

THE HIGHEST MOTIVE

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

We know it is customary to take a text and then to preach a sermon from that text, but this afternoon we will reverse the usual order and put our text at the end of the sermon. We have a special reason for doing so. Very frequently the text that has been announced is a passage well known, and some have almost thought exhausted by various speakers, so that those in the audience have been tempted to think, "Well, I wish you had chosen something else, I do not see what you will ever get out of that." And I am sure, dear friends, that that is the case with our text this afternoon. It is a very well known text, and seemingly a very simple one, and now I am inclined to think that if I were to tell you what it was, it might prevent you from really enjoying the full depth of what we have to say. So, dear friends, our entire discourse will be to prepare you for the text, and then whether you remember a thing we say or not, we hope you will remember the text, and we are sure you will get a blessing.

We have found from God's Word that every single member of the human race will have to spend eternity in one of four conditions. I have sometimes thought that probably the Lord meant to illustrate this by the statement we have in the second chapter of Genesis from the 10th down to the 14th verse, inclusive. You remember we read there, "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison; that is which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: where there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates." We know, dear friends, that describes a geographical fact respecting the garden of Eden, and yet we find very often under these geographical facts various lessons relating to God's great plan typified or illustrated; and I think very likely it is so in the case of that river. We remember that sometimes in God's Word, peoples are compared to rivers.

We remember how, in the 17th chapter of Revelation, verse 15, we read, "The water whereon the woman sitteth are nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and peoples." And so dear friends, it seems to me that probably God intended the river that flowed out of Eden should represent a race of people, the human race. That river had its origin in Eden. The human race had its origin in Eden. That river flowed out of it. The human race has gone out of Eden because of sin. After that river left Eden, it was divided into four parts; and since the human race left the garden of Eden, it has been in process of being divided into four parts.

We remember the first part of the branch of the river called Pison, which flowed into the land of Havilah, where there was gold, and the gold of that land was good. We remember in our Tabernacle studies gold was used to symbolize the divine nature. There is one division, in God's providence, of this human race that is going to attain the divine nature. We remember the second division of the river flowed into the land of Ethiopia; and we remember that Ethiopia from time immemorial has been a symbol of servitude; and so there is a second division of the human race, the division of the human race that is going to constitute the servants before the throne, the palm-bearers of Revelation. And then again, we remember there was a third division of that river, represented in the great restitution hosts. There was a fourth division of the river called the Euphrates. Euphrates was the river that Cyrus dried up. So there is to be a fourth division of our race that is to be dried up in the second death as unworthy of any place in God's great universe.

It is your desire and my desire that we might be in the class represented by the Pison branch of the river, the class that may be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, the class that may be partakers of the divine nature. But there is a question here, dear friends, and the question is this: Why do you desire to be a partaker of the divine nature? Why would you rather be in that class than to be amongst the restitution host? Why do you prefer to be in that chosen company rather than amongst the great multitude that shall stand before the throne, with palms in their hands? There must be a reason; there must be a motive. What is your reason? What is your motive? Suppose we ask you to think that over for a moment. I do not want you to answer the question to me, but in your own mind and heart answer that question. What is the real foundation motive that prompts you to desire to be of that elect company?

Well, dear friends, the text that we have chosen answers that question. But let us consider some of the motives that have been entertained by some. We may imagine someone saying, "Well, I will tell you why I want to be of that class. It is because I want the very best. Others may take the

