

“AS THE SMALL RAIN”

by

Bob Jones. Jr., Litt.D., L.H.D., LL.D.

Copyright @ 1945

CHAPTER THREE

“I AM THE DOOR”

(John 10:9)

ONLY ONE DOOR

“**I AM the door**,” said Jesus (John, 10:7). He was not talking about the door of a beautiful palace. He was not speaking of the great doors of the Temple in Jerusalem. He had no lofty portals in mind. “***I am the door of the sheep-fold***,” He said. How amazing is the humility and condescension of the Lord, that He who is the God of glory should describe Himself in such humble, simple terms! He was talking to men who knew the habits and customs of sheep and shepherds. The sheep entered the fold at night for safety and protection from wild beasts. He was describing Himself, therefore, as the door to safety and security.

He is the means of entrance into the safety of eternal life. He is the only way by which men may enter. Some are trying to go in through good works. By their own efforts they are trying to climb a wall too high for them to top. Some try to enter through the practice of the Golden Rule, some by way of church membership, but Christ says, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me**” (John 14:6).

There are no armed guards to keep poor ordinary folk out. There are no alms boxes fastened to the portal. No fine clothes are necessary. No cards of admission are demanded. Christ has described Himself as a door so humble that no man need feel too poor and vile to pass through. It is a low door, so low that a man cannot go through with his head held high. The stiff neck must bow if he would pass through this door.

We enter into salvation through Christ. We do not merit it. We cannot deserve it. We simply step through the Door by faith. There are not a half-dozen ways out of sin into eternal life. There is only one Way.

Christ is not a door. He is the Door—the Door by which any man may enter in.

Thou art the Way: to Thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek
Must seek Him, Lord, by Thee.

Thou art the Truth: Thy Word alone
True wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst inform the mind,
And purify the heart

Thou art the Life: the rending tomb
Proclaims Thy conquering arm;
And those who put their trust in Thee
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life;
Grant us that way to know,
That truth to keep, that life to win,
Whose joys eternal flow.

—George W. Doane

FOUR DIMENSIONS

GOD’S love is four-dimensional. It extends through time and space. Paul speaks of the length and the breadth and the depth and the height of the love of God as that which passeth knowledge (Ephesians 3:18, 19). It is so wonderful, so profound, so remarkable that the human mind cannot comprehend it, understand it, or analyze it.

God’s love is long. It is as long as eternity. From before the foundation of the world God loved man yet uncreated. In the mind of God a plan was made for man’s redemption. We are told that Jesus Christ was as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). God’s love is eternal, unfailing. Whom He loves He loves unto the end.

It is a broad love. It is broad enough to include all men of every age and race and condition. God’s love embraces the most unattractive and the most unlovely. It is a love as broad as “**whosoever**,” for God’s love sent His Son “**that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life**” (John 3:16), and the invitation is: whosoever will, let him come (Revelation 22:17).

God’s love is deep—deep enough to reach down into the depths of man’s need and man’s depravity. It is extended down to the poor sinner who needs forgiveness and salvation from sin.

God’s love is high—higher than the thoughts of man can soar, higher than the dreams of man can reach, high enough to raise a man to sonship with God. “**Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,**” John cries (I John 3:1).

It is a love so high that it can raise a sinner to eternal fellowship with the Most High God. It is as high as heaven itself, for it puts redeemed sinners on golden streets.

No wonder that it passeth knowledge—this love that manifests itself so perfectly in Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us! Any man who could understand the love of God could understand God, for God is love (I John 4:16).

O love of God, how strong and true,
Eternal, and yet ever new;
Uncomprehended and unbought,
Beyond all knowledge and all thought.

O heavenly love, how precious still,
In days of weariness and ill,
In nights of pain and helplessness,
To hear, to comfort, and to bless!

O wide-embracing, wondrous love,
We read thee in the sky above;
We read thee in the earth below,
In seas that swell, and streams that flow.

We read thee best in Him who came
To bear for us the cross of shame,
Sent by the Father from on high,
Our life to live, our death to die.

O love of God, our shield and stay
Through all the perils of our way;
Eternal love, in Thee we rest,
Forever safe, forever blest.

—Horatius Bonar

WORDS! WORDS! WORDS!

