, we must suffer the eternal vengeance of a holy God.

God's justice or His dealing with humanity requires that a perfect payment be made to appease His righteous wrath against sin and uphold His holiness and separation from all sin. Either the sinner must pay God back or someone else must pay God back. Since all people have broken the law and cannot keep the law by living perfectly (Romans 3:19), it is like a bill of indebtedness that we cannot pay back to God. We cannot pay this sin debt back to God because we have already sinned and broken the Law. Nor could we ever keep the Law after we would leave the courtroom of God's justice. Therefore, we must suffer the judgment of God in the eternal fire of hell. In essence, we are people who are unable to pay the sin debt that we owe to God because of our own imperfection; therefore, we become like criminals before God.

The list of the crimes of a crucified criminal were nailed to the cross with the criminal in order to declare the violations he was being punished for (see Matt. 27:37). The relationship of this customary practice will give us the clear understanding of what Christ has done for us. The sinful violations of the entire world were placed upon Christ's account. They were in a sense nailed to His cross as He paid the penalty for them all, thus satisfying the wrath of God against all the sinful crimes that we committed against Him.

Colossians 2:14 says that Jesus "took away the handwriting of ordinances that was against us" or this criminal charge, this certificate of indebtedness, by His own death. It was as if He were "nailing it to his cross" with Him, showing He paid the sin debt of judgment that we owed to God. Jesus wiped the slate or debt of our judgment absolutely clean before God, since He became a substitute bearing all of our judgment. Jesus erased or cancelled the written code of the Law that was against us by nailing it to His cross and demonstrating that He paid our debt of judgment in full ("Blotting out

the handwriting of ordinances that was against us"). This is substitution! This is God's grace! This is God's love! There is no greater love!

In his book, "Written in Blood," Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor had explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same rare blood type, the boy was the ideal donor. "Would you give your blood to Mary?" the doctor asked. Johnny hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble. Then he smiled and said, "Sure, for my sister." Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room--Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but when their eyes met, Johnny grinned. As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny's smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube. With the ordeal almost over, his voice slightly shaky, broke the silence. "Doctor, when do I die?" Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he'd agreed to donate his blood. He'd thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. In that brief moment, he'd made his great decision.

Johnny, fortunately, didn't have to die to save his sister. Each of us however, has a condition more serious than Mary's, and it required Jesus to give not just his blood, but his very own life along with the shedding of His blood. This touching story provides the perfect illustration of substitution. Jesus died in our place and paid for the judgment that we deserved.

John 19:30 says:

"When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

The Greek word for "finished" (Tetelestai) means to end, complete, conclude, discharge, accomplish, make an end, expire, fill up, finish, go over, pay or perform. This word was actually used to express the business transactions between two people. When someone would pay off their debt it would be declared to be finished. Jesus said, "It is finished" or "It is paid" (John 19:30). When this word is used in connection with the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross it means that Jesus made an end to the debt that we had before God. When Jesus said, "It is finished," He was saying that the debt of judgment that we owed before God had been fully paid by His sacrifice. He was expressing the reality that He as the sinless Lamb of God had taken upon Himself the very wrath of God and paid for the judgment that lost mankind deserved for their sins. Jesus had provided the way for all of lost mankind to be rescued from God's judgment against sinners. When Jesus said, "It is finished," He was concluding that all of God's wrath had been poured upon Himself there on the cross and now the debt of judgment which a lost world had before God had been paid

for with His own substitutionary sacrifice. The way of salvation had been made possible. The path of pardon from judgment had been made available.

We must always remember that it is not merely the suffering of Christ that saves us, but the sinless sacrifice of Christ that saves us. Yes, Jesus has been punished in your place and mine and we must remember that Jesus can never be punished for these sins again since that would violate God's program of justice. Sins can only inflict punishment upon an individual once. Either the punishment for sins will be placed upon a substitute or the very people who committed those sins. Dear friend, either you will allow Christ to pay for your sins or you must pay for them! The sinner has only two options--be pardoned or be punished.

There was once a rather eccentric evangelist named Alexander Wooten, who was approached by a flippant young man who asked, "What must I do to be saved?" "It's too late!" Wooten replied, and went about his work. The young man became alarmed. "Do you mean that it's too late for me to be saved?" he asked. "Is there nothing I can do?" "Too late!" said Wooten. "It's already been done! The only thing you can do is believe."

This Greek word for "finished" is actually in the perfect tense and is translated in that tense - "Tetelestai." This verb in the Greek is the perfect passive indicative of "teleo" which means to bring to an end. The tense of the verb indicates a finished transaction where the effects or results are still being continued in the present. Archaeologists have repeatedly found its Latin equivalent, "consummatum est," scrawled across tax receipts used in those days, indicating it also meant "paid." A renowned Presbyterian professor has conjectured that many standing near the cross probably interpreted the Savior's words as having that connotation. With sin's account settled, our debt of guilt was indeed wiped out!

Papyri receipts for taxes have been recovered with the actual word tetelestai written across them, meaning "paid in full." The word tetelestai was used in connection with the payment of rent or poll taxes. This word on Jesus' lips was significant. When He said, "It is finished" (not "I am finished"), He meant His redemptive work was completed. He had been made sin for people (2 Cor. 5:21) and had suffered the penalty of God's justice which sin deserved.

In the Greek text, it is tetelestai and it means, "It is finished, it stands finished, and it always will be finished!" While it is true that our Lord's sufferings were now finished, there is much more included in this dramatic word. This word indicates that the plan of salvation was completed. It means that the sin debt that we had before God had been paid in full by the substitutionary death of Christ. Jesus died in our place and paid for our own judgment. The judgment of God for sin has been finished or completed in the death of Christ. That is why I can know that I am saved today. It's because of the

substitutionary death of Christ upon the cross. God placed our judgment upon Christ so that we could forever be saved and set free from the judgment of hell through faith in His sacrifice. We are saved by the substitute and not by our self made efforts to gain God's favor.

“Nothing, either great or small—
Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus died and paid it all,
Long, long ago.

When He, from His lofty throne,
Stooped to do and die,
Ev'rything was fully done:
Hearken to His cry!

Weary, working, burdened one,
Wherefore toil you so?
Cease your doing; all was done
Long, long ago.

Till to Jesus's work you cling
By a simple faith,
“Doing” is a deadly thing—
“Doing” ends in death.

Cast your deadly “doing” down—
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.

‘It is finished’ yes, indeed,
Finished ev'ry jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?”

There on the cross, Jesus paid for the sin debt of judgment that we all had before God. He paid with His own life. He suffered in our place and in our stead. It is also interesting that in Bible times that a public sign or notice of a criminal's sins was placed over their cell so that everyone could see it. When the criminal had served his term or sentence, the sign was returned to him with the word written over the notice tetelestai (paid in full). His crimes were no longer against him. He could carry home that criminal record with those wonderful words written across them – tetelestai! If the neighbor would ask him if he were free, he would show him the document with this word written

over top of it. My friend, Jesus Christ has paid for your judgment in full. He took your criminal record of sin upon Himself and pardoned you before God of all your guilt. He also rescued you from the sure wrath of God. The payment has already been made. No other payment is necessary.

One lady said that she could never be sure of her salvation because she could never please God enough with her life. A pastor wrote back to this lady and said, "Mam, as far as your salvation is concerned, you don't have to try and please God. God is already more pleased with Christ than He could ever be with me or you, even if we have several good days in a row! Dear friend, God the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His own Son as a substitution for you and me. Because of this, I can stake my salvation and eternal destiny on the complete salvation Christ has given to me. Christ has died in my place and rescued me from the judgment that I faced. He has paid my sin debt in full before God and because of this I am sure that I will not face condemnation for my sins (Romans 8:1). The believing sinner who transfers all of his trust to the substitutionary work of Christ on their behalf will be forever freed from the condemnation of hell. When Satan accuses us and tries to get us to doubt our salvation, we must show him our cancelled certificate which reads, tetelestai! (paid in full).

Romans 8:34

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Jesus paid for our judgment in full. In fact, today He is the believer's High Priest in Heaven. Jesus is continually representing us before the Father's presence as a people who have had their sin debt fully paid for by His death upon the cross. He shows the blood of His cross and gives the settled record that our sinful account of judgment before God has been paid for by His blood.

Have you had your spiritual account settled before God? Have you had your sins washed away and your judgment for those sins lifted? You can be sure that your account is settled before the God of heaven if you will transfer all of your trust or faith in Jesus Christ who has both died and risen for you. The songwriter had the assurance that his old account of sin and judgment was settled before the God of Heaven when He wrote:

"There was a time I know, When in the book of heav'n,
An old account was standing, For sins yet unforgiv'n.
My name was at the top, And many things below,
But I went to the keeper and settled long ago.

The old account was large, Grew larger every day,
For I was always sinning, and never could repay.
But when I looked ahead, And saw such pain and woe;
I said that I would settle, And settle long ago.

Long ago, Down on my knees, Long ago,
Yes, the old account was settled long ago;
And the record's clear today, for He washed my sins away,
When the old account was settled long ago."

Jesus' word tetelestai may also indicate something even more. It may indicate that all the Old Testament types and prophecies were now fulfilled, and the once-for-all sacrifice for sin had now been completed or finished. Jesus had now died upon the cross in fulfillment of all the Old Testament sacrifices. The death of Jesus on the cross "completes the picture" or "finished the picture" that God had been painting throughout the Old Testament. It was the story that He had been writing for centuries. Because of the cross, we understand the ceremonies and prophecies in the Old Testament. When Jesus gave Himself on the cross, Jesus fully met the righteous demands of a holy Law, which was death. He paid our debt of judgment in full. None of the Old Testament sacrifices could take away these sins and rescue people from judgment; their blood only temporarily covered sin and became a foreshadowing of the ultimate sacrifice and substitute on Calvary's cross. But the Lamb of God shed His blood, and that blood can take away the sins of the world (John 1:29; Heb. 9:24–28).

The sacrificial system of the Old Testament was finally finished because the true Lamb had come and fulfilled the types of the Old Testament sacrificial animals. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin and bring salvation into the lives of people (Heb. 10:4) but the coming of the true Lamb, to which all the sacrifices pointed, did take away sins and grant this salvation from sins judgment. Therefore, when Jesus died upon the cross He was completing or finishing the picture of the Old Testament and the program of salvation to which all the Old Testament offerings pointed. "It is finished." The long line of sacrifices has ended in the true sacrifice! Salvation's story has been completed in the person and work of the New Testament Lamb. Salvation's story has been finally finished in the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. The actual Savior had come!

Of course, the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross does not automatically cancel out your debt of judgment before God. Christ's death does not automatically save you or anyone else in the world. When Jesus died upon the cross, He potentially paid for the judgment of every person in the world. He potentially makes salvation available to all. The payment for your sins is only applied to your life when you believe on Jesus Christ to be your Savior (John 1:12). When Jesus died upon the cross He provided a finished sacrifice by which every person in the world could potentially be saved. Therefore,

when any person places faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, only then can they become saved.

Someone has expressed it like this:

“Upon a life I did not live,
Upon a death I did not die,
Another’s life, Another’s death,
I stake my whole eternity.”

The work of salvation from eternal damnation and hell fire is finished because Jesus Christ is the only person who could finish it by dying on the cross as a substitute in your place. Your whole debt of judgment before God has been paid and therefore the work of salvation is finished through the death of Jesus Christ on your behalf. This means that salvation is by a substitute and not by your own works. You cannot be saved by what you do or how you live. You can only be saved through the finished work of Christ upon the cross.

Because Jesus said that the work of salvation was finished, I now have full coverage and assurance. Someone summed it up very well when they said:

“I have an insurance policy
Written in the blood of the Lamb,
Sealed by the Cross of Jesus,
Redeemable wherever I am!

The company will never go bankrupt,
It is bonded by God’s promise true;
It will keep every word of its contract,
Exactly what it says it will do.

I don’t have to die to collect it,
No premiums do I have to pay;
All I must do is believe God’s promise
And place faith in that.

No collector will ever come calling,
It was paid on Calvary’s tree;
It insures me for living and dying
And for all eternity.

Let me ask you two soul searching questions today. How can you ever pay God back for the enormous sin debt that you have before His holy presence? What can you possibly do to pay God back? You are already a sinner (Romans 3:23) and

unrighteous in the eyes of God (Romans 3:10). You cannot appease God's wrath against sin and uphold His holiness because you yourself are a dreadful sinner before God and incapable of absolute perfection before His presence.

Romans 3:28

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

My friend, you cannot buy your way back to God or earn God's favor by how you live and what you do because of the sin that is already in your life. Only grace, as seen in the cross of Christ, can save the man who is under the divine obligation to pay God back (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). The fact is this. We are under the obligation to pay off our debt before God. Oh how hopeless and lost we really are! Only grace can return the payment to God by providing the perfect purchasing price to God, which is the sinless and spotless Lamb of God. Dear friend, the price for your salvation has already been paid to God. The bill has been sent back to God and it says, "Paid in full!" And it is signed in blood. The blood of Jesus Christ!

Jesus said in John 5:24:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Did you catch those beautiful and reassuring words? You "shall not come into condemnation..." The one who believes on the Lord Jesus is free from judgment forever because Christ has already paid the penalty for their sins on Calvary and provided them with eternal life as a result of that payment. God will not demand the payment of this penalty twice. Christ has paid it once as our Substitute, and that is sufficient. He has finished the work, and nothing can be added to a finished work. The Christian will never be punished for his sins because Christ has already paid the penalty of judgment for all of his sins.

Augustus M. Toplady said:

"Payment God will not twice demand—
First at my bleeding Surety's hand
And then again at mine."

There are many people today who are trying to pay God back by living in a strict legalistic manner and hoping that their performance in life will somehow merit their entrance into Heaven. We might ask a person such as this, "What will you do with the sin that you already have in your life? Furthermore, what will you do with the sins that you commit later on in life?" One lady said to me that she will let God weigh the scales when she gets to heaven and see if her good outweighs her bad. What a false hope this is. The scales are already weighed. You are guilty! The Law has already

condemned you! You are being led to the electric chair that leads to God's everlasting wrath in hell.

There are other people want to ask God for forgiveness for their past sins and then hope that they will measure up in the final run of life so that God accepts them. They are actually living according to a legalistic law principle or works principle in order for God to accept them. Dear friend, God will not accept you on the basis of the way you live. Why is that? It's because you are not perfect and commit sin. Sin cannot be tolerated in His presence at all. Therefore, if you are living under the Law principle, you must live perfectly all the time without flaw or be condemned to die spiritually forever (James 2:10). But you may say, "I will ask for forgiveness when I do wrong." No! You cannot live by law and grace at the same time. You cannot mix law and grace. Or should I say, "You cannot mix Christ's sacrificial merits upon the cross with your own sacrificial merits."

Romans 11:6 clearly says:

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

This means that it is either grace all the way or works all the way! It is either Christ all the way or you all the way! No wonder you cannot have peace or the absolute assurance of salvation! Its because you are trying to go to heaven by your own way. Deep down everyone knows that they fall way short and cannot make it to heaven on their own merits. Christ and His substitutionary work on the cross is what gives you complete and everlasting salvation, for it's only through the merits of Christ's work that God accepts you (Hebrews 7:25). When Jesus said on the cross that it was finished, He was saying that there is nothing else that you can pay to God in order to satisfy God's wrath against sin and His justice and holiness. May I say to all those dear people who lack the assurance of salvation today, "Christ is the sacrifice that brings you to God, not your sacrifices!"

1 Peter 3:18 says:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

You cannot get to God and have His acceptance and approval by the way that you live. It is absolutely impossible. The only way that you can have God's acceptance is to have your sin debt of judgment taken away forever. This can only happen when you personally trust in the provision that Christ has made for you (Acts 16:31). Christ alone has satisfied God's just penalty for sin required by the Law and opened the way to God. Christ's substitutionary death is the only way to God! As a result, the unbeliever who was once alienated from God has now, through the work of Christ, become completely and forever reconciled to God and accepted of Him.

Romans 5:10 says:

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

Through Christ we can be reconciled before the holy and righteous God who had to judge sinners and sentence them to judgment. All the enmity and separation between God and the believer has been forever removed through Christ’s work. God is no longer separated from me! God is at peace with me! God accepts me! Can you honestly say that God has accepted you? Do you know that He has accepted you? You can be sure that He has if you will personally believe in the sacrifice of Christ to save you instead of your own system of works or manner of living.

The Bible declares that Jesus Christ paid your sin debt of judgment in full by becoming a substitution or replacement for you upon the cross. He purchased your pardon from judgment on Calvary’s cross.

d. The Redemption we have through Substitution

The whole idea of a substitutionary purchasing price is demonstrated by the Biblical word of redemption. Redemption is a related truth to substitution. The word redemption speaks of being released or set free through a payment or price. It is the liberation or freedom that we receive by the payment of a ransom. A ransom speaks of deliverance and rescue.

One Greek word explaining redemption is “agorazo” (Rev. 5:9; 1 Cor. 7:23) and means, “to purchase in the marketplace.” Another Greek word explaining redemption is “exagorazo,” (Gal. 3:13; 4:5) which teaches that Christ redeemed or purchased believers in order to actually remove them from the curse and bondage of the law, which condemned them and could not bring salvation into their lives. Believers have been purchased in the slave market (agorazo) and removed from the slave market (exagorazo) altogether. Christ set believers free from bondage to the law and from its condemnation as we have already seen.

Galatians 4:5 says:

“To redeem (exagorazo) them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

The death of Jesus Christ as our substitute has set us free from the judgment that our sins brought upon us and from the very bondage of those sins. This freedom is true freedom, freedom from the judgment and very power of sin within your life (John 8:36).

Matthew 1:21

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

This means that Jesus has saved each believer from the terrible consequences of their sins through His work of redemption. Jesus has purchased our freedom from judgment by paying the sin debt that we had before the Father. He accomplished this with His own perfect sacrifice. The result calls for some singing!

“I have a song I love to sing,
Since I have been redeemed,
Of my Redeemer, Savior, King,
Since I have been redeemed.

Since I have been redeemed,
Since I have been redeemed,
I will glory in His name;
Since I have been redeemed,
I will glory in my Savior’s name.”

Two other Greek words used to explain redemption are “apolutrosis (“set free by paying of a price” – Romans 3:24; 1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:14) which is built upon the word “lutroo” which means “ransom” (Luke 24:21; Titus 2:14). Both establish the idea of being set free by payment of a ransom. Believers have been redeemed (ransomed) by the precious blood of Christ.

1 Peter 1:18

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed (“lutroo” - ransomed) with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers.”

The blood of Jesus that was offered up to God is the actual purchasing price that God has accepted for your redemption (ransom) and mine. As noted already, redemption frequently had to do with the sale of slaves in the marketplace. The word is used to describe the believer being purchased out of the slavemarket of sin and set free from sin’s penalty and bondage. The purchase price for the believer’s freedom and release from sin was the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus died upon the cross in order to pay the bill that you could not pay. He rendered up to God a perfect satisfying sacrifice that was free from sin and became your replacement before God. Jesus not only paid for your judgment, but He also bought or purchased your freedom from judgment and sin’s power on the basis of His own sacrifice. May I reverently say today that the bill was on Him! Jesus paid a bill you could not pay. Jesus Christ paid for your own release from sin and hell by offering up His perfect life as a ransom or redemption price for you.

1 Corinthians 6:20 reminds of the old, old, story:

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

1 Corinthians 7:23 says:

“Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.”

Dear friend, Jesus bought you! He paid for your pardon, forgiveness, salvation and deliverance from the eternal consequences of sin. Jesus paid for your forgiveness and eternal acceptance before the God of all righteousness and holiness.

In ancient times a person was released from slavery or prison by a ransom payment (Leviticus 25:47-55). Redemption was a contractual agreement, which existed in the slave culture. Within this agreement there was offered the potential for emancipation with individuals. Family members who would pay the ransom price could actually buy relatives out of their slavery. The kinsman redeemer or near kin could pay a price for the relative and release him from the slave condition that he was in (Lev. 25:52). Redemption always had a purchasing price connected to it. All of this Old Testament practice is illustrated in the word redemption. If we are going to have redemption, there must be a Redeemer. Christ is our Kinsman Redeemer today who has paid the price of our sin debt back to God the Father. The purchasing price He paid was His own blood! What a price it was. Peter calls Christ’s blood the “precious (costly or valuable) blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19). Christ shed His sinless and substitutionary blood upon the cross in order to pay for the sin debt of judgment that we owed to God. This was seen to be a debt that we could not pay since we were dreadful sinners in His sight and incapable of offering perfection to Him.

The old saying is true:

“Jesus came to pay a debt He didn’t owe,
Because we owed a debt we couldn’t pay.”

That’s why Romans 3:24 says:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

The picture is very clear. Jesus purchased our pardon and release from the sin debt and judgment that we had before God. Jesus released us from the judicial debt of our sins before God. This means that through His own substitutionary death, we can have all of our sins cancelled out before God as well as the judgment that God had judicially and righteously sentenced us with because of these sins. We were all in the slave market of sin and condemnation without any way to pay God back. But then Jesus came! And Jesus purchased us out of the slave market of sin and damnation by becoming the substitutionary sacrifice upon the cross.

1 Timothy 2:6

“Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

The word for ransom (“antilutron”) means a redemption price, something that is given in exchange for another. The ransom price must be paid to avoid the divine punishment upon sin and the sinner. It was known as the “fine” which someone must pay in court to avoid going to jail. Here, Christ is not only the person who pays our “fine,” more properly His own death becomes the actual “fine” that is paid to the Father to produce our redemption from sins judgment and sure damnation.

Christ gave His life for us and this life was a payment price offered up to God on our behalf. He paid the price to set us free from the penalty of our sin which God’s judgment required. Jesus paid God off with His own sacrifice in order that you might be forgiven, saved and set free from the eternal burning of hell. Glory hallelujah, Christ has set me free!

“Redeemed how I live to proclaim it,
Redeemed by the blood of the lamb!”
Redeemed through His infinite mercy.
His child am forever I am!”

One of the old favorites is the story of the father and son who worked for months to build a toy sailboat. Every night when he came home from work the man and his boy would disappear into the garage for hours. It was a labor of love--love for each other and for the thing they were creating. The wooden hull was painted bright red and it was trimmed with gleaming white sails. When it was finished, they traveled to a nearby lake for the boat's trial run. Before launching it the father tied a string to its stern to keep it from sailing too far. The boat performed beautifully, but before long a motorboat crossing the lake cut the string, and the sailboat drifted out of sight on the large lake. Attempts to find it were fruitless, and both father and son wept over its loss.

A few weeks later as the boy was walking home from school he passed his favorite toy store and was amazed to see a toy sailboat in the window--his sailboat! He ran inside to claim the boat, telling the proprietor about his experience on the lake. The storeowner explained that he had found the boat while on a fishing trip. "You may be its maker," he said, "but as a finder I am its legal owner. You may have it back--for fifty dollars." The boy was stunned at how much it would cost him to regain his boat, but since it was so precious to him he quickly set about earning the money to buy it back. Months later he joyfully walked into the toy store and handed the owner fifty dollars in exchange for his sailboat. It was the happiest day of his life. As he left the store he held the boat up to the sunlight. Its colors gleamed as though newly painted. "I made you, but I lost you," he said. "Now I've bought you back. That makes you twice mine, and twice mine is mine forever." So God has created or made us and then lost us in the sin

of Adam. But He has bought us back by the redeeming blood sacrifice of His own son. We are His and His forever!