second best, but I want the very best.” Dear friends, I say that if you have no better motive than that, and never obtain any better motive than that, you will never be one of that company, for that is nothing more or less than selfishness, and selfishness will never win the prize. It seems to me that the Christian battle is very much like the natural warfare. You know how it is in natural warfare: – two armies come face to face, they give battle, and the one army is defeated, and what becomes of the defeated army? Does it immediately vanish? No, it merely retreats a few miles, entrenches itself in a new position, and now it has to be dislodged from the second position; and then when it is dislodged from that position, it retreats a few miles farther and fortifies itself in a new place, and now the same enemy has to be fought on a third ground. And so, dear friends, in the Christian warfare. First of all, we had a battle with selfish pride; it was that selfish pride that wanted us to live in better houses than other people could live in; that wanted us to wear better clothes than other people could wear, and we fought that spirit and gained the victory; but what became of that enemy? Did it disappear entirely? Oh no, that is selfish pride retreated away a short distance, and formed on new ground, as it were, and now it was the same selfish pride that made us feel, “Well now, I want a reputation for being able to quote Scripture, and I want the brethren to point me out as a man who knows more about the Bible than others know about it. It was the same spirit, only on new ground, as it were; and we fought it along that line, and we gained the victory there also. But now that same selfish pride takes a third position. It says, “Well, other people may be satisfied with restitution, and others may be satisfied to be in the great multitude class, but as for me, I want the best place, or nothing; I must have the best place of all.”

“Well,” someone may say, “that does not describe my position; I don’t think I would be satisfied with anything except a place in the ‘little flock,’ but it is because the Lord has invited me to it; He has called me to it, and I have had my mind and heart set upon it for so many years now, that I am afraid I could not be satisfied with anything else. I am afraid, since the Lord has invited me and chosen me to that, I could not be content to have a place anywhere else; if God had not invited me, it would have been different; I suppose I would have looked forward to being satisfied with restitution; but my heart has been so centered on these better things that I could not be satisfied with anything but that now.” I want to say, dear friends, there again is a mistake in our motives. For somewhere around seventeen years my heart has been centered on spiritual things; I have looked forward to the day when, if faithful, I hope to be counted worthy of a place at the side of my dear Master. I am sure no one could have

thought more constantly, or longed more intensely for what it would mean to be a joint-heir with Jesus in His heavenly throne; and yet, dear friends, I want to say here this afternoon, and mean it too, that if I could awake and find there was some mistake about it, and there was nothing but restitution for me, I would be perfectly satisfied, thoroughly contented. Now mind you, I do not intend to say that I expect there will be any mistake about it; I am sure there will not be; but I say, suppose there was; I am positive I would be thoroughly satisfied. You and I cannot conceive what restitution would mean. It seems to me sometimes that restitution is even going to be more than you and I can imagine a place at the side of our Savior would mean.

I remember some time ago, while I was at home, that thought came to my mind, and I thought what a wonderful change will take place in this earth when restitution will have done its work! I tried to imagine what restitution would be like, and in thinking it over, I got Webster's Dictionary, and thought to myself, I am going to start in this dictionary and cross all the words out that will not be needed when restitution is complete. And I crossed out the doctors, the dentists, the undertakers and the policemen; and I crossed out the cemeteries, the hearses, the funerals, the coffins; and I crossed out the pills, powders, bandages, crutches and remedies of all kinds; and I crossed out all the prisons, hospitals and asylums; and I crossed out all the warships, cruisers, torpedo-boats, and the guns and cannon; and I crossed out all the poverty, distress, suffering; and all the rheumatism, neuralgia, consumption, diphtheria; and I crossed out all the cyclones, earthquakes, droughts, deserts and wildernesses; and I crossed out all the thorns and the thistles; and I crossed out all the thieves and the murders; and I crossed out all the locks and the keys and bars and bolts, and conflagrations and calamities. And when I got through I had hardly any of the dictionary left. I never realized before that such a large part of the dictionary is built up of words descriptive of sorrow, suffering, sin and death.

Then I thought to myself, Now if this is what the Lord is going to take away, what is He going to give in its place? What will it mean to be on earth under conditions like that? Now, I feel satisfied there will be none on this earth who will be mourning because they happened to miss the high calling. The Prophet puts it, "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away." We do not expect there will be beings on this earth who through all eternity will be sighing because they find themselves deprived of a Heavenly position. I am sure there will be some who will be sorry because they failed to take this time to show their love for the Lord, solely because they wanted to serve Him and honor Him, but their sorrow will be for

that, and not because they find themselves residing on the restored earth. And so it will not do to say that we will not be satisfied if we find ourselves here, but on the other hand, we would be perfectly satisfied, we would be thoroughly contented. Any place in God's great universe would be a satisfying portion, whether it be amongst that little company, whether it be amongst the great host, or whether it be amongst the restitution class.

