

The Gospel of Salvation

Evangelistic Addresses

by Hyman Appelman

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THE LAMB OF GOD

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

WHAT did John see when he said, "**Behold the Lamb of God?**" Was he saying more than he himself actually knew? Did GOD unveil the years that were to pass and show him this man, JESUS, his own cousin, dying on the Cross for the sins of a world? Was there some peculiarity in the person of the Nazarene visit, or, seen only by John alone, that proclaimed Him the son of David, the promised MESSIAH? Did the HOLY SPIRIT reward the forerunner for his magnificent faithfulness by giving him the spiritual insight thus expressed? Be that as it may, no such problems confront us. We are living this side of the Cross, this side of the empty tomb. There is not a question in any of our minds but that John told the entire truth when he said to Jesus, "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**"

This is undoubtedly one of the key verses, if not the very key verse, to the entire Bible. Its implications, import, imagery, revelation, inspiration, cover the entire plan of redemption, leaving nothing hidden, nothing unsaid. Its importance cannot be exaggerated. The entire system of Christianity stands or falls by the truth of this tremendous assertion. There is enough in it, if believed, if accepted, if trusted, to take any soul out of sin into salvation, out of death into life, out of hell into Heaven. There is enough in it, if rejected, if refused, if neglected, to damn, to doom, to condemn eternally every unbelieving soul.

Considering, therefore, the worth, the weight, the value, the essentiality of this revealed truth, may we regard it, may we meditate upon it, may we discuss it from these three simple angles. First, there is the sin of the world. Second, we have the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Third, here is found the invitation of God couched in the word, "**Behold,**" that is, "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**"

John called and covered everyone of us when he spoke of the sin of the world. The Bible is specific upon that point. Experience verifies that truth. Observation corroborates it. The sin of the world is a universal matter. "**There is no man that sinneth not,**" is as true, as terribly, bitterly, tragically true to-day as it was at the time when Solomon pleaded it with God. Sin is still the eternal problem of God and of man. It is the fertile root from which spring all the troubles

that human flesh is heir to. Solve the problem of sin, and wars will vanish, class inequality will disappear, poverty will be banished, race barriers will be dissipated as the sun dissipates the morning mists. Solve the problem of sin, and sorrow, suffering, sickness, strife will be the forgotten difficulties of a hazy past. Solve the problem of sin, and you can scrap the navies, discharge the armies, spike the cannons, melt the battleships, commercialize the bombers, close the penitentiaries, vacate the hospitals, empty the cemeteries. Sin, sin, sin is the miasmatic ground from which sprout the noxious, bitter, poisonous weeds that have choked up the fair Edens that God and men would fain have built.

Sin is a disease. It is the fever of the mind, befogging, bedimming, deluding, thwarting, corrupting, warping, twisting man's clean intellect into a breeding place of evil fancies and wicked imaginings. It is the tuberculosis of the heart, undermining, debilitating, weakening the appetites, the emotions, the affections, sickening them with every vile vapour of miasmatic transgression. It is the cancer of the soul, an extraneous growth that stifles its beauty, sickens its spirituality, choke its divinity, destroys its vitality.

Sin is the worst disease we know anything about. It is the only universal illness. There are many who never have had, and who never will have pneumonia, meningitis, paralysis, or any of the other murderous, death-dealing, tragic afflictions that have become so fearfully prevalent. But there is not one soul to the ends of the earth who will not have to contend with the ravages of sin, with the havoc of iniquity. God help us, there is not one of us who will not be contaminated, affected, afflicted, abused by the encroachments of Satanic blandishments and temptations. There is not a soul among us whose record will not need the blood of JESUS to cleanse it from the stains, the stigmas, the spots of overt disobedience of the will and the word of God.

Sin is the only inescapable disease. Take care of yourself properly, eat the proper food, take the proper amount of rest, enjoy liberally God's fresh air, observe sanitary and clothing regulations, and you need never suffer from any of the really troublesome sicknesses. But where will you escape from sin? You will find it in the king's throne room and in the murderer's cell, in the Queen's boudoir and in the harlot's den, in the philosopher's study and in the peasant's cot. You will meet it on the sea and on the land, on the ground and in the air. Wherever men foregather, wherever human hearts beat, wherever human minds think, wherever there are lives lived, there you will find the snares and traps of Satan.

