

Father, we know that when we come to the death of Jesus Christ, we come to sacred ground. We know that there is no issue in all the Bible that is as important to Your mind and heart and plan as this one. You told us that He was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world. There was no accident or coincidence. He was not a victim of circumstances. He died because You ordained it from eternity past. You planned all the circumstances of it. You hardened the heart of religious leaders to accuse Him falsely. You told us long ago in the prophets that You would do that and that they would not listen. All this was done to put Him on the cross to die for our sins that we might have everlasting life. We marvel at Your plan, and pray that You will deepen our understanding of the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf. It is in the precious name of our Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, that we pray. Amen.

The death of Christ sometimes is nothing more than a discussion of the location. Having just returned from Israel, I am very aware of that. Inside of the present city walls, but outside of the walls in Jesus' day, is what we call the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It is a monstrous church that represents many religions. It claims to be over the site of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. The church certainly gets in the way, and by the way, for those of you have ever heard about it, a decision has been made to knock down a lot of those buildings. They have been built over this site and so it is needed that they expose it as it was, so that people can see it better. That is a good move, but this is the Catholic view and it has a lot of tradition behind it. The wall of

ancient Jerusalem at the time of Christ, has been discovered in this area, and this site is outside the wall—exactly like the Bible says. Because it is inside of the present city walls, it makes a lot of Evangelicals nervous. The church itself is so awful looking and all of its traditions cloud the issue. But from strictly a scholastic point of view, is an interesting thing. Now it is on the west side of Jerusalem—the opposite side of where the Mount of Olives is.

North of Jerusalem (north of the Damascus Gate) is another site that Evangelicals claim as their own. It is called the Garden Tomb. They also have been building a lot and making this into a beautiful garden. You say, “Well just because there is a garden today doesn’t mean there was a garden at the time of the Lord.” The Bible says near the place where He was crucified was a garden. To have a garden in a dry, barren desert you need water. Right here in front of this area is a cistern of water. There are only three such systems in all of Jerusalem from ancient times. This one holds over 250,000 gallons of water. Also in the same location is an ancient wine press, which of course means that a vineyard was near by. Thus, it is pretty strong proof that there was a garden there.

Now when they take you to see the place of the skull, it is kind of hard to visualize it, but people do try to see the skull. I am not sure about all this. First of all, this was cut out years ago. There is a bus station there now. Its noise causes you to have a little problem meditating on the death of Christ, but around the side of this hill is the Church of St. Stephen and that church commemorates the stoning of Stephen. Remember that Jesus was crucified at the place of the skull, Golgotha. In Jewish thinking, when a person was killed or stoned to death, it was not on a hill. You know, on a hill far away stood an old rugged cross. I am sorry, but it was not on a hill. The Romans did not crucify on a hill either. They would have stoned him at the foot of that hill—of the place of the

skull. There are a lot of interesting things. The Romans would have crucified along the road normally.

Now the Garden Tomb is, of course, a beautiful thing to see. The Bible said that near where He died there was a garden and in there was a tomb that no man had ever laid. Joseph of Aramethea. This is radical but I just want you to understand that the place is not that significant to me. I do not think either one of those places is the place. I am a little radical on this, and I am sure the other teachers here would be glad to refute what I say. That is okay. I just want my opinion to be heard. I do not think that any of these places are the place.

It is interesting that the nation of Israel agrees with me—or I agree with them. The rabbis all tell you where *Yeshua* was crucified. You see, He had to be crucified on the Mount of Olives. Why? Because it is the only place where you could have seen the veil of the temple rent, which is what the Bible says. You see, if you are on the Mount of Olives then you would be looking down at that gigantic temple and you could see the veil of the temple rent or torn in two. That is what the Bible says.

Because I am a Bible literalist, there is no way that anybody could have seen that. The answer other people give is that, “Well, it was just reported.” But no, they saw it! I am just a gung-ho person for details. It also says that He was hung on a tree. No, the idea of this little neat wooden cross came out of tradition. I think what happened is that He carried a beam, and not a cross. The beam was nailed up to an olive tree and He was hung on the tree. Again, I am a Bible literalist. The Bible says He hung on a tree. If the Bible says so, I believe it. I do not want to argue with you. Well, a little bit, but I think it was on the Mount of Olives. I think that is where He died.

There are a lot of other wonderful things to connect there, because when He destroys all the nations of the world after the Battle of Armageddon, He will ascend up to the Mount of Olives (the place where He died). His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives in triumph. “It is finished.”

I do not want to get into this preaching. Why did Jesus die? You can probably rattle that off real quick, but I am going to make it miserable for you, because we are going to go through fifteen different reasons why Jesus died.

Look at Matthew 27. Jon Courson, whom I was listening to this morning, described the scourging of Christ in detail.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band [of soldiers]. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put [it] upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify [him].

(Matthew 27:27-31)

I never can read this without seeing the place. I have had many trips to Israel and Jerusalem, but we never miss going into the ancient Tower of Antonio, down to that ground floor of the ancient Roman stones of that ancient place. There are huge Roman stones. There where Jesus was taken,

in the stone, still sitting there today carved in the rock is the game of the king, which the Roman soldiers played. They did it with many prisoners. That is what we believe is happening right here. It is interesting when you go in there, because a lot of the other sites people are talking because all kinds of people are visiting Israel (some know the Lord and some do not), but at this particular place, when you go down these stairs into this area underneath the present buildings, I have noticed that no matter whether they are unbelievers or some other religion, there is something that happens to people down there. First of all when you get down there, you are realizing, “Hey, this is the actual spot. There is no doubt about it.”