Dear friend, how can you as a slave, pay God back for the sin debt of judgment that you have already acquired before the holy God? We could not pay God back because we are sinners and cannot render a holy sacrifice that God would accept. Remember, the law says, "Guilty!" God demands perfection. Jesus as your perfect sacrifice bore the judgment that God required for you. He paid for your own judgment of hell while He hung upon the cross. Does that stir your heart today? It should unless you have a heart of stone.

The hymnwriter wrote:
"Jesus paid it all
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson tide,
He washed it white as snow."

Jesus paid back your sin debt to God by taking the sins of all your life upon Himself and bearing the wrath and judgment of God in connection with those sins. Jesus provisionally paid for the awful debt of our sins, which brought the wrath of God upon us. He also paid for our forgiveness. He was the perfect sacrifice rendered up to God, which could appease God's righteous wrath against sin and bring forgiveness and eternal life into our lives.

J. Vernon McGee has said:

"Christ did not come to charge man's sins against him but to pay man's debt."

e. The Forgiveness we have through Substitution

Let us never forget that God could not forgive sins without a proper payment for sin. A proper ransom had to be offered to God. Through Christ's substitutionary ransom price, provision was made for your forgiveness before God. Through His death, Jesus purchased our freedom by canceling out the sin debt of judgment that was against us and releasing us of all our sinful debt before God! Thus, God could legally remove all the charges of sin that were against us and declare that all of our sins are erased from our life forever.

Jesus illustrates this in the parable which He gave in Matthew 18:27:

"Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."

God forgave us of the tremendous sin debt that we had before His presence. Jesus bore the debt of sin and the judgment connected with this sin upon Himself. He did this

in order to grant forgiveness to you forever and set you free from the penalty for your sins.

Jesus illustrated this when He said in the parable of Luke 7:42:
“And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.”

This is what Christ did for you! He frankly forgave us of all our sins when we had absolutely nothing to offer Him to pay our sin debt. Did you catch that? We had nothing to pay. How could we ever pay for our sin debt before God? It is impossible to pay God back because we have already broken the Law and God requires absolute holiness and perfection in His sight. We could never offer up to God the kind of holy sacrifice that He requires. Therefore, we must only suffer the righteous vengeance of a holy and just God.

Habakkuk 1:13 speaks about God’s holy requirement:
“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.”

At Valley Forge in the winter of 1777-78, George Washington and his troops were in utterly desperate straits. He appealed to the government of Pennsylvania for help. Jacob DeHaven, a staunch believer in the revolutionary cause, lived near Valley Forge. Hearing of Washington's appeal, he loaned him \$50,000 in gold and \$400,000 in supplies. The army survived the winter, but after the war DeHaven was never repaid. Now his descendants are trying to collect. They claim that the loan, compounded at 6% interest daily, amounts to \$141.6 billion. In one sense, all the money in the world could never repay DeHaven for what he did. In reality, he saved the cause of freedom for all America. There's another debt all of us owe that we can never repay. It is the price Jesus Christ paid to give us liberty from the judgment and bondage of sin. We cannot repay God back because we are not holy and righteous like God’s Son. We are sinners who could never offer up to God the perfect and holy sacrifice that He requires.

In Colossians 2:14, Paul graphically compares God’s forgiveness of the believer’s sins to wiping ink off a parchment. Through Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross, God has totally erased (“Blotting out”) this certificate of sin debt before God and made our forgiveness complete. You can have your sins blotted out and the wrath of God’s judgment, which was connected with those sins, erased from your life forever!

“My sins are blotted out I know,
My sins are blotted out I know!”

Someone else has remarked:
“Jesus for thee a body takes, thy guilt assumes, thy fetter breaks, discharging all thy dreadful debt; and canst thou then such love forget?”

We must remember that the death of Jesus provided the necessary way for forgiveness to be applied to your life and mine. The substitutionary sacrifice of Christ can take away your sins that once threatened to bring God's judgment against your life. This occurs when you place faith in Christ and allow God's grace to save you (Ephesians 2:8-9). The sacrificial death of Christ not only means that Christ takes our sin upon Himself and receives God's judgment in our place, it also means that He takes away the sin which brings the judgment upon our lives and provides us with complete forgiveness and acceptance before God!

Hebrews 9:26 says:

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin (imputed and original sin) by the sacrifice of himself."

1 John 3:5

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins (the many sins we commit); and in him is no sin."

"He took my sins away,
He took my sins away,
And keeps me singing every day!
I'm so glad He took my sins away,
He took my sins away!"

Yes, Jesus took them all away! Both the original sin that you inherited from Adam (Romans 5:12) and then the actual sins that you have committed in your past and those that you will commit in your future life. Jesus took the root of sin away and all the fruits that came from this one imputed sin which all of us have received from Adam. Forgiveness of sin is applied to all of your sins (1 John 1:7, Colossians 2:13, Acts 10:43). Jesus died upon the cross to provisionally and potentially take away the sins of the world of mankind. And you must remember that all of your sins were still in the future when Jesus died upon the cross. This means that Jesus died bearing all of the sins that you would ever commit throughout your entire life. He did not just die for the sins of your past unsaved life as some extreme holiness teaching suggests.

Forgiveness is the legal act of God where He removes the charges of sin held against the sinner because proper satisfaction has been made for those sins. This forgiveness is the result of the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ when it is applied to your life. His work upon the cross washes your sins away and brings you eternal forgiveness before God's presence, freeing you from the judgment of God! You are acquitted of all your condemnation forever! Because your sins are forgiven, God drops the verdict of condemnation against you which those sins required (Romans 6:3; John 3:18) and declares you to be righteous and no longer guilty before Him through the work of Christ

(Romans 4:3, 23-24). To have your sins put away means to have them cancelled out before God so that you can be forever released from the eternal condemnation that these sins brought upon your life. Figuratively speaking, our sins are buried in the deepest depths of the sea where God cannot and will not remember them.

Micah 7:19 says:

“He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”

Someone has remarked:

“When God buries our sins in the deepest sea, He posts a sign, which reads: No Fishing!”

There is a Calvary Doxology that we need to sing today. It is written in the book of the Revelation.

Revelation 1:5 says:

“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”

“Here’s pardon for transgressions past,
It matters not how black their cast;
And oh, my soul, with wonder view,
For sins to come, here’s pardon too!”

This my friend is the wonder working power of Christ’s substitution. His blood takes all of your sins away forever and you escape the judicial judgment of God’s hand and your indebtedness to Him. Our God has a big eraser. The Old Testament wonderfully portrayed this truth of substitutionary forgiveness to us.

Leviticus 16:15, 21-22

“Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.”

On the Day of Atonement two goats were to be taken and presented before the Lord. One goat would be killed and the other goat would then be introduced following the death of the first goat. The first goat that was killed represented or pictured the death of

Jesus Christ. As the blood of the goat was shed so the blood of Christ was shed on our behalf in order to provide forgiveness before God.

The first goat portrays the actual sacrifice of Christ and forgiveness through the shedding of the blood. The second goat was introduced after the first one was slain and points to the effects and results of Christ's death. He provided forgiveness for our sins. It was left to run in the wilderness. This beautifully portrays that through the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ all of our sins were forgiven and taken away from the presence of a holy God. It encompasses the thought of complete forgiveness. The scapegoat was sent off into the wilderness bearing "all their iniquities." The goat in the wilderness typically portrays how Christ took all of our sins away from us and vows to remember them no more. It teaches the practical truth of forgiveness. This goat was called the "scapegoat" (vs. 8). In one sense, our sins were transferred out into the wilderness of God's forgiveness and forgetfulness. Jesus became our scapegoat there on the cross! He became our scapegoat who took away our sins into the wilderness of God's forgetfulness. Our sins are gone!

"Gone, gone, gone, gone,
Yes my sins are gone!"

It is rather bizarre, but the Seventh Day Adventist cult actually believes that the goat represents Satan who is the author of sin. This teaching says that Satan will in the end bear our sins away upon himself in the form of judgment. This friend is utter blasphemy. Satan could never take sin away. Only the substitutionary death of Christ can remove our sins and purchase our pardon before God. The sacrificial system of the Old Testament points to Christ and not the devil.

As we reflect upon how the substitutionary death of Christ takes away sins and grants eternal forgiveness before God, we should also comment upon the sins of the Old Testament saints. When Jesus died upon the cross, He also took away the sins of precross saints. Those saints who lived and died prior to the cross were actually forgiven and saved because God looked ahead and applied the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ to their lives (Romans 3:25; 9:15). In other words, God saved them on credit. I know that sounds rather unscholarly, but I am not a scholar and it gets the point across. Christ's substitutionary death was typically represented in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament (Genesis 3:21; Leviticus 17:11). The sins of those living before the cross were only temporarily covered (atoned) by the blood of animal sacrifices until Christ would come and actually deal with their sins in a final and permanent way by taking all of them away (Hebrews 10:4,11). The Old Testament worshippers were forgiven and saved on the basis of the future work of Christ on their behalf. But until the sacrifice came a temporary system of sacrifice was instituted by God to cover the sins of the people and prepare His people to look forward to the ultimate sacrifice and Savior in the coming Messiah.

f. The Imputation of the Substitution

The entire substitutionary death of Christ and the taking away of the sins of the human race (John 1:29) is intertwined with the Biblical concept of imputation. Imputation means to “reckon over to one” or “to set down to ones account.” It is actually a banking term. The sins of every person from Adam until the last created person that God brings into this world were all imputed upon the account of Jesus Christ. All of our sins that we ever committed and would commit were imputed or accredited to the account of Christ. He was charged for our own sins. Our sins and the judgment for those sins were reckoned over to the account of the Son of God who had no sins and judgment upon His account. When the dear Lord Jesus was hanging upon the cross He was in essence, saying to the Father, “Put the sin of all the world on my account. Charge it to my account. I will take the blame for their own sin and I will take the judgment that they deserve in connection with those sins. Put it on my own account.”

Paul illustrates this wonderful doctrine of imputation when he offered to pay for anything that Onesimus owed Philemon.

Philemon 17-18

“If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account.”

“Receive him as myself.” That is what Jesus was really saying as He hung their upon the cross bearing your own sin and judgment! “Father, you will be able to receive this poor lost sinner as you now receive my sacrifice! Charge all of their sin and all of their debt of judgment to my own account. Father, you know that they cannot pay back the debt because of their own lack of holiness and sin. So receive them as you now receive my sinless and substitutionary offer upon the cross.”

The sin of Adam was first imputed to our account when we were conceived in the womb. This is why we have a great sin debt before God. The book of Romans is very clear about this act of imputation.

Romans 5:12

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

Romans 5:19

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners...”

The act of imputation is seen in the words “passed upon” (12) and “made sinners” (19). When Adam ate the forbidden fruit he died spiritually and later he would die physically.

Both spiritual and physical death was the result of sin in Adam's own life. However, the Bible teaches that we were also tied to Adam's original sin. Adam passed to all his descendants the inherent sinful nature he possessed because of his first disobedience. That sin nature is present in every person from the moment of conception (Ps. 51:5), because of Adam's original sin. In the Bible, "sin" in its singular sense, can refer to this imputed sin nature which every person in the human race has accredited to his or her spiritual account through the initial act of Adam. This is the teaching of the imputation of sin (Adam's original sin) upon the whole human race. Both the sin of Adam and the sin nature of Adam were evidently passed down to all future generations. You may ask, "How can this be?" Because God says so, that's why!

Since all humanity existed in the loins of Adam and have through conception inherited his fallen nature and depravity; it can be said that "all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Adam is the federal representative of the human race. This means that when Adam sinned, we sinned in Adam because of our federal tie with him. We were allied with him or at union with him. The fact that "all have sinned" may also mean that we sinned in Adam in a physical or natural sense by doing the very act that Adam did. When Adam reached out for that fruit you reached out for that fruit as well because Adam represented you as the head of the human race. You and I are sinners by imputation. Therefore, we stand before God, as charged with Adam's sin. You may not like that, but that's the way the cookie crumbles! Adam acted for the human race because he was the head of it. And because he was head of it we acted with him. His one act of disobedience plunged his entire offspring into sin. We are all made sinners by Adam's sin. You cannot separate yourself from Adam's original sin in the Garden. This is why we have a tremendous sin debt before God that we cannot pay back. We are in debt up to our eyeballs!

Remember:

"People are not sinners because they sin; they sin because they are already sinners!"

Adam and Christ are representatives of the human race. Through the first Adam, sin is imputed to our spiritual account and we are under God's judgment and have a debt of sin that we cannot repay back to God. Through the substitutionary work of the last Adam, we can have our sins forgiven and receive imputed righteousness to our spiritual account. Only then can the Divine Bookkeeper of Heaven mark "paid in full" on our bill of debt in heaven.

Romans 5:19 says:

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The obedience of Christ refers to His willingness to follow the Father's will and die the sinner's death upon the cross. The Bible says that Jesus was "obedient unto death,

even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8). Through the work of Christ upon the cross, we can have our sins forgiven, be judicially pardoned before God and declared righteous in His presence.

This means that the original sin we received from Adam was imputed to the account of Christ as he hung upon the cross (Romans 6:10; John 1:29; Heb. 9:26). Also, the billions and trillions or untold number of sins committed during the existence of the human race were also imputed to the account of Christ (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18). All of these separate acts of sin flow forth from this original act of sin that we inherited from Adam.

We must simply understand that the substitutionary death of Christ was an act of God imputing your sin from Adam and own personal sins to the account of Christ. It was a divine transferal of the sin of Adam and all the sins of the human race upon the account of Christ. All of my guilt, sin and judgment were transferred to Christ. What a divine act of imputation this was! What grace is this! Jesus paid the debt for us when all of our sin and sins were transferred to His account. He was the perfect sacrifice who took our place and released us from this sin debt of judgment that we could never repay to God. The believing sinner today can rejoice and say what David said:

Romans 4:8

“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

This is because our sin has been imputed to Christ’s account. Through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross the believer can be sure that the sin of Adam will never again be imputed to their spiritual account. The reason is because Adam’s sin and all the sins that flowed from that original sin were all imputed to the account of Christ as He hang upon the cross. What a blessing to know that we do not have any sin imputed to our lives.

This act of imputation was illustrated in the typology within the Old Testament.

Leviticus 1:4 reminded us of the procedure:

“And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.”

The worshipper in the Old Testament placed his hand upon the offering to indicate that his sins and judgment for those sins needed to be imputed to the account of another. The picture is clear. All of our sins and judgment were imputed to the account of Christ as He hung there upon the tree. Oh my friend, we must lay our hand upon the little lamb today and only trust in Christ to provide our forgiveness and salvation. This speaks of faith in Christ alone so that we can receive the benefits of His sacrifice (John 3:16, 5:24).

Now friend, let me ask you this question once again. How are you ever going to repay God? If you are thinking about sacrificing yourself upon a cross in life through your own legalistic efforts to gain God's favor, then think again. Your legalistic approach to gaining salvation will not work either. Why? Because God demands a perfectly righteous sacrifice (1 Peter 1:19). We could not sacrifice ourselves to produce our salvation because we are already an imperfect sacrifice before God and could not keep the Law to even remain a perfect sacrifice before God (James 3:10; Romans 5:6). When you try to live a certain way so God might save you, then you place yourself back under the Law and are found to be guilty because of your own imperfection.

Only Jesus could be the perfect sacrifice, which could incur the sin debt of judgment that we had upon our shoulders and take it upon Himself. Jesus actually took the sin debt of judgment upon Himself that you deserved. Through the act of imputed sin and judgment, Jesus paid God back with His own sacrifice realizing that you could not pay God back. And Jesus did this as He hung upon the cross. There on the cross Jesus paid for your own debt of judgment before God through the divine act of imputation. He suffered in agony for you and for me, bearing our sin debt in order to satisfy the justice and wrath of God toward us. Jesus in a very real sense purchased your pardon. He paid God back with the price of his own blood.

“Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!”

Dear friend, it is only through His substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross that you can be saved from the wrath to come.

Romans 5:9 says:

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”

g. The Justification we have through the Substitution

Justification is another result of the substitutionary death of Christ upon the cross. Through Christ's death, God removes your sin charges and pardons you. He frankly forgives you of all your sins. Then He does something that can also be labeled as “amazing grace.” God justifies us or declares the forgiven sinner righteous in His sight. Justification is a legal term used in the courts. It really means to be declared legally righteous. Justification is the result of our forgiveness and is accomplished when Christ's own righteousness is bestowed upon the life of the believing sinner. As a

result, the Father sees us through the perfect righteousness of His Son. We are hidden in His Son's own perfection.

Jude verse 24 says:

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee." Only when we hide in the substitutionary merits of Christ's blood can God declare us legally righteous and release us from the awful indebtedness of judgment that we have before Him.

When the Royal Canadian Mounted Police found the frozen body of a former atheist in a snowbound cabin, they picked up a note he had written to his mother. It read, "The question that haunts me as I face death is not whether there is a God, but how I as a sinner can face Him." Dear friend, we can know that we will face a loving God when we die if we receive His offer of forgiveness through His blessed Son. Through the substitutionary death of Christ, we can be declared legally righteous in God's eyes. What each lost soul must do is place their faith alone in Christ alone to save them through His work upon the cross. Salvation is a matter of faith alone in Christ alone. It has absolutely nothing to do with your works or manner of living. You say, "I don't believe you." Okay, don't believe what I say. However, believe what God's infallible Word tells you today.

Romans 4:5 says:

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

The beloved Bible teacher W. R. Newell told of an experience he had while speaking at a series of meetings in St. Louis. At the conclusion of one of the services, a troubled businessman approached Newell and said, "You're looking at the worst sinner in this city. I have been coming to these meetings for 4 weeks. I did not sleep last night. I have had little sleep for 3 weeks. I have prayed. I have read the Bible. Tell me what I need to do." Newell answered, "Let's see what the Bible says." Turning to Romans, chapter 4, he began reading verse 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

The man interrupted, "That's what I am - ungodly. But please tell me what to do." Newell responded, "This verse tells you that you are to do nothing, save one thing." He then read those blessed words, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." When the man heard that, his face brightened. "Being a businessman, I know a good proposition when I hear one," he said. "I'll take it!" And placing his trust in Christ, he received forgiveness. His faith was "accounted for righteousness." He found peace with God.

The Father has been paid back through Christ's holy and sacrificial death upon the cross. Christ took our judgment upon Himself and pardons every believer from their sin, justifying them (declaring them legally righteous) in God's presence. It is Jesus Christ who paid for our sin debt by becoming the perfect sacrifice for our sins, bearing their judgment and appeasing the wrath of God Himself. Only Jesus as the perfect sacrifice could pay God back for our tremendous sin debt. You cannot pay God back! I repeat, you cannot pay God back! You are a dreadful sinner in God's eyes that needs the substitutionary work of Christ applied to your life. You are a hopeless vessel lost on the sea of life and headed toward the edge of eternity where you will drop off into an everlasting hell! Oh dear friend, this means that you must trust in Christ alone to be your Savior from hell and allow him to clear you of all your charges of sin before God and justify you before His divine presence.

Romans 8:31-34 says:

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Only through Christ's substitutionary sacrifice upon the cross can you be accepted into God's presence and be declared legally and eternally righteous in God's sight. It is this sacrifice that the risen and ascended Christ eternally pleads before the Father in Heaven in order to keep us saved (Heb. 7:25).

The question that confronted God in saving men was this. How can God who is holy and just deal with sinners by judging them and as a loving God still deliver them from the punishment that those sins deserve? The answer is for a just person to sacrifice Himself for unjust people and become a substitute or replacement for them. Of course, that person could only be the sinless and spotless Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 3:18

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

Jesus was the perfectly just or righteous person who suffered for the unjust people of lost humanity. And the cross became the place where the justice of God, which demands the punishment for sin and the mercy of God could both be found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are what we might call the two sides of the cross – justice and mercy. It's in the cross of Christ where both could be displayed.

“O safe and happy shelter,
O refuge tried and sweet,
O trysting place where heaven’s love
And heaven’s justice meet!

As to the holy patriarch
That wondrous dream was giv’n,
So seems my Savior’s cross to me,
A ladder up to heav’n.”

Jesus is still the answer! He always was and always will be! He died as our perfect replacement or substitute, which would bring us the eternal and complete forgiveness of sin and acceptance before the holy God of Heaven. Jesus suffered the judgment of God on your behalf and mine. And this suffering that Jesus experienced was a one-time event that occurred upon the cross. It can never be repeated again and again in Roman Masses! Jesus Christ “once suffered for sins.” You cannot recreate the cross! You cannot make Christ suffer all over again.

Peter says that Jesus died as our substitute for sin only once in order to provide justification for the world of lost mankind.

1 Peter 3:18

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

This means that Jesus suffered the judgment that our sin’s required only once. God had to deal with our sins only one time.

Hebrews 10:14 echoes the same truth:

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

Roman Catholics are trying to accept a partial Christ through receiving installments of His recreated body and blood. The glorious truth is this. We do not receive a partial Christ but a whole or complete Christ who has suffered only once and is now living in order to grant you His wonderful salvation today.

Under the Old Covenant, the Jewish people offered sacrifice after sacrifice, and then repeated it all over the next year, especially at the Passover. But Christ’s one sacrifice for sins was of such eternal value that it was sufficient for the entire world of people and would never need to be repeated.

Hebrews 10:26 says:

“...there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.”

Jesus died once in order to save people once and for all and forever. His death cannot be repeated because He is alive forevermore to intercede for the believing, blood-washed sinner (Hebrews 7:25; Rev. 1:18). Christ interceded for us by presenting the efficacy or value of His own sacrificial blood before the Father. If you will place your faith in the one-time substitutionary death that He died upon the cross, then Jesus will forgive you forever and provide continual intercession for you before the Father's presence.

We must remember that the death of Jesus Christ is not something that you eat in order to help save you; it's something that you believe in and accept by faith to bring salvation into your life. Physical eating and believing are two different concepts. One is works and the other is faith in Christ. When Roman Catholics supposedly eat Christ during the Roman Mass, they do not believe on Christ to be their Savior. Instead, they are seeking to gain God's grace a little bit at a time by eating His body and blood. They are seeking to receive forgiveness for their sins and eternal life by an installment program of works as they eat Christ's body and blood. Christ is not the Savior; their eating becomes their Savior. This is because every time that they supposedly eat Christ, they are taking one step closer to salvation and Heaven.

Acts 16:31 plainly says:

"Believe on (not eat) the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

There are several themes that are connected with the substitutionary death of Christ.

h. The Sanctification we have through the Substitution.

We now come to another result of the substitutionary cross of Christ. It is the result of sanctification. Paul clearly says that we have received a sanctified or holy position before God in view of the one-time death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

Hebrews 10:10

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Hebrews 10:14 is worth repeating:

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

The Bible teaches that the believer's positional sanctification or perfect holiness before the Father is also linked to the substitutionary work of Christ. This means that Christ has also become our sacrifice upon the cross in order to provide a perfect sanctification (holy standing) before the presence of the Father. The word "perfection" in this context speaks of the positional perfection or holiness that every believing sinner

has before God. The believer in Christ has a standing of spiritual completeness (Col. 2:10).

