

Amos 5:21-24

"I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"

"SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU DID NOT DESIRE, BUT A BODY YOU PREPARED FOR ME"

A BODY is prepared for Jesus and a PLACE is being prepared for us (John 14).

(When God Whispers Your Name by Max Lucado)

When my daughter Jenna was six years old, I came upon her standing in front of a full-length mirror. She was looking down her throat. I asked her what she was doing and she answered, "I'm looking to see if God is in my heart."

I chuckled and turned and then overheard her ask him, "Are you in there?" When no answer came, she grew impatient and spoke on his behalf. With a voice deepened as much as a six-year-old can, she said, "Yes."

She's asking the right question. "Are you in there?" Could it be what they say is true? It wasn't enough for you to appear in a bush or dwell in the temple? It wasn't enough for you to become human flesh and walk on the earth? It wasn't enough to leave your word and the promise of your return? You had to go further? You had to take up residence in us?

p. 127

(When Counseling Is Not Enough by J. Kirk Johnston)

Leslie Flynn, in his book The Sustaining Power of Hope, relates a moving story that beautifully illustrates the perfection of God's timing.

Toward the end of World War II a young sailor, fresh from the Pacific conflict and with limited furlough time, rejoiced when he was allotted a seat on a military C-46 out of Alameda Airport headed for Chicago where his girlfriend lived. Gliding through the gateway into the 21-seat plane, he buckled his safety belt and relaxed. The right propeller churned the air, then the left. The chocks were pulled from under the wheels. The plane was about to taxi for the takeoff. Suddenly outside was the stationmaster, wildly waving his arms. Behind him a vice-admiral waddled under the weight of two large duffel bags. "Hold that flight," hollered the stationmaster.

The sailor's heart sank. When the door opened, he heard three names, one of which was his. The three were told to get off the plane while the vice-admiral and his two bags took the three seats. Sitting dejectedly on the ground as the plane took off, the sailor looked up, "God, why did You let this happen to me? You know I want to get home!"

Happily, three hours later the sailor caught another plane for Chicago. That evening as the plane descended toward the Kansas City airport for a brief stop, huge searchlights flared all around. "Turn out those lights," shouted the pilot over his radio system. "We don't need them to land."

"Identify yourself," replied the tower. "Which flight are you?" The pilot identified his plane.

"Where's the flight that left Alameda three hours before you? It hasn't come in yet?"

The flight never did come in. Its wreckage was found in the Rockies some days later. Today, that sailor is a well-known radio announcer, Bob Murfin, who emcees the morning commuter-hour program over Chicago's Moody radio station, WMBI.

pp. 180-81

v. 6 in whole burnt offerings and [sacrifices] for sin you took no pleasure.

He "TOOK NO PLEASURE" because they did not satisfy Him.

Wiersbe says:

Twice in this paragraph, the writer stated that God "had no pleasure" in the Old Covenant sacrifices (see 10:6, 8). This does not suggest that the old sacrifices were wrong, or that sincere worshipers received no benefit from obeying God's law. It only means that God had no delight in sacrifices as such, apart from the obedient hearts of the worshipers. No amount of sacrifices could substitute for obedience.

p. 111

When I make the Father my Master it immediately demands complete obedience. What is sin? It is His will or my will.

Lane says:

God's dissatisfaction with the conventional sacrificial offerings because they failed to express a corresponding desire to obey his will is a recurring motif in the prophetic Scriptures . . . The offering that God finds acceptable represents devotion from the heart.

p. 263

v. 7 Then I said, 'Behold I am coming, (In the roll of the book it has been written concerning me) to do your will, O God.'

Kistemaker raises the question:

Why did the writer of Hebrews quote Psalm 40:6-8? He found in this quotation the best proof to show the reality that puts aside the shadow of the Levitical sacrifices. The sacrifices, only shadows, are not important; obedience to God's will counts. God delights in obedience (Rom. 12:1-2). Moreover, the words "Here I am, I have come to do your will, O God" have been recorded "in the scroll."
pp. 275-6

Pink says:

The Son was perfectly cognisant of all that was written in that book, for He had been "Counsellor" with the Father. The term "volume" is the right translation of the Hebrew word "magillah" in Psa. 40:7, but the Greek word "kephalis" ought most certainly to be rendered "head"--"kephale" occurs seventy-six times in the N. T., and is *always* rendered "head" elsewhere.

A most wondrous and blessed revelation is here made known to us: "in the head of the book" of God's decrees, at *the beginning* thereof, it is "written of" Christ! In that book is recorded the names of all God's favoured children: Luke 10:20, Heb. 12:23; but at the *head* of them is *Christ's*, for "in *all* things" *He must* have the "pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18). Thus, the first name on that heavenly scroll of the Divine decrees is that of the Mediator Himself! So too in the Holy Scriptures, which give us a copy, in part, the *first* name in the O. T. is that of Christ as Creator (Gen. 1:1 cf. John 1:1-3), and the *first* name in the N. T. is "Jesus Christ" (Matt. 1:1)! Yes, "in the *head* of the Book" it is written of *Him*.
p. 56

Pink says further:

Yet one more thought on this precious subject: "Lo, I come to *do* Thy will, O God." Weigh well the verb. It was not merely that the Son consented to passively endure whatever the Father was pleased to lay upon Him, but also that He desired to actively perform the work which had been allotted to Him. Though that work involved immeasurable humiliation, untold anguish, though it entailed not only Bethlehem's manger but Calvary's cross, He hesitated not. As a child, as a Man, in life and in death, He was "obedient" to His God.

p. 61

Westcott says:

Obedience is immediate and complete. This sense of the will of God was, as it were, the Master's call in the heart, and the servant's answer was in the new connexion: '*Here am I*' (Isa. vi. 8).

p. 310

Owen says:

The book itself was a roll; at the head of it, the beginning of it, amongst the first things written in it, is this recorded concerning the coming of Christ to do the will of God. Now this can be no other than the first promise, which is recorded Gen. iii. 15.

p. 191

Stedman says:

He did not delight in these; He had no interest in them except as they taught something. Well then, what was He after? What these sacrifices pointed to: a human body in which there was a human will which continually chose to depend upon an indwelling God to obey a written Word! That was what He was after, that was what God wanted.

p. 155

When our Lord Jesus acted on that principle He allowed the direction of His life to come from the Word of God. *Then I said, "Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God," as it is written of me in the roll of the book* (Heb. 10:7).
p. 156

The doing of God's will is that which equals the perfecting of the New Covenant worshippers.

