

09-10-80 7p Part I

by Bertha Smith

Bertha Smith's sermon emphasizes the nature of sin, the necessity of Jesus' sacrifice, and the transformative power of faith in Christ for salvation.

Duration: 34:36

Scripture: Genesis 9:6, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by sharing an illustration about the question of why God made human beings sinful and selfish. He uses a Chinese word for man to represent all people, emphasizing that everyone is sinful and in need of God's forgiveness. The preacher then discusses how God prepared a place and a people for the coming of Jesus, who laid aside his heavenly glory to die for the sins of humanity. He emphasizes the need for individuals to come to the cross and receive Jesus as their Savior in order to be counted righteous and have the Holy Spirit living inside them.

Transcript

I'd like to lift our hearts to thee in praise and gratitude for this good hour. We praise you for all these dear people who love you. And after a busy day, they're here.

And they're here because they want to love you more. Now, Lord, we thank you for thy blessed presence here. You always meet with your children when they meet together.

And we want to enthrone you now to take over here and just give something to every heart here this evening. We pray in Jesus' name and for his sake. How many of you were not here last evening? Please raise your hands.

Oh, a great many of you. Well, I'm having the second lesson on the lesson we started last evening. I will have to review it just a little bit so these people who haven't come before, haven't been here, were not here last night, will know what we're talking about.

And you people who heard it last night will get to hear it again. I have to change my illustration a little so everybody can see it. Can you see it over this way? Maybe we can get this out of the way a little bit.

That's all right, I think. Now, the Lord put this in my mind, this illustration, for the old Chinese teachers in China who had a problem all of their lives, a question they could not answer because they did not have the

Word of God. And that question was, why did God make human beings like they are? Sinful and selfish.

But because we go with the Word of God, we are able to answer them. Now, this is the word here, and you children can understand this too. Little folks can understand this.

This is the Chinese word for man. Man in general are people. That includes woman, you know, man and woman, just a person.

And these are the people of the world, and they're all black. These represent the whole human family, all black and all going down. Well, God didn't make people like that.

God made people like himself. And when he created man, he created him in his own image. Now, the Chinese always make God red because red is the happy color.

And this is for God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And when he made a man and a woman, he made them like himself in his own image. What kind of image does God have? God is light.

God is glory. And he made Adam and Eve in his own glory. Of course, they couldn't wear clothes.

But he didn't make slaves. But he gave them the right to choose. And when Mrs. Eve chose, she chose to listen to the devil.

And when she listened to the devil and she chose between holy God and the devil, she chose the devil. And God's glory departed from her and left her a sinful human being. And then she didn't leave Adam alone until she persuaded him to sin.

And he chose between the woman and holy God. And there his nature was changed. The devil entered into him and he lost his God-life and his God-glory.

Oh, that one fell down to hell. Oh, oh. Oh, oh.

You can't pick people up when they go to hell. No, it's okay. You'll just leave them there.

They just have to be there. Well, we'll just borrow one down here. We'll borrow one down here to put up here.

Here's Mrs. Eve. Well, now, as soon as man sinned, Adam and Eve sinned, Jehovah God gave them a way whereby they could worship God. And he put them to death for their sin because God's holy law always had been and always will be the soul that sinneth should die.

And Adam and Eve had to be put to death for the disobeying God and sinning. But he promised them a Savior would come. And before the Savior came to die for them, the seed of the woman would come and crush the serpent's head, but in doing so he would suffer and he would bruise his heel.

The Lord transferred the sins of Adam and Eve and transferred Adam and Eve, this black thing they had become, to sheep. I have two sheep here because he clothed them with sheepskin. God's glory had gone and they were left standing there naked.

And God killed sheep for them. And they entered into those sheep, as it were, and those sheep died in their stead. And those sheep represented the one who would come 4,000 years later, God's Son, the only one who could come and die for man's sin.

And from the time Adam and Eve sinned, God's plan was to send the Savior. Well, after about 1,400 years, the human family had become so sinful they didn't worship God. That altar was there where God had shown Adam and Eve how they could transfer themselves to animals and kill those animals.

But most of the people paid no attention to it. They went their own way. They didn't want God.