Robert Gomacki has said:

“God supplied in the death of Christ all that men need to have a perfect position before Him.”

1 Corinthians 1:30 says:

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

To be “in Christ” means that we are seen before the presence of the Father in the merits of His own Son’s work. This means that the application of the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross to our lives has provided us with cleansing from sin, which results in our pure, perfect, righteous and holy position before God. Sanctification has to do with our holy position or standing in Christ before God. The Greek word for sanctification (“hagiazō”) has the meaning of being “set apart” and pertains to our holiness before God’s presence. As a result of the one-time sacrificial work of Christ upon the cross, the believing sinner has been forever set apart unto God or has been given a holy standing in the presence of God’s own matchless perfection and holiness. How can this be? When the work of Christ’s cross is applied to the believer’s life, he is forgiven of all his sins and immediately and forever given a purified, perfect and holy standing in the presence of God. This is what the cross of Christ has done for us! God now sees the work of His own Son as being sufficient to provide us with this sanctified or holy standing in His presence. This is because the cross of Christ has cleansed us from all of our sins and provided us with a clean and holy position before God.

“Complete in Thee! no work of mine,
May take, dear Lord, the place of thine;
Thy blood hath pardn bought for me,
And I am now complete in Thee.
Yes, justified! O blessed thought!
And sanctified! Salvation wrought!
Thy blood hath pardon bought for me,
And glorified, I too shall be!”

This work of sanctification through the cross means that the person who places faith in the finished work of Christ to save them will immediately be accepted in God’s holy presence as a holy individual themselves and become a saint in God’s sight. Positional sanctification through the work of Christ means that the believer is accounted holy in God’s presence.

1 Corinthians 1:2 says:

“Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.”

The believer is a saint before God’s presence by holy position only and not by daily living. The word “saint” actually denotes our position in Christ (1 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2). This means that the cross of Christ has set apart each believing sinner to be accepted as a saint in God’s sight. The wonderful truth about sanctification through the cross of Christ must never be diminished. Through the cross of Christ I am already sanctified in the sight of God.

Hebrews 13:11-12 says:

“For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”

Under the old institution or covenant the blood from sacrifices made on the Day of Atonement was brought into the most holy place, but the bodies were burned outside the camp (vs. 11). The sin offering was then taken outside the camp and burned completely.

Leviticus 16:27 reminds us of the procedure:

“And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.”

Jesus Christ, our perfect sin offering, suffered and died “outside the gate” (outside Jerusalem) in order to make people holy in God’s sight and presence. Our sin offering today speaks of Christ, and therefore it includes all the blessings that are found in Him, even our sanctification before God’s holy presence. Under the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, certain animals were slain and their blood was brought into the sanctuary or Most Holy Place by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin. The bodies of those animals were then carried to a place away from the tabernacle environment and burned. Outside the camp means outside the outer fence that enclosed the tabernacle court. The animals burned outside the camp were a type of the Lord Jesus. He was crucified outside the city walls of Jerusalem on a hill called Golgotha. This did not picture the burnt offering for the burnt offering of the Old Testament was sacrificed upon the brazen altar within the tabernacle precincts. When the animal was taken outside the tabernacle setting it was to picture the removal of sin from Israel. The animal, which atoned for their sin, would be taken outside the camp and away from the presence of the nation. It was all a picture of the disgraceful character of sin, which was placed upon the animal and sin’s repudiation from their sight. So Christ was taken

outside the gate in order to fulfill this typology. He was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem in a disgraceful way, bearing the sins of all lost humanity. He became the final and ultimate sacrifice outside the camp. And there He was hanging upon the cross outside the Jerusalem with our sin upon Himself and the humiliation and judgment that went along with that sin. Jesus was the sinless sacrifice that took the shameful disgrace of sin upon Himself. Oh my friend, have you thanked Him today for His sacrifice outside the camp?

It was also true that Christ went outside the camp of organized Judaism and the rituals of the Old Testament Covenant. This means that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross was not like the Old Testament sacrifices. In going outside the city geographically, Jesus also went outside the religion of Judaism with its animal sacrifices. He went outside the gate or camp of Jerusalem to demonstrate that He was the fulfillment and final completion of the Old Testament sacrificial system. Christ was leaving Judaism and the law sacrifices. Therefore, the Jewish people would no longer have to keep sacrificing the animals upon the altar.

You will notice the main reason why Jesus went outside the gate and died in humility and disgrace on your behalf. It is because He wanted to sanctify us before the Father ("that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" – Heb. 13:12). We must remember that every individual who places faith in the finished work of Christ can have this sanctified or holy position before God because of the shedding of Christ's blood upon the cross of Calvary. Because of the work of Christ upon the cross and our wonderful cleansing from all sin, we can be set apart or made holy in the presence of the Almighty God. Hallelujah for the cross! We can have our guilt removed and be forgiven of all our sins, which results in a holy position before the absolute holiness of God. Because of this, we can have a continuing access before God. We have been set apart from all of our sins and made holy and acceptable to God through the merits of Christ's blood.

Telephone poles are important symbols in our country. They support lines of communication that enable people to "reach out and touch" others in just about any corner of the globe. In addition to that, the telephone poles of many communities carry power lines that make it possible for the citizens to use electric motors and appliances, which make life easier. Did you ever stop to think about these poles and the vast roadside forest they form? How long has it been since you've really looked at a telephone pole? What is its shape? The one in front of our house, I noticed, is in the shape of a cross. It is a high, straight pole with a crossbar.

This simple picture of the telephone pole reminds us that the only way that we can communicate with God or have access into God's presence is through the cross of Christ. There is another pole that stands tall and high and lifted up. It is the cross of

Christ. And it is the only way for a lost world to communicate with a holy God and be accepted in His presence. It is the cross of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:14

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

There are several themes that are connected with the substitutionary death of Christ.

i. The Propitiation we have through the Substitution

We now come to another glorious truth dealing with Christ’s substitutionary work upon the cross. God dealt with our sin in Christ upon the cross in order to appease His anger and judgment toward our sins. In fact, God had to judge Christ in our place before He could set us free from the condemnation of our sins. Therefore, all the judicial afflictions of God were poured upon the Lord Jesus in order to grant pardon, forgiveness and salvation from the curse of future judgment. When Jesus received the punishment for our own sins He satisfied God’s holy demands of judgment for sin. This is the main thrust of what the word propitiation means. The substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus became a “propitiation” or satisfying sacrifice to God in that it appeased God’s just demands for judgment because of sin and also vindicated or maintained His holiness. This brings us to another point in our study concerning the great themes involved with substitution. We now want to consider the wonderful truth about propitiation.

1 John 2:1-2 says:

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

This text reveals that the death of Jesus Christ provides potential propitiation for every man in the world. The substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross is the only way that God can be satisfied with you and accept you into His presence. His satisfying sacrifice before the Father is what pays the debt of judgment, which you owe to God and brings you into a righteous standing before God. It is only through Christ’s sacrifice that God will accept you – “Jesus Christ the righteous.” This means that Christ can enter the presence of the Father on your behalf because He is perfectly righteous in His being. Christ is absolutely sinless and guiltless and can therefore come into the presence of the Father as a lawyer pleading our case. Christ does not need an advocate (lawyer) for Himself because He is righteous in His being and nature.

I remember when we were building the church, which I am presently pastoring. We started at the foundation and poured the footer for the church. Then we poured the basement floor. Then we were ready to build upon the footer and basement floor. Next

came the steel beams that could be placed upon the floor beneath. Then came the sanctuary and finally the roof. Everything was built upon the other. So it is with the work of Christ. The advocacy work of Christ that He performs in Heaven for Christians (1 John 2:1) is compared to a second floor. This priestly work is built upon the bottom floor which is the propitiation work of Jesus Christ (1 John 2:2).

The advocacy work of Christ in 1 John 2:1 is comparable to the second floor that is built upon the first floor of foundation which is the propitiation work of Christ (1 John 2:2). I now want you to see the first floor or foundation of Christ's work upon the cross. As we are about to see, Christ not only represent believers before God (vs. 1), He also provides the ground for their forgiveness (vs. 2) which is His propitiatory sacrifice upon the cross. It is this sacrifice that is the groundwork of all Christ's work.

The word propitiation is "hil-as-mos" which speaks of the appeasement or satisfaction of an offended person. God is offended with you and your sin. The expression "for our sins" means that Jesus became the substitutionary sacrifice for all of our sins, which broke God's Law, offended God holiness and demanded God's just punishment (1 John 2:2). He took all of our sins upon Himself in order to offer a substitutionary sacrifice up to God, which God could be satisfied with. "Jesus Christ Himself is a satisfaction." The Old Testament priest offered an animal sacrifice, but not his own life as the sacrifice. But this wonderful New Testament Priest is both the Priest and the Sacrifice!

There on the cross Jesus died as you, for you, in your place, bearing all the sins that separated you from a holy God and which would ultimately bring the just judgment of God upon your life. Jesus offered up to God a clean and holy sacrifice that could take away all the sins that separated you from God (Heb. 9:26) and appease or satisfy the demands of God's holiness and justice which required punishment for your sin.

Jesus Christ is the satisfying sacrifice for our sins as His little children. John is reminding us that Christ's sacrifice upon the cross in some sense satisfied the demands of a holy and just God, who was once offended because of our sins and unholy living. A holy and just God must condemn the sinner who has sin upon his account. This requires judgment for sin in hell (Rom. 6:23).

The dictionary tells us that "to propitiate" means "to appease someone who is angry." If you apply this to Christ, you get the horrible picture of an angry God, about to destroy the world, and a loving Savior giving Himself to appease the outrage and anger of God. Dear friend, this is not the Biblical picture of salvation! Certainly God is angry at sin; after all, He is infinitely holy. But the Bible reassures us that "God so loved [not hated] the world" of mankind (John 3:16). God hates sin but He loves the sinner.

The word “propitiation” does not mean the appeasing of an angry God. Do you know why? It’s because God loves sinners! He does not hate sinners! When it comes to salvation, God loves poor lost souls who are in need of spiritual life. The thought behind the word propitiation means the satisfying of God’s just demands for punishment against all sin and sinners. It means to satisfy a holy Law and a holy God that demanded punishment for our sins.

We must remember that “God is light” (1 John 1:5). Therefore, God cannot close His eyes to sin. He cannot condone any sin in His presence or sight. If He would, then He would no longer be a holy God. Therefore, every sinner offends God’s holiness by sinning. This means that God cannot accept us and must judge us in order to maintain (vindicate) His high and holy standards. It would appear then that we have no hope and that all of us will wind up in hell forever. But then Jesus came! There upon the cross, Jesus took our place (substitution) and our sin was charged to His account (imputation). Jesus paid for your freedom from sin’s judgment and power (redemption) by offering up to God a perfect and sinless sacrifice. His holy sacrifice took the sins of all our lives (past present and future) upon Himself (1 Peter 2:24) so that we could receive pardon for these sins (forgiveness). This substitutionary payment for sin (ransom) satisfied (propitiation) God’s righteous demands for judgment and holiness, since the holiness of God could not accept the sin in our lives and had to demand judgment for sin and sinners (Rom. 6:23). Christ’s sacrifice alone could appease or satisfy God’s righteous requirements to bring judgment against all sin and uphold His holiness.

“Propitiation” means the satisfying sacrifice, which could satisfy God’s anger against sin and the just demands for punishment, which God’s holy Law required. This satisfying sacrifice was needed so that God could freely forgive those who come to Christ. Jesus had to die on the cross in order to satisfy the righteous demands of the Law which required judgment for sin and satisfy God’s holiness which required perfection in His presence. Propitiation is the satisfying of God’s just demands for punishment against all sin and sinners. It means to satisfy a holy Law and a holy God that demanded punishment for our sins.

My friend, there was something in the nature of God (holiness) that demanded appeasement or propitiation. There was also something else in the nature of God (love) which led Him to provide the propitiation. When Jesus suffered the wrath of God on the cross for the sins of the world, He fully met the demands of God’s Law, and also fully expressed the love of God’s heart.

“We may sound the depths of all the mighty oceans,
We may tell the distance to the farthest star;
But the mighty love of God cannot be measured-
Its dimensions are so high, so deep, so far.

This love is mine! I cannot comprehend it,
This love revealed in Christ my Lord divine,
When on the tree, He died for me!
God's wondrous, glorious, mighty love –
This love is mine.”

God is light! God is holy! But “God is love” as well (1 John 4:8). Because God is love, He wants to save sinners. How, then, can a holy God uphold His own justice and holiness and punish sin and sinners from His presence while at the same time express love and forgiveness to those same sinners? The answer is in the cross of Christ! At the cross, in the person of Jesus Christ, God in His holiness judged sin and condemned the very One who had taken the place of all the sinners in the world. Therefore, God's offended holiness and justice, which required judgment for every sinner, was satisfied when Jesus died upon the cross. My friend, God the Father is satisfied with the death of His Son! His only begotten Son has met God's demands for the punishment of sin and the broken Law, which offended His absolute holiness. Everything was poured upon His Son – our sins and our punishment or judgment for those sins, and the curse of the law. Jesus bore it all! He bore it all alone!

“Alone, alone, he bore it all alone.
He suffered bled and died, alone, alone.”

At the cross, God was just in that He punished sin in the person of His own Son, but He was also loving in that He was able to offer freedom and forgiveness through what Jesus did on the cross.

1 John 4:10 says:

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

Dear friend, the act of sending God's Son in order to provide this satisfaction (propitiation) is rooted in the love of God! God loved us! That is why He put His plan of propitiation into practice. This is why He sent His son into the world to provide the satisfaction that the just and holy God required concerning the broken Law and the condemnation of the sinner. It is because God loved us!

I remember one particular wedding present that we received on our wedding day. There were many presents but I will never forget this one present. An instructor at the Grand Rapids School of the Bible & Music, where I had my schooling, had recorded a new record. He was an excellent pianist and played at the wedding. This man wanted to give me his record as a wedding gift. He handed me the record and I will never forget the words that were written across the front jacket of that record. They were

written in bright bold red - "God Loves You." My friend, the most wonderful news you could ever hear is that God loves you and has expressed this love to you by providing a propitiation (appeasing, satisfying) sacrifice (1 John 4:10). This was the sacrifice of God's very own Son who died on the cross in your place. His sacrifice was the only sacrifice that could ever appease the righteous demands of the Law, which required judgment for your sin. It was the only sacrifice that could appease the law's righteous demands for judgment, satisfy God's anger toward your sin and at the same time vindicate or maintain God's holiness, which required perfection in His presence.

Why did John begin to talk about the propitiation that He gave to us through His son in 1 John 2:2? After all, he had just been talking about the need for cleansing and forgiveness in the Christian life (1 John 2:1). It's because John wants us to remember that the Advocacy work of Christ in Heaven for the Christian (vs.1) is based upon His propitiatory death upon the cross (vs. 2). Christ could not be our Advocate unless He is first our propitiation! God must first be satisfied with us through the work of Christ before He can continually accept the blood of Christ as the grounds for our daily cleansing in the Christian life. Because Christ died for His people, He satisfied the justice of God. Because He lives for us at God's right hand (Advocate), He can apply His satisfying sacrifice to our daily sins so that we can have fellowship with God!

The understanding of the expression "for our sins" (1 John 2:2) signifies that Paul is looking at his life and the lives of other believers in retrospect to when they were saved and to the fact that Christ had died for them. He is communicating to those believers the way that any Christian would communicate with another Christian in normal talk. Jesus died for us, those of us who are now saved. We know that Jesus is our propitiation or satisfaction before God. We know this to be true John says, because we are now saved and we know that the Lord Jesus Christ has become the satisfying sacrifice for our sins before the Father. Now he turns around and says, "But don't forget, Jesus was also the propitiation for the sins of "the whole world."

The obvious meaning is that Christ not only died for those believers that were now saved, but also the entire world of lost humanity. When Jesus Christ went to the cross, He bore the sins of all lost humanity or every person in the world, even those sins of people who will never believe on Christ and avail themselves to the sacrifice of Christ. The Calvinist will argue this point. But I will not argue what the clear teaching of the Word of God is saying. John says Jesus died for us and we understand this to be true because we have all accepted His provision on the cross and have been saved. But remember that Jesus also died for the whole world of lost humanity, even those who have not yet accepted His provision of salvation. Jesus Christ was the satisfying sacrifice for every poor lost soul that was ever born into the human race.

Martin Luther said:

“It is a patent fact that thou art a part of the whole world; so that thine heart cannot deceive itself, and think, the Lord died for Peter and Paul, but not for me. Lord, I believe were sinners more than sands upon the ocean shore, Thou hast for all a ransom paid, for all a full atonement made.”

We must remember that Christ is the actual propitiation for the sins of believers; He is potentially the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. John is not teaching universalism here. Universalism says that the death of Jesus saves everybody in the world no matter if they believe or don't believe on Christ. The Universalist Church teaches that every person in the world is automatically saved because Jesus died on the cross. This is not true (Acts 16:31 – there must be faith in Christ).

What John is saying is that Jesus became the actual propitiation or satisfying sacrifice to God for all the sins committed by those people who have believed on Him; those sins which broke God's law, offended God holiness and demanded God's just punishment. But Christ is potentially the satisfying sacrifice for every unsaved person that is in the world, whose sins have also broken God's law, offended God's holiness and are worthy of God's punishment. This means that the sacrifice of Christ is available to the entire world of mankind and can provide every unsaved person with the actual privilege of having Christ's sacrifice become the propitiation (satisfaction) for their own sins. This means that when an unsaved person believes on Jesus Christ, it's only then that Christ's sacrifice will appease or satisfy God on their own behalf. The saving benefits of Christ's sacrifice will be applied to their own life and God can be satisfied on their behalf. Oh how wonderful this is! What a tremendous move of grace this is toward the lost world.

Of course the whole world is not saved! In fact, not everyone will be saved. John is simply saying that the work of the Lord Jesus is sufficient in value to save the entire world, but it is only efficient to save those who actually put their trust in Him. The Cross has indeed propitiated (satisfied) God and has met His righteous demands so thoroughly that His grace and mercy are abundantly available to both saved and unsaved alike. God is satisfied with the cross of Christ! The propitiation sacrifice potentially reaches out to every poor lost soul among humanity.

In a similar fashion, the Bible teaches that when Jesus hung on the cross God was potentially reconciling the world unto Himself making it possible for a lost world to have a savable position before Him. This brings us to another word that is connected with Christ's work upon the cross. It is the work of reconciliation.

There are several themes that are connected with the substitutionary death of Christ.

j. The Reconciliation we have through Substitution

Romans 5:10-11 says:

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (reconciliation).”

The word “reconciliation” (katallasso) speaks of the “adjustment of a difference.” Thayer has defined it as: to change, to exchange, a) to reconcile (those who are at variance) b) to return to favor with, c) to receive one into favor.

This word was used in connection with the exchanging of coins for others of equivalent value. The idea or concept of exchanging is behind the meaning of this word. The Biblical concept of the word reconciliation suggests that the poor lost soul who was once an enemy of God and alienated from God can now be reconciled or brought back into favor with God through the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross. The sinner’s place of condemnation, enmity and separation from God can be exchanged for a peaceful standing before God and a new place of acceptance before His holy presence. Reconciliation involves a changed relationship. The old relationship of enmity with God is now exchanged to a relationship of peaceful standing before God.

The Biblical picture of the sinner’s separation from God is a bleak picture. It reveals that the lost human race is estranged from God because of their sin (Romans 3:23). This sin has created a giant barrier between God and man and rendered man hostile toward God. Because of this sin there is a vast barrier or Grand Canyon of separation between the holy God and the unholy sinner. The Bible pictures the lost sinner going his own sinful way and being an actual enemy of God.

Romans 5:10

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

People do not want to hear this today. They do not like to think of themselves as God’s enemy because of all the good things that they do for their church or society. But unless people realize that they are God’s enemy and that God is not pleased with their sinful life, then they will never get saved. If they do not think that they are an enemy warring against a holy God, then they will never become reconciled to God. People do not realize that they are actually God’s enemy or a rebel from God because of their sins within their life. When a lost person sins in their life they are expressing the reality that they are God’s enemy because they are going against His holy Law and established will for their lives. Hence, we are all sinners and every one of us is an enemy of God.

I want to tell you that many people today reject salvation through the cross of Christ is because they fail to believe about their estranged or separated relationship with God. They do not see themselves as dreadful sinners in His presence and as His enemy. Dear friend, you cannot tell a man that he needs to be saved unless you first tell him that he is an enemy of God because of all the sins in his life. And I want to say that a man cannot get saved unless he understands and accepts the fact that He is an enemy of God. The watered down presentation of the Gospel today tries to bypass the fact that man is the enemy of God. Many presentations of the Gospel are a pathetic distortion of the true way to present the Gospel. This is evident as people try to encourage or persuade the lost to come to Christ in order to have their needs fulfilled and experience God's help in their life.

One tract begins by saying that you are important to God and God as a plan for your life. You are special to God. This type of witness and preaching today is designed to butter up people and bypass their relationship of enmity before God. Dear friend, many have forsaken the Biblical truth that we are dreadful enemies before God and that God is not pleased with our lives. We have forsaken the true but awful fact that man is separated from God and is at odds with God. Many tracts and the Gospel of humanistic self-esteem preaching have forsaken the fact that man is God's rebel enemy who is totally separated from His holy presence and on a destruction path headed toward hell. Dear Christian friends, when you witness to lost people, don't tell them that they are important to God and special to God. You tell them that they are the enemy of God who has rebelled against His holy Law. You tell them that they are under the wrath of God. Then tell them that God loves them. Remember that a person cannot get saved if they have nothing to be saved from!

The text in Romans 5:10 goes on to say, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." This means that through the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross our position of enmity before God can be exchanged for a new position of peace and acceptance before God. The cross of Christ can bring the believing sinner back to the place of acceptance before God, which Adam had lost, back in the Garden of Eden. The first Adam plunged the human race into the place of separation, enmity and judgment before God. This is why God came searching for Adam in Genesis 3:9 and said, "Adam... Where art thou?" God knew where Adam was hiding. However, God's question was expressing the horrible reality that Adam and the human were now separated from God. Dear unsaved friend, do you really understand where you are? Do you know how far away from God and salvation you are? Do you understand that you are alienated from God and His enemy? God does not know you as His child because your sins have separated you from God.

The Bible teaches that the last Adam (Jesus Christ) has made the way for the lost human race to once again be brought back into this place of acceptance and peace

before the presence of the majestic and holy God. The way back to God's favor and the only way to receive acceptance before God is based upon the cross of Christ! In fact, the resurrection and priestly ministry of Christ continually assures us of this reconciled position which every believing sinner has before God ("saved by his life" – Romans 5:10).

Romans 5:11 goes on to say:

"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

The word "atonement" is actually the Greek word, which translates "reconciliation." The text is actually saying that the believing sinner who trusts Christ receives this reconciliation before God or this new place of favor and acceptance before God. How wonderful this is to both believe and accept.

Colossians 1:21-22

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight."