Hebrews 5:8

although being a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered;

John 4:34

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.

Luke 22:41, 42

And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Thine be done."

Matthew 6:10

Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

(Perilous Pursuits by Joseph M. Stowell)

Here are the four essential commitments that Christ lived out in His earthly ministry and His death on the cross to purchase our redemption. He was willing to surrender to the Father's will, willing to sacrifice His privileges and position, willing to serve, and willing to suffer.

p. 171

(The Life of God in the Soul of Man by Rev. Henry Scougal)

What an infinite pleasure must it needs be, thus, as it were, to lose ourselves in Him, and being swallowed up in the overcoming sense of his goodness, to offer ourselves a living sacrifice always ascending unto him in flames of love. Never doth a soul know what solid joy and substantial pleasure is, till once, being weary of itself, it renounce all propriety, give itself up unto the Author of its being, and feel itself become a hallowed and devoted thing, and can say, from an inward sense and feeling: "My beloved is mine." I account all his interest mine own, "and I am his." I am content to be any thing for him, and care not for myself, but that I may serve him. A person moulded into this temper would find pleasure in all the dispensations of Providence: temporal enjoyments would have another relish, when he should taste the divine goodness in them, and consider them as tokens of love sent by his dearest Lord and Maker; and chastisements, though they be not joyous but grievous, would hereby lose their sting, the rod as well as the staff would comfort him--he would snatch a kiss from the hand that was smiting him, and gather sweetness from that severity--nay, he would rejoice that though God did not the will of such a worthless and foolish creature as himself, yet he did his own will, and accomplished his own designs, which are infinitely more holy and wise.

pp. 71-72

v. 8 After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you did not desire, nor have pleasure [in them]" (which are being offered according to the Law),

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The writer then expounded the text he had just quoted.
p. 804

Here the writer records what has been said previously, that the Lord "DID NOT DESIRE, NOR TAKE PLEASURE" in that which was "(BEING OFFERED ACCORDING TO THE LAW)."

Kistemaker says:

God takes no delight in sacrifices. He is pleased with the unfaltering trust and obedience of his children. Christ, the Son of God, came into this world for the purpose of showing submission and learning "obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9).
p. 277

Lane says:

The repetition of phrases and clauses from the citation indicates the points of emphasis in the writer's reading of the biblical text. With powerful concentration he divides his remarks on the passage into two parts. In the first he underscores the divine rejection of the conventional sacrifices.
p. 263

v. 9 then He said, "Behold, I am coming to do your will." He is taking away the first in order that He might establish the second.

Yes, He did say:

"BEHOLD, I AM COMING TO DO YOUR WILL."

And what is that will?

"HE IS TAKING AWAY THE FIRST [that is, the Old Covenant] IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT ESTABLISH THE SECOND", the New Covenant.

"HE IS TAKING AWAY" one "IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT ESTABLISH" the other.

In the pursuit of the Father's will He finds that He is "TAKING AWAY THE FIRST [that is, the Law] IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT ESTABLISH THE SECOND [that is, grace]."

That is God's unmerited favor toward us whereby through the death of His Son upon Calvary He can render us acceptable and perfect in His presence.

Free from the law, O happy condition,
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;
Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeemed us once for all.

Refrain:

Once for all, O sinner, receive it;
Once for all, O brother, believe it;
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all.

("Once For All" by P. P. Bliss. Inspiring Hymns compiled by Alfred B. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Singspiration, Inc. Copyright - Alfred B. Smith, 1951. #112)

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . the author referred to the setting aside of the Old-Covenant sacrifices which did not ultimately satisfy God. What was established was God's will, and it was **by that will that we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

p. 804

DeHaan says:

He made His will and left us His testament and covenant of grace. When He died He sealed it with His blood. But here comes the wonder. He Himself has made provision that the terms of the will shall be carried out to the letter, for He has appointed Himself as the Administrator. After sealing the will by death, making it legal and effective, He arose to become the Executor. Forty days afterward He ascended into heaven to sit on the bench as both Administrator and Judge, and He sent His special agent, the Holy Spirit, into the world with full authority to carry out the terms of His last will and testament.

p. 130

Lange quotes Rieger when he says:

What gave to the sacrifice of Jesus its everlasting value, is that in it all was executed according to the direction and will of God.

p. 173

I DON'T FEEL LIKE A VERY GOOD CHRISTIAN

Many committed Christians wrestle with feeling like they're just not doing well in their relationship with God. The symptoms include: a burning desire to please the Lord; a fear, no matter how much you're doing that it isn't quite enough; a growing anger or frustration in your Christian life; a tendency to compare your Christian life with others. We need to develop rest and receiving from God. His healing of our legalism and its negative emotions follows these steps: 1) He lets us become frustrated till we admit our inability to pray, to keep commitment to thirst for God.

2) He convinces us (often through other people) that he loves us. 3) He teaches us that he is ultimately responsible for our spiritual growth--he's more concerned than we are. He will work in us to will and to act according to his good purpose (Phil. 2:13).

"I don't feel like a very good Christian" by Kevin A. Miller. Today's Christian Woman. Jan/Feb 1989. Pages 42-45.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(When Counseling Is Not Enough by J. Kirk Johnston)

The word temptation in this verse can refer to either Satan's temptation or God's testing. The context determines the proper translation. However, in a sense the issue of translation is moot. When Satan tempts us, God allows it as a divine test, and whenever God tests us, Satan will seize the opportunity to tempt us to sin. The point is that both satanic temptation and divine testing are ultimately in view in 1 Corinthians 10:13. The promise of this verse is that God will not allow us to be tempted or tested beyond what we are able to endure.

