

(Christ--the Way God Makes Man Righteous) 5. Christ, the Atonement

by Denny Kenaston

The atonement is the satisfaction made to God for the sins of all mankind, made possible through the mediation of Christ and especially by His passion and death.

Duration: 1:11:32

Scripture: Genesis 22:14, Psalm 119:11, Isaiah 52:13 - 55:9, Matthew 6:33, Romans 16:17

Topics: "Atonement"

Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny emphasizes the importance of having a positive attitude in our study of God's word. He mentions that a brother realized that his attitude plays a significant role in his learning. Brother Denny also discusses the complexity of defining atonement, as it encompasses various aspects and blessings for both God and man. He assigns the word 'reconciliation' to be memorized and encourages the congregation to read and meditate on chapters 3 and 7 of the book of Romans, which explore the role of the law in bringing individuals to the end of themselves.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Amen, good morning.

Well, it's about the end of the first week, huh? Praise God. Are you excited today? Are you excited about studying? Amen, that's good. One brother said to me that he's learning that a lot of it has to do with his attitude.

Boing, the light went on. It does. You know, it does.

It has a lot to do with our attitude. Just a word here before we get into our morning exercises. And I mean that in a lot of ways.

I just want to speak a little bit about a book here. I have been searching for a theology book for about five years. Not for me, but for you.

Many theology books are pretty difficult to wade through. And the theologians give you everything that everybody believes that's wrong. And then they tell you what they believe at the end.

And it's not been good. So, I've been searching for five years. And I found a basic, simple theology book that I want to recommend to you young men.

That's not hard to read. But yet covers all the basic, fundamental theologies of New Testament faith. And I got a bunch of copies of it.

Hoping that you fellas will grab it and take it home and read it. It's called What the Bible Teaches. It was written by R.A. Torrey.

That's a hundred years ago. And I haven't read it through completely. But I perused my way through it.

And I've read R.A. Torrey for years. And he's a good, sound, biblical theologian. So, I just want to recommend that book to you.

We do want you to know what you believe. And that will be a help to you, I believe. Alright.

Let's give our assignment first. The word to memorize for Monday morning is the word reconciliation. Reconciliation.

I want you to read in the commentary on the book of Romans. Chapters 16 and 17. We have two more chapters after this and we're finished.

Chapters 16 and 17. And also, through the weekend, I want you to read three times these two chapters in Romans. And read them the way that our brother was saying.

Read them slowly. Look at what you're reading. Think about what you're reading.

Chapter 3 in Romans. And chapter 7. We're going to be looking at the place of the law. How God uses the law to bring a soul to the end of himself.

And we're going to be looking at that on Monday. So, I want you to ponder those chapters. Chapter 3 and chapter 7 in the book of Romans.

Okay? Let's move into our lesson this morning. Again, we are on atonement. We're taking two days on this.

Because it is the theology that undergirds everything that we're looking at when we look at the doctrine of salvation. So, we're going to continue our study of the doctrine of atonement this morning. And the title of the message today is, Christ the Atonement.

Christ the Atonement. We finished yesterday by looking at God Almighty's need for an atonement. We began to see that the atonement came forth out of the heart of God.

Jesus was the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. And I can't figure all that out and I can't understand all of that, but I don't need to figure it out and I don't need to understand it all. It's a fact.

He is the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. So, the atonement came up out of the heart of God. The atonement is actually the expression of several of God's attributes.

It is God responding to the tragedy of the fall on the basis of who He is. It is God responding to the tragedy of the fall on the basis of who He actually is. That's a powerful one.

Chew on that a while. In simplicity, the cross is the holiness of God, the justice of God, and the love of God coming together in one radiant display of His glory. That's what the cross is.

It is God's holiness and His justice and His love all coming together and working itself out in one radiant display of glory. His holy hatred of sin separates Him from fellowship with man whom He made. His righteous justice moves Him to inflict just punishment for the sin.

And His tender love moves Him to do whatever must be done to restore fallen man and to renew fellowship, unity, and union again between He and man. Out of all that comes the atonement, the gory, agonizing sacrifice of His Son. In God's being, these three attributes must be satisfied.

