

Good Friday Sermon

by Martin Geehan

Christ came down from heaven of his own free will to suffer death on the cross, demonstrating his love for humanity and becoming a curse for us.

Duration: 35:47

Scripture: Romans 11:26, Revelation 7:4-8, Revelation 21:1-4, Revelation 21:22-25, Revelation 22:1-5

Topics: "Good Friday"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of a near-death encounter where he felt a sense of darkness and void. He emphasizes the importance of knowing Christ as a personal savior and how he found salvation after hearing the gospel. The speaker then refers to the apostle Paul's experience of being caught up into the third heaven and hearing indescribable words. The sermon also touches on the concept of man being made lower than the angels but crowned with glory and honor, and how Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan for humanity. The sermon concludes with a reference to the book of Revelation, where John sees a vision of a new heaven and earth, symbolizing the ultimate restoration and redemption of God's creation.

Transcript

Tonight I would like to speak to you of Christ coming down for the specific purpose of suffering death on the cross of Calvary and coming down of his own free will. This wonderful Savior that we have come down because of the great love that he had for mankind. It was the Father's will and the Son's will together.

It was the Holy Spirit's will, it was the Godhead involved completely in the salvation of man. And there were three or four thoughts I had, whether we will cover all of those thoughts I don't know, but at least we'll cover some of them. First he came down from heaven of his own free will.

Second, he laid aside his ineffable glory of his own free will. And thirdly, he walked to the bitter road to Calvary of his own free will. And fourthly, he suffered death on the cross of his own free will.

First of all, he came down from heaven of his own free will. I think it's a little hard for us to conceive of this, you know. The Son of God coming down from heaven of his own free will.

It would be a little hard because I think sometimes it's difficult for us to conceive of exactly what heaven is like. And probably had we a good picture of heaven, such as Paul had, for instance. Paul had a pretty vivid

idea of heaven.

He mentions that in one of his epistles when he speaks of heaven. And speaks about himself having been caught up into heaven itself. And he speaks of that over in 2 Corinthians 12, and I'll read it to you.

The first to the fourth verses. So we get some conception of where Christ came from. He willingly came down from heaven to suffer death.

And unless we have a vision of heaven, of some idea of what heaven's like, we cannot conceive of what it meant for the Son of God to leave heaven. Paul puts it well when he says, It is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

I knew a man in Christ about 14 years ago. He's speaking about himself. Whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell.

God knoweth. Such a one caught up into the third heaven. And I knew such a man.

Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. God knoweth. It was so vivid, it's difficult for him to really say that he wasn't there bodily.

Whether it was in the spirit or in the body, he said, I really can't tell. That's how I felt. How that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

He heard such things and he saw such things that he can't even tell us about. Tremendous thought to think of. That Paul, the chosen apostle of God, the great one to reveal to the Gentiles, the great and unsearchable riches of Christ, that taken up into glory, he cannot even speak of the things which he saw.

How can we conceive of what it meant for Christ to leave glory and to come down to earth? You remember in the gospel where Jesus said, Father, restore unto me now the glory which I had with thee from the beginning. Glory, imagine, to leave it. If it was you or I, we wouldn't even think about it.

Just think of, you know, just some simple thing. You can go away on a vacation and you can go to some beautiful place where you stay, some mountaintop experience, and you know how you feel? I wish I never had to leave here. I dread going back to that place where I work or where I am in that neighborhood, that community, because you've been in some mountaintop experience.

I've known so many people have gone to good Christian camps and had tremendous fellowship in the Lord Jesus. And then when the time, the end of the vacation period comes, oh, that terrible feeling, I've got to go back to earth, you know, down to that level again where I'm going to hear all of the sin and all of the things and the business and all of this going on again. And then to think of Christ himself coming down from the glories of heaven, and we have no idea, conception.

Paul says, I can't even talk to you about it. He says, it wouldn't be lawful for me to utter the things that I was spoken to about. We might also well think, couldn't we, of the other portion where Paul says, I have not seen nor heard the glories which God has prepared for them that love him.

So there is a tremendous area here. He goes on to say, but God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit. In other words, he's given us a little taste by the new birth of the heavenly presence within our breasts.