This particular place has been run for years by the Sisters of Mount Zion, a Roman Catholic convent. The original sisters of Mount Zion are no longer alive or present in Israel to give their lecture, but these sisters were in my opinion some of the greatest preachers the world has ever known. They were evangelical Catholic women, and they did not go along with a lot of stuff in the Catholic Church, even though they were nuns. They loved the Lord with all their hearts, and would preach the gospel there. There was one named Sister Agnes, and I heard her many times. I could hardly wait to hear her again. There is not a single preacher I have heard (e.g., Billy Graham or otherwise) who possibly could tell the gospel like this woman. She did it many times a day—day after day. It is a wonderful sight to see her weep every time she talked about her Savior and told the story of what happened there. One can never forget it. I think we take a little lightly the suffering of our Lord. I think we are just a little too quick to go past the details.

There, embedded in that ancient Roman rock, from that time and at that very place, is dug into the rock the game of the king. It is explained to you how they would mock a person who claimed to have some authority. That is where they mocked Jesus.

The majority of men who were scourged by the Romans died under the scourging. It lacerated the back to the point it was nothing but hamburger meat. It was terrible. And then to put a robe on it! The robe would stick in there, of course. Then to stick that crown of thorns on His head and jam it into His skull! And then to continue to spit on Him! Then take that rod, that scepter, which is solid iron and beat Him with it. By the way, the Greek text indicates in several of the Gospels that they repeatedly beat Him with their fists in addition to the rod. If you want to know what they did to our Lord, just read Isaiah where it says, “His visage was marred beyond recognition.” There are all these nice little pictures we have in the Christian bookstore of Jesus on the cross, but they are not telling the truth. You could not even recognize Him! He was beat to a pulp. His face was tortured unmercifully. The Romans just laughed, mocked, and spat on Him.

Let us pick it up at Matthew 27:31, “And after they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him.” Can you imagine what that must have felt like, to have that robe pulled off? “And put His own raiment on Him and led Him away.” They led Him away to crucify Him.

And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted [thereof], he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his

head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF
THE JEWS. (Matthew 27:32-37)

Now if you compare all of the Gospels (each man is saying what he needed to say from what was on the cross), what was on the cross was written in Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Greek was used because of the Hellenistic culture and many spoke Greek and it was spoken around the world. Latin was used because of the Romans, of course. Hebrew was used because they wanted the Jews to see it. Now the first word was *Yehoshuah* (Jesus). The first letter of that is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. It is the little yod, which looks like an apostrophe. (Hebrew is read from right to left.) *Yehoshuah* and according to the Bible it was “Jesus the Nazarene.” The next word was *ha Nazarite*. The next word would be “and,” which is what we call a *wha*. It is like a little line with a hook on top. The next one would be the king of Jews. *Hamelech Yudio*.

When Jews read Hebrew, from right to left, it is automatic with their brains and learning patterns in language. They see the first letter of every word. That is why a lot of acrostics in the Bible deal with the first letters—because that is Jewish poetry. They were trained to think that way—to see the first letter.

Now turn over to John 19:19, as a few details here are filled in.

And Pilate wrote a title, and put [it] on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, [and] Greek, [and] Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews

to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. (John 19:19-22)

Now why were they so upset by what was on the cross? What you had on the cross reading from right to left in the first letter, are the four letters of the Tetragrammaton (the name of *Yahweh* the Lord). I say, “hallelujah!” There, every Jew who always reads the first letter of every word is reading without any mistake that He is *Yahweh*. They would have been stunned by what they saw. The four letters of the name of God, and it was God’s testimony to who was dying. For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. That is why the Jews begged Pilate, “Take that off.” Pilate said, “What I have written, I have written. I’m not changing it. I don’t want anything to do with you, religious leaders.” Is that not interesting?

Now, let us keep reading our story and see what happened.

Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking [him], with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him:

for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. (Matthew 27:38-44)

We are told that the thieves “cast the same in his teeth.” In others words, they were giving insults. Notice that it is “thieves” plural. Both of them were insulting the Lord. Look over at Luke 23:39, “One of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him saying, if Thou be Messiah save Thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him....” Originally he was also insulting, but now, something has happened. What happened? I would like to suggest to you on the basis of the details of the Bible, that these two men were put up there first. Jesus was then put up, and then they tacked on that title, and this man read the title *Yahweh*. All we know is that this verse precedes that discussion.

But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. (Luke 23:40-43)

This refers to the abode of all the righteous dead. Jesus was apparently going to go down there and say, “hello.” It is very interesting.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard [that], said, This [man] calleth for Elijah. (Matthew 27:45-47)

Some of you probably have Bibles that say in the footnote that this is Aramaic. Some of your new translations might even have “Eloi, Eloi.” This is an argument that Jesus spoke Aramaic. That is what they saw, but it could not be Aramaic, because He had to speak Hebrew. What they heard Him caused them to think He was calling for Elijah. The abbreviated nickname of Elijah is still the same today as it was in the first century: Eli. *El* means “God,” and the little *i* is the pronoun “my.” “My God, My God.” It is also the abbreviated name of Elijah. I had a guide named Elijah in the past, and we called him Eli. They still call him the same thing. Christ was speaking Hebrew, and that is obvious by the fact that they said, “He’s calling for Elijah.”