The word able indicates that we have the power and ability (because of God's indwelling Spirit) to endure any testing and temptation. We can resist Satan and do what God wants us to do. Thus, on the basis of God's Word, we have to say that no matter how bad things are, Christians should and can obey God. Besides, it is only through obedience to God that genuine and lasting healing can come to those who hurt so much. In saying this I am not saying that struggling Christians simply need to be counseled to obey God. There are situations when counseling, no matter how correct and well carried out, is just not going to be enough.

p. 75-76

(When Heaven Is Silent by Ronald Dunn)

As long as we want to be different from what God wants us to be at the time, we are only tormenting ourselves to no purpose.

Gerhart Tersteegen

The things for which we visit a man were done alone in the dark and the cold.

Henry David Thoreau

But how can God bring this about in me?--Let Him do it and perhaps you will know.

George MacDonald

p. 13

(When God Whispers: Glimpses of an Extraordinary God By an Ordinary Woman by Carole Mayhall)

The Christian missionary Jim Elliott said, "God's will is always bigger than you bargain for." Often I find myself in a situation where I say to the Father, "Lord, what have You gotten us into this time?" and the Father invariably answers, "Nothing I can't handle!"

p. 32

v.10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Back in verse 5 we read a "body you prepared for me" and now we understand why.

That little body was formed in the womb of a virgin, miraculously. Born in Bethlehem, lived 33 years all for the purpose of becoming the offering for sin "ONCE FOR ALL."

Hebrews 7:27

He who is not having a need daily, like those high priests, to be offering up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, for this He did once for all, having offered up Himself.

Hebrews 9:12

and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

The hymn writer is correct:

Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

("Jesus Paid It All" by John T. Grape. Inspiring Hymns compiled by Alfred B. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Singspiration, Inc. Copyright - Alfred B. Smith - 1951. #104)

Lane says:

In his application of the biblical text, the writer stresses the communal experience of consecration to the service of God. The old sacrifices were deficient because they did not entail the genuine consecration of the one who offered them. The shift from the use of the third person singular in v 9*b* to the first person plural ("we have been consecrated") lends to the formulation of v 10 a confessional quality . . . In a statement remarkable for its density, the writer defines the means and the ultimate source of consecration. The immediate ground of consecration is the totally new offering of the body of Jesus Christ as the inaugural act of the new covenant. The ultimate source is the will of God.

p. 265

Stedman says:

This word "sanctified" is widely misunderstood. It is usually looked upon as some kind of religious sheep-dip that people pass through and they come out holier and purer on the other side. But it is not that. The word "sanctified" simply means, "to put to the proper, intended use." You sanctify a chair when you sit in it. You sanctify your comb when you comb your hair. Sanctification simply means to put to the intended purpose. Now this verse is simply declaring that when we adopt the same outlook as Jesus Christ-- when, in dependence on Him, we are ready to obey the Word of God and thus fulfill the will of God, we fulfill our humanity. We are being used in the way God intended us to be used.

pp. 156-7

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The words rendered "made holy" involve a single Greek word often rendered "sanctify" (cf. 10:14, 29). Here it occurs in a tense that makes it plain, along with the rest of the statement, that the sanctification is an accomplished fact. Nowhere in Hebrews does the writer refer to the "progressive sanctification" of a believer's life. Instead sanctification is for him a functional equivalent of the Pauline concept of justification. By the sanctification which is accomplished through the death of Christ, New-Covenant worshipers are perfected for guilt-free service to God (cf. 2:11).

p. 804

The periphrastic emphasises the permanent and continuous state of sanctification into which the believer is brought.

MacArthur says:

The new sacrifice is effective because it sanctifies the believer, makes him holy. The old system had no way of making a man holy. To be sanctified, or made holy, basically means to be set apart. When the word is used in Scripture of men, it always refers to being set apart *by* God *for* God. From this same Greek word group we also get *saint*. In biblical terms, a saint is a person whom God has set apart for Himself. It is God's will that we be set apart, not only positionally but practically. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3).

The Greek verb form in verse 10 (**we have been sanctified**) is a perfect participle with a finite verb, which shows in the strongest way the believer's continuing and permanent salvation. The force of the statement is, "You have been permanently made holy." This fulfills the desire of our Lord, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16; cf. Lev. 11:44).

One act, in one moment, provided permanent sanctification for everyone who places his trust in Jesus Christ (cf. Col. 2:10; 2 Pet. 1:3-4). On the cross, He sanctified us, set us apart unto Himself, forever holy and dear to Himself and to the Father.

p. 254

Thomas says:

It must never be forgotten that not once in this Epistle is sanctification associated with the Holy Spirit. Indeed it can be said that sanctification in Hebrews is almost equivalent to justification in Romans, both referring to our position, not to our condition.

p. 125

v.11 And every priest has stood daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

We have had the mention of the Levitical order as making offerings "year after year" and now the "OFFERING TIME AFTER TIME."

We have the SAME SACRIFICES back in verse 1 as we have here in verse 11.

In verse 1 the phrase "never able" is used.

In verse 4, "impossible" is used.

And in verse 11, "CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SINS."

Here the writer speaks in an exclamatory form, indeed, every priest representing the Law has stood "day by day" performing his sacred service.

Not only that, but:

"OFFERING TIME AFTER TIME THE SAME SACRIFICES."

We get the similar statement that we had back in verse 4:

"WHICH CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SINS."

Hebrews 10:4

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to be taking away sins.

SIN IS THE PROBLEM. How can a holy and just God who demands perfection handle the problem of man's sin?

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The truth just stated is reinforced by a contrast with the Levitical priesthood. Levite priests could never sit down on the job since their sacrificial services

were never completed. But Christ's sitting . . . is both a signal that His sacrifice was offered **for all time** and also that He can now confidently await final victory over **His enemies**.

p. 804

”AND EVERY PRIEST HAS STOOD DAILY MINISTERING AND OFFERING TIME AFTER TIME THE SAME SACRIFICES, WHICH CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY” [that which surrounds us, that is] ”SIN.”

The PICTURE here is of a man enveloped by a garment of sin that he wore.