This is the salvation story of every child of God today. We were once alienated from God as demonstrated by the way that we thought ("in your mind") and in the sinful works that we did ("wicked works"). In our unsaved state we were hostile to God inwardly through the way that we thought and outwardly by our actions and behavior. But one day we placed our faith in Jesus Christ to save us from hell through His finished work on the cross. As a result, the Bible says that at that very moment of faith in Christ, we were reconciled to God. We were changed from a place of enmity and disapproval before God to a place of acceptance, friendship and fellowship with God. What a change it was! And this is what the word reconciliation means. We have had a change of position before God. It is a thorough and complete change from one of enmity to one of acceptance and peace before God.

Colossians 1:20 says:

"And, having made peace (peace before God's presence) 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."

This is not teaching universalism. The phrase "all things" is limited to good angels and redeemed people since only things on earth and things in heaven are mentioned. I want you to notice in the passage in Colossians, when it is speaking of reconciliation, only heaven and earth are mentioned. Hell is not reconciled to God. Things "under the earth" (Phil. 2:10) are not reconciled to God. People in hell and the demons of hell are not reconciled to God. Although every being in hell will bow to Him, only those in

heaven and earth are reconciled. All those who place their faith in Christ are reconciled to God. And this is accomplished through the blood of the cross of Jesus Christ. The blood of the cross is the way lost sinners can be reconciled to God.

The shedding of Christ's blood upon the cross is what brings a lost sinner into the place of acceptance before God. The blood of Christ is the groundwork and basis of our acceptance before God. Both our justification and reconciliation are based upon the blood of the cross (Romans 5:9; Col. 1:20). Our accepted position and eternal standing before God's presence is based upon the blood of Christ. All of our spiritual blessings in Christ are rooted in the blood of Christ shed on our behalf. When God the Father sees the blood of Christ applied to the believing sinner's life, it is in that moment of time when God says, "I will bring you back into a right relationship with Me and a peaceful relationship before Me. I will give you a new relationship of peace before My holy presence through the shedding of Christ's blood upon the cross." My friend, the Father in heaven can say this because the blood of Jesus Christ has washed your sins away resulting in an accepted standing in the presence of God (1 John 1:7).

Ephesians 2:12-13 points to the same truth:

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Ephesians 2:16 goes on to say:

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body (the church) by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

My friend, do you understand that without Christ you are without hope? You have no hope concerning salvation from hell. Your future will only consist of a Christless eternity in the eternal fires of hell. By the shedding of Christ's blood or the forgiveness that comes through this blood, the believing sinner has been accepted into God's presence. He has been brought into a peaceful standing with God because the blood of Jesus Christ has washed all of his sins away and made him faultless before the throne. The believing sinner has also become part of God's New Testament body – the church, which has been accepted before His very presence on the basis of the cross.

Colossians 1:22 puts it this way:

"In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight."

Because of the forgiveness of all our sins through the blood of Christ, we can be reconciled to God and presented before God as unblemished or morally faultless (unblameable) and unaccused or without accusation (unreprouvable). This means that

believers are granted judicial perfection before God because of their unique position in Christ. It means to be justified in His presence as though we have never sinned (Romans 3:21-26). Oh what a reconciliation this is! My friend, can you even begin to grasp how wonderful this is? To be reconciled to God means that we have a new faultless position before God (Jude 24) and a position where no earthly or angelic being can accuse us of sin before His presence (Romans 8:33). Because of the cross of Christ and our faultless position before God, we have been given a new peaceful standing in God's presence (Col. 1:20). You see, we are reconciled to God as a result of our justified position before God. We cannot be made right in God's presence without first being justified in God's presence. And when we are justified in God's eyes we become reconciled before God.

The renowned William M. Thackeray and the famous Charles Dickens had a quarrel. Just before Christmas in 1863 when they met in London, they refused to speak to one another. Pricked in his conscience, Thackeray turned back and seized the hand of his friend, saying he couldn't bear the coldness that existed between them. Dickens was touched and the old anger and jealousy gave way to reconciliation. Shortly afterward, Thackeray suddenly died. Reflecting on this incident, Sir Thomas Martin wrote in his memoirs, "The next time I saw Dickens he was standing at the grave of his rival. He must have rejoiced, I thought, that he had shaken hands so warmly a few days before."

Dear friend, this illustrates the important truth about reconciliation. In one sense, God wants to take your hand into His and accept you into His very own presence. God wants the enemy relationship between you and Him to cease. But God cannot take your hand and forgive you or accept you in His presence unless you are willing to come in faith and receive the benefits of reconciliation through the cross of Christ.

Romans 5:1

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dear friend, you must personally believe or have faith in the work of Christ to save you and cleanse you from all of your sin. Only then can God take your hand and accept you into His presence forever. Only when you believe on Christ to save your soul and have all your sins forgiven can you be placed into a new position of peace before God's presence and be released from the old position of enmity and judgment. Because of the sinner's response by faith to Christ's sacrifice on the cross, God has given them peace and reconciliation before His presence. Instead of God being angry with our sins and unable to accept us into His presence because of an enemy relationship before Him, we can now have peace before God.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit (how), that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

Please notice the Godward side of reconciliation. God is the One who does the reconciling. “God, who hath reconciled us “to himself” by Jesus Christ. It is important to remember that people need to be reconciled to God (“unto Himself”) but God does not need to be reconciled to people. We must understand that mankind has left God and needs to be brought back to Him. God has not left mankind. It was mankind who left God in the garden and now needs to be brought back to Him. Reconciliation is the ministry of changing completely. But who is changing completely? God is never changing! Do you know why? It’s because He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Malachi 3:6). God does not have to be reconciled. The Bible says that God has reconciled us to Himself. It is lost humanity that needs to be reconciled. In fact, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” It is the world that has been reconciled. God has reconciled the world. As we look at the world, we can see that it is moving in its own sinful direction. “We have turned everyone to his own way” (see Isaiah 53:6). God has not turned away; we have turned away! Because we have turned away from God, it’s you and me or a lost world that needs to be reconciled back to God. And it is only through the death of Christ that the world is reconciled to God. This marvelous ministry of reconciliation through the cross is the work that Christ has done.

Also note in 2 Corinthians 5:19 that the unsaved world of mankind has been placed into a different position as a result of the cross of Christ (“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself”). This means that when Jesus died upon the cross, the Father was placing the world into a savable position. This is sometimes called provisional reconciliation. This means that when Christ died upon the cross He provided the way for the world of lost mankind to be reconciled before His presence. Jesus died upon the cross providing a universal way for every member of Adam’s race to be reconciled to God. In this way, God placed the world into the position of being able to be saved.

By way of actual provision and potential salvation, the entire world of lost humanity that ever lived was in the mind of God when Jesus died upon the cross. God was reconciling the world unto Himself in that He offered a plan by which every poor lost sinner could be brought back into a right relationship with Him. He was providing a universal provision by which the world could potentially be saved and brought back into a right position before a holy God. When Jesus died upon the cross, the entire world was placed in a potential saving position before God.

Prior to the cross, salvation was merely provided on an anticipatory atonement basis in view of the coming cross of Christ. Before the death of Christ, the actual way of reconciliation before God had not yet been provided. Salvation was granted on the basis of the future work of Christ. Therefore, the sacrificial system was instituted by God to temporarily cover sins and spare His people from judgment. This does not mean that people were not saved prior to the cross. It simply means that Christ had not yet died and actually provided the finished sacrifice that would open the way of reconciliation before God and defeat the accusations of the Accuser - Satan. However, since Christ has died, the position of the world before God has been changed because the actual death of Jesus Christ avails for the sins of all mankind (Romans 3:25-26). When Christ died upon the cross the world of lost humanity was brought to the place whereby they could be saved in view of the finished sacrifice of Christ and no longer must they be separated from God.

There on the cross Jesus Christ provided the actual way that every man and woman could be reconciled to God. Because of this, God today has His arms outstretched to a lost world. He says to a lost world, "You can come to Me through the death of my Son. I have made reconciliation possible." The worst sinner in the world can be brought into a right relationship with God today. It doesn't make any difference who you are, you can be reconciled before God. Because Christ has actually died, a holy God no longer must deal with us in judgment. In addition, He no longer must slay the lamb as He did in the Old Testament era to temporarily pass over and cover our sins. God now reaches down to save all those who will place faith in the finished or completed work of Christ upon the cross. In light of the work of Christ upon the cross, the world can be placed into the position to be reconciled back to God and have the opportunity to be saved. This is provisional reconciliation.

The other point of this doctrine is actual reconciliation. This occurs when the believing sinner places their faith in Christ and is saved. When the sinner places their faith in Christ and His work upon the cross, the person is actually reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:18

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

In other words, only when we believe in Christ can we in actual experience become reconciled before God. The provision for the world has been made in verse 19 but the actual outcome or application of reconciliation depends upon the sinner's response of faith to Christ. And remember this. You don't have to do anything to win God's favor in regards to salvation. God is not waiting around the corner to hit you over the head with a club if you do not live a certain way. God is not angry with you. God does not hate you. God loves you! He is not asking you to try and be reconciled to Him on the merits

of your own life. The reconciling work of Christ has already been accomplished through the blood of Christ's cross.

The woman taken in adultery is an illustration of this wonderful truth (see John 8:1–11). The Lord Jesus said to that crowd of hypocritical religious leaders, "... He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Then Jesus wrote something in the sand or wrote something on the earth. It is interesting that in Jeremiah 17:13 it says, "... they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters." This may be a prophecy of what happened when Jesus wrote in the sand. This prophecy may have a partial fulfillment in this event.

The Bible tells us that each religious hypocrite left beginning with the older Pharisees and then down to the younger ones. The older ones had more sense than the young fellows who hung around a little longer. Perhaps one of the old fellows had an affair with a woman over in Corinth. He thought nobody knew about it, but of course the Lord knew all about it. Perhaps Jesus just wrote down the name of that girl, and when the old Pharisee looked down and saw that name written on the ground, he said, "I just remembered I have another engagement," and he tore out of there like a dog with his tale on fire! Perhaps Jesus wrote the word "guilty" in the sand to convict all the rest of the men who He knew also had committed adultery within their hearts (Matthew 5:28). Before long they were all gone except one. Only Jesus Christ was left standing there with the woman. The only One (Jesus Christ) who could have thrown a stone at her did not throw a stone. Do you know why? It's because He is a God of grace! He asked, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:10–11).

Here is one way to understand the teaching that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (2 Cor. 5:19)." Jesus was not shutting His eyes to her sin, but for all that sin that this woman committed, Jesus was going to take upon Himself on the Cross. The condemnation for her sin was to fall on Him, and because she trusted Him, He could send her away uncondemned. Oh how very wonderful this is. Instead of judging the woman, the Lord in view of His coming cross allows this woman to go free. In a similar fashion, since Jesus has actually died upon the cross, God the Father has provided the way for people to be saved and actually reconciled before God instead of facing His judgment. He has placed the world into the position whereby they can be saved today through the actual death of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:20 says:

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

This verse reminds us of our own responsibility to be sharing the reconciling message of the cross of Christ with others. What is an ambassador? Webster says an ambassador is a minister of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government or sovereign as the official representative of his own government or sovereign. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ." We are in a foreign land Peter says and we are pilgrims and strangers down here (1 Peter 2:11). Paul says, "For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). Since our citizenship is in heaven, we are ambassadors down here.

When one government sends an ambassador to another government, it means they are on friendly relations. God is still friendly with this world when it comes to saving people. He has sent each believer as His ambassador. When man sinned, God in His holiness had to turn away from the world. But God loved man, so He sent His own Son to die on the Cross. Now God can hold out His arms to the world and say, "You can come." We are His ambassadors. As His ambassadors, we are to tell other people, "God will save you!" All God is asking any man to do is to come to Him. God will not try to get even with you. He doesn't want to punish you. He doesn't want to lay a hand on you. He invites all people everywhere to come to Him. This is a great day to be witnessing for Christ. We have the privilege of saying to people wherever we go, "Be ye reconciled to God."

"I am a stranger here within a foreign land,
My home is far away upon a golden strand;
Ambassador to be of realms beyond the sea,
I'm here on business for the King.

This is the message that I bring,
A message angels fain would sing;
Oh, be ye reconciled, Thus saith my Lord and King,
Oh be ye reconciled to God."

Christian friend, have you been able to get out this wonderful word of reconciliation to anyone else? Whoever you are, wherever you are, however you are, what are you doing today to get this word of reconciliation out to a lost world? This is what the world needs to hear from you. God is already reconciled to the world, but now each lost person will have to turn around and by faith come to Him. Let's get this word out. Dear friend, God is already reconciled to you through the death of Christ. The question is this: "Are you ready to be reconciled to God?"

2 Corinthians 5:20 says:

"We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

Hebrews 2:9 says that Jesus Christ “tasted death for every man.”

Dear friend, the sacrifice of Christ reaches out to the entire world. There is no limit to His sacrifice. Any other interpretation of these verses (2 Cor. 5:19; Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2) is huckstering the Word of God. The Bible declares that God loves the whole world and that God provided both a satisfying and reconciling sacrifice that can bring any and every person into a right relationship and position before God. Oh to be right before God! This is reconciliation. To know that God no longer looks at you as a sinner who has offended Him and His Law and who deserves judgment for their sins is a wonderful salvation. To know that you are no longer God’s enemy who is winding down the path to hell is a wonderful freedom. Oh to be right before God! This is the song of the soul set free! It is rest and peace. Oh to be right before God! Are you right before God? The only way that you can be right before God is to believe on Jesus Christ. You must make a personal response to His death on your behalf and believe on Him to bring salvation into your life through the benefits of His death and resurrection. Only through Christ can you be reconciled to God.

Acts 16:31 says:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”

Romans 10:13

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

God will not accept you by your own sacrifice.

All of your efforts to please God are seen as filthy rags in His sight.

Isaiah 64:6

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”

As we have already seen within our courtroom scene, the situation seems hopeless and we look at ourselves as hopeless sinners who have all fallen short of the moral glory of God (Romans 3:23). We hear the cries of God’s law in the courtroom of divine justice which renders us, “Guilty as charged” (Romans 3:20; James 2:10). And then in the midst of all our hopelessness and helplessness and sure damnation, we remember the cross! Hallelujah for the cross!

’Twas here the debt was paid,
Hallelujah! hallelujah!
Our sins on Jesus laid,
Hallelujah! hallelujah!
So round the cross we sing,
Of Christ our offering,

Of Christ our living King,
Hallelujah for the cross!

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah for the cross,
Hallelujah, hallelujah, it shall never suffer loss.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah for the cross;
Hallelujah, hallelujah, it shall never suffer loss.

It was upon the cross where Jesus became that universal, provisional substitute and way of satisfaction\reconciliation for the entire world of mankind. He did this by taking the sins of the whole world upon Himself and bearing the personal debt of judgment that those sins would bring upon the lives of people.

Floyd Barackman has said:

“Since the debt of sin (which is judgment) had to be paid, then a substitute had to be found if sinners were to be delivered from this obligation” (of judgment before God).

This means that a substitute had to be made in order for you and me to escape our obligation to pay for our sin by suffering the eternal judgment of God in hell. Jesus became your substitute by taking your own sin upon Himself and your own place of judgment in order to grant to you forgiveness, redemption, justification, sanctification, satisfaction, reconciliation and acceptance before the holy God of all grace and mercy. Jesus in a very real sense purchased your pardon. He paid God back with the price of his own blood so that you could have the opportunity to be forever reconciled to God.

This wonderful salvation with all the related topics is viewed as a gift which you can freely receive today (Romans 6:23). Forgiveness and salvation from hell is something that you can personally receive in your own life by believing on Christ to be your own personal substitute for sin and judgment (John 3:36). Personal belief in the person and substitutionary work of Christ is what brings salvation into your life. Saving faith is when you make a personal response to the finished work of Christ upon the cross to save you. The provision has been made for everyone, now you must apply it to your own life by personally receiving the substitutionary provision of salvation that Christ has made for you.

John 1:12 says:

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

We have now studied the substitutionary work of Christ upon the cross and the great words related to this substitutionary death such as redemption, ransom, forgiveness, justification, imputation, sanctification, propitiation and reconciliation. We will never cease to glory in the cross of Christ and marvel at the provision that was made for

each one of us at Calvary. Jesus died as our substitute. He died in our place to provide all of these wonderful blessings of salvation.

During the American Civil War, a farmer in New York was drafted into the Union army. His wife had died and he was the sole support of his young children. But then an unmarried man in the town who had no dependents came to his home and offered to go to war in his place. For the sake of his children, the farmer accepted the man's offer. The generous friend marched off to battle, and in the first engagement he was shot and killed. When the farmer heard what had happened, he went to the scene of the battle and brought back the body. He buried his friend in the village churchyard and had these words engraved on the headstone: HE DIED FOR ME. This is a touching story, but the truth of the Gospel and the substitutionary death of Christ is that Jesus gave His life for us while we were His enemies.

k. The Holy Sacrifice of the Substitution

Something very important needs to be said about the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ at this point. Contrary to the teaching that is being propagated today, Jesus Christ hung on the cross as a righteous and holy substitute. Jesus did not become literal sin as He hung upon the cross and bore the sins of the world. Jesus did not receive the nature of Satan in order to experience sin and be able to save us. These are cultic conclusions that attack the spotless sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which is the only kind of sacrifice that God would accept as a substitution for our sin debt before God.

The false teaching of the New Pentecostals has invaded the church today and is breeding confusion among God's people about the work and importance of the cross. This teaching says that Jesus actually died spiritually upon the cross by becoming literal sin for us and even taking on the fallen nature of Satan, which we all have. This preposterous teaching then asserts that Jesus went to the pit of hell in order to win our salvation and redemption for us. The teaching stresses that Jesus went to hell in order to be sacrificed to the devil and be tormented by the devil three days and three nights. Eventually Jesus won the victory over the devil while staying there in hell. The result of this victory is that Jesus was actually born again himself from His spiritually dead condition. Thus, Jesus becomes the first and only born again man in history to rise from the grave and grant salvation and spiritual life to our own lives today.

Dear friend, the implications of this teaching are horrifying! The salvation of our soul is in jeopardy if these conclusions are true! This is the heretical teaching of fanatical groups of people today that are no longer glorying in the cross. We must slam the door on all of these false claims that are destroying the significant work of Christ upon the cross. The doctrine of the cross is being distorted and even rejected today by these very blasphemous claims. Jesus Christ won our salvation upon the cross and not in hell. Furthermore, Jesus did not receive the nature of Satan upon the cross and

become literal sin and die spiritually upon the cross in order to grant the forgiveness of our sins. This is an outlandish claim that has no Biblical support. It brings the Scriptures under siege and strips the cross of its glory and saving wonder. It minimizes the blood of Jesus that was shed for the forgiveness of sin. If Jesus had to win our salvation in hell, then what purpose does the shed blood of Christ have upon the cross? This teaching also creates an unholy sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross, which could never take away sin and bring salvation to a lost human race.

This teaching is actually cultic in its design or make up and is surely the plan of the devil to stop man from glorying in the cross. Believers who hold the doctrine of the cross dear to their hearts need to stand up for the cross today and speak out against these outlandish claims which are being propagated. You may get mad at me as I expose these cultic claims and some men who are making these outlandish claims. But that's okay, I'm defending the cross! And I want to glory in the cross and not your acceptance of me as a people pleasing preacher.

“There's a royal banner given for display,
To the soldiers of the king.
It's an ensign fair we lift it up today,
While the ransomed ones we sing.
Marching on, marching on!
For Christ count everything but loss;
And to crown Him King, toil and sing,
Neath the banner of he cross.”

We must wave the royal banner of the cross today reminding ourselves and others that it was upon the cross where Jesus suffered and died for us, bore our judgment and provided salvation from Hell. This is the banner that we must lift up today. Jesus Christ did actually become the sin offering upon the cross. However, as the sin offering, Jesus Himself remained pure and holy upon the cross and in His bloody death.

There are four things that did not happen to Jesus Christ while He was hanging upon the cross:

1. Christ did not become unholy upon the cross.

The Old Testament typical offerings, which pointed to Christ, foreshadowed this truth. In the Old Testament, a sin offering was required in order to cover the transgression of the sinner. The offering was said to be holy even when it was offered upon the altar to atone for sin. As we will see, the offering itself did not become unholy before God and contaminated by sin.

Leviticus 4:3-4

“If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering. And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock’s head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.”

Leviticus 4:23-24

Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish: And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it is a sin offering.

Leviticus 4:32-33

“And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.”

We discover by these verses that the sacrificial offerings of the Old Testament were sin offerings that were to be absolutely perfect specimens. No flaw could be traced in them. This is all a wonderful portrayal of the future Lord Jesus Christ, who would be sacrificed upon the cross. He would be impeccable or without flaw before God. These verses typically portray that Christ was offered upon the cross without spot or blemish and that in no way could He have become one with the nature of Satan. Jesus was indeed the holy, harmless and undefiled Son of God with absolutely no sin to His account.

Hebrews 7:26 says:

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”

Remember that God can only accept a perfect sacrifice. Only a sinless and holy sacrifice can provide satisfaction before His holy presence. Only a perfect sacrifice can appease God’s anger and wrath against us. A sinful sacrifice cannot grant us acceptance and forgiveness before God’s presence. Our vast sin debt needed to be placed upon a perfect sacrifice in order for God to grant forgiveness and acceptance before His presence. It would take a sinless sacrifice in order for God to be able to pour out His wrath and find payment for the sin debt that we had before God.

Deuteronomy 15:21 also states:

“And if there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God.”

Any type of flaw was rejected. God did not use those animals, which were marred in any way. Likewise, God could only use His Son who was perfect and holy, without any flaw of sin. Since all these sin offerings foreshadowed Christ's ultimate sacrifice, we know that Christ was offered upon the cross by God as the ultimate sin offering that was pure and free from sin. In no way could Jesus have become one in nature with Satan or literally become corrupted by sin in any way. The offering of Christ upon the cross remained pure and sinless throughout the entire time. This is the very way it was typified in the Old Testament.

Leviticus 6:25-29

“Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy (even when its killed or sacrificed). The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten (because its holy), in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place. But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brasen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water. All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy (even after its death).”

The entire offering of the animal up to its death and even after its death remained holy. The offering was holy to God before, during and after its death. The sin offering never became an unholy sacrifice. It remained a holy and unblemished sacrifice even through its death upon the altar. The Old Testament typology never spoke about a sinful offering at the time of death. There is a vast difference between a sinful offering and a sin offering. The sin offering always was seen to be an offering that was holy, even after it had died and was being eaten by the priests. The picture is very clear. You cannot miss it unless you are a cultist attempting to warp the Word of God and take away the glory of the cross! Jesus Christ remained a sinless offering upon the cross before, during and even after His actual death. The entire substitutionary sacrifice of Christ was a holy, sinless and unblemished sacrifice. Even through Christ's death, He remained God's holy and sinless Son.

The Old Testament picture represents Christ as a sinless offering even while He bore the sins of the world. Believe it; it's true. Jesus remained holy, pure and untouched by sin when He hung upon the cross and died. The fact that our sins were poured upon Him in no way destroyed His holiness and impeccability.

The Old Testament once again verifies this truth to us.

