

COME UNTO ME

by

Hyman J. Appelman

Copyright © 1945

CHAPTER NINE

IN CHRIST

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (Revelation 1:5-6).

You notice there are three facts in this text of Scripture.

The first is, Jesus loved us.
Second, Jesus loosed us.

The word for “**washed us from our sins in his own blood**” is the same word that the Holy Spirit uses in the twentieth chapter and the twenty-eighth verse of the book of Acts where He says, “**To feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.**” Now the word purchased in that case means to loose from slavery. I want you to remember that.

The third thing is, He lifted us.

It says so right there. “**And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.**”

- In Christ we have love.
- In Christ we have loosing.
- In Christ we have lifting.

There is no way of describing the love of God. There is nothing to which we can compare it. We can see the love of a father or a mother for a child. We can see the love of a husband for a wife, or a wife for her husband. There is a physical attraction there. There is blood of one blood and flesh of one flesh and bone of one bone. They are father and mother, husband and wife, brother and sister, son and daughter. But Jesus is the creator of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords, on His throne up yonder.

It would be easier for us to understand how a human being could love a poisonous rattlesnake than for us to understand how God could love us with all our sins and our shortcomings.

I want to impress upon your hearts three things about that love.

First, it was unmerited. We were not entitled to it. We had no claim to it. We had no right to expect it. If we got what was coming to us, every last one of us would have been in hell a long, long, bitter time ago. There is no righteousness, no consideration, no merit, nothing in any of us or in all of us put together that would recommend us to the love of God, either before we became Christians or after we became Christians. It makes not a particle of difference. It is unmerited love. There was nothing in us or about us, any of us or all of us, that drew forth the love of God, except perhaps our helplessness. It was unmerited.

Then it was unsought. We weren't looking for it. We were so busy about so many things that we had no time, had no thought for the love of God. We were satisfied with the mundane things of the world, satisfied with our little homes, satisfied with our little jobs, satisfied with our little education, satisfied with our little social activities, satisfied with our little pleasures—just satisfied. Just as the hog is satisfied with the mud wallow, even so were we satisfied with the husks that this world was giving to us. In some cases they were gold plated husks or silver plated husks. In some cases they were brass husks. In some cases they were just plain old husks. We weren't thinking about God's love. We weren't toiling for God's love.

We weren't reaching up for God's love. It was unsought. God had to begin by melting our hearts and constraining our souls and breaking our wills. God had to begin, even begin, the thought in our hearts of loving God or seeking His love.

Then in so many cases, it is unwanted love. It is hard to understand how anybody in his or her right mind, knowing the love of God and all the conditions and all it offers, should still resist and reject and refuse the love of God. It is just impossible to understand.

The angels from heaven must look down upon America, upon the world, and fail to understand how it is that human beings could become so befooled and bemused and benighted that they would not respond to the love of God even when God pressed it upon them. Yes, you and I have gone up and down the highways and byways of our communities, we have knocked on doors, we have pleaded with souls, we have pleaded with the sinner to come and accept the love of God, and heart-breakingly, in so many cases they have done everything but knock us down and throw us out. Have you ever had that experience?

You know that is true. They will listen to anything and everything except the love of God. They just don't want it. They are not interested in it, and when we begin to press it upon them they squirm out from under it, they refuse to hear our talk, they refuse to come to our services, they refuse to study the Word of God, they refuse in any way and every way to place themselves in the way of God's love. Folk, I say, too, that you and I were like that before we became Christians. It wasn't easy for the person or persons that led us to Christ to convince us of the value and the need and the necessity of the love of God in our hearts.

But, thank God, there is one more thing about that love. Not only was it unmerited, not only was it unsought, not only was it unwanted, *but, thank God, it is unending.* It is unending. The love of God will follow us to the very brink of hell and stand there with bitter, mournful tears watching us sink into the burning pit.