It's not the complete thing, you see. But he's given us this little taste because he himself has come to abide in us. And as I've said so often, a little faith may take you to heaven, but a great faith brings heaven to earth in your breasts.

And so we've had just a little taste. The Holy Spirit has revealed some of these things to us. But to think of him coming down from glory itself, oh, how difficult that is to even conceive of.

Revelation 21, if you turn over there, gives us a little view of what heaven must be like. John speaks here, the revelation of Jesus Christ, this is, if you read the title of the book of Revelation, as given to John. But notice that twenty-first chapter, the first to the fourth verses, as revealed to John.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. You know, it's hard for me to conceive of a whole land like a bride adorned for a husband.

Is there anything more beautiful? The relationship of a bride and a groom as a bride adorned for her husband. And possibly in this day, some of the original conceptions of marriage and some of the original conceptions of a bride adorned for her husband are a little difficult to comprehend because of some of the things we see. Some of the dresses I see in the newspapers of so-called brides getting married in their many, many outfits.

And I think of how the Lord speaks of his bride in the pure white linen of the saints. And I think of the early conceptions of marriage, which they seem to be trying to push out now and get rid of. But those conceptions in which the white indicated the purity of the girl, the beauty and the inner beauty was showed forth.

There was a radiance about her. I think every time we have a wedding here, I'm conscious of that. As that girl comes down this aisle, the beauty, the radiance, there seems to be a complete change.

And I'm thrilled in my heart when I see this. And then I think of him speaking here of the new Jerusalem adorned as a bride for her husband and to get that conception of the beauty and the purity of it and the loveliness of it in our hearts. And to remember that Jesus came down from heaven to save you and me and came into a world of sin to suffer death upon a rugged cross, knowing from the counsels of eternity past that he would suffer and he would die.

Yet he left heaven's glory. And as I said, if you or I were there, I have often felt bad for Lazarus because Lazarus suffered death the first time and had the joy of leaving that body of his. And he had to die, come back to life.

He brought back to life by Jesus and had to die over again. And I can't think of anything worse than that. I often think of how Ed Limbrick tells me, you know, in that moment when his heart stopped beating on the table and he felt like he was descending into a great maelstrom and a void of blackness and darkness.

And he knew not Christ as his personal Savior. And how when they brought him back, the doctors did to life and the first thing he heard practically was the gospel of Christ from Steve's lips when he came to Jesus and found Christ as his personal Savior. But he was always conscious of the terrible blackness in that moment when that heart stopped before those doctors could, as they said, he died on the table and they brought him back to life.

But think of Lazarus, four days dead, and then bringing him back to life again that he might die. Listen, you or I, once we got a taste of heaven, we'd never want to come back here, you see. We'd never want to come back.

And so the Lord Jesus left heaven's glory and came down to earth. And so many blessed things when we think of him. He chose the time of his birth.

He chose the name he should bear, Jesus, because he would save his people from their sins. In all of these things, he had chosen himself the way he should die on the cross because the death of the cross was a death that was a curse. And he became a curse for us.

He was made a curse for us, it tells us in Galatians, because he was nailed to the tree. And as far as the Jews were concerned, there was no worse death than the crucifixion. And Christ suffered death upon that cross of Calvary.

He chose the time of his birth. He chose his mother. Imagine, he chose every part of it.

He chose the road he should walk to Calvary. He chose the loneliness. He chose his disciples.

Though one should deny him. He knew that they'd all forsake him. He chose them all.

And beloved, this should encourage our hearts, because I'm certain that we see ourselves somewhere amongst those twelve disciples. We see the type person we are. And we recognize that Jesus Christ chose these simple men, these men who in so many ways were failures, including Paul himself.

And yet chose these simple men to be the ones who should surround him, and be the ones who should be the great preachers of the gospel in those first days that it might be disseminated unto all the earth. And so, this Christ we love chose his way all the way down. Name, chose the mother who bore him, the time of his birth, where he'd be born, the time of taxation, that it would be everything predetermined by prophecy, exactly where Christ would be born and the death he was to die.

And so, from his very birth, he knew the death he was to die. And so, he left heaven of his own free will. Turn over to the 18th verse in Revelation 21.