IT WAS Spurgeon who said, “That which lies in the well of your thought will come up in the bucket of your speech.”

The Bible states the same truth more simply: “**Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh**” (Matthew 12: 34). A man shows what he is by what he says. It was said of Jesus Christ, “**Never man spake like this man**” (John 7:46). That He was the sinless Son of God was proved by His words. Never an inaccurate or false word fell from His lips. He spoke with the voice of divine authority and the power of His words proved the power of the Speaker. The word of the Lord of life brought forth a dead man from the tomb. The word of the omnipotent God of the universe silenced the tempest and calmed the sea. The word of the sinless Son of God cast out demons from the bodies of men and His word defeated Satan who sought to tempt Him in the wilderness.

His word revealed a measure of values beyond the conception of the mind of sinful man. These were the standards He set: that greatness abounds in service; that man's chief concern should not be in the accumulation of things; that outward appearance is not so important as the inward heart.

The most brilliant word of the greatest philosophers of the generations, the highest truths uttered by the founders of the religious systems of the world dim when compared with the glorious light of His utterances.

Others suggest paths of ethical conduct and try to point out a way of life. Only God's Son says, **"I am the way."**

Others are seekers after the truth and professed teachers of it. Only Jesus Christ says, **"I am the truth."**

Others offer suggestions as to how to secure the most from life. Only Jesus Christ says, **"I am the life."**

Others with phrases of their philosophy attempt to enlighten the minds of men. Only Jesus Christ says, **"I am the light of the world."**

Wisdom of God, we would by Thee be taught;
Control our minds, direct our ev'ry thought;
Knowledge alone life's problems cannot meet;
We learn to live while sitting at Thy feet.

Light of the world, illumine us we pray;
Our souls are dark without Thy kindling ray,
Torches unlighted, of all rad'ance bare.
Touch them to flame, and burn in glory there!

Incarnate Truth, help us Thy truth to learn,
Prone to embrace the falsehood we would spurn,
Groping in error's maze for verity;
Thou art the Truth we need to make us free.

Unfailing love, we are so cold in heart,
To us Thy passion for the lost impart;
Give us Thy vision of the need of men;
All learning will be used in service then.

— Bob Jones, Jr.

THE MAGNETISM OF THE CROSS

MANY years ago in England a man named Dodd wrote a commentary on the Bible.

He was later convicted of a crime and sentenced to execution. After he had been hanged, the publishers realized that they could not sell a commentary under his name, and so they asked another learned gentleman, Dr. Coke, to sponsor the work, and it was published with his name prominently displayed on the flyleaf.

It is natural that a man who was hanged should leave behind him such an unsavory reputation that the people would not be attracted to his commentary on the Bible.

But what the gallows is in our modern day, such was the cross in the time of Christ. It was looked upon as we look upon the gibbet, not merely as an instrument of death, but as a sign of ignominy and disgrace. Crucifixion was the form of death reserved very largely for criminal slaves. To be sentenced to death upon the cross was to be marked with the stigma of crime and disgrace.

But note the wonders of God's supernatural grace and power! That very form of death which in the natural course of events would cause men to turn away in disgust or remember with repugnance the victim, is, in the case of the Lord Jesus, the very thing which attracts men to Him. He has forever glorified the instrument which would have debased another. Because He suffered on the cross, millions reverence the cross. It is lifted on church steeples, worn as ornaments.

Because He was lifted up upon the cross, men and women are attracted to Him. On the cross He revealed the fullest measure of God's love for sinners. In the humiliation of His death He showed Himself most royal. In His suffering, naked, bleeding, and physically repulsive, He appears most divinely attractive.

It is through the preaching of the Gospel of His atoning death that sinners find forgiveness and men are drawn to Him, who said, "**I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me**" (John 12:32).

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.

When the woes of life o'er take me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming
Adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there, that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

—John Bowring

“IT IS FINISHED”

“**IT IS finished**” (John 19:30). Thus Christ hanging on the cross cried with a loud voice before He gave up the ghost. The agony of the crucifixion was over—the awful suffering first under the heat of the sun, and then in the darkness which God drew like a curtain about Calvary. He had hung there, racked with pain. He had been mocked and insulted. Now the time of release was come. Into His Father’s hands He commended His spirit and died (Luke 23:46).

