

# Blessings From Calvary

by William MacDonald

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*The sermon 'Blessings From Calvary' highlights the incredible blessings we receive from God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 39:30

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 1:3-4

**Topics:** "Cross of Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a proper understanding of who Jesus is. He challenges the audience to not just think of Jesus as a man from Galilee or a carpenter from Nazareth, but to recognize Him as the incarnate God who died for their sins. The speaker highlights the lack of wonder and amazement that often accompanies our worship, attributing it to our impoverished conceptions of God. He asserts that if we truly understood the magnitude of what took place at Calvary, we would be forever changed. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the proper response to such grace and redemption is total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Transcript

It's an alarm clock, I just pushed it. We turn our Bibles tonight to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1, and we'll just begin reading in verse 3. Verse 3, Ephesians chapter 1, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Now I have to stop before Paul put a period in there, because this is one of those sentences that just goes on, and we're interested especially in verse 3 tonight.

Yesterday we started a series on the subject, My Heart, My Life, My All. And we were considering, well we came to three amazing truths that if properly understood would revolutionize our lives. We want to come to the fourth tonight.

We first of all considered who the Lord Jesus is. It's important to have adequate views of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We tend not to think of him as greatly as we should.

We think of the man of Galilee, we think of the carpenter of Nazareth, we think of that young Jew in Capernaum, but he's more. And then we came on to what he did for us. We tried to emphasize the fact that we stood in memory before the cross of Calvary, but the one hanging there was the incarnate God.

Dear friends, as you sit there tonight in your seat, can you really take it in that your creator died for you? We tried to ransack the vocabulary of amazement and astonishment and wonder. As we thought of that marvelous truth that God the Son left the highest heights of glory and came down to this earth and died on a cross of wood. The upholder of the universe.

The one who flung the farthest constellations into space. And he did it all for you and for me. And I left and I went back to my room and I thought, it's all in vain.

It cannot be told. People just cannot take it in. And it's funny, after I went back to my room there was a little clipping there in my file by one of my favorite authors, J. H. Jowett.

He wrote, and this is very good, he said, We leave our places of worship and no deep and inexpressible wonder sits upon our faces. Isn't that true? We leave our places of worship and no deep and inexpressible wonder sits upon our faces. We can sing those lilting melodies and when we go into the streets our faces are one with the faces of those who have left the theaters and the music halls.

Incredible, isn't it? There's nothing about us to suggest that we've been looking at anything stupendous and overwhelming. And what is the explanation of the loss? He said, preeminently, our impoverished conceptions of God. Our impoverished conceptions.

I tell you, if we could really understand what took place at Calvary, who it was that hung there, we could never be the same again. And we'll be coming to that in the messages to come in the will of God. Then we discussed last night who we are and we examined ourselves in the light of the Hubble telescope and in relation to the rest of the universe and we came to the conclusion that we were practically less than nothing.

And if those words of wonderment and amazement can't describe the greatness of the Lord Jesus, language of microscopes and miniatures fail to understand how small we really are. Yet the Son of God's love thought enough of us to come down to this planet, this jungle of sin, this is what it is, to suffer and bleed and die for us. No wonder that hymn writer said, I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me, confused by the grace that so freely he proffers me.

I tremble to know that for me he was crucified, that for me, a sinner, he suffered and bled and died. Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me enough to die for me. Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me.

We mentioned how sometimes God seems to draw aside the curtain on a person's life and the truth seems to dawn on that person and it just changes his life forever. He can never be the same. Tonight we want to think about the blessings that flow to us from Calvary, from the work of our Redeemer there on the cross, the incomparable benefits that have come to us through the death of the incarnate God, of him whose name is Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, the benefits that have come to us.

First of all, of course, we are saved. The Lord Jesus has saved us from hell. And, you know, that's a wonderful salvation, isn't it? The lake of fire, the place of which we read where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Their mental anguish, the mental anguish of the people there, their physical sufferings are unending if words mean anything. Hell means separation from God forever and ever and ever. It's a place of torment.

It's existence in the blackness of darkness forever. It's a place where there is no love. Can you imagine that? A place where there is no love.

And it's a place where a person who goes there has all of the temptations of life, all of the temptations of a sinful nature. They're still there, but he will have no means of fulfilling those desires. No means of fulfilling those desires.