It gives a little more picture of heaven. You know, it always thrills me. You know, Paul says when Christ came, he came that he might break down the wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile and make one new man in Christ Jesus.

And it thrills me, and I'll just mention this in passing, and then I'll go to this 18th verse. But in the 12th and 13th verses, or 12th and 14th verses, in the 12th verse, it tells us that the wall, great and high, had 12 gates. And on those 12 gates were the names of the 12 tribes of Israel.

And in the 14th verse, it says the wall of the city had 12 foundations, and in them the names of the 12 apostles of the land. It's thrilling for me to realize that there will be the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 names of the apostles. And they'll be on the foundations and the gates and the walls of the great city.

I don't know how many of you ever go down to, now and then, I drop down to Lynbrook to have what I call a very good sandwich. If you go to the Jewish delicatessen, you get a very good sandwich. But on the walls of the Jewish delicatessen down in Lynbrook are the 12 tribes of Israel with their shields all the way around.

I was so interested that I asked him, who painted them? And I have his name because I thought I'd love to get the shields of the 12 tribes of Israel, something that really attracted my eye. And I asked him, he didn't seem to know anything about it. All he knew was he thought it looked nice.

So it would be a good idea, since they're kosher, to have the 12 tribes of Israel on the walls. But I can't help but think, and when I, you know, now and then I've said to Mr. Ackerman or something or one of the men in the village, do you realize that in heaven's glory the 12 names of the 12 tribes of Israel are going to be beside the 12 names of the apostles of Jesus Christ? That's not possible. And then, of course, I'll say, well, now let me read what the New Testament says about those 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 names of the apostles.

And so this day is coming when there shall be a great myriad in that day of tribulation who will be preaching the gospel of Christ. 144,000 out of the 12 tribes of Israel. 12,000 out of each tribe.

Great evangelists preaching. And the day will come when Israel, all Israel, shall be saved in that day. There will be a day of mighty preaching.

And the entrance into that final great day of the millennial kingdom when the Jews shall reign upon this earth. But so much for that. Let's go over to heaven itself and to that 18th verse.

And the building of the wall of it was of jasper, and the city was pure gold like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. And the first foundation, I won't read all the stones, but you can notice all the precious stones are mentioned.

The 12 gates were 12 pearls. Every several gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold.

It was like transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein. Notice that.

For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of sun, neither of the moon to shine in it. For the glory of God did lighten it.

And the Lamb is the light thereof. And then the rest of this here. The nation shall walk in the light of it.

The kings of the earth to bring their glory to it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all, day or night. And there shall be no night there.

Then over in the 22nd chapter. He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river was there a tree of life which bared 12 manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month.

And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation. And there shall be no more curse. But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.

And his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face. And his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there. And they need no candle. Need the light of the sun.

For the Lord God giveth them light. And they shall reign forever and forever. And then, beloved, you know the portion where it tells us there'll be no sickness and no pain in that place.

And so Christ came from all of this. He left all of the glory that he might come down to earth for the specific purpose of suffering death on the cross of Calvary. Then remember that he allayed aside that ineffable glory which he possessed.

Now he was made in the form of man. He was made in the likeness of man, it says. When he came into the world, Hebrews 10.5 says this, Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, burnt offerings and a sacrifice thou wouldst not.

But a body thou hast prepared me. In the volume of the book, it is written of me. I underline that word prepared.

A body thou hast prepared me. If we look over in Luke, when Jesus is born, it says the Holy Ghost shall come upon Mary. Wherefore, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

A body prepared by God, his own blessed Son formed in the womb of Mary. And he left glory, the glory which he had with God from the beginning and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin. And he was made a little lower than the angels, Hebrews says, for the specific suffering of death.

You know, I have thought of what man was meant to be. God never intended man to be what man is today. God's intention for man was completely different when Adam came.

God's intention for man was that he should rule and that the earth would be completely subservient to him. This was his whole divine purpose. And over in Hebrews 2, it tells us this very thing.

Hebrews 2, it speaks of that divine purpose. I'll read it to you, the sixth verse. What is man that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son of man that thou visitest him? Now this is speaking of man and not of Christ.