None of them can be pushed aside for the sake of the other, which I fear that today some of that has been done. That some of God's attributes have been pushed aside for the sake of others. And thus today, in this land where we live, God is love, love, love.

And amen, God is love. But that's not all that God is. And we can see just by the very sacrifice, the very atonement that flowed out of the heart of God, that God is more than just love.

He's also holy and just and right. And amen. Amen, just like Abraham said, imploring God, Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Yes, he will.

He will always do right. And He has done right in the atonement. What a display of His righteousness.

The atonement of Jesus Christ. So, none of these attributes can be pushed aside. The Father says, I will give my only begotten Son, I will slay my only Son, a pure and a perfect sacrifice to redeem man whom I love.

God still loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. The Son says, I will become flesh and live a pleasing life and lay down my life. I will bear the sins of the world.

I will let you, Father, slay me and release your wrath against sin for love's sake. He who knew no sin became sin for us. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, the Scriptures say.

And even the Holy Spirit gets involved in this atonement. The Holy Spirit says, I will be in you the strength to live that life and to lay down your life on the cross. He, speaking of Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot unto God.

So you see the Trinity flowing through this whole matter of atonement. God the Father is there. God the Son is there.

God the Spirit is there, working out this atonement in just a beautiful, radiant display of God's glory. And guess what, brethren? It's for you and I. Oh, if we could grasp even just a little bit of what this really means, it would change our lives forever. Change them forever.

Romans 5, verses 6-8 says these words. This brother read them to us already. Thank you for that, Daniel.

For when we were yet without strength, no strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

But, God commended His love, expressed His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. That's atonement. Before the foundation of the world, God decreed that the atonement needed would be a blood sacrifice.

Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. God determined that the atonement needed would be a blood sacrifice. A slain victim to appease the life of one for the life of others.

Before the foundation of the world, this was determined. The thread of this bloody sacrifice runs through the entire Bible and culminates in the bloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary. This is the atonement.

I want to give you a definition of atonement written by an old Methodist minister in 1870. It's a good one. It covers many of the aspects of atonement very well.

But, it is a bit long. But, I thought about it, you know. How do you make a definition of atonement short? Because there are so many aspects in the atonement.

And so many beautiful things that flow out of it to man. Satisfying God and blessing man. How do you give a definition and make it short? So, I didn't give you this one to memorize.

You can thank me for that. But anyway, I want to give it to you. I want you to notice how many aspects of the outworkings of this atonement is in this definition.

Here goes. The atonement is the satisfaction made to God for the sins of all mankind. Original and actual sins.

This is done by the mediation of Christ. And especially by His passion and death. And I see in that, not only the atonement back there, but there's blood on the mercy seat this morning.

And we have a mediator between God and man this very moment, because of that blood on the mercy seat. This is done by the mediation of Christ and especially by His passion and death. This done, this atonement done, so that pardon might be granted to all.

While the divine perfections are kept in harmony. Look at that. You see, the divine perfections must be kept in harmony.

You can't push one aside. Oh, for pity, for love, for pity love, we'll push aside the justice of God. No.

The divine perfection must be kept in harmony. And the authority of the sovereign is upheld. And the strongest motives are brought to bear upon the sinners, to lead them to repentance, to faith in Christ, to the necessary conditions needed for pardon, and to a life of obedience by the gracious aid of the Holy

Spirit.

Now, He's got a whole lot of salvation packed in that definition. But the bottom line is, He covered it very well. He covered God's side.

He covered God's heart. He covered God's love. He also covered God's justice and His government.

He covered man's need. And He covered the reality of an ongoing relationship of unity and union with God through the Holy Ghost. Good definition.

This is just another way of describing salvation. Which, by the way, that is what the atonement wrought. Salvation.

There are many aspects of salvation that flow out of this sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Let us consider them briefly for just a few moments. You will find most of these words in your definitions.

Propitiation. That was your memory definition for today. This flows out of the atonement.

To appease the wrath of an offended person. Redemption. To buy back as with a slave in bondage.

Reconciliation. To change from enmity to friendship and harmony. That's reconciliation.

And the word ransom? The price paid to buy back the slave. Amen? The Son of Man has not come to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. Substitution.

This means to die instead of another. That's what Christ did for us. Justification.