Isaiah 53:10-11

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

Isaiah prophesied that Jesus, as the Messiah, would become the substitutionary sacrifice, which would bear the sins of the lost. He also verifies that the Messiah would remain “my righteous servant” while bearing the iniquities of the lost. He is called the “righteous servant” even while bearing the sins of the world. This can mean only one thing. Even when the sins of the world were poured upon Christ and the Father forsook Christ; He still remained holy and righteous. The only way that the Father would be able to justify people in His sight would be to have His Son remain a pure and holy sacrifice. Only a holy sacrifice could appease God’s wrath toward sinners by taking away their sins and bringing forgiveness and acceptance before His own majestic and holy presence. A sinful sacrifice cannot grant you forgiveness, salvation and acceptance before God. It would take a holy sacrifice in order to grant forgiveness and satisfy God’s demand for holiness before His presence.

The New Testament also verifies this to us in clear fashion:

1 Peter 1:18-19

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Hebrews 9:14

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

Jesus Christ was offered without spot or blemish to God and in no way became unholy, unrighteous or sinful during His suffering and death upon the cross. He remained God’s holy sacrifice through the entire time of suffering and separation from the Father.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer has said:

“The value of the sacrifice is not discovered in the intensity of the Saviour’s anguish, but in His dignity and infinite worth.”

This simply means that Christ remained holy to God and was of infinite worth to God because of his holy offering for sin. People sometimes wonder how only a few hours of suffering could keep people out of hell. The point that we must remember is that the

duration of time that Christ suffered is not the significant matter before God. Quantity is man's concern, but quality is God's concern. The quality of the sacrifice had to be pure. And you can be sure that the blood of Jesus Christ, which He shed upon the cross, was pure and without spot. Adam's blood, which carries and transfers sin into the human race, was not found flowing through Christ's veins (Romans 5:12). Adam's blood did not flow through the veins of the sinless Son of God. The blood of Christ was actually the very blood of God Himself (Acts 20:28). It is only divine blood that can mysteriously and yet wonderfully wash away all of our sins and give us a justified standing before the presence of God.

Romans 5:9

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress."

We must simply remember that it was not the duration of time that Christ hung upon the cross or the amount of time that He suffered that was significant. What was important to God was the quality of the sin offering. The offering had to be sinless and pure. Because of this, the shedding of the blood of Christ was costly and without price (1 Peter 1:19). In fact, it would be the blood of Christ that would provide the basis for all forgiveness and acceptance before God. How can this be? Because Christ's blood would provide the spiritual washing away of sin within our lives when we accept Christ to be our personal Savior (Colossians 1:14; 1 John 1:7).

Ephesians 5:2 also talks about a holy and acceptable sacrifice:

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

The substitutory sacrifice of Christ upon the cross was like a sweet smelling fragrance in the nostrils of God. This means that when Jesus died upon the cross His offering for sin was pleasing and satisfying to God. Only a holy and pure offering could satisfy God. Any flaw in the offering would not be satisfactory. How could Jesus be a sweet sacrifice to God if He became one with the nature of Satan and as vile as the devil himself? I shutter to think how any true man of God could ever teach that Christ became a satanic being upon the cross. This is demonic teaching. It is the doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1).

"Guilty, vile and helpless we,
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
Full atonement! Can it be?
Hallelujah, what a Savior!"

Dear friend, it was not Christ that was the sinner. We were the sinners and we are the sinners! We are vile and wretched sinners. That is why God required a sinless sacrifice in order to take away our sins and provide forgiveness and acceptance before His holy presence.

2. Christ did not become literal sin upon the cross.

This view is being propagated today. It assumes that Jesus became literal sin upon the cross. This would mean that Jesus lost His holy character and nature as He bore the sins of the world because He became literal sin there upon the cross. Thus, Jesus became a satanic sacrifice bearing the very nature of Satan upon the cross. This is false assumption not supported by Scripture. It is what someone has called, “an atonement atrocity.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 says:

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Certain teachers seem to misconstrue what is really being said in this verse of Scripture. It's very clear that the word “sin” in this verse is used in the sense of a sin offering. When it says that Jesus was made sin for us it is referring to the fact that He became a sin offering for us upon the cross. This means that He bore our sin upon Himself. Paul was a Hebrew man – a “Hebrew of Hebrews” (Phil. 3:5). He certainly had the Hebrew Scriptures in mind when speaking about the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross. In Paul's mind, he was referring to the fact that Jesus became the actual fulfillment of the Old Testament sin offering. As we have seen, in the Old Testament and even the New Testament, Jesus is pictured as being a holy offering for sin and not a sinful offering (Lev. 6:25,29; Isa. 53:11; Eph. 5:2). Paul knew that the offering itself was holy before the Lord. He would never have in his thinking that the offering would become literal sin whereby the character or nature of the offering would be changed. The idea that Jesus became sin for us is simply expressing the truth that He became our sin offering upon the cross.

How differently Benny Hinn sees it:

“No, you here this! He (Christ) did not take my sin; He became my sin...”

Hinn concludes that Jesus did not just take the sins of the human race upon Himself as a sin offering, He actually became sin itself! This is an absolutely false statement that destroys the sin offering concept of Christ upon the cross. We must remember that Jesus Christ was a holy sin offering upon the cross and did not become literal sin during His sin offering. He remained without sin in His being and nature. To interpret this passage to mean that Jesus became literal sin upon the cross and took on a

different nature, the nature of Satan, is to strip the eternal God of His infinite holiness and reduce Him to nothing more than a sinful man. This is a horrifying conclusion.

Paul Billheimer in his book “Destined for the Throne” said this:

“Because He was “made sin” impregnated with sin, and became the very essence of sin, on the cross He was banished from God’s presence as a loathsome thing. He and sin were made synonymous.”

These are cultic conclusions that must be destroyed in light of the truth. They cannot be accepted in Christian circles anywhere. They must be branded as heresy and those teaching them as heretics.

Remember: There is a vast difference between a sin offering and a sinful offering! Jesus could become a sin offering without receiving a sinful nature. If Jesus became literal sin upon the cross, then God Himself became sinful in His nature, being and existence. This is the very height of blasphemy! This teaching is both absurd and unbiblical. We must remember that Jesus bore our sin without becoming our sin! He could be a sin offering without becoming a sinful offering.

We must pause to remember once again that God could only be satisfied with a holy and righteous sacrifice upon the cross (1 John 2:2). Only a holy, righteous and sinless offering for sin could satisfy the demands of a holy God and provide propitiation or appeasement before God for the sinful believer. The Bible everywhere says that the substitutionary death of Christ was a perfect sacrifice because it was a sinless sacrifice.

We must remember what really happened upon the cross. It was upon the cross that Jesus became legally guilty of all our sins, not literally our sin! Jesus became legally guilty before the Father but not literally guilty before the Father. Jesus did not literally become sin but sin was imputed to Him so that He could become a holy sin offering and die in the sinner’s place. There is a vast difference between legal (lawful) guilt and literal guilt! There is also a vast difference between the imputation of another person’s sins and sharing the same nature as someone else. Jesus took all of our sins upon Himself in a legal sense and not a literal sense. He was charged with our sins before the courtroom of God’s justice, even while remaining the holy sacrifice that God required. Therefore, when God the Father looked down at Christ He could see Him suffering as His holy and “righteous servant” while at the same time He could see Him bearing the sins of the world as the sin offering.

2 Corinthians 5:21 is worth repeating:

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

God the Father, using the principle of imputation, treated Christ as if He were a sinner though He was not, and had Him die as a substitute to pay the penalty for the sins for the entire world of mankind. On the cross, Jesus did not become a literal sinner as some suggest. He remained as holy as ever. However, Jesus was treated as if He were guilty of all the sins ever committed by those born into the world, even though He committed none of the sins Himself. He became legally guilty for our sins. The wrath of God was unmercifully poured out on Him and the just requirement of God's law was met for a lost sinful race. This is the wonder of all wonders! This is amazing grace! God treated Christ as if He committed the believers' sins, and treats believers as if they did only the righteous deeds of the sinless Son of God.

In a small Oriental town several men were working on a scaffold high above the street. Suddenly one of them lost his footing and fell to the pavement below. Horrified, his companions quickly descended, expecting to find his body broken and mangled. To their surprise they discovered that their friend was unhurt! At the exact moment of his fall some sheep were passing through the street beneath him, and he had landed on the back of one of the animals. There it lay, crushed and dead, but the man was saved. As he gazed upon that lifeless creature, he was heard to say, "It died for me!" Oh my friend, this is substitution! It is what Christ has done for us. The little lamb has died in our place! God the great Lawmaker has made His only Son, the holy Christ, legally or lawfully guilty of all our sins. Jesus died in our place while bearing our sins in a legal sense. All of our sins and the judgment connected with those sins were poured out upon His account. Everything was imputed to the "righteous servant" who died in our place. And because Christ bore our sins upon Himself in a legal sense and died upon the cross, we can be forgiven of all our sins that were placed on His account and saved from the future judgment of Hell that was poured out upon Him.

3. Christ did not become a satanic being upon the cross.

Since Jesus is God we must remember that God cannot change in His existence, being or nature. This is a clearly stated truth of Scripture. Let Scripture speak for itself. God's nature cannot be changed to the nature of Satan or the nature of man. It is blasphemy to say that Jesus as the eternal and unchanging God could be changed into the very nature of Satan. This is statement from the kingdom of the cults.

1 Peter 1:16

"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Psalm 22:3

"But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."

Malachi 3:6 says:

"For I am the LORD, I change not..."

Hebrews 13:8

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

Years ago the “God is Dead Movement” became quite popular. People were claiming that God had died when Jesus died upon the cross. However, these people failed to realize that when Jesus died, it was only the human body of God that died. It was not God’s eternal and unchangeable spirit. People ask, “How could God die?” The fact of the matter is that God cannot die in relationship to His eternal spirit and eternal being. When the physical body of Jesus died God still lived on in His eternal spirit.

Dr. Lehman Strauss once told me how he changed the name of his book, which he had written about the cross. He entitled the book, “The Day God Died.” He told me how he changed the name of the book so those people in the “God is Dead Movement” would realize that he was not on their side! God is not dead. God did not die when Jesus died on the cross. The human body that God had taken on for 33 years died for three days. But God’s eternal spirit continued to live on as it always had from eternity past. Human death could never dissolve the eternal human spirit of God. God never changes in His spiritual existence or spiritual nature of holiness and perfection (Malachi 3:6).

Thomas Watson said:

“God cannot have more holiness, because He is perfectly holy; so He cannot have less holiness, because He is unchangeably holy.”

Jesus can never change in His being or nature. He will always be holy in His existence because He is the holy God. To conclude that the nature of Jesus changed upon the cross is to destroy the holy character of God Himself. This teaching that Jesus took on the nature of Satan is an attack against the character of God. It strips God of His absolute perfection and holiness. How utterly foolish for puny man to accuse God of becoming one with the nature of Satan. How utterly foolish for man to conclude that God can become literal sin. Only an ignorant and unlearned man who does not fear God would ever conclude that God could become unholy by allowing the Son to become a satanic being upon the cross sharing the nature of Satan. This teaching is the depths of man’s ignorance and portrays a total disrespect for the matchless and unsurpassed holiness of God. Jesus as the true and everlasting holy God could never become unholy in His eternal being, nature or character.

Thomas Brooks has said:

“God’s holiness and His nature are not two different things, they are but one. God’s holiness is His nature and God’s nature is His holiness.”

“Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;

Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!
God in three persons, blessed trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy! Tho the darkness hide Thee,
Tho the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee.
Perfect in power, in love and purity!"

John 3:14 says:

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."

Some false teachers have actually stooped to the lowest of all levels by insisting that the serpent, as in Eden, is a picture of the devil. Their false claim is that Jesus, while hanging upon the cross, actually took on the nature of the devil by His symbolic representation as the serpent.

Benny Hinn said this:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the serpent is a symbol of Satan. Jesus Christ knew the only way He would stop Satan is by becoming one in nature with him."

He also says elsewhere:

"No, you here this! He (Christ) did not take my sin; He became my sin. Sin is the nature of hell.

Sin is what made Satan..... He (Christ) became one with the nature of Satan, so all those who had the nature of Satan can partake of the nature of God."

My friend, this is an absolutely blasphemous claim. Benny Hinn is not glorying in the cross. He is destroying the cross! To turn the holy sacrifice of Christ upon the cross into a satanic sacrifice is a heresy that I shutter to even think about! I tell you, payday is going to come for these false teachers who undermine the work of the cross.

Kenneth Copeland says this:

"You don't know what happened on the cross. Why do you think Moses, upon instruction of God, raised the serpent upon that pole instead of the lamb? That used to bug me. Why would you want to put a snake up there – the sign of Satan? Why didn't you put a lamb on that pole? And the Lord said, "Because it was a sign of Satan that was hanging upon the cross."

Kenneth Hagin also implies that Jesus took on the nature of Satan:

"Spiritual death means something much more than separation from God. It means having Satan's nature...."

These are horrifying conclusions of men who are teaching false theories about the cross. These men have departed into the kingdom or world of the cults in teaching these erroneous conclusions about the cross. The cults have always attacked the cross of Christ as the only ground for our salvation! Instead of maintaining a holy sacrifice, they have created a satanic sacrifice! May God have mercy upon the soul of any person who says this about the cross of Christ!

I must say again that these men are no longer glorying in the cross of Christ. They have recreated the cross into satanic sacrifice instead of a saving sacrifice. The bronze serpent does not indicate that Jesus was becoming the very nature of Satan. A satanic sacrifice cannot save us! Only a holy sacrifice, which is acceptable to God, can save us. Let's review once again the typology involved in this snake upon the pole.

The typology of the snake is easy to see. It simply represents the form of judgment that the children of Israel received long ago in the wilderness because of their sin. It does not represent Satan specifically. Not every snake in the Bible represents Satan. The snakes and their inflicted bites upon the nation became the demonstration of God's judgment upon the people in the wilderness because of their sin. In other words, the snake does not represent Satan but represents the form of judgment that God had inflicted upon the people because of their sin. Thus, the snake on the pole indicated that God was supplying a way for the children of Israel to be healed from the very form of judgment, which came from God. The snakes that were biting the people and judging the people were now represented by the one snake that was placed upon the pole and which could now heal them from their inflicted judgment. What was once their judgment now was placed upon a pole to remind the people that God would no longer judge them by way of sickness if they would look upon the snake on the pole. The snake on the pole then becomes a picture of God taking the judgment of the people on another so that they might be healed.

The pole obviously represents the cross. The serpent of brass, which symbolizes God's judgment for sin, represents Christ. Christ had to bear their sin and judgment, which the serpent represented to the people. The serpent on the pole was a constant reminder of the sin of the people and the judgment for that sin which came in the form of the biting snakes.

In John 3:14-16, Jesus takes the picture of the snake on the pole with the physical results of healing and turns the entire scene into a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the One, who died on the cross in order to heal lost people spiritually, which are inflicted with the spiritual virus of sin. The Old Testament picture of the snake on the pole beautifully illustrates that Christ, as our substitute, had to bear our own sinful virus of sin and the spiritual judgment which sin brought into our lives.

Jesus was represented upon the cross as the serpent of God's own judgment. Jesus actually bore the judgment, which God intended to bring upon the people. This of course teaches in a very clear fashion that Jesus actually took the form of God's judgment upon Himself, which was intended, for the people. Jesus is clearly our substitute because he bore the sin and judgment for those sins upon Himself as He hung upon the cross. This is what the snake on the pole pictures. It pictures the judgment of God being placed upon another, the judgment that the people actually deserved and faced in their lives.

To misconstrue this verse as meaning that Jesus actually took on the very nature of Satan upon the cross as He bore our sin is to create a sacrifice that God cannot accept. The cross was not Satan's sacrifice; it was God's sacrifice! And God's sacrifice was to remain holy and righteous throughout the offering.

“Guilty vile and helpless we,
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
Full atonement! Can it be?
Hallelujah, what a Savior!”

It is hard to believe how someone who supposedly received the nature of Satan could pray to the Father as Jesus did before He died (see Luke 23:46). Satan would never pray that his spirit would be placed in the hands of the Father. Furthermore, Satan would never pray for his enemies as Jesus would while dying upon the cross (Luke 23:34). The whole idea that Jesus became a satanic sacrifice is so sacrilegious that we should have a church trial for any person who preaches such a terrible thing as this and brand them as a heretic and one who blasphemes the person of God Himself.

Some false teachers of the end time are saying that the Father forsook Jesus upon the cross because He became literal sin and died spiritually upon the cross. They claim that the Father totally abandoned Jesus while He was on the cross because Jesus turned into this satanic sinful sacrifice. How utterly absurd to think this!

The questions that are normally asked are these: “Why did the Father forsake the Son if He did not become literal sin upon the cross? In what manner did the Father forsake the Son while He suffered upon the cross?” These are good questions that need to be answered Biblically and understandably. To be sure, the Father did forsake the Son while He became the actual sin offering upon the cross in those dark hours. The Scriptures clearly reveal this to us.

Matthew 27:46 says:

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Psalm 22:1 prophetically speaks of this forsaking:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?”

Finite individuals cannot fully understand the sense in which the Father forsook the Son. However, we do know that the Godhead cannot be divided or else God would no longer be one God. The Godhead speaks of each member of the trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). The Bible teaches that the Godhead or these three individuals is actually one God. The Bible teaches the Trinitarian oneness of God. Therefore, the Bible never divides the Godhead. The Bible never separates the Father, Son and the Spirit as different Gods. They are different persons but not different Gods. All three persons are the same one God and they all share the exact same existence, nature and likeness as God. This means that the holy character of the Son cannot be different than the holy character of the Father at any given time or else the Godhead would be separated in its nature or likeness as the One God and actually destroy the perfection of the One true and holy God. This is an impossibility! God (within the three persons of the trinity) cannot be separated in His being or nature in any way or else He would no longer be God. If Jesus became literal sin upon the cross then God became unholy and the Godhead (Father, Son & Spirit) were no longer perfectly synchronized together as the One holy God.

This Biblical conclusion would lead us to believe that when the Father forsook the Son He did not forsake Him because the Son was sinful in His very being or nature. If the Father forsook the Son because the Son became literal sin then God is no longer the One holy God of the Bible and who He claims to be. It would actually mean that God forsook Himself. It would mean that God's very person and name would become a hoax. It would mean that God could no longer defend His uniqueness as the only true and holy God of the universe.

What really did happen when Jesus was forsaken by the Father upon the cross? In what way or in one sense did the Father forsake the Son? The answer is that God the Father forsook the Son only in a legal or lawful sense as He hung there upon the cross. This means that judicially the Father had to forsake His Son. The sins of the entire world were placed upon His Son and God cannot look upon sin with His favor and approval (Habakkuk 1:13). This means that the Father had to forsake His Son only in a legal sense when He turned His back upon Him. The Father had to legally or judicially abandon His Son since all the sins of mankind were poured upon Him. Because His son became the sin offering for the world, this would mean that the Father could not be pleased with the sin that was poured upon His Son. Remember this: The Father was pleased with His son but He was not pleased with the sin upon His Son! This means that the Son in His own holiness and oneness as the true God remained holy. However, Jesus became a sin offering whereby the Father had to legally and judicially turn His face away from His Son because of the sin that was imputed to His

account. The Bible teaches a legal forsaking because of sin but never does it teach a personal forsaking because of the Son's change in His being or person!

Dr. Herbert Lockyer said it best:

“The face of the Father then has turned not so much away from Christ as from what He was bearing, namely, the load of the world's sin, which load ultimately broke His loving, compassionate heart. He was there on the plane of sinners with mountains upon mountains of guilt encircling Him, thus the Father hid His face from such a horrible load, seeing that He was of purer eyes than to behold evil.”

We must remember that the sacrifice of the Son was a sweet and acceptable sacrifice to God (Eph. 5:2) which the Father was pleased with. The Son's sacrifice was holy even while there was sin imputed to His account because the Son was and always will be the true God of all holiness. This means that the person of the Son remained holy and spotless throughout His sacrifice for He continued to share perfect righteousness with the Father as the One true God. However, because sin was judicially imputed to His account, the Father had to forsake His Son in legal sense. This was because God cannot look at sin with His favor and blessing. Sin must be judged. When all of our sin was transferred to the account of Jesus Christ, the Father had to turn His face from the sin that He could not accept. The Father within the courtroom of His own justice and righteousness had to turn His face from His Son while He bore the sins of the world. So the Father did forsake His Son in legal sense or in a way where God would show His displeasure over all the sin that was placed upon the sin offering of His Son.

However, in another sense, the Father never could in totality forsake His Son while He hung there upon the cross. This is because God cannot forsake Himself. The Godhead cannot be divided. Remember that the Father could not forsake the person of the Son because the Son was God Himself. The Son's person remained holy and spotless even though He bore the sins of the world upon Himself. This means that the Son remained pure in His person while becoming a sin offering and bearing the sins of the world. Therefore, the Father could only forsake the Son legally but did not forsake the Son in regards to His actual person.

Granted, this is somewhat of a mystery but it is true. In one sense, the Father judicially forsook the Son in the courtroom of His justice and righteous dealings with sin. He had to because He could not look upon sin and accept sin in His presence. However, in another sense, the Father did not forsake His Son. He did not forsake His Son in relationship to His eternal holy and righteous person. The Father forever remained in perfect agreement and oneness with His Son in regards to His person and perfect character. Because of the everlasting and unchanging holy character of the Son of God, the sacrifice had to remain pure and holy and was satisfying to God.

Even Jesus verifies this truth to us by what He said in view of His coming suffering and sin offering upon the cross.

John 16:32

“Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.”

Jesus spoke this in view of the disciple’s departure and His coming death on the cross. He forever realized that the Father would never leave the Son alone. He realized that the Father would continue to be with Him even as He bore the sins of the world upon the tree.

Psalm 22:24 prophetically says this about Jesus upon the cross:

“For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.”

These verses remind us that the Father did not despise or forsake the actual person of the Son when He became the sin offering or sin bearer of the world. They clearly teach us that the Son was not completely forsaken by the Father. This is because of His own holy and righteous tie with the Father remained the same. The reason the Father turned His eyes away from the Son was only in the sense that He was the legal sin offering for all of lost humanity bearing the awful weight of sin.

At the time of His actual death the Son prayed to the Father which would indicate that the Father was still pleased with the person of His Son as He bore the weight of the world’s sin.

Luke 23:46

“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

The question is usually asked, “Was Jesus aware of the Father’s forsaking when He was bearing the sins of the world?” Yes! Jesus did feel the depths of anguish as the Father looked away from Him because of His disfavor over the sin, which was placed upon the Son. This disfavor with sin upon His Son caused a separation between the Father and Son, which the Son could actually experience, as we will explain in a moment. In the time of darkness there was a very real awareness by the Son that the Father could not look upon Him because of the sin imparted upon His account. There was an eerie sense that the Son could feel as the Father legally turned His eyes away from Him. The Son could sense the departure of the Father in some measure while turning away from Him as he hung there upon the cross. This is a mystery we will never quite fully understand on this side of glory.

“O help me understand, Lord!
Help me to take it in,
What it meant for Thee
Thou Holy One, to bear away my sin.”

Who can fully understand this mystery? And yet we do know that God could not in totality forsake the Son because the Son shared the very same holy existence as the Father as Jehovah. This means that in some unknown measure the Father did forsake the Son and the Son could feel the separation of the Father due to His disapproval of the sin upon His blessed Son.