Remember this. Thou mad'st man a little lower than the angels. It will speak of Christ later being made lower than the angels.

Thou didst crown man with glory and honor and didst set him over all the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.

But now, this present dispensation, now we see not yet all things put under him. But, notice this, now it changes. But we see Jesus.

The fall came, you see. And God had put it all under man. This was his purpose.

The earth was to be his realm. But we see Jesus, notice now, who was made a little lower than the angels. He just spoke about man being made lower than the angels.

He made Jesus a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. Crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death, what? For every man. This was his whole divine purpose.

In other words, man came and God, his intention from the very beginning for Adam was that the earth might be subject to him. The animal creation, all of vegetation, everything should be perfect. The Edenic existence was to be perfection.

He walked in the garden of God. And he had fellowship with God. And this was God's divine purpose.

And God gave him the choice of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to be denied to them. The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And then the tree of life.

And if I could put it as simply as possible, this is all that it meant. The day that they ate of the tree of the knowledge of evil, Satan became their father and they became indwelt by the spirit of Satan. How do we know that? Because the scripture says, you are of Satan your father.

The devil is your father. The world, he's the God of this world. He's the prince of the powers of the air.

The minute you ate of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you related yourself and the whole generation after Adam to Satan, who's the God of this world. The tree of life then was denied to mankind because that was that which would associate him with God forever and ever and ever. And God was not going to allow natural man to eat of the tree of life and live forever in a body that's sinning and sinning and sinning all the time.

And so he denied to man to eat of the tree of life. And so from the very beginning, man, debased, fell. And it says, all things are not under subjection to him now.

I made him, I formed him with glory. I made him in my own image and in my own likeness made I man. You know, the evolutionists don't bother me in the least.

They can have all the evolution they want, all kinds of species within species and all of the rest. It doesn't bother me in the least. All I say is this.

Man, the Adamic man is out of Adam. Let them trace all they want to the primeval ooze and all the way down. But let us remember, beloved, that man, this man that's on earth right now is of Adam.

And in Adam all die. It's the result of sin. And God crowned man with honor, as he says here.

I made him a little lower than the angels. I crowned him with glory and honor. Notice what it says here.

What is man that thou art mindful of him? And then God gives the answer. I did set him over the works of my hands, put all things in subjection unto him. But now we see not those things.

It's almost as though the heartbreak of God is saying, now we don't see it. It didn't happen. Satan deceived and man fell in Adam.

And in Adam all die. And so it says, but we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. That he, notice that, suffering of death.

That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him for whom are all things and by whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. And so this blessed son of God crucified on the cross at Calvary came from glory, came from heaven itself with all of its beauty, its pristine beauty and came to this sin-cursed earth at the precise time in man's history when God ordained he was born because that was his desire to be born into this world.

And God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. But he chose his mother and the place of his birth and the place of his death and on the Mount of Transfiguration when he spoke, remember, to Moses and Elijah and spoke to them. It says he spoke to them about his coming decease in Jerusalem

and it should be accomplished.

And so in that day when he was transfigured before the disciples and they were ready to build three churches, that's what they wanted to do, let's build three temples. We'll build one for Christ and one for Moses and one for Elijah. And at that very moment Jesus was talking to Moses and Elijah and discussing his coming decease and his death upon the cross of Calvary.

Oh, the tremendousness of the Son of God. He made and formed us in his image and if man had not fallen this pristine earth of the Edenic age would yet be here. But God in his great foreknowledge saw the whole panoramic view of mankind and the fall of Adam and arranged for the coming of Christ and the sacrifice of the cross of Christ and his death upon the cross for your sins and my sins that you and I might go free and that there might be a good Friday when we could come and rejoice that our sins are forgiven.

And oh, when we look at ourselves and we see how terrible sin is and the blight it has been on mankind and we look around the world today and we see it in the mess it's in. I can't help but think that sin is much like it permeates the whole being. It's much like a drop of oil or a little smear of oil that you drop on a piece of paper and if you watch that bit of oil it keeps spreading and spreading and spreading until it gets out to the very edges of the paper and that's the way it seems sin is in the human life that it starts so little sometimes some little thing and it can spread and become the cancer of our spiritual nature so that we're involved so much in the sins of the world.