They wanted to do as they pleased. And the greatest sin and all the root sin of the human family is, I have a right to myself. And the human family took a right to themselves.

And after about 1,400 years, the people in the world had become so wicked, Jehovah God was just heart sick that he never created human beings and put them in the world. And he decided just to destroy the whole human family with a flood, and he would have, had he not looked down and seen one man, Noah, who was walking with God. And as you know, Noah preached 120 years, and not one person repented.

But for Noah's sake, the Lord saved his family and made a new start. And after the flood, the Lord made two changes. In his dealing with the human family.

In the first place, he put them under human government. You find that in Genesis 9-6. Whoso shed his man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.

That was the beginning of punishing men for sinning against other men. If any man took another person's life, there had to be men to put him to death, and he had to forfeit his own life. The beginning of human government.

And then the Lord shortened a man's life. The life of the human after the flood. There were no more people living several hundred years.

And after a while, the Bible sets their age for a person at seven years old. Well, he began then, after about 500 years after the flood, to get a place ready to send the seed of the woman by calling Abraham. And promising him that land right in the crossroads of the populated earth at that time where Europe, Africa, and Asia just almost came together there at the Holy Land.

And because he never forces people, it took him 2,000 years to get Abraham's descendants ready to send the Savior. And finally he had to let their nation be destroyed to cure them of idolatry and get them ready for his coming. And after the children of Israel were carried off to Babylon and the nation destroyed, never had a nation of their own sense, never had a king, never had their own government, they've had to live under Gentile nations and how they have chased under.

But God prepared a place and a people, carried back enough of the Jews, about 50,000 to the Holy Land to get ready for his coming. And in fullness of time, when he got a people ready, and a place ready, and a language ready for the Bible to be written in Greek, a wonderful language, very expressive, he sent forth his Son and he laid aside his heavenly glory and came into the world to die for man's sin. Because holy God can never excuse anything that comes from the devil.

Everything that comes from the devil must be punished. And the mildest sinful thought you ever had came from the devil. And the whole human family here descended from Adam and Eve.

And here we are, all sinners. And we're sinners in thought, we're sinners in deed, we're sinners in word, and we're sinners in deed. And we choose to sin because we like to sin.

We like to have our own way and rebel against holy God and say, I have a right to myself, I have a right to myself. Whoever had a right to themselves? Nobody's ever had a right to themselves. Well, in the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son to die for man's sin.

And he came into the world, laid aside his glory, and became a human being. He was God, equal with God in all that God was. And yet he came into the world and took a human body.

And how could he take a human body without taking a sinful body? Why did Jesus have to be born of a virgin? Why could he not have an earthly father and an earthly mother? If Jesus had an earthly father and an earthly mother, he'd have had a sinful nature just like you and me. But God, by a miracle, borrowed the body of a good woman who would accept what the Lord said. And no human being has ever lived that was asked to make the sacrifice that Mary did.

She had to face giving up the man she was engaged to. She had to face being accused of having an illegitimate child, and she would deserve death for that. She had to face being put to death, really.

But when the Lord asked her for her human body, she said, Be it unto thy handmaiden according to thy word. And the Lord, by a miracle, created a human body in the body of Mary without an earthly father. And Jesus was born of a virgin.

He did not have a sinful nature, and yet he had a body of flesh, perfect man and perfect God. Why? Why did he have to do that? Because God couldn't die. God couldn't die.

And he had to take a human body in order to die. Somebody had to take the punishment for the human family or the whole human family would have had to go into hell forever. God can never excuse anything that comes from the devil.

And our very natures, this big eye in us, came from the devil. Why, you can see a child two years old get angry and kick if it doesn't get what it wants. Why, you know the Lord didn't make people like that in the beginning.

Something happened after God created Adam and Eve. He created them in his own image, in his glory, without sin. But when they listened to the devil, they became sinful.

And then God, in his love and mercy, because there was absolutely no other way, there could have been any other way in the world, whereby Adam and Eve could have been punished for their sins. The descendants of Adam and Eve could have been punished for their sins. God would have never sent his son into the world.

But that was absolutely the only thing that could be done. And our Lord laid aside all the glories of heaven and came down here and lived down here just long enough to let everybody know that he was not an ordinary man. He was a perfect man and a poor man, but he was God come in the flesh.