You know, there is one thing that love cannot do. It is the most powerful thing in the world. It moves the world. It is more powerful than money. It is more powerful than knowledge. It is more powerful than any other thing and every other thing that human beings have, but there is one thing love cannot do. *It cannot compel love.* It cannot make you or me love in return. It can't do that.

- All it can do is to give itself.
- All it can do is to sacrifice.
- All it can do is suffer.
- All it can do is to agonize.
- All it can do is to plead.
- All it can do is to weep.
- All it can do is to bleed its life out on Calvary's cross.
- All it can do is to stretch out its warm heart and warm hands and say, "Come, I want you to love Me, and I will give My love to you in return."

It cannot constrain. It cannot coerce. It cannot compel love, or it would not be love. And yet the love of God in Christ our Redeemer in the blood of His Cross, in the pages of His book, in His Holy Spirit is constantly reaching out to us, by day and by night, at home and abroad, seeking us, striving to pull us out of the pit and the miry clay, yearning to impart to us the free gift of God, even the salvation of our souls.

You remember the story that is told about that dear woman that was found on the steps of a jail house in a fainting condition. They rushed her to a hospital. The doctors examined her and said that not only was she sick, but she was actually dying of malnutrition. She hadn't had enough to eat.

The woman lay stretched out in her bed in Yuma, Arizona, and for weeks they tried every way they could to save her life, but it seemed to be useless. One day a group of doctors were standing over her bed talking quietly. They thought she was asleep, but she wasn't. She had her eyes closed, but she was not asleep. She heard them give her up. She heard them say it was no use, that she couldn't live.

When they went away, she called the nurse over to her and said, "Nurse, I heard what the doctors said. Is it true? Am I going to die?"

The nurse bowed her head and said, "Yes, sister, I am sorry, but that is true."

The lady said, "Nurse, what did you do with that little bundle that I had when they brought me here?"

"It is right there on the bottom shelf of your table."

"I wonder if you would get it for me, Nurse."

The nurse reached for it and gave it to the woman. The woman opened that little bundle, and inside were some women's things, and then on the inside of that whole bundle was a little buckskin shoe, a little baby shoe, and wrapped up in that shoe was a lock of curly blond hair. It was wrapped up and inside of that shoe. And inside of that shoe was a rolled-up photograph, a small snapshot. The woman took that shoe out and unrolled that snapshot and straightened it out and looked at it a long while. She brought it to her lips and kissed it. Then she said, "Nurse, I want to tell you how I came here."

She said, "I have a boy. He is twenty-two years old now. Four years ago he was working in a bank in Boston. He stole some money and disappeared. The bank sent detectives to apprehend him. They came to my home. That was the first I knew that my boy was a fugitive from justice."

She said, "I sold my home, I sold my furniture, I sold my silverware, I turned in my insurance. I took every penny I could raise and paid in full the money he had stolen. They dropped the case. They said they would, and they did."

She said, "I advertised for that boy. I wrote every place I could think he might possibly be, and then in despair I left my home and started searching for him."

She said, "I have been going up and down the land for a little better than three years. Every place I go, I go to the jail house, I go to the hospitals, I go to the hotels and the rooming houses and ask for my boy."

She said, "My money would give out every once in a while, and I would stop and work awhile and get some money and then go on. Now I can't go on any more. You tell me I am going to die."

She said, "Nurse, I know you are busy, and it is an imposition even for me to bother you with this, but I want you to take this buckskin shoe—that is one shoe from his first pair of shoes. That lock of hair is from his first haircut. I want you to take this photograph, and if ever you meet my boy, you tell him how I died, and you tell him that with her last breath his mother said that she still loved him."

Now that is exactly what God Almighty feels toward us. There is just no limit to His love. It is unending. Our fathers and our mothers may forsake us. Our friends may turn against us. We may become the lowest of the low, we may become the vilest of the vile, we may become the wickedest of the wicked, but the love of God will reach down to the very anteroom of hell, and even there if we turn our faces to God and say, "I will accept your love," God will bestow the benediction, the blessing of His love upon us.