The legal act of God. The legal act of God of declaring a sinner righteous. Sanctification.

To be set apart unto God and set apart from the world. Regeneration. Which is regenesis.

To be born again by the Spirit of God. These words flow out of the atonement. And, oh, there are more.

What about forgiveness? And adoption? And inheritance? And deliverance? And translation? And creation? New creation? And the list could go on and on yet more. How about transformation? All these words flow out of the reality of atonement. Yes, it is God's so great salvation.

Oh, the thrill that rises in the heart when you realize that Christ is all this and more to whomsoever shall call and continue to call upon the name of the Lord. It's all there. Oh, the trembling responsibility to know all of this and walk away from it.

Christ is all of this and more. He is God's pure and spotless Passover Lamb. He is the mediator of the sacrifice and He is the sacrifice.

Oh, this is glorious. Only God could do that. He is all in all.

He is everything you need, Adam. Everything. He is the same.

He is the atonement which brings God and man back together again. That's who Christ is. He is the Redeemer and He is the ransom paid by the Redeemer to buy back the slave.

That's who Christ is. Yes, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 says, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

Let me give you again this morning some interesting thoughts on words. I hope you're grasping this principle. When you note how words fit together and where God places them and how many times God places them in the Bible, that those are very significant things as I see.

Remember how we noted the significance of the word righteousness and where it appears most? Displacement of words and the amount of times that words appear in the Scripture. This is very significant if you believe that every word is inspired and important. And I do, by the way.

If you believe that, then you have to take note of the fact that God breathed out that word one thousand times. So I was pondering the list of words which I just mentioned to you, that big long list we went through. I spent quite a bit of time yesterday just checking every one of those words and seeing where they show, where they appear, how many times it's in the Old Testament, how many times it's in the New Testament.

And there's some very revealing things that you can find if you note those words and how many times they're there and where they appear. But I did that yesterday. I noted that these words actually do not appear very many times in the New Testament.

And I also noted words like sacrifice and offering and atonement. These words are Old Testament words and hardly appear in the New. What does that mean? It means something.

What does it mean? My conclusion is this. The New Testament is full and running over with words that speak of Jesus Christ and of the Word Jesus Christ. He is all of these and more.

Why use these words when the reality has come? If you abide in Him, if you abide in Him and you live in Him in reality and let Him live in you, He is your propitiation, your redemption, your reconciliation, your ransom, your substitution, your justification, your sanctification, your regeneration. He's your adoption. He's your inheritance.

He's your deliverance. He's your translation. He's your creation.

He's all of those things. And while it's good and right for the New Testament to bring the word reconciliation out every now and then to get our attention, the fact of the matter is, if you live in the reality of Christ and you let Christ live in reality in you, that redemption is yours 24-7. Amen? That reconciliation is yours continually.

That propitiation, that mercy seat, that precious blood, it's yours continually. Just like the Bible says, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship, union, oneness, one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses.

And that word cleanse means continuous. Cleanses and keeps on cleansing and keeps on cleansing us from all sin. So, my take on the position of these words and the lack of these words is simply this.

God has focused on the atonement, which is His Son. And that's why we do not look at all those other words. Sacrifice? God doesn't need to talk about the sacrifice anymore.

The sacrifice is in front of us. The sacrifice has been made. The sacrifice has been so beautifully revealed in so many places.

And the whole Old Testament has been opened up to us because the sacrifice has been done. Let's take a few minutes this morning and behold. You know what that word behold means? It means to stop and gaze deeply and long upon.

You know like when John the Baptist saw Jesus walking there by the Sea of Galilee and he said, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. When he said that word behold, he was telling everybody around him that was hearing him, Stop! Look! Look deeply! Look long! There is the Lamb of God! So, let us take a few minutes this morning to behold, to gaze deeply and long at the atonement. No longer the principle of atonement.

The atonement. There is a difference, isn't there? No longer the promise of an atonement, but let's look at the atonement. Christ.

The atonement. Turn with me in your Bibles to Isaiah, where we see this so beautifully laid out in the book of Isaiah. We're going to start reading in chapter 52 and verse 13.

And read all the way through chapter 53. We're going to read it together. We're going to look at it together.

