

(Hebrews - Part 26): Christ Offered Himself

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the Trinity and their roles in redemption, and challenges common misconceptions about God's nature and Christ's relationship to humanity.

Duration: 29:49

Scripture: Genesis 3:6-7, Genesis 6:8, Exodus 34:6, Luke 15:3-10, Romans 3:23, Hebrews 9:13-14

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding and believing in the concept of redemption. He explains that all three persons of the Trinity - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - were involved in the act of redemption. The preacher also mentions the story of a woman who lost a piece of jewelry and diligently searched for it until she found it, highlighting the joy and relief that comes with finding what was lost. Additionally, the preacher references the parable of the prodigal son to illustrate the idea of God's forgiveness and grace towards sinners. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the fallen nature of mankind, the need for redemption, and the love and mercy of God.

Transcript

If you will look at the book of Hebrews, the 9th chapter, 9th chapter of Hebrews, verses 13 and 14, the particular emphasis on the truth found in verse 14. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifyeth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Now in verse 14, without changing the meaning at all, but selecting what I want to notice, from what is there you will find these words. Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God.

That's there in verse 14. Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God. And of course around it is woven the reasons for it.

That he might purge the human conscience from dead religious works and enable it to serve the living God. Now let's take this step by step because it is very important. Now this is what Christianity teaches on this subject.

This is what Christianity teaches. It is not true because Christianity teaches it. Christianity teaches it because it is true.

If I were to stand up and say, two times two equals four, it would not be true because I had stated it, but I would state it because it is true. Christianity, as it gives its witness, witnesses to the truth. And Christianity equals truth.

Now it is very important that we get a hold of words and that we know exactly what those words mean. You know there has been a big effort in recent times to colloquialize Christianity. By that I mean to get rid of all the old standard words that we have used, all ever since English was spoken, and to put in their places more familiar words.

Well, I'll tell you what happens when that happens. We lose the meaning when we lose the word that contains the meaning. Scientists know that, and doctors know that.

A scientist will use the same word. Ornithologists will use a certain Latin word to designate a certain bird. I don't know the Latin word that designates the bird we call Flicker.

But pretty soon, it won't be long now, this keeps up, you will find out in the yard a rather good-looking but oddly shaped bird, three or four times the size of a robin, making a strange noise. And it will have a red dot on its breast and a long type of woodpecker. That thing is known by a great many names.

My father always knew it as a Flicker or a Wet Hen, because when it began to say, wet, wet, wet, wet, wet, wet, it was going to rain, they called it a Wet Hen. And that meant the wet weather was coming. Then there are some who call it a Golden-winged Woodpecker.

And others call it a High Hole, because they go way up in the tree and dig a hole in the tree and put their nest in there. So between the Flicker and the Wet Hen and the High Hole and the Golden Woodpecker, you will know what to believe. But the ornithologists designate that by one Latin term, which has never changed.

And the result is, every time any scientist or any student hears that term, he knows exactly. Even I've only given you four names the Flicker is known by. It could be known by a dozen or two dozen, and probably is over the North American continent, for it's everywhere.

But when you want to think accurately, you think in terms of that Latin name. Now, theology is like that. If I talk about God as the All-Father or as the One Upstairs, or I get some strange name or some name or some private name, it may mean anything to anybody.

But if I say He is God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible, and stick to that, then I know exactly what I mean. And regardless of how many weird occult religionists try to designate God by their various names, if I give Him the name that He gives Himself, I always mean the same thing that He means. If I say Jehovah, I mean Jehovah.

And if I say God the Father Almighty, I mean God the Father Almighty. It never changes. You see, words are little pictures, and each one of them is labeled.

And it's the business of the devil and people to pour the meaning out of each little picture and then pour some other meaning in. If you could imagine what would happen at your house for breakfast if a little picture saying, somebody emptied the cream out and, say, put vinegar in. And you poured your husband a cup of steaming coffee, and he reached over to the little old familiar picture that he'd seen there for years and poured vinegar in his coffee.