But, I imagine someone saying, "Well, I will tell you my thought in the matter: I want to be of that little company, but the reason I want to be of that class is because I want to be with the Lord; I want to be able to see Him face to face; I want to be in His very presence; I want to be able to enjoy that communion, that fellowship with Him that will be the delight of those who occupy a place with their Master." But, dear friends, I want to say even that is not an adequate motive for desiring a place in that glorious company. Did you ever stop to think what fellowship and communion the human race, when brought to perfection, will enjoy with God? Did you ever reflect how sweet that communion will be? You and I cannot appreciate it as the result of experience; we can only take it upon faith. We know, dear friends, that we have communion with the Father, but it is not because we feel it. Our feelings are unreliable; some feel it in one way; some in another, but we believe it, not because we feel it, but we believe it because God's Word says it, irrespective of feeling. Did you ever think that a perfect man will not only have that communion with God, but he would feel it? It would not be a matter of faith with him merely, but it would be a matter of feeling as well as a matter of faith, for what communion Adam must have enjoyed in the garden of Eden with God! Think how he must have felt that communion! Think how sweet that fellowship must have been with him! And think, dear friends, what it will mean with the human race when it has been brought back to that position! There are only two human beings who ever felt that fellowship peculiar to a perfect man, father Adam and our Lord Jesus Christ. This dear friends, is one of the things that cause our Savior the severest experience of all His life. We know that we are called to suffer with Jesus, but we realize that His sufferings were far more acute, far beyond anything that we could possibly suffer. I think this was well illustrated in one of the pictures of the Old Testament. You remember how in Exodus, 12th chapter, 8th and 9th verses, when the Lord was telling Moses about the offering of the Passover Lamb, He made the statement that they should not eat that Passover Lamb raw, or sodden with water. The word "sodden" means boiled, and they were not to eat it raw or boiled with water, but must eat it roasted with fire. The Lord was very

particular on that point. That is emphasized again in 2 Chronicles 35:13. You remember that there the Lord says, "The Passover Lamb they roasted, but the other sacrifices they boiled." This sacrifice of the Passover Lamb represented the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, the one of whom the Apostle says, "For even Christ our Passover is slain for us." That sacrifice was to be roasted. But on the other hand, the sacrifices that represented what you and I offer were not to be roasted, they were to be boiled. What would that indicate? This, dear friends: you know it takes twice as hot a fire to roast anything as it does to boil it; it takes only a little over 200 degrees to boil anything, but it requires more than 400 degrees to roast. Dear friends, it seems as though that fact tells us the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ was twice as severe as the sacrifice we have to make. We can readily understand how that would be so. We see His perfect nature enabled Him to suffer to an extent that we cannot suffer. He was a perfect man; as a perfect man, all His senses were perfect. He had the sense of taste perfect, and we do not have. Think, dear friends, what an awful thing it would be for a perfect man to have a perfect taste in this imperfect world! Perfect taste requires perfect food and perfect cooks, and there are neither in the world today, and were not in the days of our Saviour. If you and I, with imperfections in our taste, can detect improperly cooked foods, if we can detect the wrong arrangement of our food, and if we can detect that fruit is too ripe, or not ripe enough, then how much more so a man with perfect taste! Think what our Saviour must have suffered because of that. Every meal of which our Saviour partook must have been a trial, a painful experience, to Him; and yet He kept it all to Himself; He never complained; indeed He was so ready to accept their invitations to meals that some of them seemed to intimate, as our Lord once expressed, that He was a glutton and wine bibber. "This man seems to be so anxious to come to our homes, He must be thinking of His stomach" – failing to realize that if our Saviour had consulted His own pleasure He would never have gone there at all; He would rather have gone out and eaten some of that wild fruit, which probably would have been more palatable to a perfect taste than the improperly mixed and improperly cooked food that was put before Him. But why was it that He loved to go there? Because of the opportunities it give Him to proclaim the Gospel. But think what it cost Him to accept every such invitation!