Matthew 27:45

“Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.”

For three hours there was blackness over the land of Israel. This was the time when Jesus was actually bearing the sins of the world upon Himself and when He experienced the Father’s forsaking. The darkness portrayed the blackness of sin that Jesus was bearing at that time and the judgment of outer darkness or hell itself that He bore on behalf of the human race. This darkness also signified the Father’s separation from the Son. The Son was left to bear the sins of the world in the dark separation from the Father’s presence. There was darkness around, darkness within, but worst of all, there was darkness above, seeing that the Father’s face was hid from Him. Denser darkness came with the Father’s withdrawal. Jesus was all alone! Christ was left to bear the bitter load of sin all alone. We must repeat the line of the old hymn once again.

“Alone alone, He bore it all alone.
He suffered, bled and died, alone, alone.”

In this time of darkness Jesus could feel the awful separation that occurred between Himself and the Father. Even if it was only in a legal manner and for a judicial reason why the Father forsook the Son, the actual time of forsaking was something that the Son could experientially feel and sense. Jesus felt that He was pushed away from the Father into a desolate and dark forest. It was the black midnight of the Son’s separation. This is why He cried out those mysterious words:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Forsaken! What a tragic word! This was a cry of anguish and deep emotion. It was the moan of a broken heart within the Son of God. It was a heartfelt cry that shows how the soul of Jesus was sorrowed over this event of separation. Will we ever really understand how Christ actually felt in this moment?

“None of the ransomed ever knew,
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
Ere He found that sheep that was lost.”

Can we fully understand the Son's feelings at this time? Will we ever grasp what the Son went through when the perfect Father forsook the perfect Son because of the transferal of sin to His account? How awful the torment must have been for the Son to know that the Father had turned away from Him!

“The scourge, the thorns, the deep disgrace,
These Thou couldst bear nor once repine;
But when Jehovah veiled His face,
Unutterable pangs were Thine.”

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Why? Why did God the Father forsake Jesus? Did not Jesus know why? Indeed, He did. He fully understood why God had to turn His back upon Him. He was bearing the sin of the world upon Himself. He became representative of all sinful humanity. He was treading the winepress of the fierceness of God's wrath. Jesus knew what was taking place. Jesus merely called out to God in this way to express His loneliness and broken heart over the matter of separation. It is also interesting that Jesus did not actually call out and say that the Father had forsaken Him. He said God has forsaken Him. This is interesting to ponder and was brought to my attention by an old Plymouth Brethren brother who shared the Scriptures with me on many occasions. In calling out the name of God He was appealing to God's divine justice in punishing sin and not allowing sin to go unchecked. It is true that the Son feels the Father's separation because the Father is God. However, the calling out of God's name indicates that Jesus was signifying that God in all three persons of His existence (Father, Son & Spirit) was just and in charge of this punishment for sin and His death upon the cross. It was the holy God who needed to punish sin in the person and body of the Son. This was to happen so the One true God could fulfill His plan and appease His wrath against sin and vindicate His absolute holiness at the same time.

Yea, once Immanuel's orphaned cry,
His universe hath shaken,
It went up single,
My God, I am forsaken.
It went up from the holy lips,
Amid His lost creation;
That of the lost, no son should use,
These words of desolation.”

Dr. Lehman Strauss has wisely observed:

“God will never forsake you if you trust His Son whom He forsook for you.”

Hebrews 13:5 gives this promise:

“... for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

4. Christ did not die spiritually upon the cross.

Kenneth Hagin said:

“He (Jesus) tasted spiritual death for every man. And His spirit and inner man went to hell in my place. Can't you see that? Physical death wouldn't remove your sins. He tasted death for every man. He's talking about tasting spiritual death.”

In almost unbelievable cultic fashion, Christians are being swept into the false teaching that Jesus died spiritually or in the realm of His own spirit while he hung upon the cross bearing away our sins. These Christians who are saying “Amen” to this type of charismatic teaching have absolutely no discernment. They are simply caught up in the emotional hype of the preacher and are not allowing the Holy Spirit to teach them about these lies which are being promoted by modern day faith teachers (1 John 2:20-21).

The Bible teaches that unsaved people are lost within the realm of their immaterial human spirit because in some unseen way they have been born with the record of sin transferred upon their human spirit. Sin is in some way imputed to the “spiritual bank account” of every lost sinner within the realm of their own spirit. The Bible teaches that the entire world of mankind has had Adam's original sin transferred upon their own spirits (Romans 5:12) and because of this their spirits are lost from God and headed toward the judgment of hell (Romans 6:23). The Bible teaches that the lost human race is dead in the realm of their human spirit because the sins of all their lives are continually being transferred to the realm of their own human spirit (Ephesians 2:1-3). Therefore, it is the spirit within man that needs to be made spiritually alive with the life of God (see John 3:3-7). What is dead within us is our human spirit. It needs the life of God. And my friend, I want to say that your baptism and catechism cannot touch the realm of your human lost human spirit. Only God can reach down into the lost human spirit and make it alive. When the Holy Spirit infuses the life of God within our own lost human spirit at the time of faith in Christ (John 5:24), then we are born again or once again made alive from a spiritually standpoint like Adam was in the original creation.

There are those who are teaching today that Jesus died in a spiritual sense when He died upon the cross. They assume that when Jesus bore the sins of the world that He bore them in His own spirit and became spiritually lost before God. By this they mean that Jesus became full of sin within His own spirit and His spirit became dead and lost from God's presence. They assume that the spirit of Jesus became sinful and that

Jesus died in the realm of His own spirit while hanging upon the cross. This is an impossibility because of what we have already studied about concerning God's being and unchangeable existence (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).

What are the real ramifications or results if Christ died spiritually upon the cross? If Jesus died spiritually upon the cross it would mean that He did not suffer as the "righteous servant" (Isa. 53:10-11) or the holy and sinless offering upon the cross as the Bible states (see 1 Peter 1:19). If Jesus died in the realm of His own spirit it would mean that sin was transferred to the realm of His spirit and that Jesus became as one of the human race. It would mean that man would be trying to save man instead of God saving man!

It would also mean that God could not have been satisfied with His Son's sacrifice because it became spiritually defiled or unholy and blemished. It would mean that God could not accept that sacrifice of His Son as sufficient payment for our sins. God could only accept a perfect sacrifice, not a spiritually defiled sacrifice. Furthermore, if Jesus died spiritually, it would indicate that He needed to be born again or saved by His own sacrifice. It would actually mean that Jesus would become a lost sinner instead of a holy Savior!

If Jesus died spiritually then His nature went under radical corruption and One person of the trinity was ripped away from the Godhead. It means that One person in the trinity ceased to exist and requires the destruction of Christ's deity who is equal in His holy nature with God the Father. In short, If Jesus died upon the cross, it would mean that we are all doomed forever! How could a spiritually dead sinner on a cross, who was like any other man and which has no life and no holiness before God, bring to us salvation and acceptance before the holy God of Heaven?

A news item tells about a yogi who was nailed to a cross in the patio of a plush hotel in the Dominican Republic. The 33-year-old Frenchman said that this was his "contribution to salvation and peace among mankind." He wanted to hang there for three full days, but within 24 hours he was so weak and near death that on doctor's orders he was forced to give up his plan. Even before this, the 7-1/2 foot cross had to be laid on the ground in a horizontal position to alleviate some of his worst suffering. A little later when the 6-inch spikes were removed from his hands and feet, he had to be given emergency medical treatment. It was obvious to all that he couldn't continue to endure the terrible ordeal he had imposed on himself.

My friend, I want to tell you as plain as I can today. Man cannot save man! I don't care if you hang on a cross as Jesus did. A mere man hanging on a cross who has the same fallen nature of another man and which is spiritually dead or lost like any other man cannot save anybody! That is why Jesus did not die in the realm of His spirit. If Jesus died spiritually by becoming a sinner like any other man, then He ceased from

being God and therefore could not save lost mankind. It only makes sense when you stop and think about it. A lost person cannot save another lost person. We must remember that sin was not imputed to Christ's spirit but to Christ's account in a legal sense.

If you were drowning in the pool and I jumped in to save you but could not swim either, then how could I help you? What would it really matter if I jumped in the pool. I would drown with you but I never could save you! In like manner, if Jesus became lost in His spirit like the rest of lost humanity, then how could He ever save those who are lost? I'll tell you, it would be impossible! The cross is all a hoax if Jesus died spiritually and became a lost sinner with sin imputed to the realm His own spirit. If Jesus changed from holiness to unholiness or if Jesus changed from having eternal spiritual life to spiritual death, then God has not accepted the sacrifice of His Son. God required a holy sacrifice and not a sinful sacrifice. Only a holy sacrifice is able to save us for time and eternity.

There are five reasons why Christ did not die spiritually when hanging upon the cross:

a. Because there is no specific mention of Christ's alleged spiritual death.

If Jesus did die spiritually upon the cross, then why is there no mention about His spiritual death in the Scriptures? The Bible only mentions His physical death or dying. The death of Jesus was the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices. These Old Testament animals did not die spiritually when they were offered upon the altars. They were sacrificed physically upon the Old Testament altars (see Leviticus 1:2-11). Thus, it is understandable that Christ, who was the fulfillment of the Old Testament offerings, would not die spiritually but only physically.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ bore our sins in his own body there on the cross and not in His own spirit. The Bible never portrays Jesus taking our sins upon His own spirit and allowing His spirit to become spiritually dead.

1 Peter 2:24 says:

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body (not spirit) on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

The Bible also verifies that Jesus was only put to death in the flesh or body while hanging upon the cross. He was never put to death in the spirit. It is a false assumption to say that He was.

1 Peter 3:18 reminds us this truth:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh (not the spirit), but quickened by the Spirit."

1 Peter 4:1 also says:

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh (not His spirit), arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.”

The epistle to the Hebrews also explains how Christ offered His body for us upon the cross. It never reveals anything about Christ offering His own spirit for us whereby it became dead and lost in sin.

Hebrews 10:10

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body (not the spirit) of Jesus Christ once for all.”

This means that all of our sins were imputed upon Jesus without affecting His inner spirit. In some unknown manner Jesus bore our sins while offering His physical body upon the cross. Our sins were all imputed to Him without becoming part of Him. They were reckoned to Him without wrecking His character of holiness and purity. They were transferred to Him without changing Him in His spiritual make up.

When Jesus died upon the cross, God in a physical sense died. Jesus was God in humanity. Thus, God died physically; however, God did not die in His eternal being or existence as a spirit. He remained the living and unchanging God as He always was (Malachi 3:6).

Jesus never said that He would die spiritually upon the cross. When speaking about His coming death and resurrection, He spoke about His body.

John 2:19-21

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body (not His spirit).”

You may ask, “Does all of this really matter? Does it really matter if Jesus died physically or spiritually upon the cross?” Oh yes it matters! Your eternal soul is at stake! If Jesus died spiritually then we are all going to hell! That is how much is matters! This brings me to my next point.

a. Because the Bible only verifies that Christ died physically upon the cross.

The Bible teaches that Christ died physically upon the cross while shedding His own blood. The Scriptures add a great deal of significance to the blood of Jesus Christ at the time of Christ’s physical death.

Colossians 1:20 says:

“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.”

The blood of the cross of Jesus Christ points to His physical death or dying. It is also true that the physical death of Jesus involves the shedding of Christ's blood. Scripture makes important statements concerning the blood of Christ so that we dare not miss them!

In 1976 John MacArthur made a statement that got him into a heap of trouble. He wrote an article entitled, “Not His Bleeding But His Dying.” In this article MacArthur said: “It was His death that was efficacious not His blood. The shedding of blood has nothing to do with bleeding...It simply means death...violent sacrificial death. Nothing in His human blood saves...It is not His bleeding that saved me, but His dying.”

MacArthur is wrong! Very wrong! First of all, the blood of Christ was not merely human blood flowing through the veins. Although it was blood that kept Jesus alive from a human standpoint, it was also divine blood, the very blood of God Himself (Acts 20:28). This means that Christ's blood was not tainted with the sin of lost humanity. Sin is obviously spiritually transferred to a lost human race in some mystical way through the bloodline. You can be sure that the blood of Adam was not flowing through the veins of Jesus. It was blood, but God's blood.

The Bible teaches that the death of Christ along with the shedding of Christ's actual blood does have saving merit or value when applied to our dead spirit. Christ's blood is not merely another way to say that Jesus died. It explains that He did sacrificially die along with the shedding of His own blood! The shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ is emphasized not only to explain His physical death upon the cross but to also drive home the truth that through the physical blood of Jesus upon the cross there is salvation. The blood of Christ is applied to the believer in a symbolic or spiritual sense when a sinner trusts Christ as Savior (see 1 John 1:7). We must believe this by faith in the same way that we believe that we are seated “in the heavenlies” with Christ. Even MacArthur admitted this in a returned letter to those concerned readers. Yet, he strangely says that it is not His bleeding but only His dying. You can be sure, Christ's physical blood upon the cross provides the believing sinner with cleansing from sin. His blood, not literally but spiritually, washes all of our sins away and gives us a forgiven and justified standing before God.

A preacher was speaking from the text, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Suddenly he was interrupted by an atheist who asked, “How can blood cleanse sin?” For a moment the preacher was silent; then he countered, “How can water quench thirst?” “I do not know,” replied the infidel, “but I know that it does.”

“Neither do I know how the blood of Jesus cleanses sin,” answered the preacher, “but I know that it does.”

Colossians 1:14 says:

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

Ephesians 1:7 also states:

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

“I hear the accuser roar
Of ills that I have done;
I know them well, and thousands more,
Jehovah findeth none.

Though the restless foe accuses—
Sins recounting like a flood,
Ev’ry charge our God refuses;
Christ has answered with His blood.”

Yes, the blood of Jesus Christ upon the cross means that He sacrificially died for lost humanity and that He shed His blood in doing it. It is a theological blunder to separate Christ’s death from His blood. I want to dogmatically affirm today that Jesus Christ physically died for us upon the cross and shed His blood for us in order to bring salvation to our lives. It is the blood of Jesus Christ shed upon the cross that saves us! It is not the spiritual death of Jesus Christ that saves us! To assert that Jesus died spiritually in order to save us is to deny that the blood upon the cross can save us! The physical death of Jesus Christ upon the cross paid the price for humanity’s sin.

It is the sacrificial death and shedding of Christ’s blood upon the cross that saves us. Our salvation is linked to the death and shedding of His sacrificial blood. It is not linked to His alleged spiritual death. It is not linked to the imaginary story that Jesus died spiritually and went to hell in order to be born again and resurrected to provide us with salvation and the opportunity to be born again.

My friend, let us glory in the cross! Let us glory in the blood of the cross! Let us stop minimizing the precious blood! We are saved because of the sacrificial death and the shedding of Christ’s blood upon the cross! The two cannot be separated and both are important. He died and He shed His blood in that dying. Anybody who gets away from this clear conclusion should be branded as a heretic in the church and not associated with by those who hold the cross in high esteem.

“Oh the blood of Jesus, Oh the blood of Jesus,
Oh the blood of Jesus, that makes me white as snow.”

L. W. Beckley has written:
“We are wont to sing of shepherds
And the heavenly glory bright,
Of angels and their message
On that peaceful, holy night.
But so oft we end the story
When 'tis only just begun,
For we fail to give the message
That this Child is God the Son--
Here to give Himself a ransom,
Crucified on Calvary's tree,

Through His blood providing pardon,
Perfect cleansing, full and free.
And the tomb, thank God, is empty;
Jesus sits at God's right hand
Now a loving, mighty Savior;
Spread the news to every land!”

c. Because Christ never said that He would be sacrificed spiritually.

In the Last Supper, which would become the communion or memory feast of the church, Jesus clearly speaks of His sacrifice upon the cross. In this solemn meeting Jesus only speaks about His physical sacrifice. He says nothing about a spiritual sacrifice.

1 Corinthians 11:24-26

“And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body (not my spirit), which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”

It was Christ's broken body and shed blood upon the cross that provided eternal redemption for us. The Scriptures tell us that not a bone of Him was broken (John 19:36; Psalms 34:20). Thus, Jesus used the word “broken” in the sense of distribution among the disciple's lives. What Jesus was signifying by this action of the breaking of bread was that we should share the broken bread together. The broken bread may very well indicate that we all share in the benefits of Christ's death upon the cross;

therefore, we are to break the bread and distribute it among ourselves and eat together. The broken bread then is a reminder that Jesus wants every believer to participate in this memory feast because He died for every one of them and saved them. This is why He broke the bread. It was a reminder that He shared His life or gave His life for everyone.

In any event, Christ clearly refers to his bodily death and not to His spiritual death as He speaks about the cross. Only a cultist with a blindfold over His eyes could misconstrue what Jesus was saying. And you can be sure that they do!

a. Because Christ presented His spirit to the Father while dying upon the cross.

Luke 23:46

“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

Here is another reason why Jesus did not die spiritually within the realm of His spirit upon the cross. Just before His death, Jesus offered His spirit to the Father. He voluntarily died. He dismissed His spirit. No person could take the life of Jesus if He did not first choose to voluntarily give it up. And in doing so, Jesus commended His spirit into the Father’s keeping and care. Surely, someone who has supposedly died spiritually, could never approach the Father in this way. If Jesus died spiritually, then He could never offer His spirit to God’s keeping and care. But Jesus did not die spiritually and therefore could commend His spirit into the Father’s hands. Jesus could commit His spirit unto the Father both during and after His sacrifice because He offered His spirit without spot to God.

Hebrews 9:14 says:

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit (or spirit) offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

The reference may just as well be referring to Christ’s own spirit since the Greek language did not make the distinction of capital letters and since the definite article (“the”) in the Greek is missing. Did you catch what the Bible says here? Jesus offered His eternal and unchanging spirit to God without spot. How could a spiritually dead spirit, which was identified with sin, be without spot to God? My friend, we must return to the holiness of God and the impeccability of Christ even as He offered His eternal spirit upon the cross. We must start to glory in the cross again by realizing that Jesus was holy in His spirit even while He was the sin offering for the world. Our sins were transferred upon Christ without polluting His eternal and unblemished spirit. Therefore, our sins were accredited to Christ through His bodily death upon the cross and not His spiritual death.

Something else must be noted in connection with Christ committing His spirit into the Father's hands. He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Jesus did not say, "Satan, into your hands I submit by being. Take me, I'm yours. Take me to hell." Jesus did not go to hell and fight with the devil, as we will see in a moment. If we take the Bible seriously, we must conclude that Jesus committed His spirit to the Father and not to Satan. As we will see in our next section of study, Jesus won the victory over the devil upon the cross and not in hell. Jesus did not suffer horrible torture at the hands of Satan in the bowels of hell.

Kenneth Copeland made this outlandish claim:

"Since Jesus was made to be sin, He had to pay the penalty for sin. He had to die spiritually, which took him into the regions of the damned, before He could redeem us."

After I was finished speaking at a church in Bedford Pennsylvania a lady came up to me and asked me this question, "Did Jesus actually go to hell when he died?" Many people are confused as to what really happened to Jesus after He died. The old church creeds talk about Him descending into hell. This wording has confused many people throughout the years. In actuality, Jesus went into the place called "Hades" when he died and not hell. Hades was the Greek word to describe the place where Jesus went when He died. "Sheol" is the Old Testament word for the same place.

Psalm 16:10 prophetically states:

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

The Hebrew word for "hell" is literally "Sheol" in this verse. Sheol was the place in the center of the earth that was divided into two compartments. One compartment was where Abraham and all the regenerated or saved went when they died.

In Acts 2:27, this verse was quoted by Peter during his Pentecost sermon:

"Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

This verse is speaking about the same place but uses the Greek word "Hades" to describe this hidden underworld. This place was a cavern in the center of the earth, which was divided into at least two dwelling places. One particular compartment in "Hades" was where all the saved people went prior to the resurrection of Christ. The saved beggar went to the compartment where Abraham's spirit went and all Old Testament Saints.

Luke 16:22 says:

“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.”

This particular place was called “Abraham’s bosom” because the faith of this leading patriarch allowed him to receive God’s righteousness (Genesis 15:6). Therefore, his name was used to describe this dwelling place of all those people saved prior to the cross. Abraham became the original representative of all those who enter this abode by faith in the future Messiah.

Another compartment in Hades was a place of suffering where the unsaved spirits of lost people went when they died. The unsaved rich man died and went to the compartment of suffering there in Hades. The rich ruler who trusted in his riches and failed to trust in the salvation that God offered was taken to this compartment of judgment which was separated by a gulf or expanse from Abraham’s bosom.

Luke 16:23 says:

“And in hell (“Hades”) he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

So where did the spirit of Jesus go when He died? The Bible teaches that He descended into this place called Sheol or Hades. The actual place called “hell” is not used when it refers to the descent of Jesus into the heart of the earth. Most of the time, we simply substitute the word hell for this other place which is called Hades. Actually, the Greek name Gehennah is translated hell in the English language. This refers to the eternal Lake of Fire where the lost will suffer throughout eternity. Hell is actually the place, which Jesus called “Gehennah.” It is the place of eternal fire, which coincides with the Lake of Fire spoken of in Revelation 20:14. Hell is a separate place from Hades or Sheol because according to Revelation 20:14 Hades will be dumped into the place called the Lake of Fire.

We must conclude that when Jesus died He went to “Hades.” This leaves us with the question. Did Jesus go to the suffering compartment of Hades where the spirits of lost people were being tortured? The answer is no. The Bible reveals that Jesus went to the non-suffering compartment where the saved people of the Old Testament era were residing. We know this is true because after His resurrection Jesus led all the saved of the past ages out of this place when He went back to Heaven.

Ephesians 4:8 says:

“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

The Bible also reveals that during Jesus' death He went to a third compartment of the place in Hades where demonic spirits were residing and awaiting their future judgment.

1 Peter 3:18-20 says:

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

The “spirits” in this verse have reference to those wicked demonic “spirits” which Peter would talk about in his second epistle.

2 Peter 2:4-5

“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.”

The word “hell” in this verse is literally translated “Tartarus.” This is the only place that this word is used in New Testament. It obviously is talking about those wicked spirits who were working a hideous crime in the days of Noah. They were trying to snuff out the line through which the Redeemer was to come by indwelling a race of giant people who would intermarry with the line of Christ and destroy the purity of the line through which Christ was to come.

It was this place (Tartarus) and these wicked spirits that Jesus went to when He died. Tartarus was obviously another compartment within this place called “Hades” in the center of the earth. It was the place of these demonic spirits who had tried to destroy the line of Christ in the days of Noah. But why did Jesus go to this place? Peter tells us that Jesus went into this place to preach to these wicked demonic spirits.

“By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

This section of Scripture clearly reveals that Christ went to preach to the wicked spirits that were confined in another region of the place called Hades. The text does not say that He went into this place to fight the devil or these demons. He went into this place to preach to the devils of hell! Jesus did not suffer at the hands of the devil in hell. He preached in hell. Jesus obviously wanted to send a message to these spirits who tried to stop Him from coming into the world during the days of Noah. What did Jesus say in His sermon in Hades or as we often refer to as hell? Well, He no doubt preached a

message of victory to those spirits. He told them that He had won and they had lost in all of their efforts to keep Him from coming into the world. Jesus had come into the world in spite of their devilish and demonic plot and died for lost sinners. He preached to them about His victory on the cross and how He had defeated the devil and every spirit that was against Him in the days of Noah. He was also about to rise again victoriously over the grave and ascend back to the Father to verify His completed victory. You see, Jesus never went into the center of the earth to suffer at the hands of the devil. He went there on a preaching mission! In any event, Jesus did not have to descend into hell in order to fight the devil and win our redemption. Our redemption was won on the cross.