Delitzsch says:

The writer of the epistle having thus shown (vers. 1-10) that the self-oblation of Jesus Christ, in contrast with the sacrifices of the law, was the only true realization of the divine will for our sanctification, proceeds (vers. 11-14) to exhibit Christ’s priestly service in contrast with the daily repeated, because ever inefficient, service of the priests of the law, as for ever perfected by one high-priestly act, which has issued in His kingly exaltation and waiting for the final subjugation of His foes.
p. 157

Pink says:

”These words are an entrance into the close of that long blessed discourse of the apostle, concerning the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, their dignity and efficacy; which he shuts up and finisheth in the following verses, confirming the whole with the testimony of the Holy Spirit before producing by Him.
p. 68

English says:

Two words in the first clause of verse 11 claim especial attention: “standeth,” and “daily.” The former denotes the posture of the priests in exercising their ministry, and the latter, the continuity of such service. Search as one may among the furnishings of the tabernacle or temple, he will find no chair, for whatever the service performed, whether in attending to the appointments as, for example, replenishing the shewbread or replacing the candles, or in offering the burnt-offerings and sacrifices, the *modus operandi* demanded that the priest must stand. And this requirement was symbolic of a spiritual fact: the priest’s work was never completed.

This operation was “daily.” It needed to be done continuously, and over and over again; for the same care and replacement must perpetually be bestowed upon the furnishings and their attachments, and the same kinds of sacrifices must oftentimes be offered on account of sin.
pp. 296-7

J. Vernon McGee says:

The offerings could only cover the sin; they were an atonement, but they could never take away sins. The offerings were just a reminder that men were sinners and that the sin question had not yet been settled.
p. 573

v.12 but He, when He offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

The word “BUT” forms the contrast.

”BUT HE, WHEN HE OFFERED ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOR ALL TIME, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD”

Jesus Christ is this priest. He made a sacrifice of Himself. ”HE OFFERED ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOR ALL TIME.” He cried on the cross: ”My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?” We understand now that Jesus was being made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might know the righteousness of God, and that His sacrifice was good for all time. It satisfies fully the justice of a holy God in full and complete payment of the penalty for the sin of man.

Isaiah the prophet foresaw it when he said:

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

John 1:29

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

When He finished the work, He ”SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.”

Hebrews 12:2

fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of faith, who for the joy lying before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Pink says:

It is naught by Divine *favour* which gives holy angels and redeemed sinners a place in the Father's House; but the Man Christ Jesus has *merited* that high honour!

"The highest place that Heaven affords,
Is His by sovereign *right*,
King of kings and Lord of lords,
He reigns there in the Light."

p. 71

Draper says:

All the other priests stood daily making continual sacrifices (10:11). This Man sat down (10:12), signifying that his work was complete. If we want to know how to find God, his name is Jesus Christ. If we want to know how to find forgiveness of sin, it is in Jesus Christ. This Man, this God-man, this divine Man, this virgin-born Man, God's Son, became man's son so that the children of men might become children of God. He came and dwelt among us, and the gospel is his story.

p. 260

Bruce says:

The unrepeatable character of the sacrifice of Christ, by contrast with the sacrifices of the old order, is underlined by an appeal to the language of Ps. 110. The introductory oracle of this psalm, in which the Messiah is invited by God to sit at his right hand, has already been quoted by our author (Heb. 1:13) and has influenced his phraseology in 1:3; 8:1; but only now does he draw out its full significance. The Aaronic priests never sat down in the sanctuary; they remained standing throughout the whole performance of their sacred duties. In this our author sees a token of the fact that their sacred duties were never done, that their sacrifices had always to be repeated. In v. 1 the repetition of the ritual of the Day of Atonement "year by year" was mentioned; here, as in 7:27, the reference is to those sacrifices which were offered "day by day." But whether the repetition was annual or daily, the main point is that repetition was necessary; not one of these sacrifices could remove sin or cleanse the conscience with permanent effect.

pp. 244-5

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Bruce says further:

To all who are uncertain of their acceptance with God comes the voice which brought encouragement to the soul of John Bunyan: "Sinner, thou thinkest that because of thy sins and infirmities I cannot save thy soul, but behold my Son is by me, and upon him I look, and not on thee, and will deal with thee according as I am pleased with him."⁷⁰

70. *Grace Abounding*, para. 258.

p. 246

DELIVERANCE FROM SIN

"A do-it-yourselfer went into a hardware store early one morning and asked for a saw. The salesman took a chainsaw from the shelf and commented that it was 'the newest model, with the latest technology, guaranteed to cut ten cords of wood a day.' The customer thought that sounded pretty good, so he bought it on the spot.

"The next day the customer returned, looking somewhat exhausted. 'Something must be wrong with this saw,' he moaned. 'I worked as hard as I could and only managed to cut three cords of wood. I used to do four with my old-fashioned saw.' Looking confused, the salesman said, 'Here, let me try it out back on some wood we keep here.' They went out to the woodpile, the salesman pulled the cord, and as the motor went Vvroooooommmmm, the customer leaped back and exclaimed, 'What's that noise!?'"

"Too often Christians want to be righteous, as God wants them to be, and work themselves to a frazzle in discouragement and in frustration. God chose to change sinners into righteous people. The first phase of God's plan was judicial--to declare a sinner to be righteous. The second phase of God's plan is experiential--to deliver a believer from the power and presence of sin and death. This result of salvation involves a spiritual engine which drives the deliverance from the power and presence of sin."

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.13 then waiting until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.

Jesus Christ is simply waiting.

He is waiting for:

the COMPLETION of His bride, the church and
the COMING of His kingdom.

You could say that He is "not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter 3:9).

He is waiting for:

sinner to come,
saints to learn to turn it over to Him and to rest in Him, and
the glories of His coming kingdom.