Sin is an absolutely mortal disease. It is altogether incurable. There is not anything man can do, and, outside of CHRIST, there is not anything GOD can do, to heal the fever, the tuberculosis, the cancer of sin. It kills, hopelessly, inevitably, eternally. That is the worst thing about it. All other diseases reap their harvest of pain and destruction only in this life. Sin reaches beyond this life. All other diseases end with the grave. Sin goes beyond the grave. The bitter tale of every other affliction finishes at the coffin. Sin's but begins anew there, and, oh, what a dread beginning!

Sin is not only a disease. It is also a crime. Sin is a crime against GOD. It takes the bounties, the blessings, the benefits, the benedictions GOD has bestowed upon the sinner and uses them for self, for Satan, for sin. GOD has no profit from the life, from the activities of the sinner. If life, if health, if home, if loved ones, if job, if a free country are the gifts of a bountiful GOD, then the sinner is culpably, palpably guilty when he gives GOD no return for all of these treasures. There must be a day of reckoning, a day of accounting, a day of evening up.

Sin is a crime against the sinner himself. It is physical, mental, moral, financial, spiritual suicide. It robs the sinner of wealth, of health, of peace, of prosperity, of character, of influence, of loved ones, many times of home and hope. It bars the sinner from the mansions of glory, and opens the lurid gates of hell as its penalty. Oh, if only we would all see this; if only the world could be brought to see the awful folly of sin, the fearful power of it, the eternal penalty it entails! Of what use are pleasures, gains, property, position, when they must be dropped at the grave, when they must be paid for by an endless torment, a perpetual banishment from the presence of GOD. Oh, sinner, do you not see the frightful injustice of your unbelief, of your continuance in sin, if only to yourself, to your hopes, to your prospects?

Sin is a crime against the sinner's loved ones, friends, schoolmates, business associates, everyone whom the sinner touches. Sin is contagious and infectious. It spreads. It grows. It leaps. It bounds. It passes from heart to heart, from mind to mind, from life to life. The sinner's influence points either to GOD or to Satan, to righteousness or to iniquity, to Heaven or to hell. "**None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself,**" is an eternal truth. The most fearful thing about sin is not so much that the sinner gets punished for it, but that others, too heartbreakingly many others, are involved in the tragedy, in the penalty, in the bitter harvesting. Oh, sinner, for the sake of a merciful GOD, for your own welfare's sake, for the sake of all whom you ought to consider, whom you ought to regard, whom you claim to love, avail yourself to-day of the mercy of GOD. Break with the entail of sin.

But, thank GOD, I can take you with me into the next word of the text, the next truth. JESUS is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. GOD promised Him. GOD provided Him. To-day GOD proffers Him. He is the Saviour of men, of all men. His power is abundantly and superabundantly sufficient to rid you of the bitter weight that now hangs about you. His blood is ample for the cleansing away of every sin of your soul and of your record.

This Lamb of GOD takes away the sin of the world by bearing its penalty. Scripture is very definite on that. "**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.**" "**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.**" "**For he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.**" "**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**" "**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 we were healed.**"

This is the authoritative declaration of God's word, simple, clear, definite, easily understandable, unmistakable. CHRIST bore our sins, endured our punishment, suffered our penalty, provided for our redemption. GOD is just and the justifier of him which believeth in JESUS. You need have no fear, you need have no worry, you need have no concern; the price has been paid. Redemption has been obtained and is available to all of us. Not one jot, not one tittle, not one feather's weight of anything need you add to this glorious consummation.

"Hallelujah! 'Tis done!

I believe on the Son.
I am saved by the blood
Of the crucified One."

That is as true as GOD, as true as the Bible, as true as the Cross, as true as eternity. Come and take it. You are more than welcome.

But that is not all. More is needed. If GOD would take us to Himself out of life into glory the minute we were saved, this redemption would be all that was necessary. But there is a life to live. There are temptations to face. There are sins to overcome. There is Satan to resist. We need help, strength, courage, power. Therefore, secondly, the Lamb of GOD takes away the sin of the world by overcoming its power by His intercessory prayers at the Throne of Grace and by the indwelling presence of His HOLY SPIRIT. How inspiring it is to know that the Son of GOD walks with us, talks with us, abides with us, strengthens us, sustains us, supports us, supplies our needs, surrounds us with the hosts of Heaven as with an army with conquering banners, to banish fear, to dispel doubt, to destroy discouragement, to overcome evil, to resist Satan.