And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled [it] with vinegar, and put [it] on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. (Matthew 27:48-49)

This could be based upon Malachi 4:5-6 because Elijah is to come before the Messiah.

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from

the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;
And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints
which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his
resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto
many. (Matthew 27:50-53)

This is an interesting passage, is it not? These people died again, but that is a visible demonstration of the power of Christ and what had happened here.

Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching
Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they
feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. (Matthew
27:54)

They saw these things. They saw the veil of temple rent. “They feared greatly saying, truly this was the Son of God.”

And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed
Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was
Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and
the mother of Zebedee's children. (Matthew 27:55-56)

Then it is the story of Joseph of Aramethea taking the body and putting it into his grave. That is amazing, is it not? The crucifixion.

Why did Jesus die? Hebrews 10:7 says that it was to do the will of God:

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and [offering] for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure [therein]; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all]. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Hebrews 10:7-14)

Are you not glad that He did the will of God? It is by the will of God, not the will of men, that we are saved or sanctified. It was specifically the will of our Savior that caused Him to go to the cross.

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:13)

Second, Jesus died to save sinners. This is a frequent message in the Bible.

But go ye and learn what [that] meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Matthew 9:13)

In Luke 19:10, He said to Zacchaeus, “The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” A lost sinner!

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. (1 Timothy 1:15)

Do you realize that you are a sinner, and apart from the death of Christ you will be lost forever? Several years ago, I had a visible illustration that happened to me of what it is to be lost. Maybe you have done this too. I went to Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico, which are located about 750 feet below the ground. There is a little path that takes you out to a little seating area that they call the Chapel of the Rocks. You hear the guide talk about these caverns. They are amazing and spectacular! During the course of the guide’s lecture he said, “How many of you know what it’s like to be lost?” Everybody was skeptical. He said, “Well, in a moment we’re going to give you a chance to experience it. So we’re going to turn the lights out in Carlsbad Caverns for just a few moments.” He said, “They tell us that if a man were down here for seven days in this condition, he would be totally insane.” Then they turned the lights out. It did not take but five seconds until people were begging him to turn the lights back on. You tried to move your hand to feel motion, but you could not even see your hand. He warned us about not falling over the side. So a lot of people got down on the ground. So did I. I bumped into an elderly lady who was scared to death,

so he turned the lights back on. It was a frightening experience, and I thought, again, why Jesus died—to save lost sinners.

Hell will be a place of incredible lostness. There will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. The guide at Carlsbad was not a Christian, but actually quoted that verse as an explanation of what would happen to somebody who would stay in that condition where there is no light at all. In darkness you lose direction. You lose the ability to even feel physical things, like your body itself and where it is. Lost! To think that the Bible says, “lost forever.” It is outer darkness. Hell is no party time. Jesus came to save lost sinners. He seeks to save them. How about you?

Third, He came to fulfill the law. In the Sermon on the Mount we have a statement, which causes some people to struggle.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I
am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you,
Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise
pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:17-18)

Now what did He mean by “to fulfill the law”? That is the reason He came, but if He said, “I come to give My life for the world,” then why did He say I am come to fulfill the law? Romans 10:4 says, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to those who believe.” It is amazing to me how some people read this saying, “Somehow the law is no good or whatever.” We do not even understand what is being said. The heart and soul of the law, class, is the sacrificial system. The penalties for breaking the law are handled by the sacrificial system. Everything that is pictured there is pointing to God’s way that man can come to Him. How can we approach a holy

God? The answer is through sacrifice. “The blood of bulls and goats can never take away sins.”

They were types and illustrations. The law is a school master (or a tutor) to lead us to the Messiah that we might be justified by faith. There is nothing wrong with the law. If you preach it correctly, you will see Jesus on every page. The law points to the Savior as the only solution for man’s sin.

There are two ways to look at this:

1. “Oh those sacrifices. They never took away sin. What a bunch of junk the Jews were in. We got Jesus.”
2. “Wait a minute. Jesus is the fulfillment of what that law is telling the people.”

It is very interesting to just look at the Bible in that way. For everything that the law said, Jesus was the answer to. Everything!

The fourth reason that Christ died according to the Bible is to redeem those who are under the law. Now this point deals with the law’s condemnation. How many lies does it take to make a liar? Just one. How many sins does it take to make a sinner? James 2:10 says, “If you offend in one point of the law, you are guilty of all of it.” Now, there is a curse on the law. If you break God’s law, there is a whole list of curses or penalties. The very last curse mentioned in the law is, “Cursed is he who hangs on a tree.” It was the worst thing that could happen to a Jew. You can understand why David’s heart was broken when Absalom was hung in a tree.

Go to Galatians 3 and watch this. It is interesting to me that the one curse that is the worst thing imaginable to a Jew is the particular penalty that Jesus took.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. (Galatians 3:13)

“The soul that sins must die,” and people teach that and they teach it correctly, but they do not tell them all they need to tell them sometimes. How was Christ made a curse for us? Paul then quotes Deuteronomy 21, “Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.”

