

Truth for The Final Generation
Divine Hour Message

Revival “Motivated by Agape part 1”

Scripture Reading:

Jeremiah 13:23, 1 John 5:10-12, 1 John 3:1

Introduction:

God will accept nothing less than unreserved surrender. Half-hearted, sinful Christians can never enter heaven. There they would find no happiness, for they know nothing of the high, holy principles that govern the members of the royal family. The true Christian keeps the windows of the soul open heavenward. He lives in fellowship with Christ. His will is conformed to the will of Christ. His highest desire is to become more and more Christlike.—The Review and Herald, May 16, 1907.

We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His people “to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given.—The Desire of Ages, 672 (1898)

Dead and Lost

¹And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ²Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and

of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. (Jeremiah 13:23)

... for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:1)

Man apart from God is hopelessly lost. Dead in trespasses and sins. Position, rank, title, ethnicity, or any other qualification apart from God amounts to nothing. The gulf that sin created can only be spanned by the cross of Calvary.

The Drawing Power of the Cross

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

³² And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. (John 12:32)

The Lord of life and glory clothed his divinity with humanity to demonstrate to man that God through the gift of Christ would connect us with him. Without a connection with God no one can possibly be happy.

Fallen man is to learn that our heavenly Father cannot be satisfied until his love embraces the repentant sinner, transformed through the merits of the spotless Lamb of God. The work of all the heavenly intelligences is to this end. Under the command of their General they are to work for the reclaiming of those who by transgression, have separated themselves from their heavenly Father.

A plan has been devised whereby the wondrous grace and love of Christ shall stand revealed to the world. In the infinite price paid by the Son of God to ransom man, the love of God is revealed. This glorious plan of redemption is ample in its provisions to save the whole world.

Sinful and fallen man may be made complete in Jesus through the forgiveness of sin, and the imputed righteousness of Christ. Jesus Christ laid hold on humanity, that with his human arm he might encircle the race, while with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite. He planted his cross midway between earth and heaven, and said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

The cross was to be the center of attraction. It was to speak to all men, and draw them across the gulf that sin had made, to unite finite man with the Infinite God. It is the power of the cross alone that can separate man from the strong confederacy of sin.

Christ gave himself for the saving of the sinner. Those whose sins are forgiven, who love Jesus, will be united with him. They will bear the yoke of Christ. This yoke is not to hamper them, not to make their religious life one of unsatisfying toil. No; the yoke of Christ is to be the very means by which the Christian life is to become one of pleasure and joy. The Christian is to be joyful in contemplation of that which the Lord has done in giving his only begotten Son to die for the world, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (YI March 30th, 1893)

It was to redeem us that Jesus lived and suffered and died. He became "a Man of Sorrows," that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory, to a world marred and blighted with sin, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5.

Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God.

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption. (SC 13.1, 2)

The Power of the Cross is Agape

¹⁹To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19)

Sin Separates from God

¹Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: ²But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and

your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (Isaiah 59:2)

²⁵ Who [Jesus] was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. (Romans 4:25)

It is the nature of sin to separate the creature from the creator. The end of this separation is described in the bible as death (Romans 6:23). This death is final and irreversible. It was because of sin and God's immeasurable love for man that Jesus died. Therefore God is seen as just and the justifier of them that believe on Jesus.

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: ²⁵ 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; ²⁶ To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Romans 3:23-26)

With His Stripes We are Healed

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah (53:6, 5)

²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: ²² Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: ²³ Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that jud-

geth righteously: ²⁴ 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. ²⁵ For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. (1 Peter 2:21-25)

Security against Apostasy and Defection

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God.

That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ?

The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan.

Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.

The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come.

Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in his beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of his law, and still save the transgressor.

Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of his shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin.

There are many who will be lost, because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works.

Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion. (ST. December 30th, 1889)

Appeal

³And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:⁴And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ⁵And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

¹⁰And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.¹¹And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, ¹²And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

¹³Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: ¹⁴And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. ¹⁵But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: ¹⁶For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

¹⁷And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

¹⁸And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

¹⁹And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

²⁰And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. (Acts 9:3-5, 10-19)