And, you know, if the Lord Jesus hadn't done anything else but to save us from hell, period, that would be enough to cause us to worship and adore him for all eternity, wouldn't it? It would be enough just to cause us to pour out our hearts in endless gratitude and worship. But he did more. We're forgiven.

We're forgiven. I think when many of us think of our salvation, we think of that tremendous load that was lifted from our shoulders when we trusted Christ and that burden of sin rolled away. He forgave us our sins, all of them.

We received judicial forgiveness for all of our sins. Christ paid the penalty and now he can righteously pronounce us forgiven when we repent and receive him as Lord and Savior. And I think it's wonderful the way the scripture just rolls over this thought.

They're removed as far as the east is from the west. They're cast behind God's back. They're buried in the sea of his forgetfulness.

And I think it's marvelous that God's forgiveness of the believer in Jesus is so wonderful that God himself can't find a single sin for which to punish that person with eternal death. Not a single sin. And as I said, when we trust him as our Savior, we receive judicial forgiveness of sins.

Then as believers, when we sin, we receive parental forgiveness of sins when we confess those sins. He's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Forgiveness is a wonderful blessing.

Part of the problem of a lot of society today is guilt but no forgiveness. They don't know where to go or are unwilling to go to the Savior. They go to the psychiatrist's couch but no psychiatrist can say, go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee.

We're saved, we're forgiven. We receive eternal life. This is marvelous.

I think as young believers when we think of eternal life, we think of life that lasts forever. That's not a good definition of eternal life, is it? Because the unsaved will live forever. They don't have eternal life.

Eternal life is a quality of life. It's the life in the believer. When we trust Him as our Savior, we receive the divine nature.

This explains the enormous changes that come into people's lives when they get saved. I love to watch that. I love to see some of our dear young people.

Just a few months ago they were on drugs and they were on sex and they were on alcohol and you name it. They ran the whole gamut of sin. You come back a few months later they trusted Christ and their compulsive talk was about the Lord Jesus.

You can't shut them up. You don't want to. You can't shut them up.

What is it that has created this? Well, I'll tell you, it's no therapy that created it. It's the divine life that has been implanted in them and it makes them new creatures in Christ Jesus. It's true.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's in new creation. All things have passed away. All things have become new.

He has a new love of holiness. He has a new hatred of sin. He has a new love for the children of God.

That's one of the ways I realized that I was saved apart from the Word of God. I used to look at those Christians and they used to annoy me. Are you saved yet, Bill? And I would really grit my teeth when they said that.

It really bothered me when they said that. And then I got saved and to me they were just the excellence of the earth and whom is all might and delight. But that wasn't me.

That was the Spirit of God putting that divine nature in me and giving me a new love for His people. We know that we pass from death to life because we love the present. A new love for the world and its lost people.

Not for the world system, but for the world of lost people. And that's a marvelous thing, isn't it? To see people. And I think it's especially marked too among our dear Jewish brethren.

You know, when a Jewish person gets saved he has an inordinate love for the Jewish people and it doesn't make any difference how much they persecute him. He'll go on loving them just the same. He's willing to endure all kinds of insult and shame for the name of the Lord Jesus.

And Paul had that. I confess to you that's a verse of Scripture I don't understand. Paul said, I could wish myself a curse from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

What does that mean, a curse from Christ? Sounds pretty strong to me. Maybe somebody can explain that to me afterwards. I can't explain it to you.

To me it means to die under the curse of God. Huh? I could wish myself a curse from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh. I tell you, you can't explain these changes in people's lives apart from the new life that they have received.

A new life of righteousness and a new desire to confess Christ. Isn't that wonderful? When a person gets saved he wants to confess Christ. Before that he might have just used the name of Christ in vain, you know.

As a curse word. And now he wants to tell people look, I've been saved by the grace of God. And I tell you, no psychology or modern technique can explain the change that comes into a person's life when he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.

So, we receive eternal life. We are accepted. Accepted in the Beloved.

I love this truth. As long as we were in our sins we had no right to enter into God's presence. Imagine.

Sinful creatures coming into the presence of God. We were unclean and we were unholy and we were unworthy of His presence. But the moment that we're born again the moment that we're saved God sees

us in Christ and accepts us on that basis.

And we come into the presence of God in all the acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wow! Hold your hats, friends. It's just too wonderful.

The words. The hymn writer said God sees my Savior and then He sees me in the Beloved accepted and free. The Savior could have done less than that for us.