It would ruin the coffee, of course. So when we find a little theological word so familiar to the Church down the centuries and it means a certain thing, then some bright young fellow, usually out of some seminary, pours that meaning out, rinses it and puts another meaning in. Then you don't know where you are.

You're all confused and all mixed up. So let's stay not only by the truth, but let's stay by the words that convey the truth. We have a lot of writers now, and I won't join their ranks.

We have a lot of writers now who are busy writing down to the people, making morons out of all of us. If you haven't got enough gumption and intellectual verve to learn the simple language of the Bible, when the word says repent, it means a certain thing. And when it says justified, it means a certain thing.

When it says born again, it means a certain thing. Find out what it means. It wouldn't take you a minute and a half, and then from there on until you die, you'll know exactly what you mean when you use that language.

You won't have to have some silly person writing down to you. I don't want to be written down to, nor talked down to. When I turn on the radio, the only place I ever hear preachers much, I turn on the radio and I hear some fellow obviously talking down to me, snap him off.

I don't want to be talked down to. Well, now let's take this step by step. And notice what it says here.

It says that Jesus Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God. Now, that presupposes certain truths, and one of those truths is that the fall of man is a fact. Now, this is one self-demonstrating doctrine.

Not all truths are self-demonstrating. A noisy, dirty little boy is a self-demonstrating male. If you were visiting a friend, and you hadn't seen that friend for ten years, and you'd heard that they had a child in the home, but you didn't remember whether it was a boy or a girl, if you looked up and saw something about three years old, so dirty that you couldn't get him cleaned up, and yelling for something to eat, slugging his way through a clean kitchen, you wouldn't say, Is that a girl? You'd know better.

That's a self-demonstrating male. He's demonstrating by his conduct that he's a boy. And the worst thing in the world for that fellow would be to call him a girl.

And now there are truths that are self-demonstrating. They demonstrate themselves. God says man sinned and fell.

If you don't believe it, buy the Globe and Mail tonight, as soon as it's on sale. And read the first page. That'll tell you.

Self-demonstrating, man did fall. We have sinned. We are sinning.

Hate is in the world, and greed and avarice and arrogance, they're in the world. Sin is here. Scripture says so, and it demonstrates itself.

Christianity says more, however. Merely that man has sinned, it says that man's moral revolt alienated him from God and banished him from the presence of God forever. That's what it says, and that's what the Bible teaches.

Now, the fall of man. Three words or four, if you want to use the article. Four words, little words at that, all single syllables.

There you have it. The fall of man. Now, you don't have to have that taught down to you.

You don't have to have anybody write you a pretty little story trying to incorporate that to stir the unstirable atoms within you. My brother, anybody ought to know this and believe it and stand for it. Man is a fallen creature.

We're not what we should be and not what we were. Sin is here, and hate and insanity and impermanence and criminality and war. They're all here in the world.

That's one fact. Now, it presupposes, this takes another fact, that redemption of man is an accomplished act, and this was done by the Godhead. Only the Godhead could visit this fallen man and redeem him and restore him.

It's without human collaboration. Dr. R. R. Brown tells about the old brother who got on his knees to pray, and he said, Oh, Lord, use me. Use me any way you can.

But if it's all right with you, I would like to be used in an advisory capacity. But there's nobody that God is using as an advisor. God doesn't accept advisors, and God doesn't accept little helpers.

It's a pleasant thing to see a little girl helping her mother bake pies. You've seen that. No doubt your little girl has helped you, or you've helped somebody bake pies.

Well, the little girl gets a little dirty mess over here on a little table while the mother is baking the pies right. The little girl is messing up the kitchen generally. And when her father comes home, she dashes, now that she's all cleaned up again and has a pretty little fluffy dress on, she dashes to meet her dad.

Says, You know what, Daddy, I helped Mother bake pies. He smiles and hugs her and says, That's wonderful. He knows.

But she's just been helping her mother, which meant adding 33 and 1 3rd percent labor to what her mother was doing. I heard of a man who wrote a book once, and he dedicated it to his little girl. It said, To Shirley, my daughter, without whose help this book would have been written one half time sooner.