And he laid his life down. If Jesus had not been willing to die, the whole Roman army could not have nailed him to the cross. He said early in his ministry, I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give my life a ransom for many.

And praise the Lord that included you and me. And when Jesus came to be baptized, you remember, at the beginning of his public ministry, he was going to die our death, so he took our burial. That's why he

was baptized.

He took our burial because he was going to die our death. And he was buried in that river, Jordan. And John the Baptist seeing him come said, Look, there's God's Lamb that takes away the sin of the world.

And he would take away our sin by dying our death because holy God must punish sin. God can never excuse anything that comes from the devil. It must be punished, and the punishment is death.

And Jesus went to the cross, and do you know he had to become us when he went to the cross? He had to become what we are by nature when he went to the cross. And he is sin. And because he is sin, we are sin.

We are sin. And because we are sin, we've got that devil nature. Jesus had to become us to take our place in death.

As you know, the Chinese words are made up of symbols. And here's their word for sin. And the top part is a bundle of something.

And the bottom part is a negative, something which should not have been and should not be. And they put these two together, and they make the word for sin. It's a bundle of something that should never have been and should not be, and yet every person in the world has it.

And they always represent sin by a bundle of something, a great burden tied to the back of an individual so tightly that no human authority can release them from that sin. And they always write this word on that bundle, sin. And we think sins, and we talk sins, and we act sins.

Friends, because we are sin, we are this human nature that is sin, that came from the devil. The dirtiest place in all my Bibles is not John 3.16. That brings up too many questions in the eyes of the Chinese. You can't ever give anybody John 3.16 by itself.

God so loved the world that he sent his son into the world, that he sent his son to die. They can't understand how God could love sinners. What kind of God is it if he can love sinners, excuse sinners, and love sinners just the same as good people? Well, they don't know, of course, that everybody's a sinner.

But they can't understand substitution. The Chinese can't understand substitution. Anybody else can, too.

So the first in my Bible, in all my Bibles, big ones, little ones, Chinese and English ones, is 2 Corinthians 5.21. 2 Corinthians 5.21. Let me give it to you. He who knew no sin, and that was Jesus Christ, of course. God the Father made to become sin.

What for? That we might become the righteousness of God in him. He who knew no sin. God the Father made to become sin.

That we might enter into him and stand before God in him in all of his perfect righteousness and his perfect holiness and be counted righteous by all the goodness and the righteousness of Jesus Christ be in charge to us. And not only counted righteous, but he could die our death. And God charged the death of his Son to us.

And look at us as if we'd been put to death. And because that devil nature's been put to death, not only could we be placed in his Son and stand before God in his Son, but God could count us righteous in his

Son. And then we could receive a living Lord inside of us to live inside of us.

We would not only stand before God in the righteousness of his Son, but we'd be a personality for the living Lord to live in, express himself through. Now, miracle of miracles, the greatest miracle in the universe. Only God could have done that.

Now, when Jesus went to the cross, he had to become that awful thing, sin, because that's what you and I are. And he had to become us in order to take our place on the cross. And he went to the cross, he became sin.

And God's Lamb came and died. And after that, people need never slay any more animals after Jesus died. Now, I told the group last night how I'd known about Jesus, of course, all my life.

I knew about him coming at Christmas and some of the songs about him being the Savior. But I didn't know I was a sinner. I didn't know I needed a Savior.

I didn't know his death had anything to do with me, because I'd been a good girl all my life, and I'd been taught in an old-time home where yes was yes and no was no, and nobody was ever told twice to do anything. We were told once and that settled it, and we enjoyed doing what we had to do, and I enjoyed school, and I just memorized more Bible than anybody else in the community. And I was a good girl, and I always led my classes because I wanted the teacher to brag on me.

That's why I studied, to lead the classes, to get ahead. And I thought the Lord was exceedingly pleased with me, and always on the honor roll. And I was between 10 and 11.

I was almost 11 years old, like about three months. And here in the Revival Meeting, friends, as the man of God preached the Word, I saw that I was not what I thought I was. But I was this black person here, deserving hell.