The very method that Christ chose was the worst curse in the law. Why did He do this? That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, and that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

“You are not redeemed,” says 1 Peter 1:18, “with corruptible things of silver and gold.” All the money in the world cannot buy your redemption. You were redeemed by the precious blood of the Messiah as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. To this I say, “Hallelujah!”

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Galatians 4:4-5)

Let me explain this to you. Paul is talking about the slave market, which were all over the ancient Roman world. They usually were located in the *agora*, the marketplace. The word *agora* is a Greek word for “purchase” or “buying market.” The word “redeemed” is *agoradzo* (or *exagoradzo*, “to buy out of.”) It is translated as “redeem” in the Bible. Now, when these slaves were captured, they were brought to these slave markets and you could buy a slave. They would auction them off and you could buy a slave by paying the purchase price. Paul teaches that you were “bought with a price, therefore, glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The Bible says that Christ was a “ransom price for you that believe.” You see, the initial thing of buying a slave in the market, is the first step of redemption. It requires a price, and for us, that price was the precious blood of Christ. He has redeemed you.

There is another word that means that a former slave owner, who—for some reason or another—does not like you. You are incorrigible and rebellious. He could kill you if he wanted to, but he wants to get some money off of you so he brings you to the slave market in hopes that some other owner will buy you. The new owner redeems you from being a slave to that owner to become his slave. The Bible uses that word of our redemption also. Is that not interesting? We have left a state of being Satan’s slave, and we are now a slave of Jesus Christ. This is how Paul writes to most of the Christians. We are a bondservant, *doulos*, of the Lord Jesus Christ, because He bought us and paid the price.

There is another word for redemption, which is a compound Greek word that speaks about a man who really likes this slave. He has a wonderful wife and five children over here and is just begging somebody to set him free. This man has a lot of money and does not really worry about losing the money. He sees this dear guy, likes him and fell in love with his kids or something like that. So, he decides to buy him out of the slave market to set him free. He will never be a slave

again. That word is also used of us! You are no longer a slave to sin, death, hell or Satan, because you have been redeemed! You have been bought out of the slave market of sin. You do not belong there any more. To this I say, “Hallelujah!”

But it gets even better. There is one more thing a man can do. Let us suppose that he took the gentleman and his family home and he really likes this guy. In fact, he falls in love with him and thinks, “You are just like a son to me. You know what, I don’t have any heirs and I’ve got a big, huge property here and I’ll tell you what, I really like you. So I’m going to officially adopt you as my son and all that I have belongs to you.” When Jesus redeemed you, He also adopted you as His son. You are now joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Is that not great? I would say that our redemption is pretty good. What do you say? It is pretty good.

So far, Jesus died to:

1. Do the will of God.
2. Save lost sinners.
3. Fulfill the law.
4. Redeem those who are under the law.

Fifth, Jesus died to demonstrate God’s righteousness. Now, God’s character is manifested in a host of ways in the Bible: through His miracles, judgments, the universe He created. He tells us about Himself. “The heavens declare the glory of God.” One of God’s essential attributes is righteousness. There is no sin in Him. He possesses justice and judgment. When Jesus died on the cross, He demonstrated the righteousness of God. It is almost a paradox. Let me explain.

How could God be righteous in allowing an innocent person to die for others? It does not sound just and fair to me. Why does He have to die for what He did not do? How does that demonstrate righteousness?

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.
(Romans 3:24-25)

In other words, He has been putting up with you, to declare His righteousness, so that He might be just. He has to deal with sin.

To declare, [I say], at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.
(Romans 3:26)

What is it talking about? When God poured out His wrath on Jesus all the suffering and all the torture of His death on the cross showed that He was just in paying for sin. Sin had to be paid for. It had to be dealt with, or else God would not be just. The only way that God would be able to justify us (to declare us righteous), is if the one who bore the penalty was not guilty of anything.

Let me put it to you another way with a simple illustration that I read years ago and cut out of the paper. It took place in the Midwest, in a little small town. It was kind of big news in this town because the judge had to face his own son in his own court. His son apparently had, I forget all

the details, stolen a car. I do not know what else. He had to be sentenced in front of his own dad. Of course, that little town just all turned out to see what was going to go on in the court room. They were all kind of shocked because the kid came in front of his dad to be sentenced and there was no mercy at all. He fined him the maximum penalty of the law. I do not know what it was (probably five or ten thousand dollars). It was that or prison. He fined him all this money and the people were shocked. Then before they could even catch their breath, the judge got up out of his seat, and walked over to the rack. He took off his political robe and put it on the rack. He came over and stood beside his boy and put his arm around his son. Then he said, “Son as your judge I had to sentence you, but as your father, I will pay the penalty for you.”

I cut that little bit out because it is a good illustration. As our judge, to be righteous, He has to deal with sin, but as our loving, heavenly Father, He sent His Son to die in our place. As judge, He had to sentence us, but as our Father He paid the penalty for us through His own Son. It is absolutely amazing!

For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that
we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
(2 Corinthians 5:21)

I am declared righteous because someone paid my penalty. Amen!

[[This editorial break represents a fifteen-minute intermission.]]

One of the most common things that people say is, “Jesus died to manifest His love to us.” Of course, that is true, but it was not merely that. Liberal theology has always held that the point of the death of Christ is to show us what love is all about. “God is love.” The Unity people even said that is all God is—just a principle of love.

