

The Gospel of Salvation

Evangelistic Addresses

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Eight -

GOD'S SUPREME WORD

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (I Corinthians 1:18)

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who bring the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:1-3). GOD has spoken and still speaks to us in various and sundry ways. For example, He speaks to us in the voice of nature. **"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."** The sun, the moon, the stars, the winds, the rains, the snows, the fields, the grass, the flowers, the trees, the birds, the beasts - all tell the story of the mighty power of JEHOVAH-GOD. Most of us, however, are so constituted that the message of nature is but a dim, indistinct revelation of the Lord.

GOD speaks to us through the pages of history. Someone has said that history is His-story. Surely the Lord wrote a page in fire and carnage, in blood and destruction, in shame and desolation, during the four tragic years of the 1914 European War. Yet, hardly had the thirsty earth soaked up the shed blood of the chivalry of the civilized nations in Flanders' fields, hardly had the red poppies attained their full growth, when the very same war-torn nations were again at each other's throats. History is a hazy pronouncement of the will of GOD.

GOD speaks to us in the still small voice He has implanted in our souls which we call "conscience."

Unceasingly always, at times condemningly, at times praisingly, it is the monitor of our beings. Personal experience, observation in the lives of others, shows however, that conscience may be trained until it loses its sharp edge, disregarded until its voice is dimmed away into nothingness. GOD has also spoken and does now speak to us through the cross of His only begotten Son. This mighty blood-stained word, this royal, revealing, redeeming word cannot be avoided, cannot be

misunderstood, is rejected at the eternal peril of the soul to whom it is spoken. It is this word, written in agony, in shame, in loneliness, in blood, in death, on Calvary's cross, that is our present concern.

As you pray for me, as GOD gives me utterance, may I press upon your souls these three thoughts, derived from GOD's red word. First, it is GOD's supreme word of Condemnation; second, it is GOD's supreme work of Redemption; third, it is GOD's supreme offer of Salvation.

In the cross the Lord exposes our sins.

In the cross the Lord condemns our transgressions.

In the cross the Lord reveals His holy horror of our iniquities.

The cross accuses every man. We are all guilty of the shed blood of CHRIST, of the murder of the Son of GOD. I do not say this because I am a Jew, and in any way striving to avoid the awful responsibility devolving upon my poor people for their part in Calvary's tragedy. It is the fearful truth, the absolute truth, the unqualified truth. GOD made Him to be sin for all of us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in Him. CHRIST hath redeemed all of us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for all of us. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.

I. The Word of Condemnation

The cross tells us of the *presence of sin*. We are all so apt to excuse it, to deny it, to call it by some other less terrible name, to palliate it by some high sounding terminology.

- The cross stops all that.
- It strips off the veneer,
- cuts away the finery,
- reveals the nakedness,
- the sickness,
- the degradation,
- the foulness,
- the enmity of the thing we call sin.

The cross is as it were a searchlight in the hands of the HOLY SPIRIT to probe deep into our souls, to expose the innermost recesses of our beings, to uncover the hidden corners of our lives. We all too often engage in the foolish practice of comparing ourselves to each other, and of finding at least partial relief in the thought that we are not so bad as so many others whom we know. The cross is the measure, however, the balance, the yardstick. The cross is the mirror of GOD. In it all of our faults and wrinkles are clearly seen. The cross is the witness we shall have to face and answer in the judgment.

The cross tells us of the *power of sin*.

- Not even GOD could combat it without the cross.
- Not even GOD could conquer it without the blood.
- Certainly GOD could not condone it.

The blood of the mightiest victim ever slain on the altars of justice, human or divine, was required to stem the tide of godlessness, to stop the encroachments, the inroads of the satanic forces of hell. What sin did to CHRIST, the very Son of GOD, on the cross, is a bitter illustration of its cursed power in the hearts and lives of its devotees.

Let the cross warn you, I beseech you, that you cannot fight sin in your own poor strength. Even GOD's Son was slain by its demands before GOD could use that death as a weapon against it. Let the cruel nails and biting thorns, as well as the sharp spear, warn you of the power of the enemy of your souls. Let the cross make you resist the devil, reject sin, refuse evil.

The cross speaks of the *penalty of sin*.

- The law is inescapable.
- The judgments of GOD are without repentance.
- There are no exceptions to either.

From the beginning of time the word was: "**Behold, all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.**"

Calvary is an exclamation point to this eternal truth. Written across the bruised, torn, bleeding body of the Man of Galilee is the inexorable decree of eternity, that the wages of sin is death. Nowhere in all the world, not even in the tormenting depth of a bottomless hell, is this truth more definitely, more vividly propounded than in the dripping wounds of the Son of GOD, spreadeagled on the cruel tree. Again I plead with you, be warned. Let the drops of blood that flowed from Immanuel's veins on that indescribably awful day stop you in your disregard of the law, in your inexcusable unbelief, warning you of the inescapable curse, the unavoidable consequences, the certain condemnation of your sins.

So I repeat that the word of the cross is the bitter word of condemnation. Measure yourselves by that cross. Where do you stand by the side of the righteousness of CHRIST? Have you recognized and admitted your guilt as part of the burden that broke Him on the tree? Have you deeply considered that, in addition to all things else, GOD lifted His Son between the heavens and the earth to show you that the way of the transgressor is hard, that death and damnation are the sure outcome of the life of the unbeliever?