But there's some things that I want you to take note of as we go down through this chapter. And so, if you're wise, you'll have your pen in your hand. And if you feel clear in your heart to do it, I know some people don't, but mark these words.

First of all, I want you to note the personal pronouns that you will find in verse 1 through 6 of the text of chapter 53. Personal pronouns. We.

Our. I mean, God makes it very personal that way. We and our.

Number two, I would like you to note also the past tense verbs used all through the text. And you get the idea there because of the use of past tense verbs. He was wounded.

He was bruised. You get the idea of people looking back. Isn't that interesting? Because in the Old Testament where this text is found, the people were looking ahead.

But we now look back. He was wounded. And thirdly, and here's a good exercise for you, and all you can do in our reading here this morning is to note it.

But here's a good study for you. Talk about inductive Bible study. See how many places you can find in this text that imply or clearly relate to the many aspects of this atonement that we've been looking at.

Redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, ransom, substitute. All those things. Judgment, penalty.

See how many places you will find the very words and the concepts that we've been looking at the last couple of days here. Let's read chapter 52 and verse 13. God says, Behold! There's that word again.

My servant shall deal prudently. My servant, in the book of Isaiah, is Christ. He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

Wherefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name. It says in the New Testament. Verse 14.

He's going to be exalted and extolled and be very high as many were astonished at Thee. His visage was so marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men. In other words, speaking to the children of Israel here in the present tense of Isaiah's prophecies, you've seen some gory things out on the battlefields.

His visage was so marred more than any man. But, look at verse 16. So shall He, my servant, sprinkle many nations.

What do you think He's going to sprinkle the nations with, brethren? Huh? Blood! Blood! So shall He, my servant, sprinkle many nations. And that word nation there means peoples, ethnic groups, tribes, kindreds. It's not France and Germany.

It's way more than that. For there are multitudes of people groups in this world. He shall sprinkle many nations.

The kings shall shut their mouths at Him. For they which had not been told, for that which had not been told them, shall they see. And that which they had not heard, shall they consider.

Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? You know, brethren, not everyone believes this report that we're speaking about. It's not everyone whom the arm of the Lord is revealed to. For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant.

And as a root out of the dry ground, He hath no form nor comeliness. And when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. And I believe that in a sense that's Israel speaking, giving testimony.

We didn't know who He was. You know, He wasn't like Saul, head and shoulders above everyone else. I don't believe that's the way Christ was.

Christ was not the most handsome man that ever walked around. He wasn't tall, dark and handsome. He wasn't built.

That's not the way He was. He was just a regular, ordinary guy who grew up in a regular old little town, in a regular old family, and grew up with a regular old occupation, just like all the other poor people in the town of Nazareth where He grew up. Who's going to believe this report? And to who will this arm of the Lord be revealed? You answer that question this morning, brethren.

Will it be to the proud? Will it be to the high and the mighty? Will it be to the self-sufficient? Will it be to the self-righteous? Will they see it? Will they hear it? Will they understand who it is? Will they look beyond the fact that there's no comeliness about Him? Will they look beyond those things? No. We know who believed the report, don't we? We know who the arm of the Lord was revealed to. But let's go on.

He is despised and rejected of men. He is a man of sorrows, and He is acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him.

He was despised and we esteemed Him not. We didn't know who He was. We didn't know who He was.

He was rejected of men. He was despised. He was a man of sorrows.

He wouldn't have fit into some of the modern-day churches today where you say everything good and positive and upbeat and you're bright and you're cheerful and everyone feels good after you talk to them. He wouldn't fit into those kind of churches where the attendance is now pushing 30,000 and 40,000 in numbers on Sunday morning to hear this positive speaker, this handsome guy with a beautiful wife and a \$1,000 suit on. He wouldn't have fit in there.

He wouldn't have fit in there. No, not the atonement. Not the atonement.

You see, the atonement is for the lost. The atonement is for the unrighteous. The atonement is for the undone.

The atonement is for those who are longing for something to be changed inside of me. That's who the atonement is for. If Christ would have come the other way, it would have never happened the way that it happened here.

Surely, we hid as it were our faces from Him. We looked upon that, that gory picture, and we hid as it were our faces. We turned our faces away.