It is Charles Hadden Spurgeon who said:

If in the arms of the Virgin he is the Saviour, what is he on the throne of God? If wrapped in swaddling bands he is Jesus, what is he now that the heavens have received him? If in the workshop of Nazareth, and sitting in the temple among the doctors, he was the child Jesus, the Saviour, what is he now that his infancy and childhood are over, and he is exalted far above all principalities and powers? If he was Jesus when on the cross, presenting himself as an offering for his people, what is he now that he hath by one sacrifice perfected for ever them that are set apart? What is he now that he sits at the right hand of God, expecting till his enemies are made his footstool?

p. 35

(From Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, compiled by Wilbur M. Smith)

J. Vernon McGee points out:

Our Lord is just waiting. There are a few more people to be saved. We pray, "O come now, Lord Jesus," but He says, "No, not yet. We are going to wait, because I want to save some more." He is giving you an opportunity, friend, if you are not saved. Psalm 110:1 says, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," referring to the second coming of Christ to the earth. But in the meantime He is waiting for more of the human family to come to Him.
p. 573

Lane says:

The session at the right hand puts Christ in a position where he may provide assistance to his people without having to offer sacrifices. The allusion to Ps 110:1 in vv 12-13 insists on the established firmness of his position. For the future he has only to wait for the complete subjugation of every power that resists the gracious redemptive purposes of God. Jesus' place in the presence of God enables him to exercise in heaven the ministry of the new covenant. This is the basis of the assurance extended to the community that they possess now full access to God.
p. 267

v.14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Here again we have the word "ONE" and "FOR ALL TIME."

His one offering for sin is totally adequate, not only to SAVE but to SANCTIFY the soul and to deliver it to its ultimate glorification.

The REASON He is seated is given. The whole work is done and He need not arise to repeat it.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

"The sanctified" have a status in God's presence that is "perfect" (cf. 11:40; 12:23) in the sense that they approach Him with the full acceptance gained through the death of Christ (cf. 10:19-22).
p. 804

Westcott says:

The 'offering' of Christ, His perfect life crowned by a willing death, in which He fulfilled the destiny of man and bore the punishment of human sin, is that by and in which every human life finds its consummation.

It is significant that Christ Himself is said to perfect 'by the offering': it is not said that 'the offering' perfects. His action is personal in the application of His own work.

p. 315

J. Vernon McGee says:

One offering does what many offerings could not do. If *Christ* cannot save you and keep you, then God has no other way to save you and keep you.

p. 573

English says:

Perfected forever! This is the position of those who are sanctified through the blood of Christ. His exalted place, seated on the right hand of God, is assurance of our glorious status. Just as long as the Lord Jesus is there in authority and power, our perfect standing is guaranteed. And when He leaves that place, it will be to take us to Himself so that we may reign with Him as He governs and makes His enemies, the enemies of His cross, the footstool of His feet.

p. 301

THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

”Sanctification is a neglected priority in today’s church everywhere and a fading glory in the evangelical world in particular. . . . Today, the concern for holiness that was once so striking mark of evangelical people is largely a thing of the past. . . . To listen to the sermons and read the books we publish today, you would never know that once the highway of holiness was clearly marked out for Bible believers, and that ministers and people knew it well and spoke of it with authority and confidence.”

--J. I. Packer
(in *Hot Tub Religion*,
Tyndale House, 1989)

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.15 And the Holy Spirit also is bearing witness to us; for after having said,

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Reverting to his basic text on the benefits of the New Covenant, the author quoted a portion of it (in 10:16 he quoted Jer. 31:33; and in Heb. 10:17, Jer. 31:34) to drive home his point. The text is a testimony given by God's **Holy Spirit**, and shows that final forgiveness, such as the New Covenant promised, meant that there was no further need for any **sacrifice for sin**. As the writer will shortly show, a person who turns from the one sufficient sacrifice of Christ has no real sacrifice to which he can turn (cf. Heb. 10:26).

p. 804

In MY SEMINARY NOTES verses 15-18 are titled:

”THE INACTMENT OF THE NEW COVENANT”

Westcott says:

The fulfilment in Christ of the prophetic description of the New Covenant.

The Apostle goes back in conclusion to the testimony of the prophet from which he commenced his exposition of the high-priestly and sacrificial service of the new Covenant. A characteristic of that Covenant, which has been established by Christ, was the forgiveness of sins. Under it, therefore, offerings for sin were necessarily done away; and the Temple services could no longer have any value for the Christian.

p. 315

Delitzsch says:

The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of prophecy, and from Him comes the whole God-inspired written word. He also in that word is the witness, that with Christ's return to the Father all is accomplished, and nothing remains to be done to procure for us inward perfecting, and a complete restoration to communion with God.

pp. 163-4

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Lane says:

The writer finds confirmation of his argument in the witness of the Holy Spirit attested in Scripture. The present tense of the verb in the introductory formula "the Holy Spirit also bears witness," is significant; it indicates that through the quotation of the prophetic oracle the Holy Spirit is speaking now. The Spirit brings the detail of the text from the past into the present and makes it contemporary with the experience of the readers. The promises given on the occasion when God announced His intention to enact a new covenant have immediate relevance for the community addressed in the homily.

p. 268

Wiersbe raises the question:

How do we know *personally* that we have this perfect standing before God? Because of the witness of the Holy Spirit through the Word (Heb. 10:15-18).

p. 113

v.16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, the Lord is saying: I am putting my laws upon their hearts, and upon their mind I will write them,

v.17 and their sins and their lawless deeds I will positively not remember any more."

There are 3 THINGS here:

1. "I AM PUTTING MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEARTS"
2. "UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM"
3. "THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL POSSITIVELY NOT REMEMBER ANY MORE."

Draper says:

God declares that when people come to him through the blood, when people come to him in faith, when they give themselves to him, he will remember their sins no more. He puts those sins behind him. They are lost in his memory. What a wonderful, blessed anticipation.

p. 259

Wuest says:

The other distinctive feature of the New Testament is the fact that God remembers sins and iniquities no more. The constant repetition of the sacrifices demonstrated that the sin question was not settled. The once for all offering of the Messiah shows that sin is paid for and put away.

p. 177

Psalm 103:12-14

As far as the east is from the west,
so far has He removed our transgressions from us,
Just as a father has compassion on his children,

So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.
For He Himself knows our frame;
He is mindful that we are dust.