He did show His love. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”

Romans 5:8, “God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” But do not make the mistake that a lot of people do. They make this a little more syrupy than they should. We are not talking about the gushy romantic, emotional vibes that you and I have with one another. We are talking about unconditional love. It is interesting, in the passages that it portrays us as being unworthy of it, that God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. The depth of God’s love is to love the unlovely. To love somebody who did not deserve it, but deserved hell instead.

This even involved laying down His life (1 John 3:16). “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10). God did not love you because you loved Him. You loved Him because He loved you. This makes all the difference in the world. Some say, “Oh, if you just really love the Lord, He will love you back.” No, He will love you even if you do not love Him back. We learn a lot about what *agape* is all about, and that is the sacrificial and unconditional love of God.

Another purpose of the death of the Lord Jesus is to bring us to God. This is no small task in that God is who He is, and man is who he is. To bring us to God, required the death of Jesus Christ.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom [are] all things, and by whom [are] all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (Hebrews 2:9-10)

Now look at 1 Peter 3:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. (1 Peter 3:18)

It says, point blank, “that He might bring us to God.” Back in Hebrews 2 it brings up another critical issue that happened when Jesus died.

Christ died to destroy the devil’s power. What was that power? The power of death. The devil is a destroyer. If you go after his baits and it is going to destroy your life. Everything he entices us with, as attractive as it may be, will destroy your life. You know all of his attempts to make it attractive, but they do not alter the fact.

I was watching Larry King, and there was this actor who has had this alcohol problem that was real serious. He was saying how in the movies he was in part of the pattern of most movies, you come into somebody’s house and they say, “Do you want a drink?” Then they go over and pour them a drink or whatever. It is kind of like a part of every single script. He said it looked so

attractive and cool to him. So he put a bar in his home. Everybody was really complementing him on this beautiful bar and nice portrayal of all kinds of liquors. Then the guy almost lost his life—that which was attractive to him and made him so popular almost destroyed his life. Of course, it does destroy a lot of people's lives.

Whether it is drugs, sex, or whatever, it is interesting that everything the devil has, all of his baits and enticements, are intended to destroy you and me. He gives us temporary relief or pleasure to entice us. Then he destroys us with it.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,
he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death
he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the
devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their
lifetime subject to bondage. (Hebrews 2:14-15)

I do not know if it is in your heart yet, but you are not under the devil's control anymore, after you come to Christ. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." The devil's power over you has been broken, and you do not have to be a slave to sin anymore.

Christ also died to be a merciful and faithful high priest. Do you realize that if Jesus never became a man, if He never went to the cross, then we could continue to accuse Him that He did not understand what we went through.

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his]
brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in

things [pertaining] to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:17-18)

In Hebrews 4, we see the impact of this.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

He became man and suffered and died in our place. Therefore, He can be a merciful and faithful high priest. Thank God for it!

Christ also came to serve and to give His life as a ransom. Now, we have a problem here about the death of Christ and I want you to put your finger in both passages. I want you to understand these passages. That is a big hint, is it not? The two passages are Matthew 20:28 and 1 Timothy 2:5-6. Both of these passages say a similar phrase, but the conclusions are different. It looks like a contradiction, and it deals with the subject of Calvinism and Arminianism, concerning unlimited and limited atonement.

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:28)

Christ has paid that purchase price to get you out of the slave market. Now the Greek uses the word for many. That is clear in the text.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

Now Matthew 28 says a “ransom for the many,” but 1 Timothy 2:6 says a “ransom for all.” Which is it? Well, it is actually both. The answer is found in the preposition. Though the English preposition “for” is the same in both cases, it is not in Greek.

You need to know this. In Matthew 20:28 the preposition used is *anti*, which in English today means “against.” That is not its original meaning. It originally meant “in the stead of.” It is a word of substitution. For instance, the Antichrist is not simply against Christ, although he is, but he is a substitution Christ. He is a counterfeit, who is in the stead of Christ. In Matthew 20:28, Christ died in the stead of the many—obviously the many who believe in Him. Did Christ’s death substitute for those who believe in Him? The answer is yes. Did He die for the elect? Absolutely!

Now in 1 Timothy 2:6, it says that He is a ransom for all. Here it is not *anti*, but the Greek preposition is *huper*. The word means “in the behalf of.” It is a word of sufficiency. Matthew 20:28 is *anti*, a word of substitution, and 1 Timothy 2:6 is *huper*, a word of sufficiency. What do

we mean? Was Christ's death in the behalf of all, whether they believe in Him or not?

Absolutely! It was sufficient. Why? Because God was in Christ. God's life would equal the sum total of all human life, which He Himself created. Sure it was sufficient, but it is only efficient—it only works for those who believe.

So you say, "Which belief do you believe? Are you a Calvinist or an Arminian?" Well, I am a Calvinist if you mean, "Did Christ die for the elect?" But I am an Arminian if you mean, "Did Christ die for the whole world?" I believe them both. Does everybody understand? Some people say, "Well you're a Calminian." No. I am just a Bible preacher. That is all. The Bible indicates that He was ransom in the stead of the many who believe in Him. He is a ransom also on the behalf of all men. Okay.