Imagine if they would have known who that was. They would have gazed and gazed. They would have gazed as long as they could upon the atonement.

If they would have known as they, the multitudes, and they were there. If they would have known, this is the atonement hanging on the cross. This is God's Lamb.

They would have stood there. They would have knelt there. They would have in humility stood there and gazed and gazed and gazed.

And there were those there who did believe the report. There were those there whom the arm of the Lord had been revealed. And they were there.

And they were gazing and gazing and gazing. And they looked and looked and looked. Oh, what a privilege they had.

But brethren, we have the same privilege. We have the same privilege. There is enough revealed in this book called the Bible for every one of us to sit in awe and gaze and gaze and gaze upon the atonement any time you like.

Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet, we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. And I believe what they mean there is simply this.

Yeah, we looked on Him and said, yeah, He's a male factor. Yeah, He's a troublemaker. Yeah, He's all those things.

And look what God is doing to Him. We esteem Him stricken of God. He's a wicked man.

That's what He's getting. He's getting His just reward. He's a wicked man.

He's a troublemaker. He made all the trouble in Jerusalem. Let Him die there.

God is smiting Him. Yes, God is smiting Him, but God is not smiting Him because of what He has done. He is smiting Him because of what you have done.

Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. We thought God was smiting Him because He was evil. But in verse 5, He was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace, the punishment to bring peace back to us was upon Him. And with His stripes, we are healed.

Hallelujah! Made whole. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to His own way.

And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity, the inequity of us all. He was oppressed. And He was afflicted.

Yet, He opened not His mouth. Right? He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.

He's not going to say anything. Because He's the Lamb. He's the Lamb.

And the Lamb's not going to say anything. It's just going to innocently die for the sins of the person who brought it. And there's Christ innocently dying for the sins of humanity without opening His mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment. And who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living. Cut off in His prime.

Right? Who's going to declare His generation? Who's going to keep His name going on? He was cut off out of the land of the living. Oh, I'll tell you who's going to declare His generation. For He brought many sons unto glory through that atonement.

Amen? He brought many sons unto glory. He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of My people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death because He had done no violence, neither was deceit in His mouth.

He hadn't done anything wrong outwardly. And there wasn't even any deceit in His mouth. Nothing came out of His mouth.

There was no guile in Him. Yet, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. This is the Father.

It pleased the Father to bruise His Son. How could it please the Father to bruise His Son? He hath put Him to grief when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin. He shall see His seed.

He shall prolong His days. And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He, God the Father again, shall see the travail of His soul, the Son, and shall be satisfied.

Are you noting all those redemptive words as we're going down through this? You know, appeasement, pardon, penalty, punishment. He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. And by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many.

For He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore, will I divide Him a portion with the great. He shall divide the spoiled.

He spoiled principalities and powers. He shall divide the spoiled with the strong. Why? Because He hath poured out His soul unto death.

And He was numbered with the transgressors. And He bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. Like I said, that would make a good portion of Scripture to do an inductive Bible study in, wouldn't it? Especially after all of this.

Because there's a lot of gold in there. Yes, Christ is the atonement. And we see the atonement being made right here.

Amen? But let's take another look at the atonement. Let's take a look at the atonement from the victim's perspective. Do you know where you find that? Psalm 22.

Let's look at a few verses in Psalm 22. That's the atonement from the victim's perspective. The slain victim who was slain instead of another.

And what I'd like you to do this morning is put yourself in the place of the Lamb. You know, that was supposed to happen in the Old Testament when a man brought a sacrifice in the Old Testament because he had sinned a sin. He used to go and get the Lamb and bring it to the altar.

And the Scriptures say in the book of Leviticus that he was to put his hands upon the head of that Lamb and confess his sin. And then take that innocent Lamb, grab a hold of its head, pull it back, and cut its throat. Put yourself in the place of the Lamb.

Put your sins on the head of the sacrifice. Because that's what he's going to bear. He bore our sins in His own body upon the tree.

You know, as you look at the atonement, in reality, you look at the actual atonement. You can look at it from many different ways. And we can look at it and say, oh, how unfair.

And we can look at it and say, oh, that must have been terrible. The pain, the blood, the nails in your hands, in your feet. You can look at those things and say, that's terrible.