Not only the sins of the flesh but the sins that involve us in every area of life. Sin spoils our natures. Sin spoils, beloved, our personalities.

It spoils our dispositions. It's a cancer to us. No matter how lovely or no matter how personable we are, no matter how winsome we are, no matter how highly we're called of character, yet sin can take that very winsomeness, that very beauty, that very good character and use that.

Satan can use that to bring sin into the life. The very winsomeness that seems so wonderful. Satan himself can drag the soul down into the deepest sin and we can look down through the pages of history to find time after time and we can find how Paul and Peter and all the rest, some people have stayed back and say, how could David ever have done this thing? How could Peter ever have denied his Savior and cursed Him? How could Paul, member of the Sanhedrin, ever have taken Christians and had them slain in front of him? How could Paul have stood by Stephen's side and watched him stoned to death and walked away cold and indifferent to this man of God? Because sin is such a ravaging thing and oh, how careful we have to be.

And this is the sin that Christ came for. Christ looks upon us. He sees us in all of our weakness.

He sees us in all of our supposed good character. He sees us with all of our winsome qualities. He sees the one that's beautiful.

He sees the one that's handsome. And if I do say so, there are those who have deeper trials than others emotionally in the line of sin. He sees every single area.

But I want to say this, there has been no sin that's taken you but that's common to man. And God is faithful and will not see you to be tempted above that you are able. In other words, there's nothing that's not common to man.

If there's some sin that tempts you, if there's some vile thing, God is saying, remember, someone else has that sin. Someone else has that temptation. You're not alone in that.

And for all of this, the very essence of sin, may I say this? If I can give all the enormity of it when it says Christ was made sin for us, if I can take it, it's not your sins, your individual sins. You're not to think of Christ in this sense. You're to see Christ with all the sins that have ever been committed upon the face of the earth in all of their heinousness.

Every single one in His body. And then you'll understand the weight that Christ bore of man's sin and how He says, in Adam all will die, but those who are in Christ, they shall be made alive. He was made sin for you.

He was made sin for me. Not your individual sins, but the very essence of sin in all of its horror, the most terrible things conceived of, all placed upon Him. Then how do we wonder that He said, Why hast thou forsaken Me when all the weight of all man's sin was put upon Him? And in that terrible moment, God had to turn away from His own blessed Son as He suffered death for the sins of the world.

Oh, beloved, do we really conceive of what Christ has done? He came down from glory. He left heaven's portals. He came down to earth.

He took upon Himself the form of a man. He said He was made in the likeness of His own brethren. Imagine, He saw the children before the foundations of the world.

He saw you in Christ, and He was made in the form of His brethren. He said, The brethren were made of flesh and blood. Therefore took I part of the same and became man, the Son of man, made lower than the angels that He might suffer the death of the cross.

Did He suffer it for you? He died for the sins of the world. There's no sin that you've committed that's not been put upon Christ's cross if you have believed. I care not what it is.

Some have said to me, He never could forgive me. I've heard this term time and again. God will never forgive me.

I've done something God cannot forgive. Then you do not understand the cross of Christ. He was made not your sins.

He was made sin. How can I express the enormity of it? Is it possible? Would it be possible to know what the enormity of sin is? He was made sin for us. He knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

He had to be. Every single sin had to be there that we might know that we're perfectly cleansed. No sin was left out.

Suppose there was some sin you could commit. Sometimes people think of a scarlet sin or this sin or that sin. That sin cannot be forgiven.

Then you do not understand the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ is sufficient for all sin. For Paul says, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Do you know Him tonight as we come to the table, beloved? Do you really know Him? Let us pray. Father, we pray that we may comprehend of what it means when it says Christ was made sin for us. That when man came into the world, he was crowned with glory and honor.

And in the garden, he walked with God. God put everything under His domain, put everything subject to Him, and told Him everything was subject to Him. And then man fell.

And God said, now all things are not subject unto Him. But we see Jesus, He said, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death that He might taste death for every man and He might bring us to God. For the wages of sin was death, but the gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So Father, we pray tonight that every heart truly believing on Christ as they come to this table may rejoice that God loved us so in all of our sin that He gave Christ to die for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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