Micah 7:18, 19

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Isaiah 38:17

. . . you have put all my sins behind your back.

Sometimes we have to let go of the past in order to enjoy the present, and be able to dream of the future.

--A Hallmark Card

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

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

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

REMEMBERING TO FORGET

An experienced husband is one who remembers his wife's birthday but forgets which one it is.

A perfectionist is one who takes great pains--and give them to other people.

<Unknown>

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

GOD'S KIND OF FORGIVENESS

A young nun once claimed to have had a vision of Jesus. Her bishop decided to test her truthfulness and ordered that the next time she had a vision she should ask Christ what the bishop's primary sin had been before he became a bishop.

Some months later, the nun returned and the bishop asked if she had asked Christ the question, to which she affirmed that she had.

"And what did He say?" the bishop asked apprehensively.

"Christ said . . ." and the nun paused a moment . . . "He said, 'I don't remember.'"

[Lutheran Witness, Jan 1992. Page 2.]

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Psalm 86:5

You are forgiving and good, O Lord,
abounding in love to all who call to you.

In MY SEMINARY NOTES verse 18 is called:

"THE DECISIVE WORD OF THE ARGUMENT"

Since Christ brought perfection and Christ granted such complete forgiveness that the sins cannot even be remembered, what need is there of Levitical sacrifices now?

Owen says:

And here we are come unto a full end of the dogmatical part of this epistle, a portion of Scripture filled with heavenly and glorious mysteries . . .
p. 195

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

After the promise of a new inward relationship with God, there is a further promise of a total obliteration from God's memory of all past transgressions, something that the sacrifices of the Law could never achieve (cf. v. 3). This leads naturally to the same generalising conclusion as that in verse 12, expressed here negatively. **Where there is remission of these sins, there is no longer any offering for sin.** The completed self-oblation of Christ has rendered any other sin-offering superfluous.
p. 171

Richards says:

Forgiveness. Forgiveness in the Bible is never seen as "passing over" guilt. The root meaning of both Old and New Testament words for forgiveness is "send away." God deals with guilt by *sending off* sin, not just passing over it. With forgiveness, the source and cause of "guilt feelings" are removed.
p. 94

How is this possible? It's possible because in His forgiveness God actually does *send off* our sins. Blood-bought forgiveness means remission of sins (10:18). Sins that have been sent off in this way have no more real existence! They simply cannot be remembered against us. Human forgiveness can never deal with the original act; it must deal only with the guilt incurred. God's forgiveness goes beyond dealing with guilt, and erases the very sin that made us guilty!
pp. 94-95

A. T. Robertson says:

This is the logical and triumphant conclusion concerning the better sacrifice offered by Christ (9:13-10:18). As Jeremiah had prophesied, there is actually remission (*aphesis*, removal) of sins. Repetition of the sacrifice is needless.
p. 410

Lane says:

The conclusion to the cultic argument introduced in 9:1 is expressed as an axiom: where the sins of God's people have been decisively put away, a sin offering is no longer necessary. In the light of the preceding argument, the fulfillment of Jeremiah's oracle is tied directly to the new situation introduced by the sacrificial death of Jesus. The basis for speaking about the decisive putting away of sins is the efficacy of the sacrifice offered by Christ on the cross.

p. 269

Sins no longer provide an obstacle to an enduring covenantal relationship to God. The people of the new covenant enjoy unhindered access to God in worship (10:19-22). The only sacrifice required of them is a "sacrifice of praise" (13:15).

p. 269

Lenski says:

When God sends away "these," namely our sins and our violations of his law, so that even his memory does not recall them, they are gone indeed. But the Spirit himself testifies that God actually does this.

p. 341

MacArthur says:

The work of sacrifice is done. There will be no more. Forgiveness is already provided for those who trust in this one perfect sacrifice. Why would anyone want to go back to the old sacrifices, which were never finished and never effective? To reject is to have no other hope of forgiveness--ever.

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). Salvation--glorious and perfect salvation--is promised in the Old Covenant and purchased in the New.

p. 257

English says:

May this tremendous truth grip us: the one perfect sin-offering has been made and cannot be made again, nor need it be. All has been done for us. "There is no more offering for sin." Rest in this fact, and walk in the light of the Man who, having "offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."
p. 303

Stedman says:

That is why Jesus sat down. What else was there to do? It is all finished, it is sufficient, it is adequate. It will win the prize, it will do the job. When you have rested upon all Jesus Christ has done for you, you have entered into a place of provision of power. *I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts* (Heb. 8:10). You can know in any situation what God wants done and expect Him to do it through you. More than that, you enter into perfect peace of heart. There is no quarrel between you and God any longer; you are accepted in the Beloved. *I will remember their sins no more* (Heb. 8:12). Now, the writer says, when you come to this place, what more do you need? Where there is forgiveness, there is no more offering for sins needed. Of course not. Man has drawn near to God, the relationship is complete.
p. 160

(When Counseling Is Not Enough by J. Kirk Johnston)

Dear Abby,

I have read many letters in your column from people who say they cannot forgive. What they really mean is, they will not forgive. Abby, withholding forgiveness hurts only you. It can eat you alive.

I want to tell you what I was able to forgive in hopes that it will help people who are harboring petty grudges to forgive, and get on with their lives.

Lee and I have been married for 10 years. Last year he became completely burned out at his job and also suffered a severe back injury. I was expecting our fourth baby and we have another family sharing our home. All this created a very explosive atmosphere, and Lee flipped out. Our baby was born and developed mononucleosis at three weeks. Lee announced that he didn't love me anymore, and he left me.

The other family moved out suddenly, and I was alone with a sick newborn and three other small children. I couldn't eat or sleep. I lost 47 pounds, got hooked on tranquilizers and had a nervous breakdown. Lee came back, put me in a mental hospital, then proceeded to have an affair with my best friend of 20 years (the affair lasted four months).

While I was in the hospital, my best friend's husband broke into our house and caught his wife and Lee in bed together. He told Lee that he could have her--then Lee and my girlfriend became "engaged." They told me later that they had planned to drive me to commit suicide so I would be out of the way.