John 19:30 says:

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

“It is finished.” This is what Jesus said in connection with His finished work upon the cross. He was declaring that He had paid for our redemption by His sacrificial death on Calvary. He had taken our judgment upon Himself and paid to God what God required to free us from judgment. You will note that Jesus did not say that His work was just begun and that He had to now go to Hell in order to win our redemption for us. Jesus declared that the plan and work of redemption was finished when He died upon the cross. He had paid for our sin debt of judgment in full through His death upon the cross. It was on the cross where our pardon, forgiveness and salvation was won. Christ did not win our redemption in Hell, but on the cross. Everything was finished through His work upon the cross!

Who will you believe, Jesus or Kenneth Copeland who said:

“When Jesus cried, “It is finished!” He was not speaking of the plan of redemption. There were still three days and nights to go through before He went to the throne....Jesus’ death on the cross was only the beginning of the complete work of redemption.”

How can someone get that out of Jesus’ words, “It is finished.” Copeland never did tell us what was finished on the cross. Beware of the cultic conclusions of the cross of Christ. The cults do not glory in the cross. They destroy the cross and try to minimize the blood of Jesus Christ, the salvation through the cross and the victory of the cross.

Paul Billheimer said:

“It was not sufficient for Christ to offer up only His physical life on the cross. His pure spirit had to ‘descend’ into hell...The Father turned Him over, not only to the agony and death of Calvary, but to the satanic torturers of His pure spirit as part of the just dessert of the sin of all the race. As long as Christ was the ‘essence of sin’ he was at Satan’s mercy in that place of torment. While Christ identified with sin, Satan and the hosts of

hell ruled over Him as over any lost sinner. During the seemingly endless age in the nether abyss of death, Satan did with Him as he would, and all hell was in carnival.”

This is another cultic conclusion to Christ’s work upon the cross. You will notice that the cults deny the efficacy of Christ’s work on the cross. They deny that the cross is enough to save people. They deny that the blood of Christ alone is sufficient to save souls.

Frederick Price adds his own two cents:

“Do you think that the punishment for our sin was to die on a cross? If that were the case, the two thieves could have paid your price. No, the punishment was to go into hell itself and to serve time in hell separated from God...Satan and all the demons of hell thought that they had Him bound and they threw a net over Jesus and they dragged Him down to the very pit of hell itself to serve our sentence.”

Frederick Price has denied that Jesus bore our judgment upon the cross. He flatly denies that Jesus won our salvation from hell by being punished upon the cross. He also says that the two thieves could have won our redemption on the cross if Jesus could have. This is the very height of blasphemy! Were the two thieves a holy sacrifice? Were the two thieves God? The Bible says that Jesus became our curse of judgment while hanging upon the cross. He suffered all the hell that God wanted Him to suffer upon the cross as the sins of the world were poured upon the Him and as God’s judgment for those sins was meted out against Him. It all took place upon the cross.

Galatians 3:13 once again says:

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

Jesus was judged for our sins upon the tree or cross of Calvary. He did not have to go to hell in order to be judged for our sins. The Bible also says that as a result of Christ’s death upon the cross that the veil in the temple was rent or torn in two by God Himself to indicate that His work of redemption and salvation from hell was complete when His Son died upon the cross.

Mark 15:38 says:

“And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.”

Hebrews 10:19-22

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh (body and not spirit); And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us

draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

My dear friend, Jesus Christ’s substitutionary and bodily death upon the cross allowed God to tear apart the Old Testament veil which led into the Holy of Holies of the temple. This was where the holy God in that shekinah glory of old would meet with sinful man upon the mercy seat. The veil demonstrated that man could not approach God. It sent the picture that man could not be accepted into His holy presence. There was a separation between God and man. At best, the veil in the temple was only a temporary access into the presence of the holy and Almighty God through the annual blood sacrifice. The sacrificial system of the Old Testament allowed the Old Testament worshipper to have fellowship with God on the basis of the future work of Christ. But the veil signified that the way of access to God was not yet made available. However, when Jesus bodily died upon the cross, He Himself became the finished and final way of access and acceptance into the presence of God. There is no more need for a veil! Each New-Covenant worshipper can now approach God in the conscious enjoyment of freedom from the guilt of all their sins knowing that Jesus Christ has actually died and forever done away with the sin barrier between God and man.

The death of Jesus upon the cross replaced the veil of the Old Testament and provided the sinners of all the ages with eternal acceptance before God. Oh my friend, Jesus did it all when He died upon the cross! Jesus did not have to go to hell in order to fight the devil and win our redemption and make us accepted before God. Jesus made the way to God available through His death upon the cross. This is clear because God tore the veil from top to bottom when Jesus died upon the cross. God was saying, “My Son has made the way of access possible through His finished work upon the cross.”

Hebrews 10:22 now says:

“Let us draw near (near to God) with a true heart in full assurance of faith (that God has accepted us), having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (knowing we are cleansed of all our sins).”

The writer’s words are probably an exhortation to lay hold consciously of the cleansing benefits of Christ’s cross and to draw near to God in enjoyment, knowing that we are made clean before God and accepted by Him through Christ and the forgiveness found at the cross. Clean before the Lord I stand! Why? Because of the cross of Christ! Because Christ’s finished work upon the cross I can have the assurance of being accepted in His presence and reconciled before a holy God. This is why we must glory in the cross today!

“I must needs go home by the way of the cross,
There’s no other way but this;

I shall ne'er get sight of the gates of light,
If the way of the cross I miss.

The way of the cross leads home,
The way of the cross leads home;
It is sweet to know, as I onward go,
The way of the cross leads home."

My friend, there was no need for Christ to go to hell in order to win our salvation. Our salvation was won on the cross of Calvary! And Christ defeated the devil on the cross as we are going to study about in our next lesson.

e. Because God does not need to be saved.

Does that surprise you? God does not have to be saved! The charismatic faith teaching of today claims that Christ died spiritually and needed to actually be born again before He was resurrected. This is another blasphemous claim being made today by various men who are highly esteemed as Spirit filled men. Various men are teaching that Jesus needed to be hauled down to hell and as a spiritually dead spirit and then be born again like any other ordinary man needs to be born again.

Kenneth Copeland said:

"That Word of the living God went down into that pit of destruction and charged the spirit of Jesus with resurrection power! Suddenly His twisted, death-wracked spirit began to fill out and come back to life. He began to look like something that devil had never seen before. He was literally being reborn before the devil's very eyes. He began to flex His spiritual muscles....Jesus was born again – the first-born from the dead."

Benny Hinn also supposedly received some revelation on the rebirth of Jesus while in hell: "My, you know, whoosh! The Holy Ghost is just showing me some stuff. I'm getting dizzy! I'm telling you the truth-it's just heavy on me now...Do you know what the word begotten means: It means to be reborn. Do you want another shocker? Have you been begotten? So was He (Christ). You say, "What are you talking about?" ... He was reborn. He had to be reborn. If He was not reborn I could not be reborn. Jesus was born again."

After claiming that the Holy Ghost showed him all this, Hinn looked into the camera and said, "I'm telling you the truth." Oh my friend, this is a despicable doctrine or teaching about Christ. Benny Hinn is a liar. He did not receive this doctrine from the Holy Spirit. He received it from a demonic spirit! The teachers in the modern Charismatic Faith movement are liars. They are creating a fiction story around Jesus and demoting the cross of Christ as some secondary work. They have destroyed the work of Christ upon the cross and created a Christ that became a lost sinner who

needed to be born again just like any other man. This destroys the holy sacrifice of Christ and His saving work upon the cross. It destroys our salvation and hope.

Friend, Jesus never died spiritually. And He never needed to be born again. As we have seen, Christ never had to be born again because He remained perfectly holy in all of His suffering and sin offering. To even suggest that Christ had to be born again is full of blasphemy. If Jesus died spiritually upon the cross, then His own shed blood upon the cross would be needed to save Him. Jesus would have died for Himself!

In John 3:7, Jesus said to Nicodemus:

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

Jesus never said that He would have to be born again! This is because Jesus was never to become part of the lost human race who needed to have their human spirit regenerated or made spiritually alive.

John 5:24

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

Jesus gave this invitation to a lost world who needed to be saved and not to Himself. To say that Jesus died spiritually upon the cross would mean that Jesus would one day have to believe on Himself in order to be saved! It would mean that Jesus would one-day need to repent of His own sin and have faith in His own sacrifice upon the cross so that He could save Himself. But how could Jesus believe on Himself and save Himself if His own spirit became lost and was in need of salvation? Furthermore, who would Jesus repent to if He Himself is the eternal God? These questions clearly verify that Jesus did not die in the realm of His own spirit when He hung upon the cross. It is absolutely erroneous and absurd to conclude that He did die spiritually. As we have already said, if Jesus died spiritually, then His nature went under radical corruption and One person of the trinity was ripped away from the Godhead. It would mean that One person in the trinity ceased to exist and would require the destruction of Christ's deity who is equal in His nature with God the Father. We must remember that Jesus Christ has spiritual life in Himself and therefore He cannot lose this life (John 5:26). It is part of His very being and eternal existence. Therefore, I will glory in the cross realizing that Jesus won my salvation by His holy sacrificial death upon the cross. He never died spiritually and descended into hell to fight the devil in order to become born again. I say once again. Such teaching like this comes from the kingdom of the cults.

“In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering oer the wrecks of time”

Jesus was not wrecked by sin. He did not become lost! We were the lost wrecks of time, not Jesus! We had no life but Jesus did. Jesus was our holy Savior! Only a holy Savior could tower over the sinful wrecks of lost humanity. I must repeat this excellent saying as we close out this section on substitution. It is my testimony.

“Upon a life I did not live,
Upon a death I did not die;
Another’s life, another’s death,
I stake my whole eternity.”

Many years ago, at a gospel meeting in the Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium, George Bennard sang "The Old Rugged Cross." He was a short, rather slightly built man with white wavy hair and a face that shone with the love of God. Before singing that favorite of all hymns, he told the audience that the inspiration to write it came to him one day in 1913. He said, "After composing the melody, the words were put into my heart in answer to my own need in a time of crisis. I had come to realize that the cross is more than just a religious symbol. Along with the resurrection, it is at the very heart of the gospel."

Following that brief introduction, Mr. Bennard sang "The Old Rugged Cross" as I had never heard it rendered before. When he came to the second verse, his heart seemed to be gripped anew by the stirring message of the Savior's sacrifice, and tears began flowing down his cheeks. His face appeared radiant with the glory of God as he sang,

“O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
To bear it to dark Calvary.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He'll call me someday to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I'll share."

An Author unknown said:

“Calvary is not only the place of atonement; it also the place of amazement. Are we so familiar with the cross that we no longer pause to wonder and to worship?”

We need a fresh glimpse of this glory today. If we will but pause and remember the old rugged cross today and the wonderful saving benefits of this cross, we will stand in awe and wonder. We will have our heart of stone melted and see the glory of the cross once again.

“Have I a heart of stone, So cold and dark within,
That I can view the Savior, In anguish for my sin,
And never sorrow feel, For all He sacrificed?
Have I a heart of stone, To watch the bleeding Christ?

Have I no eyes to see, That I can stand so near,
And watch the Savior wounded, But never shed a tear?
Can I but coldly gaze, Upon His painful loss?

Have I no eyes to see, God’s Lamb upon the cross?
As I behold the blood, And view the Crucified,
The piercing thought o’erwhelms me: Twas for my sin He died.
Lord make my soul to feel, Thy suffering on the tree.
Lord, break this heart of stone. Lord make my eyes to see.”

We now return to our main outline so that we can lead into the second main point in our study about the cross.

There are two notable events that occurred when Jesus was hanging upon the cross.

2. Jesus defeated the devil upon the cross.

The Belgian artist A. J. Wiertz, in his great painting entitled "The Triumph of Christ," beautifully portrays the victory Jesus won through His ignominious death. As you look at this famous canvas, you see the Savior hanging in shame on the cross. Yet from the crown of thorns on His head shine beams of heavenly light. Above Him glorious angels sound their trumps while sinister, evil figures flee away into the darkness. These evil figures depict the victory that Jesus had over the devil and demons when He died upon the cross.

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus defeated the devil upon the cross. Jesus did not do battle with the devil in hell after His complete victory upon the cross. The victory was won upon the cross and not in hell. The present day teaching that says that Christ had to go into the regions of the damned or the place of suffering and defeat the devil in battle is totally erroneous. I say again, the battle was won on the cross and not in hell. Hallelujah for the cross!

Colossians 2:15 says:

“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (the cross).

This is said in connection with Christ’s suffering upon the cross (see verse 14). A Roman triumphal march was a parade that took place when a general returned after

winning a major victory. The high political officials would lead the procession, followed by men blowing their trumpets. Then would come wagons carrying some of the spoils taken from the conquered territory and just behind them a number of defeated army officers in chains. The priests, carrying burning censers from which a fragrance pervaded the air, were next in line. Bringing up the rear would be a group of cheering military men of various ranks. The smell of the incense symbolized joy, triumph, and life to the victorious general and his followers; but to the wretched captives, who were on their way to execution, it savored of death.

This is the exact picture of victory, which is behind Paul's thinking, as he writes in Colossians 2:15. The death of Jesus on the cross spelled defeat for the devil and his power against us. On the cross, Jesus triumphed over the devil and provided the basis for victory in our own lives today. The cross gives us authority over the devil. It is the basis of victory for our lives. The cross defeated satanic power and authority over our lives, which once entrapped us or enslaved us in our lost estate (see Ephesians 2:1-3). The victory of Christ over the devil was like a Roman general showing off his own victory before the people. Through the death of Christ on the cross, He made Satan and his followers to be an open spectacle of spirits who were now defeated in their power over our lives as God's born again children ("he made a show of them openly" - Col. 2:15) The picture is that of a victorious Roman general parading his defeated enemies through the streets of Rome. Satan is seen to be defeated. He is paraded before us as a defeated foe. What a victory it was!

On the cross, Christ not only paid the sin debt of judgment that we had before God, He also won the demonic war being waged against God's people.

There on the cross, Jesus "spoiled (disarmed) principalities and powers." All of the wicked spirits that were fighting or warring against God's people were in one sense disarmed of their power against God's people when Jesus died upon the cross. This portrays how Christ utterly erased or stripped the plan and purpose of Satan to destroy man in Hell for all eternity. First, the power or "authority" that Satan had to keep men in sin and judgment was taken away from him when Jesus died upon the cross. Furthermore, this fact that all wicked spirits were "disarmed" when Jesus died upon the cross also indicates that Christ defeated the power which Satan and his army of wicked spirits has over the lives of His own children. In addition, Christ won the victory over the demon forces on the cross, whose effort was to halt God's redemptive plan from coming into the world. The cross spelled victory in every way!

Hebrews 2:14 explains: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

The word "destroy" has been defined rather well by Thayer:

- 1) to render idle, unemployed, inactivate, or inoperative
to cause a person or thing to have no further efficiency, to deprive
of force, influence, or power
- 2) to cause to cease, to put an end to, to do away with, to annul, to
abolish, to cease, to pass away, to be done away, to be severed
from, to be separated from, to be discharged from, to be loosed
from anyone to terminate all intercourse with one

In short, when Jesus died upon the cross, He put Satan in the unemployment office! The death of Jesus Christ upon the cross put a sign on Satan's office door, which reads, "Out of Business." Satan has been put out of business in relationship to the sinner who believes on Christ's redemptive work of salvation and who now has the indwelling Victor within him. Through the work of the cross, the shackles of Satan have been taken off of the believer. The defeat of Satan on the cross is the victorious ground of victory for the believer in Christ today.

I drove to an office store in downtown Lancaster in order to look for some storage cabinets for the church. I pulled up alongside of the building and walked inside. To my dismay, the office store had gone out of business. There was no sign on the outside of the store any longer and the shelves inside were empty. Well, that's what Jesus did to Satan when He died upon the cross. Satan was put out of business and his shelves are empty!

When Jesus died upon the cross Satan was robbed of his "power over death"(Heb. 2:14). But what does this mean? It obviously means that Satan was the originator that caused death to enter the human race. First, the devil introduced sin through his temptation. Second, the devil was the agent who caused man to plunge into sin and be lost. Third, the devil kept man under the power of sin, energizing man to keep rebelling against God. Fourth, the devil is then responsible for bringing condemnation upon mankind because of their sin, which is the eternal judgment of God. Fifth, the devil accuses man of his sin before God, wanting judgment to immediately fall upon man. In all of these ways Satan had the authority over the realm of death.

In one sense, Satan had gained the power or authority over the realm of spiritual death in that he instigated a plan that would result in the spiritual ruin of people for all eternity. It was a well-calculated plan. Satan knew God would have to respond in righteous judgment and damn the lost race of people within Satan's kingdom to the everlasting hell prepared for his own judgment. He knew that sinful man could not be accepted in the presence of a holy God. Therefore, Satan wanted man to become a sinner and keep him under bondage to his sins so that he could rule man's life and be sure that he would be judged for his sin in hell forever. In this way Satan had the authority over the realm of death. He made the plan to tempt mankind, executed the

plan efficiently and then kept mankind under the consequences of his own sins by charging him of sin before God and the need for God to judge the sinner.

Thus, Satan exercised the power over death in the sense that he brought spiritual condemnation into a once perfect human race in Eden. He then began to accuse the same fallen race for their dreadful sins before God, emphasizing the fact that Jesus did not die upon the cross to rescue them from judgment. Then, throughout their life, Satan kept mankind in bondage to their many sins. What bondage it was! What a hopeless situation it was. A lost fallen race whose sins would ultimately bring judgment against mankind. A lost human race where Satan could keep mankind in bondage to their own sins which would judge them in the future. It all seemed hopeless. It seemed that there was no way out of this dreadful predicament of sure judgment and slavery to sin. But then Jesus came!

“...that through death (the cross) he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

The death of Jesus upon the cross put an end to the devil's right or authority to bring his stinging and just accusations before God. These accusations demanded that God must judge every person to an eternal Hell who was ever born in this world. This was the devil's soul-damning program before the cross, where he could rightly accuse sinners of not being saved prior to Christ's finished work upon the cross. Before Christ died on the cross, Satan had the power or authority to demand spiritual death for every person in the human race, even those Old Testament worshippers who brought the Lamb to the altar. This was because Jesus had not yet actually died upon the cross to provide salvation for the race of humanity.

Hebrews 10:4 says:

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”

Satan knew this and therefore he could righteously argue that those who placed faith in the future work of Christ upon the cross during the Old Testament era could not be saved because Christ had not yet officially come and died upon the cross. Before the cross, Satan was busy sending condemning messages up to God in order to try and keep people in the realm of spiritual death, even those people who were saved prior to the cross of Christ.

We must remember that those regenerated or saved people who died and went to Hades were temporarily held in this compartment until Jesus Christ actually died for them. Satan kept reminding God that Christ had not yet died upon the cross and paid the price for their redemption from sin's judgment. He kept reminding God that His Son Jesus Christ had not actually died for mankind and that the entire human race would have to someday suffer the eternal consequences for their sins. However, when Jesus

died upon the cross, He went into the realm of Hades and emptied out the compartment of those spirits of people who were regenerated in the Old Testament. Christ died and rose again to lead these people forth out of Hades in a great triumph, declaring that He had finally paid the penalty of judgment for their sins upon the cross (Ephesians 4:8). This action of Christ proves a marvelous point. The point is this. Jesus had destroyed the devil's power or authority over death when He died upon the cross in that the devil could no longer say, "These people deserve damnation." Why? Because Jesus had actually paid for their judgment and damnation and released or ransomed them as believing saints from their obligation to pay their sin debt of judgment (Matt. 10:28)!

In a similar fashion, Christ's death upon the cross does the same thing for every believer sinner today who trusts in Christ. Upon believing on Christ, our spirit is regenerated and we are given a release from the fear of death and the judgment that follows death. Satan no longer has the authority to condemn us. We are also released from our bondage to sin, which the devil had kept us under for so many years.

Hebrews 2:15 says:

"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Here are the results of the work of Christ upon the cross. As a result of Christ's death, believers have now been released from the fear of dying and its subsequent judgment that once ruled their heart in their unsaved state. They can now believe that Jesus paid the ransom price for their total release from eternal Hell. The cross of Christ brought an end to Satan's rightful claims for judgment based upon the premise that Christ had not died. Since Christ has now died upon the cross the redemption price has been paid in full and we are set free from judgment by the substitute of another! What redemption it is! In addition, believers have also been released from the power and slavery of sin that Satan kept them under, when he was their author of sin, death and damnation. The death of Christ upon the cross put an end to Satan's scheming plan to empower and enslave mankind in their sin and keep them under the awful authority of His will. Again I say, "What a redemption it is!"

"Redeemed how I live to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb,
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child, and forever, I am."

1 Corinthians 6:20 says:

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Through the cross of Christ, believers were bought or purchased out of the slave market of sin, where the devil had kept them under his authority and dominion for so many years. Through Christ, we have now been liberated from Satan's realm of death, judgment and bondage, which he had kept us in for so long. The purchasing price for our release from Satan's slave market of power and authority or this realm of death and bondage was the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19). The freedom we now have is the opportunity to serve Christ instead of Satan and our old nature.

Have you ever heard the unusual account of how the news of the Battle of Waterloo reached England? The word was carried first by sailing ship to the southern coast. From there it was to be relayed by signal flags to London. When the report was received at Winchester, the flags on the cathedral began to spell it out: "Wellington defeated...." Before the message could be completed, however, a heavy fog moved in. Gloom filled the hearts of the people as the fragmentary news spread throughout the surrounding countryside. "Wellington was defeated...." But when the mists began to lift, it became evident that the signals of Winchester Cathedral had really spelled out this triumphant message: "Wellington defeated the enemy!" So Christ has defeated our enemy upon the cross. Christ was not defeated upon the cross. The devil thought that he had won the victory. But when all the fog cleared, the devil realized that Jesus had won the victory. The message is very clear to read, "Christ defeated the enemy!"

The cross is the victorious redemption tree for the believer in Christ. The cross spelled defeat for the devil over the lives of believers, so that they can now live their life for the glory of God. The saving benefits of the cross of Christ broke Satan's rightful authority to demand judgment for our sins and also broke the chains of sin that the devil kept us shackled in when we were in our lost estate. Jesus broke the power of cancelled sin and set the prisoner free! Jesus spoke about this freedom from sin, which He had granted for every believer sinner through the cross.

John 8:36

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

1 Corinthians 7:22

"For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant (a slave in the Roman Empire), is the Lord's freeman (a free man in Christ – no longer a slave to sin): likewise also he that is called, being free (not a slave in the Roman Empire), is Christ's servant."