And that's it. We help. We like to help, you see.

We want to help God. We say, Oh, Lord, I'd like to help you. But you can no more help redeem yourself than you can help convert yourself or help create yourself.

God does his work alone, without any human collaboration. We cannot contribute one atom to the work of God. Now, redemption was a work of the Trinity.

Here's what it says here, and I'd like to bear down hard on this. If we get no further, we'll get that far. That redemption was a work wrought by the Trinity.

The fall was a work wrought by man alone. But the redemption was a work wrought by God alone. The text says that Christ, that is, the Son, through the eternal Spirit, that is, the Spirit, offered himself unto God, that is, the Father.

So we have in the act of redemption Father, Son, and Holy Ghost united. The persons of the Godhead cannot work separately. Keep that in mind always.

We can think them apart, but they never can be apart. The early Church Fathers recognized that right away and said, We are not to divide the substance, though we are to recognize the three persons. The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are co-substantial, consubstantial.

They are one substance and cannot be separated. So it is impossible to think of the Father over here doing a work and the Son out there doing a work and the Spirit across there doing a work. The Spirit and the Son and the Father always work together in whatever is done.

If you will read your Bible, you will find that it teaches that the Father created the heaven and the earth, and then turns around and teaches that the Son created the heaven and the earth, and then says the Spirit created the heaven and the earth. And it's not contradicting itself because the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit work together in creation, and they work together in redemption, too. You will notice how the Trinity worked together when Christ was incarnated.

At the Annunciation, the angel came and said that the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, and the Spirit shall come upon thee, the Holy Ghost, and that holy thing that is born of thee shall become the Son of God. There were the three Persons in the Incarnation. Then at the Baptism, if anybody comes to you as they do and says that they don't believe in the Trinity, ask them about this.

Tell them that the Father spoke out of heaven, the Son stood on the bank of the river, and the Spirit came as a dove from the Father to light upon the Son. And the Father said, This is my beloved Son, and put the Spirit upon him. So you have the three Persons at the Baptism of Jesus.

You will find also here three Persons at the death of Jesus. And at the resurrection of Jesus there were three Persons. Jesus said, If you destroy this temple, I will raise it up.

There was declaration that the Son would raise himself up. Then he said, The Father will raise him up. And it's always taught the Father raised the Son.

But in Romans 1 and 4, it teaches us that the Holy Spirit raised the Son. So there again we have at the resurrection all Persons of the Trinity working in perfect harmony to do the work of God. So in the redemption.

Now there are some errors held, and I'd like to have you get the errors out of your mind. But you say, Why waste your time on errors? Why not preach the truth? Well, you might as well say to a farmer, Why waste your time on weeds? Why don't you just plant corn? If he plants corn and doesn't deal with the weeds, he won't have any corn very long. I've always wondered why.

Of course, I know why. It's because the world's upside down and sin is in here, in this world of ours. One fellow wanted to know what you could do to make the world a better world in which to live.

Well, he said, I could think of one way I could make good health contagious. But good health isn't contagious, sickness is contagious. You just wait around to catch good health.

You won't catch it, you'll get measles. So it's not good health that's contagious, it's disease. So it is in the world.

I've often wondered why a garden wouldn't produce tomatoes and yellow corn and all the rest without a lot of care, but it'll produce weeds and green berries without anybody's help at all. Because the God said to Adam, Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee, and in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt learn your bread. Sweat of your face.

So man's face has to sweat in order to keep the weeds out. So if you're going to know truth, you're going to have to pull the weeds out in order that truth can grow. All right, let's look at some of the weeds.

Then after we've cleared the weeds away, we'll see where true corn grows. That Christ the Son differs from the Father. Now that is one of the weeds that I'd like to have you pull out of your mind and never allow it to grow there.

The conception is that Christ is for us and God is against us. There never was any truth in that at all. Christ being God is for us, and the Father being God is for us, and God the Holy Ghost being God is for us, and the Trinity is for us.