He also died in order to reconcile us to God. Let us suppose that you and a friend of yours have a bad relationship. Do you have anybody like that? Somebody from the past or somebody you are sitting next to right now, or is across the room and you do not dare get close to them. Is there somebody that you just do not like? You do not get along? We could start a riot here. We all have these situations in life and sometimes we say, "Hey, why don't you get reconciled with that person?" Now that assumes that there is some hostility between the two of you. There is something wrong. There is a barrier between the two of you. Now it could be the fault of both of you (e.g., Some misinterpretations or misunderstandings, something was said and you took it wrong, or it was said with a lack of sensitivity to your feelings, etc.). Life is filled with this. People often wear their heart on their sleeve, and no matter what you say to them, they are hurt. It is as if their mission in life to tell you that they are hurt. This is what I call "Christian masochism." You just want to be pained again today. You feel better hitting your head against the wall, because it feels so good when you stop.

So what do we do to straighten it out? It is a tough thing. A lot of people go through life and never straighten anything out, because they do not have the courage to go up and say, “Hey look, there is something wrong. I said something and you said something.” Or, “Here’s what I think...,” or whatever. People do not like to do that. They would rather mope and sit soak and sour. Their pride keeps them from getting it straightened out.

Do you suppose that the pride of man could keep him from straightening himself out with God? The problem in our relationship with God is not God’s problem. It is our problem. The hostility rests in our hearts. The Bible says we were enemies. We are the ones that need to be reconciled to God. God does not need to be reconciled to us. It is interesting to think that through. We are the ones that have the problem.

How have we offended God? Well, we have disobeyed Him. Our sin is a transgression of His law. That is why, when King David confessed his sin, he said, “Against Thee, and Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight.” We have offended God!

God has already done something about it. He is willing to fellowship with you even though you have offended Him many times and will continue to do so. He is willing to fellowship with you because He solved it already. He has already reconciled you to Himself. How did He do that? By paying for whatever is wrong with you. He has already taken the enmity and the hostility away. He paid for your sin! You were reconciled to God when you put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and now you can have fellowship with God. It is not a strained relationship anymore, because Jesus paid it all and all to Him we owe.

A few of those verses, like Romans 5:9-11, are just full of wonderful words.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Romans 5:9-11)

The Greek word used here speaks of reconciliation. We have received reconciliation that brings us joy. Are you not glad that you can fellowship with God even though you are such a stinker? Are you not glad God is not holding it against you?

A lot of us cannot get our relationships in life restored because one or the other parties involved is too proud to humble themselves. You know, I have always thought that we would get along much better if we just treat each other like dirty, rotten, depraved sinners. Is it not our expectations of people that drive us crazy? We put pressure on folks to perform. Then we get disappointed when they fail us, and our pride makes a big deal over it. You would be a lot happier if you would just humble yourself. I do not care who it is. I do not think it is God's will that you go up to people that you cannot stand and say, "I want to have an eternal ever-loving relationship with you." I think that some things need to be solved. "You said something that really hurt me." Now that is taking a big step because it may be rebuffed. The person may say, "Well so what." So the hostility gets deeper, but taking a chance might be worth it. "You know you said something to me that really hurt me." "Well what was that?" "Oh I didn't mean that." "You didn't?" "No, not at all." "Oh. I still don't like you."

There are a lot of things that, from a human point of view, the reconciliation of a relationship and getting restored is really tough. Here is a tough one for you. It is when you start liking somebody from the opposite sex and you are really interested. Do you know what I mean? You get pretty thick, and you might even write little love notes, saying, “I love you with all my heart.” Then you find out that that card, which said, “I love you with all my heart,” was purchased six at a time, because he sent it to six different people. Wound of wounds! So even in those little love relationships, people get uptight. Have you ever tried to break up gracefully? Talk about an emotional hassle, it can tear your life apart for weeks. You do not really want to keep going with a person, but you cannot figure out why you are so upset because you broke up. The Lord is working in our midst, but it is kind of funny, is it not?

We often do not relate that to our relationship with God. Are you not glad that He loves you no matter what? We are all conditional, and the reason that you are so upset, even though you wanted to break up with that person, is because you do not want rejection from anybody or anything. You are so proud that you want that person to be totally broken hearted that you would have the courage to leave them. You want them to suffer, even though you do not want to be with them. That is how emotional we are.

It is very hard to restore relationships. It is not like business. You cannot just say to the person, “We have been going together now for fifteen years and I want it stopped today, okay? You agree?” You know that just does not happen.

With God, there is no problem on His part—none at all. He loves you so much, even though He knows everything about you. There is not anything that you are going to tell Him that He does

not know. He knows your motives, how bad you are, what's wrong with you, and how many times you are going to stumble in life. He has counted all your wanderings away from Him. All your tears are all in His bottle. He knows about them all. There is not anything you are going to experience that He does not already know about. To think, He loves you! I think He should reconsider, don't you? But He loves you with an everlasting love.

I think one of the most wonderful things in the Bible is that we are reconciled. Colossians 1:20 says, we are reconciled by the blood of His cross. There is no problem anymore. Why are you fighting God? What is the big deal? He is not mad at you. He loves you! Some of us are mad, but He is not. You have been reconciled to God, which is a wonderful thing.

