

Behold the Lamb!

What it Means to be a Christian

Lesson 1: Slain from the Foundation of the World

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3.

What is our situation here on this Earth? Why do we see so much suffering and misery, sorrow and death? Why are we here? Is there any hope of something better? The only Book that tells us the truth about all this is the Holy Bible. It starts out: **“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis 1:1.** And it assures us, **“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” Genesis 1:31.** So we ask, “What happened on earth to change all that?”

Before we begin to find out, we need to know something about the ‘God’ who created. What is He like? The Bible says, **“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” 1 John 4:8.**

The Creation of this world was a love affair with God! The Godhead, consists of Three Eternal Beings we know as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They had planned and were carrying out something very different and special on this planet. All the beings God has created are special in their own way and precious to the heart of their Creator, but Earth was to be unique. God planned to make man in His image. All His created intelligent beings share His image in some ways, but here with man, God shared, on a small scale, His actual capability to create by giving them ability to reproduce; to have families and children! In this way mankind would be able to appreciate somewhat the way God feels about His created little ones, and hopefully, understand Him better.

The Bible says, **“For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:9.** But that doesn’t tell us Who created, it just says God created. So we have to go a little deeper:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” Hebrews 1:1, 2.

Who is the Creator? It is the One we know as Jesus, the Son.

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:” Ephesians 3:9.

As they saw this project from the hand of the Creator, the angels and other beings were thrilled and sang songs of praise! When the beautiful earth was finished and Adam and Eve placed in their special garden home, the first full day they knew was the Sabbath. The Seventh Day Sabbath was always to be a special time to spend with the Lord, their Creator. So who created the Sabbath? Jesus created the Sabbath; Jesus is the ‘hands on’ Creator.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1. Jesus was the Creator—He is God; He existed from all eternity.

Behold the Lamb

**“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”
John 1:3**

**“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.” John
1:10**

**“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as
of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1:14**

**“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one
Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” 1 Corinthians 8:6.**

**“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour
Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify
unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:13, 14.**

Jesus created man in the Image of God. So Jesus is the God Who spoke and it was done and
who breathed life into mankind!

Rebellion in the Universe!

**Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all
things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Revelation 4:11.**

Why was everything created? For the pleasure of God, because it says, He is worthy! So all
things were created for God, by God; does that include the angels? It certainly does. Let's go
back before the creation of this earth for some background. The Bible tells us there was
rebellion in heaven. It tells us there was a War in heaven! There was a great catastrophe, a
major upheaval.

**“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the
stars of God: [rule over and above the angels] I will sit also upon the mount of the
congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be
like the most High.” Isaiah 14:13, 14.**

Now what is that all about? Now, when God speaks angels into existence, He speaks—and they
stand fast. If God wants a dozen angels, He speaks—and there are a dozen angels. But Genesis
says, **“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and
female created he them.” Genesis 1:27.**

Did God ever create male and female angels? No. **“And God said, Let us make man in our
image, after our likeness:”** now the angels are in the likeness of God, and they are in the image
of God, they didn't have a lower capacity or anything like that, but here was definitely
something new going on!

Then He said, **“and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the
air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth
upon the earth.”**

To which of the angels had God ever said, “Have Dominion”? None of them; to none of the
angels had God ever said, “Have dominion”.

Behold the Lamb

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,” Genesis 1:28.

To which of the angels had God ever said, “Be fruitful and multiply”? None of them. Wow!

“Subdue it, replenish the earth”; RE-plenish—means fill up again. Is it possible that this new order of being was being created and put into existence to replenish the universe? That angels that had lost their position and fallen from heaven, were to be replaced by this new order of being? It seems God was reaching out to His creation in a very special sense, because He was being misunderstood at the level of His creation. So what had happened that this was needed?

Next to the throne of God was an angel called Lucifer, ‘the light bearer’. This mighty angel Lucifer, had looked at the Godhead and the Son of God, who was part of the Godhead. Before He came to this earth as Jesus Christ, our Savior, He had mingled with the angels, appearing like one of them, no difference. However He was in the fullest sense, God. He was taken into the council of the Godhead, but none of the angels were.