And it was because the Father was for us that the Son came to die for us. And that's why the reason that God is for us is why he is at the right hand of God now, the Son pleading for us. The Holy Spirit is in our heart, he is the Advocate within, Christ is the Advocate above.

And all agree. So there is no disagreement between the Father and the Son over man. They say that Christ was a loving and kind and God was stern and just.

It took me quite a little while to escape the feeling that the New Testament is a book of love and the Old Testament a book of judgment. But I have gone through the Old and New Testament, carefully counted the words, and I find there's three times as much about mercy in the New Testament as there is in the Old. Or three times as much in the Old as there is in the New.

And equally as much about grace in the Old as there is in the New. Way back in the days of Noah, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. And we read this morning, the Lord is gracious, merciful and gracious, slow to anger.

Grace is an Old Testament quality, and judgment is a New Testament quality. Read your 23 Matthew, read your book of Revelation, read Jude, read 2 Peter, and see what they tell us of the terrible judgments of God that are coming upon the world, New Testament judgments. So God is a God of judgment and a God of grace.

Judgment is in the New Testament, and grace is in the New Testament. Judgment and grace are in the Old Testament. God is always the same without change, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

And then they teach that Christ won God over to our side by dying for us. Some people imagine that. Now, I don't say that anybody actually writes a book teaching this, but the idea is you get it, you know.

It sort of seeps in by osmosis into the Church. That Christ won God over to our side. I've heard evangelists, you know, I might have done it myself, telling about the unangry God with his shillelagh raised to destroy a sinning man, and Jesus rushing in, and the shillelagh fell on the head of Jesus, and he died and the sinner lived.

Well, now that's good drama, but it's mighty poor theology, for there's not a word of truth in it. The Father so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, and it was the love of the Father that sent the Son to die for mankind. So the Father and the Son were in perfect harmonious agreement that the Son should die for the sins of the world.

And I don't think I'm far wrong if I should say that while the maiden's son alone, Mary's son alone, Jesus, actually died on a cross, I believe that the heart of God ached and was as deeply pained as the heart of the Holy Son. If your boy, you had a son, and that son were to be executed by hanging tomorrow morning, I ask you, who would suffer the greater pain? The boy who died with a rope around his neck, or you? I believe your pain would be greater than his, for his pain would be brief and over, and yours would never be over. So when the Holy Father turned his back by the necessity of justice on his son who was dying on a cross, I believe the pain in the heart of God was as great as the pain in the heart of the Son.

And when they drove the spear into the side of Jesus, I believe it was felt in heaven at the right hand of God. Though only the Son died, yet the Father suffered because he was one with the Son. Then, of course, they teach or wrongly get the idea that only one person had part in redemption.

The truth is, as I have said, that all three persons have part in redemption, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost all had part. The Father received the offering at the hands of the Holy Ghost, and what offering was it? It was the Son who was offered as a lamb without spot and without blemish. So all three persons of the Godhead had part in redemption, though the redemptive price was paid by the Son to the Father through the Spirit.

Oh, the depths and the heights and the light and the darkness and the cataracts of love that flow down from the heart of God through his Son to mankind by the Spirit. Now, salvation is redemption appropriated. You see, redemption is an objective thing.

It's outside of you. Redemption is something that took place on a cross, but salvation is something that takes place inside of you. So when I have appropriated redemption and made it subjective, I've taken that which is external to me, redemption, and made it internal within me, that's salvation.

So salvation is redemption appropriated. And the three persons call the lost to salvation. The Son said, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.

And in John it says, No man can come unto me except the Father draw him. And in the book of Revelation it says, The Spirit and the bride say, Come. So the redemption that was wrought for us by the three persons becomes salvation when we heed the call of the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and we come.

Now I'll close with this. Once Jesus sat down with some sinners to eat bread. He knew why he was there.

He was there for the same reason the Salvation Army girl goes into a saloon in the United States. They don't have them around here, I guess. But they go in and give away or sell or get rid of somehow war crimes and come back out again.

You see a Salvation Army girl going into a saloon. She's not going in there to get a drink. She's going in there to give the water of life.