Again, the Word of GOD speaks its message to our souls. **"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."** **"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, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."** Thank GOD for this. We are not left to our own devices, to our own strength, to resist sin in our own power. Being born of GOD, the Lord Himself is responsible for us. By day and by night, at home and abroad, GOD is there, ready, eager, willing, anxious, able to lift us out of the muck and miry clay, to give us the wisdom, the will, the courage, the confidence to go on living glorious Christian lives of beauty, of holiness, of usefulness. He will never leave us nor forsake us. He has paid too great a price for our redemption. We are too precious in His sight. He rejoices in our victories and mourns over our defeats. The treasure houses of eternity are open and available to our humble supplications and requests. Yes, this JESUS, the Lamb of GOD, takes away the sin of the world by overcoming its power.

We so often misquote Scripture by erroneous part statements that sound like truths. For instance, we say, **"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,"** and leave it there. As a matter of fact, this is only half true, and so it is almost worse than a lie. The statement should be made, **"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."** That makes a great deal of difference, the difference between man's puny efforts and GOD's mighty power. That is what Paul meant when he said, **"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."** This is all part of the Lamb's work, part of His purpose and program for the children of men. You need fear no dark future. You need have no doubt of the tomorrows. The same CHRIST who loved you and died for you will, now that He has all authority in Heaven and on earth, bless you and keep you.

But even that is not all, even that does not finish the tale of redemption. There is one more great, gracious, glorious victory involved. The Lamb of GOD takes away the sin of the world, thirdly, by removing us from its presence, and some joyous, victorious day by removing its very presence from the world. Oh, my brethren, my sisters, how many, how very many, tears of

gratitude and joy has this poor sinner shed over that marvellous picture in the seventh chapter of the book of Revelation:

"After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb . . . And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, . . . These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Thank GOD for all that. Thank GOD for the mighty triumph of the Lamb which we are privileged to share. Thank GOD for the cleansing power of His precious blood. Thank GOD for His great love and mercy. Thank GOD for the resurrection and the heavenly home. **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."**

There you have it, the whole matchless, superlative story. The Lamb of GOD takes away the sin of the world by bearing its penalty in His own precious body, by overcoming its dangerous, persistent, insistent, degrading power, by removing us from its corroding, corrupting, contaminating presence. What more need we have? The past is taken care of by the shed blood. The present is provided for by the interceding CHRIST and the indwelling SPIRIT. The future is as certain, as bright, as eternal as the promises of GOD.

To-day GOD comes to us with His passionate appeal. Pointing to His only begotten Son, in all the beauty of His holiness, in all of the sacrificial attraction of His mighty, blood-proved devotion, GOD cries, **"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."** But what does GOD want us to do? What does He really mean by the invitation, **"Behold."** Three things, beloved, three things are on the heart and in the mind of GOD, expressed in the simple direction, to **"behold."**

First, the Lord wants us to behold the Lamb and love Him. Oh, is He not worthy of our love, He, the fairest of ten thousand, the lily of the valley, the Rose of Sharon, the bright and Morning Star? How can you keep from loving Him who is so lovely, so loving, so lovable? Can you find aught in Him that is not attractive, that is not inviting, that is not appealing, that is not inspiring? He will be your dearest friend. He will never shame you, impose upon you, dishonor the trust and the confidence you may put in Him. At home and abroad, under any and all conditions and circumstances, you may proudly, grandly, unhesitatingly introduce Him as one whom you know and love. You may bring Him out of the secret chambers of your souls to the high and to the low, to king and to beggar, to philosopher and to peasant. But do you love Him?