Lucifer had the highest place among the angels, but when the angelic host appeared before the Almighty, everybody bowed down in adoration to the Son of God! Lucifer said, “Why does everybody bow down to HIM! What’s the difference between Him and me? I look like Him, I can do what He can do, but He is taken into the counsel of the Godhead and I am not, and everybody obeys Him. I want to be honored like Him! I see no difference!”

Lucifer had allowed the poisonous plant of jealousy to take root in his heart; forgetting that he, himself, was a created being, and that whatever abilities and position he had was all given to him, he coveted the place and honor of the Son of God, something he had no right whatever to have! He started hating God’s law, saying to himself, “Now all these rules and regulations; ‘There must be no other important Being except God,’ I intend to change that!”

So it was that Lucifer left his honored position and began to visit among the angels, spreading lies and stirring up rebellion! God called the angels together and explained to them that His Son occupied a place that they could not and they were to honor Him as they would the Father. The angels were mostly happy about this, but although Lucifer bowed with them, in his heart was jealousy and rebellion. He rose to carry out his schemes until he and the angels he had tricked into following him, were cast out of heaven!

God knowing Lucifer’s heart and watching this attitude and situation developing, takes counsel, and decides to create a new order of being, to meet the greatest crisis this universe had ever had to face. So God creates an order of being that would understand the mind of God, more than any creature that had ever been created by Him.

He was going to share His ultimate gift with this new creation, the capacity to bring forth life, and the capacity to rule like a Creator. That meant a totally new situation, a new planet; a new creative planet, where man would have the capacity to play out this role of a creative being. This goes beyond the ability to have children, all humans tend to be creative, they invent, design, build, and construct things; even a small child enjoys making something. But especially in the family situation, when you bring forth children, you put a lot of care in their upbringing. You have rules and guidelines to protect them and keep them safe.

Behold the Lamb

God also created all His intelligent beings with the greatest gift He could provide them with, and that was the Gift of Freedom of Choice. Without Freedom of Choice we would be puppets. Freedom of Choice is the greatest Gift that God has ever given His creation. We are not puppets; we are each something special.

When God created this Gift, He knew that things could go wrong! But He was prepared to accept the consequences Himself; and so He said, “Be fruitful and multiply”, which He had said to none of the angels. “Replenish the earth”, replace that which has fallen. “Subdue it; have dominion; rule like I rule!”

Lucifer, now Satan the adversary, looked at this creation and he knew God was doing something new! God was creating a being more in the Image of God, not in terms of brain capacity or anything like that, but in terms of, “Wow! Sharing the creative capacity of God.” He could see that this order of being was being created to expose his hypocrisy. God designed that this order of being was going to one day be the means to put sin to an end in a sense as well, because they will judge even angels! The Bible says that man will judge angels.

“Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?” 1 Corinthians 6:3.

From the mindset of a Creator, we would be able to understand that. Notice Psalm 8:

“O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength [WHY?] because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.”

So human beings, speaking about God, are there to shut the mouth of the enemy! Who is the enemy? Satan, the adversary. Continuing:

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

Too often we read this in this way, “When I consider the greatness of the heavens, what is this man-worm that you even bother with us?” some afterthought, some creation way down here, some side issue. No-No it doesn't say that! It says; “What is man, what is so important about man, that the God of the universe is so mindful of him?” Let's prove that! Continuing:

“For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, [the word there in the original is 'elohiyim' which is God. Thou hast made him a little lower than God] and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”

Does that sound like a worm? Something that is crowned with glory and honor—is that a worm? No!

And **“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:”** Does that sound like a worm? Here was a new order of being, something the universe had never experienced before. You are not worms; lift up your heads, you are meant to be the sons and daughters of God!

Behold the Lamb

Then, unfortunately, because there was a crisis, there had to be a test. God designed the easiest test that would allow man to show his loyalty, or not.

“And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Genesis 2:9.

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” Genesis 1:31.