Look what the Lamb is going through. But I believe the greatest suffering that that atoning Lamb went through is expressed here in chapter 22 of Psalms in verse 1, when Jesus cried out, hanging on the cross, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Why art Thou so far from helping Me? Why are You so far from the words of My roaring? What is Jesus saying there? He's saying to His Father, which He is now calling His God, Where are You? You've always helped Me. You've always given Me.

You've always been there. You've always answered Me. You heard My every prayer.

You met My every need. You were always with Me. Why hast Thou forsaken Me? Well, we know the answer, don't we? Because the sin of the world was put on the sacrifice.

And God, who is holy, holy, holy, and just, He cannot fellowship with sin. Brethren, don't miss that. He cannot fellowship with sin.

And so, the Father forsakes the Son. Oh, my God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not, and in the night season, and am not silent. Where are You, Lord? But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

As if the Son knows what's going on. It's like in and out, you know. In His humanity, He's suffering.

In His deity, He's devastated. Our fathers trusted in Thee. They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.

They cried unto Thee, and they were delivered. They trusted in Thee, and they were not confounded. But it seems like I am confounded.

But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me, laugh me to scorn. You see, the perspective this is given in the person of the Lamb who is being sacrificed.

It's like He's talking to His Father, and He's saying, Father, everyone who sees me, they're laughing at me. They're mocking me. They shoot out their lips.

They shake their heads, saying, He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him. Let Him deliver Him. Seeing He delighted in Him.

And we find those very words, don't we? 700 years later, we find those very words coming out of the mouth of evil men as they crucified the Son of God. But it's like God pulls back the veil and lets us get a glimpse of what this Lamb, this suffering Lamb, went through to make the atonement for you and I. Look at His perspective in verse 12. Many bulls have compassed me.

Strong bulls of Bishan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint.

My heart is like wax. It is melted in the midst of my bowels. He's telling you what it's like.

What is going on in me? And what is happening around me? And we don't understand all that's happening there, but I can just imagine the devils just swarming around like bees that day. You can be sure they were there. My strength is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws.

And Thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me. The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me.

They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones. They look and stare upon me.

They parted my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture. You see what Christ is saying there? See the Son there clinging to the righteousness of God His Father, which He loved and glorified, and at the same time clinging to the misery of mankind, whom He would not forsake. Remember, He could have called 10,000 angels.

Just like that. And oh! What a powerful thing that would have been! What a tragedy that would have been for you and I. But He could have. They were at His beck and call.

His obedient love for His Father, He would not leave that cross. Yet He knew that He would be forsaken as He hung there upon it. His love for man and His desire to redeem man, His joy would not let Him leave man in the condition that He was in.

There's a good definition of love. Listen to this. I mean, if you need one after reading that.

Love is an earnest and an anxious desire for and an active and beneficent interest in the well-being of the one loved. Love identifies itself emotionally with its object. Yes, God so loved the world.

So loved the world. You may think at a first glance what kind of father-son relationship is this? That a father would slay his son. That it would please a father to bruise him.

That a father would lay on his son the iniquity of us all. What kind of father-son relationship is this? But let us look deeper, brethren. Look deeper.

Remember. The atonement is the expression of God's holiness, His justice, and His love flowing out over the tragedy of the fall. There is an infinitely deep relationship of fellowship that we can hardly understand between the Father and the Son, which is taking place right here.

Turn to Genesis 22. As again, we look at the atonement. Genesis 22.

Remember the story of Abraham and Isaac? This is a living picture of what we have been considering here this morning. A living picture. Let's go there for a few moments in our imagination.

And I've pondered this chapter much. As I'm sure you have too, each time you read it. You know, these are the kind of thoughts that go through my mind anyway.

Okay, Abraham. How could you do that? God said, Abraham, I want you to slay your son and offer him as a burnt sacrifice on the altar unto me. How could Abraham do that? I mean, could you do that? You know, all of our sense of right says, wait a minute, wait a minute.

God, you have gone too far here. You have gone way too far here. But yet, it seems as we read the account that Abraham was up and about it.