But more was finished than the physical suffering. Redemption’s work was done. He had finished paying the penalty of sin. He had finished the task which would make sinful man acceptable to a sinless God. He had completed the work of salvation. There was nothing more which could be done.

He had suffered, the Just for the unjust.

Some men do not realize how completely it was finished. There are those who still try to work out salvation for themselves. They are trying to make themselves acceptable unto God by good deeds. When they sin, they seek to counterbalance that by an act of righteousness, hoping that God will take account of the good and overlook the bad. They labor fruitlessly, seeking to accomplish that which cannot be done “**for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified**” (Galatians 2:16). They seek to do what has already been done — the work of salvation. Christ on the cross finished that work.

Our salvation depends not upon what we do but upon what He has done. When we accept Him as our Saviour, when we by faith identify ourselves with Him, we are saved, for He “**bare our sins in his own body on the tree**” (I Peter 2:24). They were atoned for when He died. We are forever free from their guilt. Nothing remains to be done about them. He took care of every sin when He died. Forever and eternally “**it is finished**”!

Cross of Jesus, cross of sorrow,
Where the blood of Christ was shed,
Perfect man on thee did suffer,
Perfect God on thee has bled!

Here the King of all the ages,
Thron’d in light ere world could be,
Robed in mortal flesh is dying,
Crucified by sin for me.

O mysterious condescending!
O abandonment sublime!
Very God Himself is bearing
All the suffering of time!

Evermore for human failure
By His passion we can plead;
God has borne all mortal anguish,
Surely He will know our need.

— James S. Simpson

FREEDOM FOREVER

POSSIBLY none of the words of Christ are more often quoted than these: “**And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free**” (John 8:32). They lend their beauty to many a political speech and many an educational lecture. They gleam like brilliant gems amid the rubbish of many a sterile sermon. They are engraved on the walls of university libraries and carved over the doors of college chapels.

In one sense there is freedom in all truth. However, truth is arrived at in two different ways. Some truth comes by discovery; some truth by revelation. The scientist in his laboratory, by experiment and research, may discover truths in the realm of science. The biologist, the botanist, or the chemist may discover truths of natural law and use these truths to free man from the scourge of disease. The archaeologist may uncover truths from buried civilization and free men from false ideas about nations long since vanished. By the trial and error method many may attain to truth, and truth brings freedom from error.

Spiritual truth, however, comes by revelation from God Himself. God, who in Himself is the embodiment of all truth, reveals Himself to man in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son. The truth of man’s lost condition, the truth of the life hereafter, the truth of the Person and love of God is revealed in the Bible, the Word of God. Truth which man discovers for himself frees him from error, but only the truth which God reveals frees man from sin and its power and its penalty. The mind of many by searching cannot discover God, and only God in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is able to strike off the shackles of habit and sin and weakness which bind man body and soul. This eternal freedom which evades human discovery but comes as the gift of divine revelation is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. He who said, “**And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,**” said of Himself, “**I am the truth**”; and only God’s Son frees man from self, from his own sinful passions and tendencies, and from the condemnation of his sin.

Wonderful words, these, “**The truth shall make you free,**” but completely realized only in Christ, the Incarnate Truth. “**If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed**” (John 8:36).

Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

Sun of our life, Thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, Thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is Thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is Thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch Thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are Thine!

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before Thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no luster of our own.

Grant us Thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for Thee,
Till all Thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame.

— Oliver W. Holmes

A SURPRISED CONGREGATION

WHEREVER He was on the Sabbath, it was the custom of Christ to worship at the house of God. On one particular Sabbath (Mark 1:21-34) He amazed the congregation at the synagogue in Capernaum where He taught, because He spake with authority and not as the scribes to whom they were accustomed. But Christ did not only speak with authority; He demonstrated His authority—the authority of Deity Himself—by casting out an unclean spirit from a member of the congregation.

The deity of Christ is clearly and explicitly taught and emphasized in the Word of God, and Christ Himself repeatedly, as on this occasion, by His miraculous power demonstrated His deity.

When the demon was cast out of the man we are told that the congregation was “**all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?**”

The demonstration of the eternal truth of His deity so amazed them that in their ignorance of the teaching of the Scripture they thought some new doctrine was being set forth.