Then, dear friends, with respect to other senses. He had the sense of smell perfect. You and I today have enough unpleasant experiences along that line. Think what it must have been with our Saviour, living as He did in those Eastern cities, with narrow and uncleanly streets! Travelers from

Europe have so frequently spoken of the filthy condition of those cities. Then how must a man with a perfect smell endure it! Think what that cost our Saviour!

Then think how His perfect hearing would enable Him to hear more unpleasant noises, and His perfect sight enable Him to see more of the disagreeable things than any of the rest of us. And then His perfect mind and perfect being enabled Him to suffer to an extent the rest of us could not. He could know more intimately indeed what the human race was going through than any of the rest of the race possible could.

But in addition to this, we realize His pre-existence added to His suffering. You and I have never known anything better than this. If we had ever lived under better conditions, in a better world, and then had to come here, how much more trying, how much more unpleasant it would be than it is at the present time. So, dear friends, think what it cost our Saviour. He had never had His word doubted in Heaven; he had never been mistreated there; He had never been unkindly dealt with during all those ages He had spent with the Father. Think what our Saviour suffered in coming down to this earth!

But, dear friends, this is not what I wanted specially to mention in connection with the severity of our Saviour's sufferings. You recall, for instance, that toward the end of His life He said to His disciples on one occasion, "What meaneth this, 'He was numbered with the transgressors?'" The Saviour could see that prophecy applied to Him, but He was in doubt as to what it meant. He could not understand it. "I see how this prophecy applies to me, but how am I to be numbered with the transgressors? Surely that is something I am not to pass through; I cannot understand that." Probably I am putting words in our Lord's mouth, or thoughts in His mind, that were not there. He realized that He had to stand that; that it was to be part of His experience. But what it meant He could not understand. And it seems as though from that time onward He was looking for the fulfillment of that Scripture. You remember, for instance, when they came out with Judas to take Him, He said, "Why are ye come against me as against a thief and a murderer, with swords and staves?" It almost looked as though that was the way He was being numbered with the transgressors. You remember, dear friends, shortly after that they delivered Barabas in order to hold our Saviour. Probably that was the way He was being numbered with the transgressors? No, that was not the way. You remember also how later they crucified Him between two thieves. Was that the way He was being numbered with the transgressors? No, that was not it, either. You recall, how, when He hung there on the cross, suddenly our Saviour cried out, "My God, My God,

why hast Thou forsaken me?" As much as to say, "Why, dear Father, what does this mean? I expected men would forsake me, I expected men would leave me, but I did not expect you to forsake me. What does this mean, Father?" Dear friends, we see what it meant. That was the place where He was numbered with the transgressors. In order to pay the penalty of the sins of our race it was not only necessary that He should die, but that He should die with the favor of God withdrawn from Him. There it was that He was numbered with the transgressors. But, dear friends, you can imagine what our Saviour felt when He went through that experience. You remember He was in such agony when He cried out that way that those around could not understand what He said. You remember they said, It sounds as though He were calling for Elias. Our Saviour was a perfect man; as a perfect man He had the perfect gift of speech. No one could pronounce their words more accurately than could Jesus, and yet, though He spake in the language of the people, they could not understand Him. They thought He was calling for Elias. What did it mean? It meant that His soul was in such agony He could not properly control even His words at that moment, and thus He muttered in that incoherent way, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Dear friends, this is one of the experiences, I believe, you and I will not have to go through. It was necessary for Him because He was the ransom sacrifice for the sins of this world. It was necessary in His case, but you and I have the promise of God that, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And if all the feelings in our nature should seem to indicate that God had forsaken us when the time came for us to die, we could say, "I know He has not, because I believe God's Word, and I will not believe the feelings in my being contrary to His word." Remember the Lord Jesus could trust His feelings; He had fellowship that extended farther than anything could possibly extend with us, who are such weak, earthen vessels, and the consequence was that there was no doubt in our Saviour's mind as to what that experience meant – the Father had left Him, and Jesus cried out, "It is finished" – the prophecies concerning me have been finished.