Now that's the way Jesus ate with sinners. He sat down with them everywhere, not that he enjoyed their wickedness, but that he wanted to help them. So they saw him with the sinners, and they said, How is it that he eats with sinners? He told them three little stories, and they're all one story.

Why, he said, one time there was a shepherd, and he had a flock of sheep, and he got 99 of them safe in the fold. But he looked around, and he said, There's one missing. And he left the 99 safe and went and looked everywhere until he found the sheep.

He said, That's not enough. One time there was a woman, and she had a beautiful piece of jewelry composed of ten pieces of silver. Now, not coins to buy milk with, but ten pieces of silver.

They were jewelry, not coins. She said, You know how a woman will do. Her beads will break.

Oh, she'll go out with the beads, and she'll have her husband and kids down on the floor searching everywhere. Finally they come up with them, each with a little handful, but there's not enough. Well, that's what happened to this woman.

Something broke, and down went her jewelry all over the floor. She picked it all up, but she said, There's one piece missing. So she got her candle, and she went searching everywhere, and finally down here, she found it.

Ah, she said. Yelled out, I found it! And the woman across the fence said, Good, good. We're glad you found it.

Everybody was glad she found that. Then he said, That isn't all. There was a man one time who had two sons, and one of them was a young delinquent, we call him now.

And he said, Father, give me my share. I don't want to wait until you die. You may not die yet for years.

Give me my share. I never could quite understand why the father did it, but he gave him the share. I'd have given him a boot.

But he gave him his share. And he took it and went away and spent it. Later on, he got lying around there dirty and ragged and smelling of the pig pen.

And he said, What a fool I've been. Boy, have I had it. He said, Aye, aye.

Back home, he said, My very servants are well-dressed, clean, and well-fed, and here I am lying in a hog pen. He said, I know what I'll do. I'll go back home.

He said, Aye, aye. And as he went, he made his little speech. He picked it all up.

He said, I'll tell my father I am not worthy to be called thy son. I have sinned in my sight. Therefore, make me one of thy hired servants.

He said, When they got back there and the father saw him, he ran and greeted him and gave him new garments and killed the fatted calf and had a feast. I heard those three stories from the time I can recall when I was 17 years old when I was converted. I read those.

But I never knew what was meant here until years later when I had a session with God in earnest prayer. Oh, God, what does this mean? And I ignored what all the commentators said it meant, which is usually a

good thing to do. And I sought God alone to find out what it meant.

And it came to my heart a revelation just as beautiful as when in flying you break through the clouds and see the sun-bathed landscape below you. I saw it all, and I see it now. And that was years ago and I've had no reason to change my mind.

There were the three persons of the Trinity. That lost boy was the lost world. That lost coin was the lost world.

That lost sheep was the lost world. And there was the father looking for his lost boy. And there was the son, the shepherd, looking for his lost sheep.

And there was the Holy Ghost, the woman with the light, looking for her lost coin. And they all added up to being the redeemed human race. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were all looking for the lost.

The father was waiting for his boy to come home. The son was looking for his sheep. And this woman, the spirit, was looking for her silver piece, the jewelry that she was to wear around her neck.

And so God said to me, this is what it means. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all busy searching for his lost treasures. Now, Jesus said, that's why I talk to sinners.

I am the son looking for the sheep. My father is looking for his boy. And the Holy Spirit within me is looking for the silver coin.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united in this. Now, that's to me wonderful. This is not great preaching, but it's preaching about something pretty great.

And I hope you realize it. And I hope you see that you have the answer to all the heretics and all the picture emptiers and all the people who want to moronize you and write silly stuff. I hope you have the answer to it all.

I know what I believe, sir. I believe that man fell and God redeemed him and he redeemed him. All three persons of the Trinity were engaged in the holy act of redemption.

The Father received the sacrifice, the Son, David, and the Holy Ghost conveyed it. So Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the divine Trinity, is engaged in saving mankind. I pray that we may be wise enough to know it and turn our eyes to Him while it is called today for the night coming when no man can work.

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