II. The Word of Redemption

But, thank GOD, the word does not stop there. It is also GOD's supreme work of Redemption. If there is anything stated most clearly in the Bible, if there is any doctrinal point that all Christians must agree upon, Protestant, Baptist, all others; if there is any one universal message in the Book of books, it certainly is, it assuredly is, it definitely is, that **we are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of CHRIST, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**

- Satan had enslaved us.
- Sin had sold us to the law.

In the archives of glory there was a judgment bill against us which had to be met.

It was beyond our ability, beyond our powers, beyond our means.

- The charge of it was so great,
- the pressure of it so enormous,
- the debt of it so heavy,

that not all of us together possibly could have had enough, offered enough, paid enough, to redeem a single soul, whether our own, or that of anyone else. JESUS, blessed JESUS alone, was found worthy. His life's blood alone was deemed sufficient to cancel that guilt, to discharge that tremendous burden, to satisfy that crushing debt.

The thought is simple.

A world was lost in sin. One had to be found who was worth more than all the world besides. His person, His merit, His intrinsic value had to be greater than the combined value of the myriads of a lost world. The law had a claim against every soul on earth. One had to be found who had fulfilled the requirements of the law to their least jot and tittle. The personal, the spiritual, the acceptable value of JESUS, the only begotten of GOD, was more than that of all the universe put together. When He stripped Himself of His glory, when He stretched Himself on the cross, when He took the place of the sinner, when He surrendered up His life on the execution block of GOD's justice, when He emptied His veins of His own precious blood, when His life drained from Him, when He cried, "**It is finished,**" more than the price in full was paid for the redemption of all the souls of men.

It is as in a time of war. You know that prisoners are exchanged for release. Suppose, then, to illustrate, five of us were captured by the enemy. Two were privates, one a lieutenant, one a major, one a general. The time for exchange came. The privates would be worth just one more private each. The lieutenant would require a platoon; the major, a company; the general, a battalion. We would consider that bargain very fair.

In the higher realms of spirituality, in the higher courts of GOD's justice, JESUS, the Creator of the universe, was considered valuable enough to be taken in exchange for the entire world.

It is a finished redemption.

The death on the cross is all that GOD needed to make Him just, and at the same time the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS. Sinner, without fear or hesitation, without doubt, delay or question, by simple faith, you may step out in the full assurance that your sins were judged, condemned, punished, and atoned for in and by the CHRIST of Calvary.

- Surely this is a mighty word.
- Surely this is a gracious word.
- Surely this is an inspiring word.

When you come to GOD through CHRIST you come under the blood. The bill against you is marked "paid" in the blood of GOD's Son.

There remains not a feather's-weight charge against you. The only debt you owe is the debt of gratitude to JESUS for what He has done for you. The only price you have to pay is the loving price of loyalty, faithfulness, gratitude.

III. The Word of Salvation

But even that is not all of the message of the Word of the Cross. There is also the offer of Salvation. It seems to me that in the cross GOD bends down from Heaven into our very lives. With His hands, covered with the crimson blood of His Son, stretched out towards a stumbling, blundering, wandering, disobedient, dissipated, distressed, disheartened, discouraged, disturbed, disappointed, diseased, degraded world, He says:

"Sinner, I know your condition. I know all about you. Your sins, your shortcomings, your weaknesses, your record is before me day and night. Justice requires that I plunge you into the pit of doom and damnation, but mercy is my name, and mercy seek to extend to you. I love you. You can have no doubt about that. I sent my Son, mine only begotten Son, to bear your sins in his own body on the tree. I have gone to the limit of my possessions and powers to provide a way of escape for you. Will you take it? Will you take it now. Will you step out into the crimson stream flowing from Calvary. Will you accept my Son as your SAVIOUR? Will you acknowledge that his death was for you also? Will you come to Him and through Him to me today? Will you love Him? Will you serve Him? He so sacrificially served you. Will you confess Him as your personal REDEEMER this hour?"

The way of the cross does lead home.

It has always led home. It will always lead home. There is no other way. Many have said that there are other ways, but they are false prophets, blind leaders of the blind. There is but one way known to GOD and that is the way of Calvary. The mightiest offer of salvation that GOD makes to you is written across the expanses of Heaven in CHRIST's shame, in CHRIST's heartache and heartbreak, in CHRIST's loneliness and death. Today the HOLY SPIRIT is pressing your hearts, your minds, your lives with this offer of Salvation. Will you accept it? Will you close with it? Will you step out on it? GOD has never broken any promise He has spoken. He will not break His promise to you. It is sealed with His Son's blood. It is guaranteed by His Son's sacrifice.

You need not delay. If you recognize yourself a sinner, if in your heart you can find faith enough to believe that JESUS died for your sins, if you know and have confidence in the love of GOD and in the desire of GOD for your soul's salvation, that is all you need. You cannot have salvation by the demerits of others. Good resolutions, excellent intentions, pleasant wishes will not abide the fire of the last day. You must have a robe of righteousness. You must be clothed in the garments made white in the blood of the LAMB. Had there been any other way, CHRIST would have never gone to the cross. That in itself is a proof positive of the truth of my contention, that you can be saved only by the word of the cross.

Forget all else that I have written. Stand once more in the shadow of that bitter wood,

contemplate once more the awfulness of those six endless hours in which the SAVIOUR expiated your sins. Let your hearts move you now. Let your souls constrain you. Let the gratitude of your minds impel you to CHRIST's saving blood. By your own mortal soul, by the love of GOD, by the plea of the SPIRIT, by the sight of Heaven, by the depths of hell, heed GOD's supreme word this hour. Come to CHRIST. Come to the cross. Come to the blood. Come to this full, abundant, everlasting salvation.

~ end of chapter 8 ~