And, dear friends, we see it was that very thing which caused the death of the Lord. You know that, as a usual thing, the crucifixion was a horrible thing, horrible especially as it was such a slow and lingering death. There the poor, helpless victim hung on the cross, sometimes for days, suffering the most unutterable agony; as he hung there in the helpless fashion, at times even the very vultures of the air would gain courage and fly down and pluck out his eyes as they realized his inability to help himself. The Jewish law was far more humane than any of the other laws of earth, and the result was it specially stated that no one

should be permitted to hang on the cross after sunset, and so we find that towards the close of the day they came to take the Lord Jesus and the thieves down, not only because it was the close of the day, but because it was drawing toward the beginning of the Sabbath. And, you remember, they found the Lord Jesus already dead. How was it that our Saviour died so quickly? Well, dear friends, the Bible shows us the reason for it. Our Saviour died of a broken heart. You know we often speak of people dying of a broken heart, but we generally use it in a figurative sense; they have had some great sorrow, some great affliction which was so severe that they speak of it as a breaking of the heart, but there is such a thing as a literal breaking of the heart. It is something, however, that very seldom occurs. Very few doctors have any record of such a case. The walls of the heart are so strong that it is almost impossible to burst them, but it is only in the case of a very weak heart that it occurs at all. Is it possible that our Saviour died of a literal broken heart? Yes, dear friends, our Saviour's heart literally burst; the shock of the Father's withdrawing Himself killed Him. We have three scriptures which refer to that. There are two in the Psalms. There is one Psalm (the 22nd) which prophesied about our Saviour. In the 16th and 18th verses it says: "They pierced my hands, and my feet." That has reference to our Saviour's crucifixion. "They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." That is all true of our Saviour. Now listen to the 14th verse: "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." That awful experience burst our Saviour's heart, as if it had been of wax; it just melted, the blood burst forth and our Saviour's death occurred. Now the 69th Psalm, 20th verse, has the same thought. This again refers to our Saviour, because it says, in the very next verse, "They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Now listen (verse 20): "Reproach hath broken my heart." In taking upon himself the burden of our sin, and the reproach that accompanied it in being cast off temporarily from the Father's presence that He might die in our place, in order that we might stand before God in Jesus' place, our Saviour's heart was broken by that experience.

In the gospel of John, we have the evidence that this was fulfilled. You remember when the Centurion saw that Jesus was already dead, he thrust a spear into His side, and forth with there came out blood and water. In the actual bursting of the heart, the blood runs out into the abdominal cavity, and if the body is opened, it is just as if blood and water were pouring forth. That is the evidence that these two prophecies were fulfilled.

But now, the point I want to specially to make is this: How wonderful must have been the fellowship Jesus had with the Father as a perfect man. How glorious and how sweet it must have been! True, Jesus did not see the Father face to face during that time, and yet the fellowship He enjoyed must have been wonderfully sweet, and I think that fellowship is the fellowship the human race is going to have with God when the time comes, when the Tabernacle of God is with men, and God himself shall dwell with them. And so, I say, the communion that the human race is going to have with God when they are brought to perfection, is going to be so sweet and grand and glorious, that it will really exceed what you and I can conceive it is going to be like to be with Him face to face, to be in His very presence in heaven. So I feel sure that is not an adequate reason that we should want to be of that little flock.