After I was released from the hospital, Lee tricked me into a false reconciliation. Two hours after making love to me, he stood me up at the airport and took his girlfriend to Florida. Meanwhile, my kids were aware of everything that was going on, and my 7-year-old kept begging me to shoot him in the head because he didn't want to live. It was terrible. We lost our home, so the children and I moved into my parents' attic with no heat--during a Pennsylvania storm.

Suddenly, Lee came to his senses and broke up with his girlfriend. Her husband forgave her and she went back to him and their three children. And guess what? I forgave Lee and took him back. I got counseling, went to church and kept reading my Bible. I'm off the pills, eating normally, and our family is intact. We got our house back, Lee is totally repentant, and we have restructured our lives to avoid anything that could be destructive to our family.

Two weeks ago, I went to my girlfriend and told her I forgave her. We cried together and talked for six hours. Forgiveness, when it is least deserved, has true healing powers. In forgiving her, I released her of all guilt, and now God is able to work in my life.

I still feel a little insecure at times, but I'm much better today than I was six months ago. A life filled with thoughts of revenge and bitterness is no life at all. Abby, if you think this letter will help others to forgive, you have my permission to print it with my name.

Donna Stewart
Hilltown, PA

p. 196-7

(The Tribute by Dennis Rainey with David Boehl)

Sigmund Freud revealed a slice of mankind's decayed heart when he said, "One must forgive one's enemies, but not before they have been hanged."

(Shame and Grace by Lewis B. Smedes)

We are accepted in our most fantastic contradictions and our boring corruptions. Accepted with our roaring vices and our purring virtues. We are damaged masterpieces, stunted saints; there are ogres and angels in our basements that we can hardly tell apart and that we have not dared to face up to. For the whole shadowed self each one of us is, grace has one loving phrase: you are accepted. Accepted. Accepted. Accepted.
p. 117

Charge It!

A little girl was sitting on Santa Claus' lap. She gave him a whole list of expensive toys which she wanted for Christmas and then without a word of appreciation, she jumped off Santa's lap and started toward her mother. Her concerned mother spoke quickly, "Honey, haven't you forgotten something?" The little girl thought for a moment, then said, "O, yes." Then turning back toward Santa, she shouted, "Charge it."

God has already "charged" our sins to His Son and has paid the debt in full. What more could you ask for at Christmas?

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

THE BONDAGE BREAKER

”Forgiveness is agreeing to live with the consequences of another person’s sin.”

Forgiveness is critical to a Christian’s freedom because unforgiveness is the means Satan uses to gain ground in the life of the believer. Scripture teaches that we must forgive in the same way we have been forgiven. In His mercy, God has given us what we needed, not what we deserved.

Forgiveness is hard for us because it goes against our sense of fairness. To forgive is a conscious decision of the will. Since God commands us to do it, we know that it is possible. We need to realize that forgiveness is not just for the sake of the offender, but also for ourselves--so that we can be free.

The high cost of forgiveness lies in the fact that it involves being willing to live with the consequences of someone else’s sin. Genuine forgiveness is always substitutional, just as Jesus took upon Himself the penalty for our sin. That, in fact, is our motive for forgiving: He forgave us.

What are the steps to true forgiveness?

~Acknowledge the hurt. The beginning point is to emotionally accept the fact that you have been hurt. Christians often try to deny or cover up their pain, but we need to allow God to bring it to the surface so He can heal it. Pray asking God to remind you of each person you need to forgive. (In almost every case, the first ones who come to mind will be your parents.) Make a list.

~Take it to the cross. Realizing that God has forgiven those who offended you, choose to take on the burden of their offenses by promising not to use information about what they have done against them in the future. If you wait until you feel like forgiving, it will never happen. Emotions can heal only after you have decided to forgive.

~State it. Say to God about each person on your list: ”Lord, I forgive him/her for _____.” It’s important not to avoid the bare emotional decision to forgive by saying ”Please help me forgive” or ”Lord, I want to forgive.” Nor should you try to rationalize or excuse the offender’s behavior. Only forgiveness will free you from the past.

”The bondage breaker” by Neil Anderson. Spirit of Revival, Aug 1993. Pages 8-9.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

THE BLACKS AND WHITES OF FORGIVENESS

In her later years Corrie Ten Boom told this story: “I wish I could say that after a long and fruitful life traveling the world, I had learned to forgive my enemies. I wish I could say that merciful and charitable thoughts just naturally flowed from me and on to others. But they don’t.

”I recall the time--and I was almost 70--when some Christian friends whom I loved and trusted did something which hurt me. You would have thought that, having been able to forgive the guards in Ravensbruck, forgiving Christian friends would be child’s play. It wasn’t. For weeks I seethed inside. But at least I asked God again to work His miracle in me. And again it happened: first the cold-blooded decision, then the flood of joy and peace. I had forgiven my friends; I was restored to my Father.

”Then, why was I suddenly awake in the middle of the night, rehashing the whole affair again? ‘My friends!’ I thought. ‘People I loved. If it had been strangers, I wouldn’t have minded so.’

”I sat up and switched on the light. ‘Father, I thought it was all forgiven. Please help me do it.’

”But the next night I woke up again. They’d talked so sweetly too! Never a hint of what they were planning. ‘Father!’ I cried in alarm. ‘Help me!’

”Then it was that another secret of forgiveness became evident. It is not enough to simply say, ‘I forgive you.’ I must also begin to live it out. And in my case, that meant acting as though their sins, like mine, were buried in the depths of the deepest sea. The reason the thoughts kept coming back to me was that I kept turning their sin over in my mind.

”And so I discovered another of God’s principles: We can trust God not only for our emotions but also for our thoughts. As I asked Him to renew my mind He also took away my thoughts.

”He still had more to teach me, however, from this single episode. Many years later, after I had passed my eightieth birthday, an American friend came to visit me in Holland. As we sat in my little apartment he asked me about those people from long ago who had taken advantage of me.

”‘It is nothing,’ I said a little smugly. ‘It is all forgiven.’

”‘By you, yes,’ he said. ‘But what about them? Have they accepted your forgiveness?’