Our old landlord was Satan. Our new landlord that we must serve is Christ. We can be free from sin's power, bondage and shackles. We can be free from the awful state that the devil once kept us in. When the devil has a believer under his authority it's because he has not applied the victory of the cross to his life. There is a real freedom from sin's authoritative power that we can experience as we live near the cross. If we really want victory, we must choose to focus upon the cross where our victory was won. By

believing in our identification with Christ and His work of victory upon the cross, I can learn that God can keep me from sinning. Because of our union with Christ and our participation in all that Christ has accomplished for us on the cross, we can claim the same victory that Christ has claimed over Satan's kingdom. In light of His own death upon the cross, Jesus reminds us about the devil's judgment:

John 16:11

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

John 12:31 says:

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

These statements about the devil, who is the ruler of this evil system of darkness, actually remind us about Satan's stinging defeat at Calvary. There on the cross, Satan was judged. He was "cast out" or expelled, driven out of his place of dominion and authority over our lives. No longer can the devil demand damnation for God's own people, since the saving benefits of Christ's death have been applied to those who believe on His Son. No longer can the devil possess his authority over our personal lives as believers in Christ. We no longer must live under Satan's rule and authority whereby he keeps us under fear and sinful bondage. The reason is because Jesus judged the devil through His death upon the cross. What a victory it was!

When Jesus died upon the cross as God, he provided a deathblow to the devil. On the cross, Jesus triumphed over the devil and his demonic soldiers by disarming them of their power against the believer's life. Christ's death provided the victorious ground for believers to stand upon in the day of temptation. Christ's death upon the cross was the deathblow upon sin and the devil. Through His death believers are set free from the old unregenerate people that they used to be, when the devil kept them enslaved to their sin.

In his book, "Forever Triumphant," F. J. Huegel told a story that came out of World War II. After General Jonathan Wainwright was captured by the Japanese, he was held prisoner in a Manchurian concentration camp. Cruelly treated, he became "a broken, crushed, hopeless, starving man." Finally the Japanese surrendered and the war ended. A United States army colonel was sent to the camp to announce personally to the general that Japan had been defeated and that he was free and in command. After Wainwright heard the news, he returned to his quarters and was confronted by some guards who began to mistreat him as they had done in the past. Wainwright, however, with the news of the allied victory still fresh in his mind, declared with authority, "No, I am in command here! These are my orders." Huegel observed that from that moment on, General Wainwright was in control.

Huegel then made this application: "Have you been informed of the victory of our Savior in the greatest conflict of the ages? Then rise up to assert your rights. Never again go under when the enemy comes to oppress. Claim the victory in Jesus' name."

My friend, we must understand that through Christ's victory we can be in charge of our lives and not Satan. We can be victorious over the enemy of our soul. We do not have to submit to Satan's temptations and tactics to defeat our lives (James 4:7). Today we must believe by faith that Jesus Christ has defeated the devil's authority and power over our lives through His death upon the cross. What we must learn to do is claim what Christ has provided for us and not be brought back under the devil's enslavement. We can triumph in the victory that Christ has provided for us through the cross of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:14 says:

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."

You will notice that we can triumph only "in Christ." It is only through our identification with Christ in His work of victory over Satan that we can triumph today. We must once again put our position into practice through aggressive praying and simply believe what God has said did actually occur. We may never understand how it all could possibly take place, but God said that it did. We must believe it by faith and triumph in Christ today! Faith is the victory that overcomes the world!

Jesus said in John 16:33:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

1 John 2:13 says:

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father."

1 John 2:14

"I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

1 John 4:4 also says:

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them (satanic spirits working with false teachers): because greater is he that is in you, than he (Satan) that is in the world."

Jesus was the real victor! He overcame the devil and the entire world system that was against God, when He died upon the cross. Because of His glorious victory over the world system, John says that we have overcome the “wicked one.” This reference is to Satan, who also works in connection with his vast number of demonic cohorts. Together they push a wicked system (the world) that seeks to defeat our lives. We have been given complete victory and overcoming power for daily living through the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross and His resurrection life. The package is complete! Think of it. We have overcome! We do not have to work in order to overcome Satan. We have already overcome! The victory is ours in Christ. Now believe it, claim it and live it! We are not fighting for victory, we are fighting from victory!

1 John 3:8 adds:

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”

The Bible teaches here that Jesus died upon the cross in order to “destroy” (loosen, break up or undo) the works of the devil in our lives. These “works” were the devil’s sinful works that he kept us in bondage while we were in our unsaved state. They are works related to sin. Christ died upon the cross (“was manifested”) and provided us with victory in order to free us from the sinful works that the devil worked within our lives. The cross is the basis for our victory. The resurrection life of Christ then becomes the power for our victory (Romans 6:4-5).

Satan no longer has the power to produce these sinful works in our lives because of his defeat through the cross of Christ. Now we must claim the victory that Jesus won over the devil upon the cross. We must believe that Jesus triumphed over the devil for our benefit. Never forget, the death of Jesus Christ is the basis for our victory over the devil’s temptations. Therefore, we can claim this victory by applying it to our lives through aggressive praying. The resurrected Christ lives within us today so that we can pray to Him and claim the victory that Jesus has won over the devil in his death upon the cross. The cross is the sure defeat for the devil’s power over our lives today and seals the future defeat of the devil in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).

Because Christ defeated Satan upon the cross, you have been given the authority to overcome the world of Satan’s temptations and allurements. Through Christ and in Christ, you have already overcome the satanic strongholds of your old life. You have been provided the new freedom and release from the blindness, darkness and power of sin, as well as from Satan himself.

Colossians 1:13 says:

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

The Bible says that we have been delivered or rescued from the domain of all darkness or evil through Christ's blood sacrifice on the cross and our identification with Christ specifically. Our reception of His work into our lives at the time of salvation and our subsequent identification with Christ's work provides the basis for this new deliverance and victory over the dark side of life! I have been forever delivered from the dark side! I have come from the darkness to the light! I have been delivered from the dark domain of my past. How wonderful this is to realize today as a child of God.

This verse is talking about the believer's spiritual liberation by God from Satan's kingdom of sin and bondage, which is here contrasted to the realm of light or purity just mentioned in verse 12. Judas was under the power of darkness in his unsaved state and Jesus acknowledge this to him (Luke 22:53 – "this is your hour, and the power of darkness"). When we were lost, we were actually united to Satan's kingdom, which is a kingdom of sin, bondage, deception and wickedness. We were under the energizing power of the devil and blinded by his working in our life. Jesus compares this world of lost people to a palace that contains many valuable goods. And a strong man is guarding this palace.

Luke 11:21-23

"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

Jesus had just cast out a demon from within a man (14-20). The Pharisees claimed that Jesus was casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub ("lord of the house"). This was another name for Satan that Jesus used to provide an illustration for his next parable where Satan is seen to be lord over the lost of this world. The fact is that Jesus could not be doing his miracles in Satan's power or Satan would be working against Satan's own kingdom of darkness. So Jesus reminds them that He was stronger than Satan and that Satan was a defeated foe. This casting out of the demon proved that Jesus was stronger than Satan and his kingdom of darkness.

In this parable (21-23), Satan is pictured as the strong man, and his "goods" are lost men and women. The only way to release the "goods" is to conquer the strong man, and that is just what Jesus did on the cross ("But when a stronger man than he shall come upon him, and overcome him..."). Jesus came to earth to die upon the cross and in doing so invaded Satan's "palace" or domain of living and power. When He died, He broke Satan's power and captured his goods! The goods are the lost souls in Satan's palace of bondage and dungeon of doom. Each time a lost sinner is won to Christ, more of Satan's "spoils" are taken from him. These goods or spoils are the redeemed souls of lost mankind. When the saving benefits of the death of Christ upon the cross

are applied to believing sinners, Satan's power is forever released from their life. The point of the parable is this. Jesus is the stronger One and victorious One!

For many months after the close of World War II, Japanese troops were discovered hidden in the caves and jungles of the Pacific islands. Some of these stragglers were living like frightened savages; they didn't know the war was over. Once they understood that it was no longer necessary for them to fight, they surrendered.

Christians may rest in the truth that Satan is a defeated enemy. He may still win a few battles here and there, but he has already lost the war! The war is over! Jesus already won the war over Satan upon the cross. The strong man's power over us has been broken. We have been rescued from the palace of Satan! Satan is no longer Beelzebub or "lord of the house." We have been rescued from Satan's power and now must appropriate this to our own personal lives. There is no need to go back into the palace of Satan's bondage. By the way, this is why Satan should never be lord of your home or house as a Christian. As men we must stand up and claim the victory that Christ has won for us upon the cross. Satan no longer must rule in our homes and conquer our homes, which should be homes built around Christ. It takes a man claiming the victorious ground of the cross that keeps his home in order. Rise up oh men of God!

Ephesians 2:1-5 says:

"And you hath he quickened (made spiritually alive), who were dead (spiritually dead) in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past (unsaved life) ye walked according to the course of this world (world system under Satan's influence and power), according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh ("energizes") in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had (past tense) our conversation (manner of living) in times past (unsaved life) in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath (God's judgment), even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."

In a tremendous way, this passage also reminds us that we have been made spiritually alive (regeneration) or been given the new birth by being joined to the life of Christ. As a result of receiving this new life because of our spiritual and positional connection with Christ in Heaven, we have been delivered from the realm of spiritual death and the old place or position that we once had under Satan's realm of power. As a result of our spiritually life with Christ and connection with His victory over the devil, we have been delivered from the tyranny of the devil and the tremendous bondage that we had in our lost estate.

Two years after receiving Christ, Jean Zeiler was still shackled by her habit of chain-smoking. Repeated attempts to stop had failed miserably. Finally, she decided, as she said, "to lay my cigarettes at the foot of the cross." In a church service she told the people she was surrendering her all to Christ.

For three months Jean felt no serious craving to smoke. But then one beautiful July morning the test came. As she entered the kitchen, there on the table was a package of her husband's cigarettes. Instantly the most powerful craving consumed her. Jean recalls, "I stumbled toward the table. I knew I was going to smoke. I ached with the craving and began to whimper like a child. Then suddenly, I went to the floor on my knees and began praying, "O dear God, I can't take it. Do something!" Lady, her big black Labrador retriever, had come to her side, sensing that something was wrong. By now Jean was crying her heart out, hugging Lady. Then followed an unusual stillness. As Jean got to her feet, everything seemed the same. The cigarettes were still on the table. Then it hit her--the craving was gone! "Oh, thank you, Lord!" she exclaimed. That victory has lasted nearly 28 years. God may give victory by removing a desire once and for all. Or He may lead us through a long, hard-fought process. But if we surrender our weak will to Him, He who broke sin's power on the cross can break the chains of any habit.

Acts 26:18 speaks of God's victorious purpose of the cross:

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Through the cross, God has delivered the believer from the power and authority of Satan over our lives. Think of it! God has delivered us. He has delivered us from the blindness of our past when Satan kept us blind to our need for Christ. He has delivered us from Satan's domain of power over our lives, which kept us shackled to our sins. We are freed from Satan's palace and our past estate. We already have the victory in Christ. It's a victory that we can claim today in the time of temptation when Satan tries to lead us astray through the works of the flesh. We must remember about our freedom in Christ.

John says that the whole world of lost humanity lies in the lap of wickedness and ultimately the Evil One himself.

1 John 5:19

"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness (wicked one)."

The world of mankind under Satan's power and dominance is pictured as sitting in the lap of the devil following his advice and direction. However, blood purchased believers

have been forever delivered from the devil's bondage of sin, wickedness and deception. Colossians 1:13 says that we have been delivered or rescued from the powerful authority of Satan and no longer must yield to his sinful prompting and temptations in our lives ("Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness..."). What a freedom! What a release! What a bondage breaker! Now we can sing:

"Glory hallelujah Christ has set me free.
Glory hallelujah a new life now I see."

This wonderful liberation or deliverance can be illustrated by the experience of the children of Israel, as recorded in Exodus. They had been living in Egypt, groaning under the lashes of the taskmasters there. By a marvelous act of divine intervention, God delivered them out of that fearful bondage and led them through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

Exodus 12:17 says:

"And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever."

Deuteronomy 15:15

"And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day."

This deliverance and redemption typifies our own deliverance or freedom today from the bondage of the devil's world system. It portrays what Jesus did for us through His own death upon the cross and our identification with that death. Jesus delivered us from our own Egyptian bondage and rescued us from the power that the devil had over our lives. This is a positional reality for every child of God who is in Christ. They share in Christ's victory over the devil. For the Jews, it was a mass exodus or deliverance and a quick and decisive exodus.

The typology of Exodus 12:39 also says:

"And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual."

God has given all of us an "exodus" or deliverance from the darkness of sin and the devil's power. In fact, God thrust us out of the kingdom of Satan and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Happy day, happy day!

Colossians 1:13 once again says:

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

In God’s mind, we are already kingdom citizens, awaiting the arrival of His Son’s wonderful and victorious kingdom upon the earth. God has already glorified us and made us a citizen of His future royal kingdom (Romans 8:30). The idea of our victory in Christ from the power of sin and Satan ties in with the future reign of Christ, which is a kingdom of victory over the hostile forces of the world. We have victory today “in Christ” over the hostile forces of the world and can look ahead to the future victory when we will actually share “with Christ” in His glorious kingdom rule over Satan while his evil forces will be incarcerated in the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-2; Zech. 13:2). In other words, we can have victory today because of the anticipated victory we are already guaranteed in the future.

The sad story is that believers today can neglect their new position in Christ and be defeated and brought under the darkness again. They can become carnal and defeated in their Christian lives and be brought back under the darkness of the past. Satan wants to defeat our lives and bring us back under the darkness. Sadly, we can in some measure be swept back into the dark tunnel of the past. That is why we are told to victoriously “cast off the works of darkness” (Romans 13:12), no longer partake of the darkness (Eph. 5:7-8) and reprove or correct the darkness (Eph. 5:11) that so very easily can overtake our lives. Failure to do these things will lead us back into the darkness in some measure.

1 John 1:6 gives us the timely advice:

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.”

In other words, instead of putting this wonderful deliverance that Christ has provided for us into actual practice, believers can allow the darkness to overwhelm them again and even bring deception into their lives. This means that we must apply or appropriate all that we have “in Christ.” More than 100 times Paul talks about the believer as being “in Christ.” This means that because we are “in Christ” we already have or possess what Christ has provided for us upon the cross. Christ is the victor over Satan and his evil forces. We have already studied this. Since we are “in Christ,” we share in His victory and claim victory in our lives because of our identification with Christ.

Believers are personally identified with Christ’s victory that He won over the devil and demons on the cross. Therefore, we can cling to His victorious authority, which He has won upon the cross and His resurrection power, and claim our victorious ground, which we have in Christ. As believers we must take our stand and participate in Christ’s authority over Satan and evil spirits, which He has provided for us upon the cross. This participation in Christ’s victory can only be experienced daily in our lives as we place

our faith in Christ as our own personal conqueror over the devil and his demons. It is a daily matter that you must address. You must within your own heart truly believe (have faith) that Jesus already defeated the devil and his power over your life through His cross.

So where does the rubber meet the road? It's when we apply the victorious work of the cross to our lives. We must believe the accomplished facts and rest in what Christ has already done for us. Applying or appropriating the cross to our lives as believers is not a once and done deal in your life. Nor is it a once a week or even once a day matter. It should be a moment by moment daily process as temptation invades our mind and heart. If you must pray to God ten times a day in order to stay in fellowship with Him and resist temptation, then do it. When temptation arises, we must flee to the place of victory under the shadow of the cross and claim Christ's victory. However, we can only do this as we depend upon the living Christ who rose again and lives within us in His resurrection power. The resurrection of Christ is the only way to have His victorious work upon the cross applied to your life and working within your daily life. There could be no applied victory if Christ were still dead. Therefore, we serve a risen Savior who lives within us to apply the triumphant victory of His cross to our lives.

Romans 6:8 says:

“Now if we be dead with Christ (our identification in His death), we believe that we shall also live with him (our identification in His resurrection).”

Yes, He lives within our life providing us with His new life and victorious accomplishment upon the cross. We live with Christ in a union of victory and untold blessing. The cross of Christ is the ground and authority for our victory. Christ's resurrection is the canceled check or proof that He has defeated Satan upon the cross and has won the victory. His resurrection also provides us with Christ's daily resurrection power to overcome the Evil One. We are tied to a living Christ. The living Christ has won the victory over the devil upon the cross. Therefore, since He lives within us we can claim His victorious authority over the devil, which He obtained through the cross and rely upon Him for daily power to overcome the devil.

“He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way.
He live, He lives, salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives?
He live, within my heart!”

Victory is sure! The Conqueror lives within me! I have His risen power within to assist me in all of my battles with sin. Actually, Christ has already won the battle. What we must do is defeat Satan by prayer and quoting Scriptural truth and certainties in order

to claim the victory. The battle is ours! We are winners in Christ! We are on the victory side!

“On the victory side, On the victory side!
No fear can haunt me On the victory side;
On the victory side, On the victory side!
With Christ within, The fight we’ll win,
On the victory side.”

Now, we must use this shield of faith as a way to practically overcome the devil when he shoots the fiery arrows of temptation our way.

Ephesians 6:16 says:

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

We can do this in a very practical way by quoting verses that deal with Satan’s defeat through the cross of Christ (John 16:11; 16:33; 1 John 3:8; Col. 2:15). This will help you to apply real victorious and overcoming faith to your times of temptation. It will help you to extinguish those burning “fiery darts” or temptations that Satan shoots your way. Satan has no rights over our lives any longer. Satan does not want to admit it, but he knows it’s true. The question is this. Do we know it’s true? Christ has dethroned the power of Satan from our lives and has cut the ground from underneath him. Satan has no ground to stand upon. We stand on the ground of Christ’s victory which He obtained for us upon the cross.

We are reminded once again what Jesus said in John 16:33:

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

Jesus Christ has defeated the world system that is headed up by Satan and his demonic emissaries. Because Christ has defeated the world system that was against us through His death on the cross, we also can overcome the evil lusts of the world system and the spiritual forces that oppose God in this world. How do we do it? We overcome in Christ. We apply Christ’s victory upon the cross to our daily lives and claim with authority what He has already won for us. This is done through daily aggressive praying and application of the victorious promises of the Bible to our lives, which is called the “Sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17).

John Dorsey describes the devil's tactics in the following poetic words:

"I had a battle fierce today
Within my place of prayer;
I went to meet and talk with God,
But I found Satan there.

He whispered, 'You can't really pray,
You lost out long ago;
You might say words while on your knees,
But you can't pray, you know.'
So then I pulled my helmet down,
Way down upon my ears,
And found it helped to still his voice
And helped allay my fears.
I checked my other armor o'er;
My feet in peace were shod;
My loins with truth were girded 'round;
My sword the Word of God.
My righteous breastplate still was on,
My heart's love to protect.
My shield of faith was all intact--
His fiery darts bounced back.
I called on God in Jesus' name,
I pled the precious blood--
While Satan sneaked away in shame,
I met and talked with God!"

We must remember that the blood of the cross of Christ is the basis for our victory. The blood that Jesus shed upon the cross is the ground of our victory.

Revelation 12:11 says:

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

Spiritual victory over the devil's accusations, temptations and harassment is only promised to each one of us through the blood of Christ! Christ's blood is an important matter to address in the “evil day” or time of the devil's temptation. These people in Revelation 12:11 were seen to have spiritual victory over the devil's accusations (12:10) through the blood of Jesus Christ. It was the blood of Jesus, which forgave them of all their sins and gave them acceptance before God in Heaven. The blood of Jesus is the way that these Jewish believers will overcome Satan in the future tribulation period. They will cling to the victorious message of the blood of Christ that has washed their sins away and granted them victory over the devil's authority over death and bondage to sin.

All the accusations that the devil tossed up to God could not bring these people down before God's throne. Why? It's because the blood of Jesus gave these people judicial acceptance before God. The blood of Jesus Christ had taken them out of the domain of the devil's authority to condemn them as lost sinners. The blood of Jesus Christ had

assured them of their acceptance before the holy God of Heaven. This is why they could be martyred and stand in the presence of God. Furthermore, their actual “word of testimony” to the fact of their eternal forgiveness before God gave them this spiritual victory. They gave testimony to the fact that Satan’s rule of authority to condemn before God’s presence had been broken over their lives. These people could claim their victory over the devil and his accusations against them even in the time of their death. They looked to the blood of Jesus as the victorious ground of forgiveness, which they could plead before God as they were martyred and passed into the next life.

In a similar fashion, you can use such a verse as this to counteract Satan’s assaults and temptations against your own life today. You can overcome Satan through the blood of Jesus, which has defeated Satan upon the cross and provided you with victory over his accusations, power and influence. Likewise, you can give your own “word of testimony” that Satan’s rule and power over you has been demolished or broken through the blood of Jesus Christ (Col. 2:15).

The blood of Jesus sets us free! The blood of Jesus is a liberating truth that Satan despises. The blood of Jesus is the answer for victory. It is only through the shattering deathblow of judgment that Christ has given to Satan through the shedding of His blood upon the cross that we have any ground for victory. The blood of God’s Son still prevails!

“I heard an old, old story, how a Savior came from glory,
How He gave His life on Calvary to save a wretch like me;
I heard about His groaning, of His precious blood atoning,
Then I repented of my sins and won the victory,
Oh victory in Jesus, my Savior forever!
He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood;
He loved ere I knew Him, and all my love is due Him.
He plunged me to victory, beneath the cleansing flood.”

My advice to you today is this. Get out of Egypt! What are you doing back under the bondage of the world? The blood of Jesus Christ has provided the way of freedom from the devil’s bondage. Freedom is ours for the taking. Take it and claim it though the shed blood of Christ. Apply this victory of the shed blood of Jesus Christ upon the cross to your life today and right now.

This involves a practical presentation of truth before the devil in the time of temptation. As you pray, pray to God and not to the devil! Where in the entire Bible do you see people praying to the devil or speaking to the devil? Other than God Himself, no person addressed the devil in such a way as to rebuke him (Zechariah 3:2; Matt. 16:33). The Bible does not inform us to pray to the devil. As you pray to God the devil will know that he is losing ground. You must pray to God and claim your ground of victory and authority over the devil through the cross of Christ.

We must also remember that we cannot rebuke Satan. It is a dangerous allusion in your Christian life to believe that you can rebuke Satan and kick him around like a plastic ball. Even the great and mighty archangel Michael could not rebuke Satan (Jude vs.9). He only could send the direct message that the Lord had given to Him as an angel of God, in order to be able to rebuke Satan. None of us have been given the power or right to rebuke Satan. Only the Son of God could do this as He dealt with Satan because He was more powerful than Satan. We cannot rebuke the devil but we can press the claims of the cross in the time of temptation and overcome the temptations, which the devil brings our way.

This is why we can glory in the cross today as believers. It's because Christ became our substitute upon the cross and victorious conqueror on the cross. He has defeated sin, Satan and spiritual death for the believer through His finished work upon the cross. This is why we must glory in the cross today. The cross of Christ is to be at the center of our lives. We must once again allow the cross to become the focal point of our daily living. The cross is the only means of our salvation and acceptance before God. The cross is the ground for our daily victory over the devil.

I want to repeat what A.J. Gossip said:

“Get the people in the sight of Calvary. Pause there... hushed and reverent; enable them to look, to see it, make it real to them, not just an old tale that has lost its wonder and its stab, but a tremendous awful fact.”