Huh? He didn't have to do all that for us. It would have been just wonderful if He had saved us from hell. No, I wasn't satisfied to do that.

As we are standing in before God we're clothed in Christ and enveloped in the Son of God's love. You know, a beggar can't enter a ruler's presence in his own unworthiness. He doesn't have any worthiness.

And, you know, he couldn't get into the king's presence. But, you know, if the royal prince befriends him and he can take him in and introduce him to his father, can't he? The beggar isn't going there in his own merits. He's going in the merits of the prince royal.

But that's just what's happened to us. The Lord Jesus is worth when we're saved by the grace of God. He takes us by the hand and He brings us right into the very presence of God, His Father.

And we're accepted in virtue of the name of the person who brings us there. He's the royal prince who has opened the way to the Father for us. And closely associated with that is the fact that we're complete in Christ.

I love that. We're complete. What does that mean? It means, look, if you have the Lord Jesus you don't need anything more for heaven.

And that's why there are no degrees of fitness for heaven. There's nobody here in the room tonight who's more fit for heaven than any other person. Did you know that? You say, come on! So and so has lived 75 years, a life of faith, that doesn't make a bit of difference.

Not a bit more fit for heaven than the person who was saved last night. If a person was saved last night. You say, how come? Listen, if you have Christ you can't improve on that.

It's absolute. It's absolute fitness for heaven. And that's what Paul means when he writes to the Colossians and says we're complete in heaven.

We're not fit for heaven in ourselves either before conversion or after conversion. In ourselves. We're not fit for heaven.

Because God's standard is perfection and we cannot reach that standard. Neither by good works nor by a virtuous life can we make ourselves fit for heaven. One of the wonderful things that happens when we accept the Lord Jesus is that God thereafter links us with his own beloved son.

And I tell you it's enough to take your breath away. He places us in Christ and the Lord Jesus then becomes our fitness for heaven. It's his merit and not ours.

When will people ever come to understand that? When will people in the church world ever come to understand that? It's the merit of Christ that makes us worthy of heaven. Not any merit of ours. It's

because the Father sees us in him that we're qualified to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in life.

And I thank God tonight that it's absolutely true that the believer in Jesus is just as fit for heaven as God can make him. Do you agree? It's absolutely true. The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is just as fit for heaven as God himself can make him.

How can we stay unmoved? How can we go out from our places of worship and our faces are no different from the faces of people that just come from the theater or the music hall? We don't understand it. We really don't take it in. We're children of God.

We become children of God. Wow. The moment of conversion.

We're born into the family of God. From henceforth, God is our Father. Dear friends, that is no mean privilege to be a child of God.

I mean, you talk about the great people of the world, you know, the presidents and the rulers and all the rest. But now we're related to God in a relationship that can never, never be broken. And I want to tell you, dear friends, that no angel is so privileged as you and I are tonight, if you're in Jesus.

No angel is as privileged as we are. And you know, it's wonderful to me that whether we study the star universe or whether we study the human cell, the living cell, whatever we study in this wonderful world of creation, we can say, my Father made it. And I like to say that when I go to some of these gorgeous places in nature, my Father made it all.

And so He did. And you know, worldlings may boast of their ancestry, that their forebears came across on the Mayflower. They may boast of their links to the famous or their ties to the wealthy.

But I want to tell you, all these honors are tawdry compared to what it means to be a child of God. Absolutely breathtaking. And not only are we children of God, but we're heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

You know, we've read these verses so many times that we're no longer enthusiastic about it. What else is new, Brother MacDonald? We've heard that for 30 years. Tell us something new.

Well, we might have heard it for 30 years, but we're not enthusiastic for 30 years. We've lost the zip. We've lost the zest of our salvation.

Heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. This means, again, hold your hat. Everything God has is ours.

It says that. All things are yours. And you are Christ's.

And Christ is God's. Can you ever be poor? Say not. You'll never be poor under those circumstances.

Of course, right away we're tempted to think of material things when we think of heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. But don't think of material. Think of the world and life and death and things present and things to come.

I would say that the human mind is incapable of fathoming all that is meant in the expression heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. I would say there's no one here in the meeting tonight that can really understand fully what that could possibly mean. But you know, one day we're going to come into the full enjoyment of it all.

Isn't that wonderful? And it was all purchased at Calvary. When your creator died for you. It was all part of his wonderful work there at the cross of Calvary.