The Bible teaches that Christ also died in order to bear our sins.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that
we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose
stripes ye were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

This is a beautiful verse. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many! Now there is an Old Testament Hebraic (or Jewish) background behind this. On the Day of Atonement, there is a goat that is killed and the blood is put in the holy of holies on the mercy seat by the high priest only, once a year. There is a second goat, called the *hazozel*, which they send out into the wilderness. The priest puts his hands on that goat and confesses all the sins of the people. Then the goat goes out. They send it away live and you are not supposed to ever go after that goat. The figure is, that the goat is bearing our sins away.

When the Bible says that He came to bear our sins, it is picturing that goat which was sent out into the wilderness. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103:12).

A thirteenth reason why He died was to take away our sins.

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

The word “atonement” is *kaphir* in Hebrew, which means “to cover.” All the lambs that were killed in the past covered sin, but Jesus Christ took sin away. I need to give you an illustration.

My wife and I were invited out to dinner at a wealthy family’s house. It was a beautiful home. We were there with several other couples, and it was a party of about sixty people. It was a pretty big dinner party. The house was gorgeous; everything was just fantastic and beautifully set. There was this gorgeous Battenburg lace all over the table, with matching napkins and beautiful china. I am like a bull in a china shop. I do not know why, but I just bump into things. I do know why, but anyway, I am a little clumsy. My wife always makes me nervous. As we come up there, the moment she looked in and saw this scene, then patted me on the hand, saying, “Be careful dear.” I wish she would not say that. It makes me nervous throughout the whole night. So, I am doing pretty good, sitting in the middle of the table and talking. I was even keeping my pinkie up with the little cup and all that. I was being really cool. You know, using the right fork and knife. I never saw so many of them in my life. About half way through the meal, there was baked potatoes and gravy. I was talking and somebody asked for the gravy. The person was trying to

pass it to me, but then I turned and hit it. It went all over this Battenburg lace—all over the table. They were mopping up the gravy and I am trying to help, but they say, “Please leave it alone.” The lady was trying to be kind, and so she brings one of those Battenburg lace napkins and lays it over the gravy stain and says, “There, now nobody knows it is there.” Well, I knew it was there, and everybody else knew what was under that. She said, “Don’t worry about it. We’ll just send it to the cleaners tomorrow and it will all be gone.”

Then, I got to thinking about it. That is the difference between atonement in the Old Testament and Jesus taking sin away in the New Testament. You see, in the Old Testament the blood of the animal was just a covering, but the stain is still there. Jesus is the cleaning. He took the spot away and now there is no trace of it any more. It is brand new—washed white as snow! White as Battenburg lace! It is gone. Amen!

When it says that He took away our sins, it is pretty powerful. In 1 John 3:5 it says, “Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins and in Him was no sin.” Again, why did He come? Why was He manifested to the world? To take away our sins. I love that because, according to the Bible, He will not remember anything against you since He already took them away. They are gone!

Christ also came to forgive us our sins. I think we can understand this. Look at Ephesians 1:7, and Colossians 1:14, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” “If we confess our sins,” says 1 John 1:9, “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” I think you and I understand forgiveness, do we not? You have a problem between you and another brother or sister and you say, “I’m really sorry. I should not have done that. Would you please forgive me?” Now at that point the person who has been sinned

against and is hearing this is trying to make a decision about whether or not this is really sincere. Yet the other person is a proud beast too. You say, “Wait a minute. I was the innocent victim.” You see, you are so proud that you are deciding whether or not the person who asked you to forgive them really deserves it. Let me clear this problem up for you. They do not deserve it, but neither do you. If you got what you deserved you would be in hell.

It is funny how when we are trying to forgive somebody, we are trying to make the decision about whether they deserve it or not, like we are playing God. Who do you think you are?

Here is another one. “I just don’t feel that you’re sincere.” What does that got to do with it? You mean to tell me that forgiveness is based on whether you feel like I am sincere? Jesus said that if a man comes to you and says, “I repent,” Christ says to forgive him. If he does it seven times in a day, (He didn’t say seven times in a lifetime or in a year or in a month), then this guy is what you call a repeating offender. I cannot tell you how many people say to me, “He’s done it the third time. That’s it. There’s no more forgiveness.” Jesus said if he does it seven times in a day, you are to forgive him if he comes. You say, “Well, if he did that seven times a day and came back and said he was sorry seven times a day, he obviously is insincere in his confession.” That is not what the Bible says. Apparently you have a problem. In your pride, you cannot forgive somebody, because you do not think that they deserve it, or because you think that they are going to repeat it again. In fact, you may even set some conditions upon them in order to prove that they are worthy of your forgiveness. “I will forgive you, but here is the way it has to take place.” You make a long little list of things in your mind or on paper. What gave you the right to do that? Who do you think you are?

I am sure glad that God does not work that way, because if He did, none of us would ever be forgiven. We are all guilty. You see it is a very interesting thing when the Bible says that He has forgiven us of our sins.

Have you ever said to somebody, “Well, I’ll forgive you but I’m not going to forget what you did!” Wait a minute, if you forgive somebody then it also involves forgetting it. Are you not glad that God, who knows everything, has voluntarily decided never to remember against you any more? When He forgives you, it is done. He does not bring it up; He does not have a gigantic sign on your way to class the next day saying, “John sinned against me, but I’ve forgiven him. Here’s what he did at 3:00 yesterday.” No, God does not do that, but some of us cannot forget how we have been hurt. There comes the pride again.