Some one told of the first encounter, the first meeting of great Gipsy Smith and the equally great Will Rogers. It was in some European salon, at a public gathering. They were introduced to each other by a mutual friend, and stepped away from the crowd for a bit of conversation. Will Rogers, in his own inimitable way, started to tell the matchless preacher one of his funny stories. Gipsy listened carefully and laughed heartily. Then he looked Will squarely in the face. "Will," he said, "do you love my Lord?" Will started to answer with another joking remark. Gipsy stopped him this time. "Will," he said again, "do you love my Saviour?" Once more Rogers tried to pass the question off with some aside. The evangelist put both his hands on the comedian's shoulders and spoke again. "Will, do you love my JESUS?" With tears running down his cheeks, the superb American, pressing the questioner to his own breast, replied, "Yes, Gipsy, I do love your JESUS. He is my Saviour too." Thank GOD for that also. Thank GOD that Will Rogers is in Heaven with JESUS instead of in hell with Satan.

Friends, that is what I should like to do with you to-day. I should like to come to you, to face you with the question, "Do you love my JESUS?"; to keep on asking it until out of the very depths of your heart you are able to say, and do say, "Yes, preacher, I do love your JESUS. He is my Saviour too."

Second, GOD wants us to behold the Lamb and trust Him; trust Him with our past, with our present, with our future; trust Him with our hearts, with our minds, with our souls, with our lives; trust Him with our sins, trust Him with our needs. He is trustworthy. He has never broken any promise He has spoken. He has never failed in a single case. His power is from the uttermost to the uttermost. His love and willing compassion are from everlasting to everlasting. GOD has put all authority in Heaven and on earth into His capable hands. He has been exercising, He does exercise, He will continue to exercise that mighty suzerainty for our salvation and eternal good. For nineteen hundred years the children of men have fled to Him for refuge and rest. From the ends of the earth, black and white, Jew and Gentile, men, women, and children, with all sorts of burdens, under all kinds of circumstances, driven and harried by all manner of needs, weary, burdened, tried, tormented, have found in Him the Great Physician, have received at His hands the balm of Gilead, the cure-all for their many illnesses. To you this day He offers the healing of your souls, the strengthening of your hearts, the inspiring of your minds. Will you trust Him? Will you humbly, penitently, yet boldly, eagerly, come to this Fountain and quaff deeply, freely of the waters of life? Will you behold Him and trust Him?

Third, GOD wants us to behold the Lamb and serve Him. This is where so dreadfully many of us fail. We are willing, at least we say we are willing, to love Him. Why not? There is no cleaner character, no truer friend, no nobler object of love. We are willing to trust Him, at least we say we are willing. But to serve Him, to give our lives to His obedience, to surrender our all, to deny self, to be crucified with Him; to lay down hope, home, ambition, aspiration, friends, loved ones, business, career, money, pleasures, position, popularity, property at His feet, even though He did stretch out His entirety on the Cross for us, ah, that is different.

There are so many who fall so fearfully short of this requirement, of this challenge. Yet this is the ultimate essential, the very essence of our religion. To stop anywhere short of that, is never to have assurance, never to have joy, never to have confidence, never to grow in SPIRIT, in grace, in power. He is entitled to our service. He served us faithfully and well. He purchased our loyalty by His own agony, by His own heart's blood. He rewards every least effort, every least energy,

every least second, we expend in His service, in a thousand and one ways. He is the best paymaster in all the world. Here and hereafter, His servants will draw the wages of their labors with untold interest. His service affords the truest pleasures, the most joyous satisfaction, the greatest usefulness. There are no regrets in it, no bemoaning of time, of talent, of money ill invested. When we reach to the end of the way; when we come to the end of the day, the bright shining treasures of eternity, the smiling, lovely face, the welcome words of approbation of Him whom we loved and served will more than repay for all the burdens we have ever borne, for all the trials we have ever endured, for all the sacrifices we have ever made. Beloved, there is nothing you can do with your lives that will satisfy you more than to invest them in the employ of this Master of men.

So, humbly, yet faithfully, I come to you in the name of the Lord. I lift the CHRIST of GOD before you. I point you to the streaming wounds, to the passion marks on His hands, His feet, His forehead, His side, and bid you, "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**" With all the emotion, all the anxiety, all the concern of my soul, with all the longing, all the desire, all the compassion of my heart, I plead with you, close with this JESUS, with this Lamb, now. Behold Him and love Him! Behold Him and trust Him! Behold Him and serve Him!

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