I got the shock of my life. Now, I'd seen sinners called forward for prayer all my life. Once a year, when they had the Revival Meeting, the sinners came up and knelt down, and there were saints and sinners and backsliders in our church, and the saints prayed for the sinners to repent, the backsliders to come back to the Lord, and the man of God preached in power, and they did.

They did come back, repenting and weeping over their sins, and just then filled with the joy of the Lord. But you see, I didn't know I was in the class of the sinners, and I got the shock of my life that night, and I started praying, prayed a whole year, and because I was too young to go to the altar, so I thought, and other people thought so too. We didn't baptize infants in Baptist churches in those days, and had to be old enough to have an experience with the Lord, to know their loss, and come to the cross of Christ and take His death, and you had to hand yourself over to the Lord.

We called it surrender when I grew up. You had to surrender everything to yourself and everything to the Lord before you'd ever come into your heart, and that's true now too. And by the next year, I started going to the altar, and for six long years, I prayed and wept over my sins and confessed them over and over and over.

And here I was praying, why didn't the Lord save me the first time I asked Him? The Lord doesn't have but one place to meet people. Because of His holiness, He doesn't have one place to meet a sinful human being, and I didn't know that place. And I was praying directly from this sinful heart up yonder to God, and

because I'd been taught that God was my Father and I'd been taught to pray the Lord's Prayer, which the Lord gave for His disciples and not for children, not for unsaved people, my Father who art in heaven.

And I was calling Him my Father who art in heaven. He must have been my desire for Him, but I didn't know any better. But He couldn't save me.

He didn't have but one place to meet that sinner, and I didn't know that place. And for six long years, I wept over my sin and prayed directly to God the Father. And I want to tell you, I think if the Lord could have ever saved anybody without the death of His Son, He surely would have me.

He must have been my desire for Him. But He just kept heaping up that conviction and heaping up that conviction. I can never praise Him enough that He never let me alone.

And God is the Father of those who've been born into His family. He's not the Father of these people. There's a difference in being your Creator and your life giver and your life preserver and your Father.

Well, I learned after six long years that this is the place where you come when you sin. And friends, I came. I came here.

Uh-oh, that didn't happen now. The Lord didn't let that happen. He held on to me.

He just did not let that happen. And I admitted the fact that I was that sinner who didn't deserve anything but hell. I am really embarrassed today when I think of the human pride and wickedness that I had in my heart to think that a little girl would be that wicked.

I blush today. Do you know I wanted to make a hundred on all my examinations? And I didn't want anybody to make a hundred but me. Well, I couldn't make but a hundred.

Why didn't I want everybody to make a hundred? Oh, I wanted to be first. I wanted to be this. I wanted to hear the teacher brag on birth.

Now, could you imagine anybody that wicked? That came from the devil. Well, I came here. And when I came there, the Lord met me here.

The Lord met me here. And when I came there, God the Father comes down just this close to me. He comes down just that close to me.

And He can come that close because when I came and took Christ's death as my death, God the Father charged the death of His Son to me. And He looked at me as if I had been put to death. As if I had been put to death by charging the death of His Son to me.

And, lo, He charged all of my sins to His Son. He counted all my sins as if they'd been the sins of His Son. And He charged all the goodness and the holiness and the righteousness of His Son into my account.

And He counted me righteous. What about that? He counted me righteous. Now, these preachers call that imputed righteousness.

Something that's not yours, but the Lord counts it so as if it were yours. So I was counted righteous. Now, I didn't know that at that time.

Now, what I did know was that when I came to the cross of Christ, I knew my burden of sin rolled away. And a living Lord came inside of my heart. Well, I had to take this... When I took Christ's death as my death, God saw me dead in His Son.

Now, I didn't know all that happened to me and the position the Lord put me in, the glorious position the Lord put me in, until I got old enough to study that from the Bible. But I knew I was born anew. I knew the Lord was no longer way yonder.

And then I cried to Him and cried to Him and still He was a way yonder and I was here. And when He invaded my personality, I want you to know, I was literally made over. Well, I've learned from the Bible that when I came here and took the death of Jesus Christ as my death and took Him as the Lord of my life, the Holy Spirit placed me into the resurrected Christ.