”‘They say there is nothing to forgive! They deny it ever happened. No matter what they say, though, I can prove they were wrong.’ I went eagerly to my desk. ‘See, I have it in black and white! I saved all their letters and I can show you where . . .’

”‘Corrie!’ My friend slipped his arm through mine and gently closed the drawer. ‘Aren’t you the one whose sins are at the bottom of the sea? Yet are the sins of your friends etched in black and white?’

”For an astonishing moment I could not find my voice. ‘Lord Jesus,’ I whispered at last, ‘who takes all my sins away, forgive me for preserving all these years the evidence against others! Give me the grace to burn all the blacks and whites as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to Your glory.’

”I did not go to sleep that night until I had gone through my desk and pulled out those letters--curling now with age--and fed them all into my little coal-burning grate. As the flames leaped and glowed, so did my heart.”

[Tramp for the Lord, Fleming H Revell, 1974. Pages 181-183.]

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The Old Covenant is the “shadow,” the New Covenant is the reality.

LESSON #2: The Law by means of its sacrifices could never perfect those who are drawing near to God.

LESSON #3: The sacrifices were a constant reminder, not a remedy for sin.

LESSON #4: “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to be taking away sins.”

LESSON #5: A body was prepared in the virgin’s womb for the Savior to come and to offer that acceptable sacrifice for sin once and for all.

LESSON #6: Jesus Christ came to do the will of the Father.

LESSON #7: He came to take away the Old Covenant in order that He might establish the New Covenant.

LESSON #8: Jesus, by the sacrifice of Himself upon the Cross, has done all that is necessary for us to have acceptance and a perfect standing in the presence of a Holy God.

LESSON #9: Jesus Christ, after making His sacrifice, sat down at the right hand of God indicating the fact that His work was done.

LESSON #10: We have the promise in the New Covenant that our sins and lawless deeds will positively not be remembered any more.

LESSON #11: There is total forgiveness in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wuest says:

The writer now draws an important conclusion to all this. He says that in view of the fact that sin has been paid for, there is no more need of the constant repetition of sacrificial offerings. And that is exactly what the writer is attempting to instill into the minds and hearts of his readers, namely, that the New Testament in Jesus' blood is superior to and takes the place of the First Testament in animal blood.
pp. 177-8

I received a Christmas card that had a special significance for me. I'd like to summarize it for you:

"If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator. If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. But since our greatest need was forgiveness, God sent us a Savior."

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

(Broken in the Right Place by Alan E. Nelson)

The world breaks everyone and afterwards many are strong at the broken places.

--Ernest Hemingway

p. 9

Brokenness is a process issue. It is a part of God's character building process.

"Almost every one of us," says Gordon MacDonald, "will encounter some issue that introduces us to brokenness at a far greater intensity than we ever thought possible. . . . Broken worlds are a significant part of living; we must be vigilant enough to avoid the avoidable, but prepared and disciplined enough to persevere when facing the unexpected or the unavoidable."

p. 18

Malcolm Muggeridge said, "We are henceforth to worship defeat, not victory; failure, not success; surrender, not defiance; deprivation, not satiety; weakness, not strength. We are to lose our lives in order to keep them, to die in order to live."

p. 24

Unshakable faith is faith that has been shaken.
Unquenchable joy is joy that has been quenched.
Unbreakable love is love that has been broken.

p. 36

(The Forever Feast by Dr. Paul Brand)

Richard Foster tells of an occasion at the Keswick convention in England long ago. It is vivid to me because I was there when that great Scottish Bible teacher, Graham Scroggie, was leading some of the services in that wonderful annual Christian convention. He was a born teacher, and a master of the English language in his rolling Scottish accent. Yet, as all truly eloquent people do, he used simple words.

Scroggie was leading the missionary meeting in the smaller of the two great tents in Keswick, wearing, as he always did, the academic gown of his university. He gave the missionary challenge, followed by prayer. Some in the audience stood to offer themselves for service, and then the meeting concluded. Graham Scroggie stayed at the front, until all had left, except for one young woman who just continued sitting, thoughtfully and by herself. Graham went up to her and asked if there was anything he could do to help her, or clarify something he had said. "No," she replied, "I think I know what God wants me to do, but I cannot seem to make up my mind whether to do it."

"Oh," said Scroggie, "I think you need to come with me to Joppa, and see what Peter said." He turned the leaves of his Bible to the tenth chapter of Acts, and pointed to the story of Peter on the rooftop, when he saw the sheet let down, full of animals, and the voice of God told him to rise, kill and eat. His reply had been, "No, Lord, I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

Scroggie said, "You know there is something strange about Peter's reply to God. He said, 'No, Lord.' Now that is not really a proper sentence at all. Peter could have said 'No' and that would have been a statement. Or he could have just said 'Lord!' and that would have meant 'Yes!' But you just cannot say 'No' and then finish by saying 'Lord.' Those words do not belong together."

Graham Scroggie then wrote on a piece of paper in bold letters the words NO, LORD and put it on his Bible, and gave it to the lady, on her lap. He said, "I think that is what you are trying to say. Now I am going to leave you and go over there to pray for you. I want you to pray too, and then take this pencil and cross out one of those words."

He hardly had time to kneel down when the Lord told him it was time to go back. He went to her, and saw the word NO had been crossed out. She was sitting back in her chair, crying and repeating to herself, "Jesus is LORD, Jesus is LORD, Jesus is LORD." That was her moment of truth. For her, that was the Lord's Breakfast. That was when she knew decisions had to be made; and she made them; decisions from which there was no turning back.

pp. 217-19

(The Christian in Complete Armour by William Gurnall)

Have you ever freely given yourself to Him? Everybody professes this, but the presumptuous soul, like Ananias, lies to the Holy Ghost by keeping back the most important part of what he promised to lay at Christ's feet. The enjoyment of lust is entwined about his heart and he cannot persuade himself to deliver it up to God's justice. His life is bound up in it, and if God will have it from him He must take it by force; there is no hope of gaining his consent. Is this the picture of your faith? If it is, you have blessed yourself in an idol; you have mistaken a bold face for a believing heart.

October 24