But that is not all. Then the next word in this text is that in Christ we have loosing. He loosed us. He washed us from our sins in His own blood.

First of all He loosed us from the penalty of sin. **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus"** (Romans 8:1).

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24).

Jesus, by His death on the Cross, by His poured-out heart’s blood, *has loosed us from the penalty of sin.*

- That is a thing to shout about.
- That is a thing to praise God about.
- That is a thing to rejoice over by day and by night.

The fact that in Christ we may have absolute, complete, eternal redemption, cleansing us, loosing us, washing us from every sin, from every stain, from every iniquity, from every blot, from every blemish of sin and of unrighteousness so that neither in this life nor in the life to come, forever, world without end, neither before men nor before the angels nor before God shall we ever have to face the penalty, the guilt, the stain, the iniquity of our sins.

Then, we are loosed from the power of sin, from the pollution of sin, from the bold that sin has on our hearts and minds and souls and lives. Jesus Christ does not save us and then let us go. He keeps us. He walks with us and talks with us and abides in our hearts and minds and souls and lives. He lives in us. It is He that is now in us that causes us both to will and to do after the good pleasure of God Almighty.

Why, not the best of us, not the choicest of us, not the strongest among us could resist the devil for one minute were it not for the power and the presence of the indwelling Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, when Christ was raised from the dead, when He went back to heaven after forty days, when ten days later He poured out the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, He gave the Holy Spirit, among other things, the task, the responsibility, the duty, the job, the work of keeping; keeping us out of the snares of Satan, of keeping the hearts and lives and souls and experiences and activities of those that accept the loosing in the blood of Jesus Christ.

You know, regeneration consists of two things. Our sins are forgiven us. That is one. Then the second thing is, the Holy Spirit comes and makes His abode in the temple of the Spirit which is our bodies.

You must remember that. Would to God every one of us (this preacher, and every one of you readers) would remember this tremendously important lesson: there is no problem, there is no trial, there is no battle, there is no task, there is no burden, there is no undertaking, that we have to do or carry on or out in our Christian lives, whether in our homes, our businesses, our schools or in the church, but that the Holy Spirit is ready and willing and eager and anxious to bear the heavier part of the load and to do the bigger part of the work.

Many of our church members are so weak and so unworthy, so selfish, so carnal, so useless, so fruitless in the service of the Lord because they are not giving the Holy Spirit a chance to loose them from the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

And then, thank God, one of these glorious, victorious, choice days, *we shall be loosed even from the presence of sin*. We shall be loosed from the presence of sin so that Satan will be left far behind, so that temptations will no longer afflict us, so that throughout an endless eternity in the beauty of holiness up yonder before the glory-circled throne of God we shall serve our Redeemer and sing His praises with the angelic choir forever and forever. What a thought that is!

You know in studying and reading I have found that the closer a saint gets to God the more he hates himself, the lower he is certain to be in his own estimation. The greatest Christians have been the greatest penitents. The greatest Christians have been people of the utter-most self-abnegation and self-repentance. Yes, the greatest of them all, Paul the apostle, said, **“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief”** (I Timothy 1:15).

If Paul needed to make a statement like that, then where would we be and where are we? But, beloved, one of these days God will take us out of this old world, and God will take us out of sin, and God will take us out of temptation. God will take us out of the traps of the devil, and God will bring us to the kingdom of glory. Some day He will bring us together in the New Jerusalem, in the new heaven and new earth where sin will be no more. So I repeat, not only does Jesus love us, but He loosed us—we mustn’t talk about it in the past tense, for He is doing it right now—loosing us from the penalty, the power and the presence of sin.

Then the text goes on and says, **“And hath made us kings and priests unto God,”** in the service of our Redeemer.

Not only has He loved us, not only has He loosed us, but, thank God, He has lifted us.

First, *He lifted us up into salvation*. You remember what John said of Jesus: **“As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name”** (John 1:12).

Yes, Paul the apostle tells in the eighth chapter of Romans that when we come to Christ we become the children of God, brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ by the grace of saving adoption.