“Well, then,” says someone, “I will tell you the way it is with me; I want to be of that class because I want to help uplift the world, because I want to assist in bringing the world back to perfection, back into harmony with God; because I want to be one of those who shall restore life and blessing to mankind.” But, dear friends, did you ever think that there is a flaw in that too? Are you most desirous of seeing the world uplifted, or are you most desirous of doing it? You know that to a large extent, that is the spirit of the world. There are men today who are willing to make a great sacrifice to do a great work, if they can do it; they want to be at the head of it; they want to do it. But, dear friends, which is the most important, to uplift the world, or to see the world uplifted? Why, I say, it will be far more glorious to see the world uplifted than to do it. I am sure it would be proper and right for us to put the matter like this: We might say, “Dear Lord, the thing I long for is to see the world brought back into harmony with you. I want, dear Father, to see the world brought up to the place where sorrow and sighing shall flee away. I want to see the world brought to that place where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, neither crying, nor any more pain, and, dear heavenly Father, if you should see that I would be a proper instrument to share in that work, I will rejoice to share in it, I will take delight, dear Father, in sharing in that work, but I am so anxious that the work should be done right, and I am so anxious that the work be done, that if you see I am not a fit instrument to share in it, if you should see that I would mar that work, why do not put mein that company and spoil the restitution arrangement, just to gratify me; I am far more desirous of seeing the world raised to that place than that I should be one who should do it.” I am sure that appeals to me as the proper spirit we should show in this matter.

Now, says another one, "I will tell you the way it appears to me. I want to be of that little flock because the Lord wants me." That is right, dear friends, I am sure. But why are you glad the Lord wants you? That is really the question that is before us this afternoon. Why are you glad the Lord wants you to be of that elect company? Now, dear friends, we come to our text. In this text the Lord Jesus tells us why He wants us to be glorified with the Father, why He wanted to be raised to that wonderful height the Father has promised. It is found in the 17th chapter of John's Gospel, the first verse, and it reads like this, "These words, spake Jesus and lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." Why did Jesus want to be raised to that position? That He might glorify the Father, as He said a little later, in substance, "Father, I have glorified you on the earth; I have done the work you have given me to do, but, Father, I want to glorify you more, and I know, dear Lord, in that position, I can do it." Dear friends, as it seems to me, the only reason I want to be of that class, rather than of any other class, is because in that little company I will have the capacity, and I will have the power, and I will have the position that will enable me to glorify my Heavenly Father more than I could do on any other plane, or in any other condition. This, dear friends, is what the Lord desires we should do today; it is the thing we will want to do, if our hearts are right, to glorify Him. We would not want to be seeking our own glory; that is the spirit of Babylon. You remember the way it is stated there in the Book of Revelation, "how much she hath glorified herself." But you and I should have the spirit that has an eye single to God's honor and glory; we should be of that class that is seeking to glorify God in our body and our spirit, which are His. If, dear friends, our heart's desire and ambition today is to glorify our Heavenly Father, then we are the proper ones to be united with Jesus in glorifying the Father in a higher sense and on a higher plane, beyond the veil.

Notice the way our Lord Jesus followed this out in the first three verses of this 17th chapter: "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to Heaven and said, 'Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may also glorify Thee. As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.'"

I want you to specially note this last verse. I have been inclined lately to take a different view of that verse from what I once did. You know we have generally looked at that verse as though it said, "Why, to get life eternal is by knowing Thee, the only true God." But it does not say that;