- It is possible to be in the house of worship and have an unclean spirit.
- It is possible to be a member of a church and a regular attendant at church worship and not be right of heart.

All the ethical teaching and philosophy and emphasis on doctrine which the Church has to offer cannot cast out an unclean spirit, cannot give a man a newness of heart. Only the divine Christ is able to perform a regenerating miracle in the life of an individual. Church attendance is valuable and important. Christ Himself sets the example of attendance on public worship, but it is possible to come away from public worship still a slave to sin, unclean and lost. Only a personal meeting there or elsewhere with the Lord Jesus Christ and the acceptance of His divine authority as Lord and Saviour can accomplish the miraculous in the life of the individual.

Come, sinners, to the Gospel feast;
 Let every soul be Jesus' guest;
 Ye need not one be left behind,
 For God hath bidden all mankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
 The invitation is to all:
 Come, all the world! Come, sinner, thou!
 All things in Christ are ready now.

Come, all ye souls by sin oppressed,
 Ye restless wanderers after rest;
 Ye poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind,
 In Christ a hearty welcome find.

My message as from God receive;
 Ye all may come to Christ and live:
 O let His love your hearts constrain,
 Nor suffer Him to die in vain.

See Him set forth before your eyes
 That precious, bleeding sacrifice!
 His offered benefits embrace,
 And freely now be saved by grace.

—Charles Wesley

HURRAHS —HISSES!

THOSE few days from the triumphant entry of the Lord into Jerusalem to His crucifixion afford all the proof we need of the fact that popularity is a fleeting thing and that unregenerate man is a fickle and depraved creature.

- When Christ entered Jerusalem He was acclaimed and applauded by the multitude. When He went out He was spat upon and jeered at by the mob.
- He rode into Jerusalem over the garments spread out before Him by the enthusiastic crowd. He went out of Jerusalem bearing a cross.
- As He was welcomed into the city they cried, **“Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”** As He was led out of the city they cried, **“Away with him, away with him, crucify him.”**
- He was received into the city as if He were a conqueror and a king. He was led out of the city as if He were a malefactor and a criminal.
- When He came into Jerusalem, palm branches of victory were waved in salutation before Him. When He went out of Jerusalem, a crown of thorns was placed on His brow in mockery.
- He entered the city from the Mount of Olives surrounded by enthusiastic and admiring throngs. He went out of the city to the mount of execution, a condemned prisoner under guard.

So overwhelming was the enthusiasm of His reception into Jerusalem that the Pharisees, His enemies, said, **“Behold, the world is gone after him.”** So unpopular was He a few days later that not even the Roman governor, who found Him innocent, dared to risk the displeasure of the mob by setting Him free.

Our Lord, as He rode into Jerusalem amid the hosannas of the excited populace, knew they would reject and crucify Him. He had come into the world to die upon the cross, and the infinite Son of God was not deceived by the momentary swell of apparent popularity that greeted Him that day.

The Lord Jesus Christ knows all about the shallow and changeable human heart. He knows the fickleness of popular favor and the faithlessness of human friends. He saw a false friend betray, a trusted friend deny, cowardly friends follow afar off or flee in the hour of His trial.

It is a common occurrence in the history of a fallen race for fame to fade, friends to fail, and applause to die away, but the Lord Jesus Christ changes not nor faileth ever. He says in the hour of our loneliness and dejection and disappointment as in the time of joy and success and triumph, **“Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.”** He is the one Friend who **“sticketh closer than a brother,” “the same yesterday, today, and for ever,”** infinite in love and compassion and understanding to all who trust in Him.

Come, says Jesus’ sacred voice,
Come, and make My paths your choice;
I will guide you to your home,
Weary pilgrim, hither come!

Thou who, houseless, sole, forlorn,
Long hast borne the proud world’s scorn,
Long hast roamed the barren waste,
Weary pilgrim, hither haste.

Ye who, tossed on beds of pain,
Seek for ease, but seek in vain;
Ye, by fiercer anguish torn,
In remorse for guilt who mourn—

Hither come! for here is found
Balm that flows for ev'ry wound,
Peace that ever shall endure,
Rest eternal, sacred, sure.

—Anna L. Barbauld

~ end of chapter 3 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