- We are lifted up.
- We are lifted out of the poor and the low and the weak and the wicked.
- We are lifted out of the muck and the mire of earthliness.

Our ambitions are changed, our aspirations are sanctified, our hopes are lifted up until the vision and vista of God’s great glory revolves before us.

- We are lifted up out of ourselves until once more we long and yearn and strive and toil and weep and aspire for the things of God and of eternity.

I tell you, that is a lifting! I thank God for it.

I am not satisfied with what I am. Certainly God knows I am not satisfied with what I was before I became a Christian. I can't be satisfied. I don't want to be satisfied. God keep me from being satisfied—thank God, the Lord provided, He made ample provision by the power of the Spirit that I may be lifted up to higher, loftier planes of salvation by the indwelling and power of God's Spirit.

Then He lifted us up to supplies. You remember that Paul said, **“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus”** (Philippians 4:19). God has lifted me up and out from the fear and uncertainty of physical distress or desolation, the fear of financial disappointment and fear of discouragement, of fear of the future, of fear of sickness, of fear of old age, of fear of death because I can say with Paul the apostle, **“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?”** (Romans 8:32).

I have been lifted out of the doubt and uncertainty of life. I don't care what happens tomorrow—I don't care, I'm not interested in it, I'm not even thinking about it. I know God knows and that is enough for me. Well, how about piling up money and property? No, I won't, I'm not going to give my attention to money when the best thing I can do is to draw closer and closer to God. He has the cattle on a thousand hills. He has promised to supply all of my needs according to His riches in glory by His Son, who loved me enough to die for me. Yes, I have God, Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

May He lift you out of any kind of fear you may have in this life or of the life to come. You know, with every ounce of sense I have in my head, with every bit of experience of these brief years, I tell you the reason so many of our church members never sacrifice a thing for the service of the Lord is that they are crawling on their spiritual bellies on the ground. They are crawling. They have not been lifted up.

They may have been saved, but they are afraid, they haven't assurance, they haven't victory, they haven't courage, they haven't inspiration of God, they are not big-souled enough. These weak-kneed, blow hot and blow cold, spineless, Christless men that we have in the churches are totally incapable of comparing values. For a little money—most of them will never have more than four or five thousand, or ten thousand dollars—they are selling the Saviour, they are selling their service, they are selling their assurance of God, losing their souls, selling their peace of mind for a few paltry dollars that won't do any good anyway.

Then God has lifted us up through Christ not only to salvation, not only into the abundance of His supplies, *but He has lifted us up into service.* It is a glorious thing to be a servant of Christ. Most of our people don't appreciate it. Listen to me, I don't care if you are the best school teacher in this town, the humblest Christian has a loftier place than the best school teacher. I don't care if you are the biggest business man in this town, whether banker, lawyer, real estate man, or a department store owner, or moving picture show operator—I don't care who it is—the humblest Christian, the child of God that is serving the Lord, has a loftier position than the loftiest business man or woman in this town.

Listen, I've told you before and I tell you again, you can take all the Presidents of the United States that ever lived and put them on one side of the scale and put the humblest servant of the cross, the humblest servant of Christ who is sacrificially, surrenderedly and longingly and earnestly consecrated, and with zeal is serving the Lord; he may be uneducated, but I tell you this humble Christian will outweigh all of these Presidents that have ever ruled our great country. May God help you to see it.

The biggest job you can have, the greatest honor God can bestow upon you, the loftiest position you can be elevated to in life or death or through the endless eternity is to be a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, to serve God.

Now this morning God offers to every one of us this love, this loosing, and this lifting. And my prayer is that God may give you and me, all of us, the grace first of all to see and appreciate this love, this loosing and this lifting, and then to turn ourselves over to God completely that He may love us, that He may loose us, that He may lift us, that our days might be moved by His will that Christ be magnified through us and the Church built up and multitudes of precious souls come to know Christ as their personal Redeemer.

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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