Right off. Could it be that Abraham saw my day and was glad? Could it be that Abraham saw my day and was glad? All you can do is speculate. Chapter 22 verse 1, And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt or test Abraham and said unto him, Abraham, and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he, God, said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee unto the land of Moriah and offer him therefore a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning. It's like he didn't miss a lick.

Okay, Lord. You know, I've thought about that many times. I believe one reason why Abraham could do that is he knew the voice of God very well.

He knew. He knew God. So Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his oss and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son and claimed the wood for the burnt offering and rose up and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Then on the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the oss and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you. It's a lot of faith in those words, isn't there? I and the young man will go and worship and we will come again unto you.

There's a man of faith. Amen. And Hebrew says that Abraham slew his son believing that God was able to raise him from the dead.

That's what Hebrew says. So we get a little insight into what's happening here. I'm going to kill him because somehow I believe in my heart that God will raise him from the dead.

And of course, now that makes a little more sense, doesn't it? You know, in our natural mind, I can grasp that. I can get my mind around that. I'm going to slay my son because I believe that God will raise him from the dead.

Amen? Makes a little more sense. But yet, still, put yourself in the middle of that father-son relationship because this is a picture of the atonement. Right here.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac, his son. Carry the cross, boy. And he took the fire in his hand and a knife.

And they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto his father and said, My father! And he said, Here am I, my son. And he, Isaac, said, Behold, the fire and the wood.

But where is the lamb for the burnt offering? This boy's starting to think, isn't he? Where is the lamb for the burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering. There's powerful words in there, aren't there? God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So they went both of them together.

And they came to the place which God had told him of. And Abraham built an altar there. That took a little time, didn't it? Build an altar.

Get a stone. Put it in its place. Get another stone.

Put it in its place. Oh, look at that priest. Building that altar, putting those stones in place.

Abraham built an altar there on the top of Mount Moriah. Which, by the way, is the place where the temple was built. This very place of sacrifice is the place where the temple was built.

So, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. And bound Isaac, his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. Now, question.

How many of you think that Abraham had to wrestle that boy down, catch him, grab him, hold him, and hogtie him, and throw him on the altar? How many of you think that's the way it went? None. How many of you think that this is how it went, between the father and the son? My son? Yes, father. Because this is the kind of relationship that was there.

My son? Yes, father. God has told me that you are the sacrifice today. God told me that I'm to offer you as a birth sacrifice unto him.

Now lay down, son, so that I can tie you up. And Isaac laid himself down on the ground. Or got up on the altar.

And Abraham tied him there. Isn't that how it went? Father, son. Father loves the son so much.

His only son. Son loves father so respectfully and submissive, wanting to please. And there they are at the altar.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son. Right? Stretched forth his hand. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, Abraham! Abraham! Said his name twice.

I'm going to get his attention. And he said, he probably said, Here am I! Do you have an answer? Do you have a way out of this? But don't you doubt it, Abraham slew his son that day. Don't you doubt it.

He slew him. A slaying takes place in here before it takes place here. Right? He slew his son.

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him. For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked and behold behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns.

And Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh. The Lord has seen and provided.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Talk about outward righteousness and God being pleased with what we do. What a beautiful example we have there. Amen.

The last verse in one of our favorite hymns says it all so very well. Could we with ink the ocean fill? And were the skies of parchment made? Were every stock on earth a quill and every man a scribe by trade? To write the love of God above would drain the oceans dry. O love of God, how rich and pure, how measureless and strong! It shall forevermore the saints' and angels' song.

It shall forevermore endure the saints' and angels' song. Yes. In closing, why did God, Jehovah, the eternal self-existent one, go through all this agony? Why? Was it just so we could go to heaven and have a nice life and live in a mansion and walk on streets of gold? Was it so we could live a fleshly, self-centered life while we're here on this earth and go to heaven when all that's done? Brethren, it was to deliver us from our sins and transform us into God-glorifying saints to the praise of the glory of His grace.

So let us seek the Lord and so dedicate our lives that we can walk worthy of Him who hath called us. Let's stand for prayer. O Father, it seems like we ought to have a communion service, Lord, as we have spent these two days looking at the atonement.

Thank you, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Thank you. Thank you for the atonement.

O Lord, may we walk worthy of this atonement all the days of our life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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