And in the meantime, we can just revel in the fact that though we are sinners saved by the grace of God, we're inheritors of all the divine treasury. You know, it's nice to walk around with a hangdog expression on your face. I don't care what you might be going through in life.

You're an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. I'm going to tell you tonight, friends, there's no Cinderella story like that one. From rags to riches.

No such rise. That's enough to blow fuses in your brain. That isn't all.

We're indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. And this really blows me away to think that this body, this mortal body, with all its arthritis and aches and pains I shouldn't complain because I don't have much of that. But anyway, you know what I mean.

With all the frailties of a human body, that the second person of the Trinity dwells in that body. Wow. And it's true, too.

And I know it's true. I know it's true not only from the Bible, but I know it's true from personal experience, too. The subjective knowledge of the indwelling Holy Spirit in our lives.

He's there as a seal marking us out as belonging to God. And that's a seal forever. And he's there as the earnest.

And as the earnest, he's the down payment. He's the guarantee that just as I have received part of the inheritance already, I'm going to receive the full inheritance someday. And the full inheritance includes heaven and the glorified body.

And that means that we're just as sure of heaven as if we were already there. Doesn't that mean that? If you're saved, you have the Holy Spirit. And he guarantees heaven so surely they couldn't be more sure if you were already there.

And then he's there and he's with us as the helper. Perhaps that means more to us than the word comforter. The word comforter, we think of something on the top of a bed or we think of somebody who comes to you in times of funerals or that sort of thing.

But it's more than that, it's a helper. Somebody who comes along to help in times of need. Maybe like a nurse in the hospital and you ring the bell and she hurries into your room.

The Holy Spirit is there in times of need. He guides us, he prays for us and that's wonderful isn't it? Isn't it wonderful to have a person of the Godhead praying for us all the time? We little know how much we owe to the prayers of the Holy Spirit and the advocacy of the Lord Jesus Christ. He produces the fruit of holiness in our life and we can well ask what good and needful ministry does he not do for us? What good and needful ministry does he not perform for us? You say, that's enough.

No, it's not enough. God isn't satisfied with that, with his bride, with the bride of Christ. Of course, that expression brings in all the aspects of love, the special love that he has for us.

Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having a spot or wrinkle or any such thing but that it should be holy and without blemish. And once again, I can't find words to discuss how wonderful this is. With all our wrinkles and birthmarks and spots and sunspots and all the rest of it, someday we're going to be presented in heaven without spot.

Anything that compares with a birthmark or a wrinkle or any such thing. And you know, the Lord Jesus had all this in mind when he died for us on the cross. All this in mind.

One day, we'd be presented spotless there before and without holy and without blemish. I want to tell you, dear friends, to be a member of the bride of Christ is a greater honor than membership in all the sororities, fraternities, societies, organizations of the world. There's nothing to compare with that.

Nothing that the world has to offer. Possibly, did you know that the church means more to God than all the nations of the world? It does. And Isaiah, God speaks of the nations as a drop in the bucket and the dust of the scale.

I chuckle when I read that. We think of Russians of the great, there were times when we trembled when they rattled the sword. Drop in the bucket, friend.

The small dust of the scale as far as God's concerned. You never did that about the church. What a wonderful transaction that was that took place at Calvary when the Lord Jesus gave himself up there for the church.

You know what happened? The fragrance of that work stole through the universe and filled the presence of God with fragrance. God was wealthy. What lucky beggars we are.

What lucky beggars we are. That's not original. Guy King said that.

He didn't believe in luck anymore than I do, but I like the expression anyway. There is such a thing as poetic liberty, you know. We're able to pray.

We're able to pray. We have, just think of this, I mean, we have constant access to the sovereign of the universe anytime of the day or night. We can come right into his presence.

By faith, in prayer, we leave this sordid scene and enter into the throne room of the universe and there converse with God. You tell me that isn't wonderful. We come with our worship and our praise and our thanksgiving and our supplication and our intercession and he never reproaches us no matter how often we come.

If any man like wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not. What does that mean, upbraideth? It means he never scolds you for coming too often into his presence. I want to tell you when I get to heaven, I don't know about you, when I get to heaven one of my regrets will be I didn't pray more.

I didn't spend more time with God in prayer down here. I was too much of a Martha and not enough of a Mary. I know that's going to be true.

And that isn't the end. You see, he couldn't have done any more. He hadn't finished yet.