it does not say that eternal life is the object of knowing God, but it says just the reverse of that. It says, knowing God is the object of having eternal life. Notice the word "that." It is the same Greek word which occurs three times in these three verses, once in the first, once in the second, and once in the third. It is a word which really means, "in order that." "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to Heaven and said, 'Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son that (in order that) Thy Son also may glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that (in order that) He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given to Him. And this is life eternal that (in order that) they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.'" "As though the Lord Jesus would say, "Dear Heavenly Father, I want to be glorified, in order that I may glorify you, because, dear Father, when I am glorified, then I will have power over all flesh, as you have promised, and I will reign with my Church in that glorious Millennium, and I want to do that in order that I may give eternal life to as many as Thou has given to me. And, dear Father, I want to give them eternal life; I do not want to give them temporary life, but eternal life, and I want them to get eternal life, in order that they might know Thee, the only true God. Dear Heavenly Father, I was the first being that you ever created; you brought me into existence before you brought any other being into existence, and, dear Father, away back there, in the ages of the past, I learned to love you. I realize what a wonderful Father and Creator I had; and then, dear Lord, the next thing I knew in your plan you had something else I never thought of, and how much more wonderful it made you than you were before. And then, in a little while, you had something else, something remarkable, and then by and by, you brought to light the wonderful plan you had in connection with the permission of evil in your universe, and dear Father, the way I see that new beauties are unfolding in your plan year after year, if we are going to know you perfectly we will have to live forever to do it; it will take all eternity to fully know you, dear Father, and that is why I want the human race to have eternal life, that (in order that) they might know Thee, the only true God, that they might realize what a Creator, what a God, our universe has; if they live a million years they would know you better than they did at that time; if they lived five million years they would know you better than they did the first million years; but, dear Father, I can readily see now that if they are to know you in the full sense, the larger, grander, better sense, they will have to live forever to do it. "And this is life eternal that (in order that) they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Notice, dear friends, our dear Saviour did not merely want them to know of Him, but He wanted them to know that God had sent Him. We have thought so much of the sacrifice our dear Saviour has made, and surely, dear friends, we cannot overestimate the grandeur, the beauty, and the wonderful nature of that sacrifice, but in looking at the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, so many of us have been inclined to underestimate the part of the sacrifice the heavenly Father made, forgetting that God's part of the sacrifice was the greatest part, so that our Saviour could say, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." I am sure, dear friends, the heavenly Father would far rather have been hanging on the cross than to see His Son hanging there; I cannot help but think it cost the Father far more to see His chiefest Son, His grandest Son, going through that agony than if the heavenly Father had been the one Himself. But He could not pay the penalty for the world's sin; He was immortal; He was divine. His nature made death out of the question, and therefore He sent His Son, who should pay the penalty for our race.

I think this was illustrated so well in the case of Abraham and Isaac. You remember how God came to Abraham, in the days of old, and told him to go into the land of Moriah, and there offer up Isaac, his only son. And you remember Abraham had the ass saddled, and he and Isaac and two young men started for the place of sacrifice. And the third day they lifted up their eyes and saw the place of sacrifice afar off. Now that is mentioned as a wonderful illustration of faith. It was, but the remarkable part of it was not that Abraham offered up Isaac. There might have been other fathers who would, had they been asked to offer up their sons, on the spur of the moment would have done it. But where was a father who would have taken a journey of three or four days and never wavered in his determination? Where was there a father who, long before he reached the end of that journey, would not have fallen under that trial and turned back? But not so with Abraham; no wavering manifested itself in his faith. At the end of his journey he was just as willing to offer Isaac as he was at the beginning. Think how on that journey Isaac must have become dearer and dearer to him. Think how, as they went along, and he looked and beheld Isaac, and saw the grand traits of character then manifested in him, how his love for Isaac must have grown. At last they reached the place of sacrifice, and there Isaac said to his father, "Father, here is the fire and the fuel, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" You will notice Isaac did not yet know he was the one that was going to be sacrificed. At last Abraham told him, "Isaac, you are the one God wants me to offer. You are the one to be slain on the altar." "What, father, me?" "Yes." "All right, if God wants me."