On the Seventh day He rested and was refreshed! What does that mean? The Hebrew there is ‘naphash’, “to breathe; passively, to be breathed upon, i.e. refreshed (as if by a current of air).” God breathed the breath of life into them on the sixth day—so what was He breathing here? What was God doing on the Seventh-Day that He ‘breathed’?

“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.” Isaiah 49:15, 16.

Here is this new creation; it’s going to be a creative being, it’s going to work like God, in the sense that it has control and management of a universe-type set up. It is also a creative being: there is not a human being that’s not creative; that doesn’t want to do things that are creative. Even little children love to make things. Much more in the image in terms of the Creator, not in terms of the greatness. or mental capacity, just in terms of the mind-set of a creator. And this new being is here for a purpose.

God is going to prove to the universe through this being, that if you think like a Creator, then His government is fair. You must have rules; you must have boundaries; and you must have certain conditions in order to be happy! He created them with the capacity to choose. Thank God for that! I would hate to serve God because I had no choice! I want to serve Him because I desire to!

That is what God did on the Sabbath! He took His new creation and He knew He was going to die because of them! but He looked at them and He breathed, “Hahhh! It’s worth it!” that is what the Sabbath is about! It is about a love relationship with God! When Jesus looked at His creation, He knew that He would find ultimate rest from what? From the war in His universe. So when He looked at this couple, He went, “Hahh [sigh], it’s worth it!”

The Devil says, “No! I don’t need rules; I don’t need boundaries; I don’t need certain conditions; and I hate what You have created over there, especially in this reproduction business because that is going to replace me!”

God says to the devil, “I will give them space to do what they like. I will visit them in the cool of the day, and you can meet with them at that one forbidden tree only. On the Sabbath I have set aside time for them. I will meet with them on the Sabbath and they can be with Me and I with them, and after a period of test and trial, the test will come to an end and it will stop. But up until that time, you have access to them at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

The Fall:

Behold the Lamb

No wonder this fallen angel was so angry! He was determined to deceive them and get them to join his rebellion against God. So one day, Eve wandered away from Adam and found herself gazing at the forbidden tree. Something we should never do is to linger around anything that is forbidden or that we know is wrong!

Satan saw his chance and disguising himself as a serpent he spoke to Eve. “Did God really say you must not eat from the trees in the garden?”

“We may eat of the trees in the garden but God did say we must not eat of this one or touch it or we will die!”

“You will surely not die! You will be like God!” That is what he said.

And Eve looked at this fruit the serpent was eating, and she was fascinated and she thought, “Wow! That’s great! I can be like God!” And she took it and she ate it, then she tempted Adam to eat it too, and that is when sin came into the world. Sin is the transgression of the law; she broke the law; she too coveted the position of God—to do that is breaking the commandments.

The Ten Commandments are part of the character of God, which is love. but they are now expressed in a special way to meet the needs of fallen mankind. Where there is no law, there is no transgression; so Adam and Eve did have a law. There must have been a law or they could not have sinned.

We have two groups of people on this planet; the one group which say, “I shall be saved by my works, and I don’t care about anything else, I am selfish—it’s about me, me and me alone!” The other group says, “I will rely on the merits of my Saviour who has promised to save me.”

“And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.” Exodus 34:6.

These are the attributes of God; the Lord is compassionate and longsuffering, and He keeps love for thousands. So what is our duty now? It is to show to the world the truth about the character of God. God’s people must stand like a rock speaking up for the lovely character of God.

Jesus never forces anyone; He says “I, when I be lifted up will draw people to Me.” The devil is the one that forces. The devil is the one that coerces; he is the one that hates—God is the One that loves—He never, ever forces.

So when the angels and other beings saw that man had fallen, and would henceforth be subject to death, great sorrow was everywhere, there was no singing, no rejoicing. What would happen to this lovely new world now?

It was then the Creator came forward and pledged Himself to redeem man. He would pay the penalty Himself to give human beings a chance to return to loyalty and be saved. It was a plan laid far back in time, in case something ever went wrong. Now something had gone terribly wrong, but how hard it was for God the Father to agree to allow His Son to become the surety

Behold the Lamb

for fallen man! But the Bible tells us, **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.**

God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn it, but to redeem it! This was no make-believe Gift, He Gave Him to save the World! Jesus was to become like us! This is how Jesus became the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the earth.