And I let these red names represent the resurrected Christ. And here I am. The Holy Spirit baptized me into Jesus Christ.

I was placed into Him. Now, friends, that's the only baptism of the Holy Spirit there is. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is that we are placed into the resurrected Christ.

And I stood before God in His Son, in His Son. And, of course, I was counted righteous. God saw me in His Son, standing before Him.

And He charged all the goodness and the wholeness and the righteousness of His Son to me. I'll just get out my box of pecks and then I'll have enough. I haven't got the wrong felts tucked in the suitcase somehow.

I had to piece them out and make some paper things that won't stick. But this will do just as well. I was counted righteous because I stood before God in His Son.

And 19 times in the New Testament the expression is used, in Christ, in Christ, in Christ. And those who have come to the cross of Christ and taken His death have been put to death in Christ as God sees it. And we stand before God in His Son.

And, of course, we are counted righteous because God can accept the righteousness of His Son. He can't accept any righteousness that these people can have or ever have. No human being could ever have righteousness that God could accept.

He can only accept perfect righteousness. Therefore, He can only accept His own righteousness. He and His Son and the Holy Spirit were one perfect righteousness.

And I was counted righteous. And because I was counted righteous and that sinful nature was put to death I could receive a living Lord in the person of the Holy Spirit into my heart. This is the word for the Holy Spirit.

I received Jesus in the person of the Holy Spirit into my heart. And I was born anew. I was recreated.

If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17 tells us. God had made His Son to become sin and my sin that I might be the righteousness of God in Him.

So here I am in Christ and I'm just as righteous before God as His Son because my righteousness doesn't count at all. It's all His righteousness that's charged to me. Now, isn't that glorious? Isn't that glorious? Counted righteous.

Placed into the living Lord in order that I might receive a living Lord inside of me and become a personality down here in the world for the Lord Jesus Christ to live in. And, you know, that's the only place He has to live down here. He doesn't live in Baptist churches.

I wonder sometimes if some people think so from the amount of money they've borrowed to banks to build pretty churches. They must in all the sincerity of their souls they must think they're making a dwelling place for Jesus and for God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. But He doesn't dwell in churches.

He just dwells in human hearts. We're His temples. And human beings are the only temples He has down here.

And human hearts are the only throne that He has down here. That's the only place where He reigns. Is in human hearts.

Well, now let's get a few more people up there. Brother Marshall, were you ever down here? Were you that black? You were that black? Well, where are you now? How'd you get here? How'd you get from here up to here? Trusting who? A little louder. Trusting Jesus.

Just trusting Jesus. Blessing the little children and never speaking untimely to a woman and feeding the hungry and healing the sick? Is that what saved you? Oh, by trusting Jesus. What do you mean by that? Oh, placing your sins on Jesus.

Well, what did He done about it? Oh, you came here where He died. You came here where He died and then you placed your sins on the cross and your sinful self. Well, when you did that and here you are down here, this black, well, you came here, eh, and you placed your sins on Christ.

That's the only place a sinner can meet God. And God the Father is just over there on the other side of the cross. And you didn't know it at the time, but perhaps, but we know it from the Word of God and, of course, you learned it later, that when you placed your sins on Jesus and you took Christ's death for yourself, that God the Father charged the death of His Son to you and the Holy Spirit baptized you into His Son.

And when you were saved, you were baptized by the Holy Spirit. That was a part of being saved, being placed into His Son. Now, nobody after Pentecost is ever told to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

If they're saved, they've been baptized and they were saved. If they haven't been baptized with the Holy Spirit, they're not saved. If they haven't been placed into Christ, they've never come to the cross.

And here you are over here and you're counted righteous, called righteous. And because you stand before God in all the holiness and the perfections of His Son, you can receive a living Lord in the person of the Holy Spirit into your heart. And then you stand before God in His Son and then you have His Son living inside of you.

No wonder we're called new creations. Well, let's get somebody else up here. Let's get a woman.

Anybody here been a Christian 40 years? Mrs. Peavy, how long are you here tonight? Raise your hand. Is she here? How long have you been saved? How many? Did she say? 60 years. Ooh, aren't you a good

one for an illustration.

Oh, 60 years. Well, Mrs. Peavy, were you ever this black? You ever this black?

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