And Isaac got upon that altar. But, dear friends, whom do you think suffered the most, Abraham or Isaac? Isaac suffered intensely, but it was only for a short time; think how Abraham suffered from the time they began that journey! Think of the awful suffering Abraham must have gone through as they pursued that journey, and he realized that this dear son was the one who was soon to be sacrificed upon that altar. And, dear friends, we learn from the Scripture that Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac illustrated God's sacrifice of His Son. There is not anything in the Scriptures, so far as I know, which gives any hint that our Saviour knew anything about His sacrifice until just before He came down to earth to suffer in man's stead. We know God had spoken about it in the Old Testament; we know our Saviour would understand, or did understand, that He would have some part in the deliverance of the human race, but there is not any reason to suppose He knew His part would be to suffer, to die, until the very moment came; just as in Isaac's case, there was no thought in his mind that he was to be the victim until the place of sacrifice was reached. So now, dear friends, we can readily see that just as Isaac was slain in the mind of Abraham before that journey had begun, so the Lord Jesus, as the Lamb of God, was slain in the mind of the Father even before the foundation of the world. Our Saviour way back in the days of Moses probably did not understand what He was to suffer, but the Father understood it, and, dear friends, we cannot help but believe that even though the Father knew what the consummation would be, even though the Father knew what the result was to be, we recognize it could not help but be a very painful matter to Him, it could not help but bring suffering to His divine heart, as He thought of what His only begotten Son was to pass through for the sins of the world. But, dear friends, we understand that this was what our dear Saviour was desirous the whole human race should realize; He wanted them to understand that He was the one God had sent to be the Saviour of the world. We rejoice and honor the Son; we rejoice and honor the Father, and when we honor the Son we honor the Father, but when we honor the Son who was willing to die for our sins, we must not forget the Father who is back of the great plan, the one of whom we read, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." This, dear friends, was the spirit of our Saviour, the spirit that sought the glory of the Father in heaven; the spirit that sought the honor of His Father's name. Our Saviour said in one place, in substance, "I seek not my own glory; there is one that seeketh, and judgeth; there is one that seeks my glory, that seeks to glorify me, and He is one that shall judge what shall be done in my case. I am seeking, not my

glory, but the glory of Him who sent me.”

So, dear friends, we rejoice in everything that will exalt our heavenly Father and His glorious character in our hearts. I trust that our little talk this afternoon may help to lift our motives a little, and that we may realize that while it is a glorious thing to think of the future, the most glorious part of all is that then we will be able to bring glory to the Father’s name as we cannot possibly do today. Someone might say, “But is it not written of our Saviour that He, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame?” Yes. What was the joy that was set before Him? Part of this joy was the deliverance of the human race; part of that joy was the joy of buying the world of mankind back from condemnation. But why did He want to do all of this? Why was that such a joy? Why was it a joy to our Saviour to think of the human race coming back into harmony with God? Why was it a joy to Him to think of the human race being delivered from all the suffering and pain? Dear friends, the chiefest part of the joy was the thought of how the human race would be able to glorify the Father. Then our Saviour sought to glorify His Father, and He thought likewise to do for the human race everything that could be done to put them in a position where they could also glorify the Father, so that all creatures in heaven and in earth might sing praises and honor and glory to the Father who planned it all. And may we have the spirit that will say always, with the Lord Jesus, “Father, when the hour comes, glorify this Son, also, being exalted to the right hand of the majesty on high, being endowed with heavenly powers, being entrusted with all of the things that accompany that immortal nature, might be permitted to share with the Lord Jesus in lifting the world up to a position where they might glorify you to an extent they cannot possibly do today. So, when the hour comes, glorify this Son too, that this Son also may glorify you.” Amen.



In the days or months yet remaining until the completion of our work here in the flesh, let us be worthy exponents of the precious Truth and worthy representatives of Him whose name we bear...

How important it is that all who have named the name of Christ, who have entered His School, should apply themselves well to the lessons set for us by our great Teacher! How important it is that we who have made a covenant with the Lord, should walk worthy of our great vocation, and not be a reproach to Him whose Cause we have espoused! There are no people upon the face of the earth who should so exemplify in their daily walk and conversation the precious fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit of God as should those who have been led out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Lord. We believe that we are earnestly desirous of thus glorifying our Lord and of showing Him our gratitude and appreciation for His loving-kindness to us.

The Church is today "as a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid." Much is expected of us, even by our opponents. Much is surely expected of us by our Lord. Then let us be faithful, dear brethren, in word, in act, in all our deportment. Thus shall we honor the name of our God and of our Savior and King, whom we hope soon to see face to face.

- ZWT November 1, 1916, page 327. R:5980