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14, 15.

He became like us; isn't this incredible? God again reaches out to His creation and He becomes like them. When He was on earth, the Pharisees looked and said, “Huh! Who are You that we should be mindful of you? Look at you, you don't even have any education, pooh! who are you?”

Jesus did nothing to attract attention; this is His character; He is the gentle and humble God. He came to this world and He did good; He lifted up the poor; He spoke an encouraging word; He was kind; He was gentle; He was longsuffering; He never forced anyone; He never bullied anyone; and when they finally slaughtered Him for that, He was led like a Lamb to the slaughter and He didn't open His mouth.

What a God to serve! One day I would like to stand before Him, take the crown that He will give each one of His children and lay it at His feet and say, “Lord, I want to bow my knees, not because you force me like the devil thought,—no! Because I want to! Serving a God with a character like Yours will be my pleasure.

Those who love His commandments and obey Him know that they are not burdensome and we know that Jesus will help us.

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” Isaiah 41:10.

We are sons and daughters of God! Created in the image of God; Created to even take the place of angels. Let us stand for what is right; let us not listen to the voice that says, “I will corrupt the Sabbath! I will pervert the creative act of man—the bringing forth of children! I will pervert the marriage relationship! I will destroy it! Those are the two main hates that Satan has: the Sabbath and the Family, because both of them reveal his nasty character in contrast to the lovely character of God.

In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son! The ages passed until the time came for Jesus to be born into this world; this is a great mystery and we can't understand it, but we can believe and know that it happened.

Satan has made a great effort to keep all people, even God's people, ignorant of the Word of God. Satan recognizes that if we are ignorant of the very simple things, then we won't go

Behold the Lamb

deeper. So it is the simple things that he desires us to be ignorant of. He wants us ignorant of what really happened at Gethsemane and Calvary.

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” John 8:44

Lies, error and deception began with Satan; Lucifer in heaven. He got caught up in his beauty; he became proud and desired the privileges that belonged to Christ alone. He began to cause rebellion with the angels.

Then some of the angels that were on God’s side came to the angels that were falling and to Lucifer and said, “Listen, God is a loving God and if you would just go back to Him, He’d forgive you and all this stuff could be washed away.”

Lucifer knew that if perfect beings understood the true nature and character of the Father, that is exactly what would happen, they would turn back and find forgiveness.

Lucifer said to them, “You’ve broken the Law, you can’t turn back now. God is a stern judge and if you go back to God, He is just waiting until you come, so He can blot you out. God doesn’t desire to forgive! You’ve broken His law, now there must be justice.”

So they thought if they went to God they’d be destroyed; they delayed in coming, delayed to repent, and were lost.

This lie of Satan worked on the holy angels. Then on this earth, using the medium of the serpent, he told Eve; “God’s character is not what you think it is! That’s not the way He really is. He’s keeping something good from you.” So again he lied about God’s character and it worked on sinless Eve, she and Adam fell into sin.

Sinless angels, sinless humanity, righteous beings were deceived and fell, because they misunderstood the character of God. We are not even righteous, what makes us think that if we don’t understand Satan’s aim, that we will be alright? It worked on sinless angels; it worked on sinless humanity, what makes us think that if we don’t understand the real nature and character of God we’ll be safe?

God loves every one of us with an everlasting love.

“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Jeremiah 31:3.

The reason we don’t come to God, is because the love of God has been blinded from our eyes with the efforts of Satan. If these lies are dispelled by the true Word of God, we would gladly come. The cross is the means to move the world. Jesus said;

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” John 12:32.

“If the cross does not find an influence in its favor, it creates an influence. Through generation succeeding generation, the truth for this time is revealed as present truth. Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. This is the means that is to move the world.” MS 56, 1899.

Behold the Lamb

“The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish every earthly and Hellish power. In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection; yea, more. It was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror. Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.” GCB, April 1, 1899.