In my opinion it takes humility to forgive as well as to ask for it. You have to humble yourself both ways. You have to humble yourself to say that you are sorry for what was said or done. “Please forgive me.” You also have to humble yourself to say, “You bet. You’re forgiven.” Let me tell you something, there is nothing sweeter to restore any broken human relationship than forgiveness. There is no stronger cement to glue people together than the willingness to forgive. “I forgive you.” Those are sweet words. “Hey, you really mean that?” “I said it didn’t I?” You see, are you not glad that the forgiveness of God is perfect.

What is God’s forgiveness based on? The blood. It has already been paid for us. We do not have anything to talk about. Of course, you are forgiven. It is already taken care of.

Now turn to Ephesians 4. Maybe I am talking to somebody today who has got something against somebody and you have not let it go. It is eating you up, since you know your lack of forgiveness

can hurt you more than the person who needs your forgiveness. It can absolutely tear you apart, but you are unwilling to forgive somebody for what they have done to you.

Madge Rada, is in her seventies. She plays the organ at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa on Sunday morning. This dear woman was raped in a Denny's Restaurant and her throat slit by the young man's knife. That story was remarkable, because she not only forgave him, but she went and witnessed to him, and gave him a Bible. He came to know the Lord. It is a tremendous story. Now that is a pretty rough deal. He raped her and left her for dead, but she survived. I still remember the front page of the Newport Beach paper. The actual headline was one word in bold and black ink. It is the only one anyone ever remembered this in the paper. It said, FORGIVENESS! And it was the story of that. People could hardly believe it. Now what made Madge do that?

Let all bitterness and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God, for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:31)

Here is the eye-opener on forgiveness. The normal word for "forgiveness" in Greek, *aphiemi*, is not in that text, but is the word "grace" (*charizo*). Let us read it that way, "Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, gracing to one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath graced you." There is the secret of forgiveness. Grace gives us that which we do not deserve. When you forgive somebody, you do not forgive them because they deserve it, or they prove that their confession was really great and detailed, but you forgive them by gracing to them what they do not deserve. Forgiveness is the healing power of the Lord. You can change a person's life by

forgiving them for what they have done to you. What did Jesus say on the cross? “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

One final thing as to why Jesus died? He died to give us eternal life. Look at John 3, which is a beautiful passage for a lot of reasons.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so
must the Son of man be lifted up. (John 3:14)

Is Jesus a snake? “I thought the devil was a snake.” The snake was killed and put on a pole to remind us that death has set us free. As he lifted it up, so must the Son of Man be lifted up. There is a play on words here. In Philippians 2:9-11, just after saying that Christ humbled Himself to the death of the cross, it says:

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a
name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in
earth, and [things] under the earth; And [that] every tongue
should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the
Father.

The words in Philippians 2:9, “God hath highly exalted Him,” are the same used for “to lift up” that is in John 3:14. You see, as Christ was put on the cross He was exalted. That which was humiliation and a terrible death with suffering was exaltation! People say He was exalted when He was ascended up on high to the right hand. This is true, but He was exalted on the cross. God

highly lifted Him up. It is a really interesting play on words.

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:15-16)

Remember the story of the Good Shepherd who gives his life for the sheep. In John 10:10, Jesus said, “The thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy.” That is what the devil is like. Why did Jesus come? “I am come that they might have life and they might have it more abundantly.” “I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”
Wow—that we might have eternal life!

My sheep hear My voice. I know them. They follow Me. I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. God has given us eternal life. (John 10:27)

Look at 1 John 5, which the Jehovah’s Witnesses do not like because it mentions all three persons of the triune God in one verse. They point out that the manuscript evidence is against this.

This is he that came by water and blood, [even] Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. (1 John 5:6)

The Bible says the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Have you not ever asked how He does that? According to 1 John 5:6, you have your answer. Where in the Bible does it tell us that blood and water came out of the side of the Lord? In the Gospel of John 19. Keep your finger here and turn back to the Gospel. I hope you get blessed by this. You have to think with me for a moment.

But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already,
they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear
pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.
And he that saw [it] bare record, and his record is true: and he
knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things
were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him
shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall
look on him whom they pierced. (John 19:33-37)

Now in 1 John 5 it says that it is the Spirit that bears witness about the blood and water. How does the Spirit bear witness with your spirit, namely through the Bible's account? The same writer wrote both. John is saying, "I was there. I saw it. The Spirit is now bearing witness because the Spirit is truth."

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the
Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. (1 John 5:7)

That is not in a lot of manuscripts. I do not have the time to prove it to you, but I believe it belongs in the text.

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (1 John 5:8)

It is talking about the death of Christ, and keep reading.

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:9-13)

If you lack assurance that you have eternal life, it is because you have forgotten what Jesus did on the cross. Do not miss the point of this passage. You and I have eternal life because of what Jesus did when He died on the cross. All you have to do is review it again. For the Spirit will use the word that you review and bear witness with your spirit that you are indeed the child of God, because I believe the witness about Jesus Christ dying for my sins. Amen!

Let us pray.

Father, thank You for Your wonderful Word. I pray that You would continue to open up our hearts that we would see the glory of our Savior as He died for us.

We remember what Paul wrote in Galatians, “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.” May it be so in every life. We pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.