We will have eternal. Yesterday morning we thought of how frail we are, how transient we are, here one day and gone the other, how sinful we are, how evil we are, yet he deigned to save us by his grace and he's not satisfied until he gets us home in heaven in a glorified body just like the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ. And what a wonderful thing that will be to be in his presence and to sin no more.

It's enough to make me shout from the housetops. To sin no more. Never to grieve the heart of God again.

And it's all true. He wasn't satisfied to just save us from hell or even to give us a long endless existence here on planet earth. Won't be fully satisfied until we're there like his blessed son.

Those are really immortal lines that diary wrote, aren't they? And is it so I shall be like thy son? Gasp when you read that. And is it so I shall be like thy son? Is this the grace that he for me has won? Take a deep breath. Father of glory thought beyond all thought in glory to his own blessed likeness brought.

I want to tell you dear friends the drama of our redemption can't be told it's so wonderful. And as I said yesterday morning that the best we can do is little more than a stutter when we try to do it. Now you say what does that have to do with the title my heart, my life, my all? Well it comes to this.

What is the proper response to people who are the objects of such grace the inheritors of such wealth and who have the prospect of eternal glory before them. But the answer is total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't it? Total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The logic of our redemption leads us down a one way street that ends in commitment to him. You say well that's what we do. That's what we do.

We go to church regularly. We put our money in the collection and we give him our spare evenings. That's total commitment.

Well no we read the Bible from time to time and we pray. That's total commitment. That's all it means hardly.

Commitment is a definite well considered act in which a person turns his or her life over to the Lord Jesus Christ to do with it whatever he wants to do with it. Getting close to home friends. Be careful.

You consider all of this could mean a whole change in your life. You say but I'm safe. I know that's not enough.

That's enough to get you to heaven. But that's not total commitment. It's exchanging our will for his will.

I like this. It's giving up our rag rights for his throne rights. Giving up our rag rights for his throne rights.

It's abandoning all for the one who abandoned all for us. In every life there's a throne. The natural occupant of that throne is self.

Commitment is when we take self off the throne and put Christ on the throne. It's when we say from our hearts take me as I am Lord and make me all thine own. Make my heart your palace and your royal throne.

Isn't that lovely? Make my heart your palace and your royal throne. It's possible to commit my life to the Lord for salvation and never to commit it to him for service. Am I hitting a touchy nerve tonight? It's possible to commit your life to the Lord for salvation and never to commit it to him for service.

Both of these things should happen at the same time. But they don't always. Things aren't the way they should be in life.

It was that way with the Apostle Paul. His commitment for salvation and his commitment for service took place together on the road to Damascus didn't they? Who art thou Lord? What will you have me to do? That's the commitment. Commitment is denying self, taking up the cross and following him.

It's losing one's life for his sake and the gospel. It's flinging one's body and soul down for God to plow them under. When you desire his will supremely and are giving him the devotion of your heart and the love of your soul, you're a committed Christian.

An unconditional commitment There are certain words that are not in the vocabulary of that. Words or phrases. For instance, you never say not so Lord.

You never say I will follow you but let me first. You never say not now but later. Commitment to him means submission to him in sickness and in health.

In poverty or in plenty. At home or overseas. Single or married.

Unknown or well known. A short life or a long one. Does this seem a heavy load to lay upon you? Jesus said my yoke is easy and my burden is right too.

If you want to know what a heavy load is it's trying to do your own thing and your own strength. It's trying to live your life the way you want to live it and not the way the Savior wants to live it. I think my time is up.

8.15. So we're just going to close in prayer and tomorrow night in the will of God we're going to think of the one who teaches total commitment as nobody else had ever done. That's the Lord Jesus. Just as he is the author and finisher of faith so he's the author and finisher of commitment.

There was never anybody so focused as the Lord Jesus Christ in commitment. He's left us an example that we should follow. Blessed Lord Jesus we pray that you will forgive us for trying to express the wonder of Calvary in such impoverished ways.

For thinking that you are just one like ourselves. For making our God too small. And we pray as we go through the scriptures this week and follow the thread of commitment through them and through the history of the Christian church we pray that you'll speak to our hearts.

Lord we don't want to be playing church. We don't want to be going through motions. We don't want to be trifling.

Even at this late hour for some of us we want our lives to count. Give us a tender part and may we turn over to you that which no longer belongs to us because you bought it at the cross of Calvary. We ask it in the Savior's name and for his sake.

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