Do you understand the gift God has for us? We’re going to be placed in positions above angels that have never fallen.

Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice. Many, if not most, of us have, or have had, that view of God. We have the understanding that God is harsh and Christ is somehow different. That’s not new;

“And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. . He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” John 1:5, 10, 11.

Why didn’t they receive Him? Because He didn’t come in the manner that they thought He was to come. They didn’t receive Christ is because they didn’t understand the things He was to do, they didn’t understand the prophecies that they preached every Sabbath day.

Satan in heaven destroyed the understanding of God’s character and so Christ needed to come. The Bible says we beheld the glory of the Word made flesh, that was Christ, we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father. But what is glory?

“And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.” Exodus 34:5-8.

Now did God tell him His name? Or did He give him attributes of His character? ‘The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful’ etc. that is not His *name*—those are attributes of who He is. That was His character. So when we saw Christ and we beheld His Glory, we beheld the Father’s character. Jesus came to the earth to give us the understanding of God’s character.

Satan misapplied, misinterpreted, the character of God, holy beings were lost because of it. Now he comes to us at the end of the world and he’s doing the same thing, misinterpreting the character of God, and he does it in so many different ways.

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:8.

Before God created, the plan of Salvation was already laid. In other words, Jesus has always been under the shadow of the cross. How long did Jesus know He was going to the cross? He’s

Behold the Lamb

always been under the shadow of the cross! Think about that for a moment. Now, let's go with Jesus to Gethsemane.

“And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,” Luke 22:39-41.

Jesus didn't calmly walk to His place around that stone and there kneel down. When he began to enter into the garden, he began to stagger. He began to sway back and forth like a drunkard because of the woe and anguish that had come upon Him. He fell on his face and began to pray.

“Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” Luke 22:42.

Why would Jesus, who for eternity knew the plan and what He was to go through, all of a sudden come to where He says, “Father, if there is another way? Why, with His knowledge and understanding come to the point where the promises of resurrection, all these things, are in His mind, going out the window? What made Him say three times, “Father, if there is another way; nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done.”

We need to understand and experience that kind of submission; “Lord, I don't want to do this”. Did you know that was what He was saying? He said ‘nevertheless not My will, in other words, My will is that I won't do it!’ But He said, “Father, not My will but Thine be done.”

Christ didn't want to go through it, because something that the disciples and something that you and I take for granted now, began to happen in Gethsemane.

“Could mortals view the amazement and sorrow of the angels as they watched in silent grief the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory, from His Son, they would better understand how offensive is sin in His sight. As the Son of God in the Garden of Gethsemane bowed in the attitude of prayer, the agony of His Spirit forced from His pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that the horror of great darkness surrounded Him. The sins of the world were upon Him. He was suffering in man's stead, as a transgressor of His Father's law. Here was the scene of temptation. The divine light of God was receding from His vision, and He was passing into the hands of the powers of darkness. In the agony of His soul He lay prostrate on the cold earth. He was realizing His Father's frown.”

God the Father and His Son have always been one; never had there come a point where they had been separated. But now He was realizing His Father's frown.

“The cup of suffering Christ had taken from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it Himself, and, in its place, give to man the cup of blessing. The wrath that would have fallen upon man, was now falling upon Christ.” 5BC 1124.

What a transaction! I'm going to take from you your dirty laundry, your trash, your rubbish, and give you the kingdom. That's all I require of you. God is saying all He requires is our rubbish, for the kingdom, and yet we hold on so tight. What's wrong with our minds? What's wrong with us that we want to hold on to rubbish and He wants to give us everything?

Behold the Lamb

This was in the garden, "Father, if there is another way; I have never experienced what I am experiencing now; from eternity past I knew it, but I didn't experience it".

How much does God know? Everything, but one thing. The Bible says He knew not sin. He knew what it did in heaven; He knew the Mystery of Iniquity, He was able to play it out, but He was experiencing for the first time what it would do. Christ was going through what we should be going through every time we sin! And yet we don't because we don't recognize the sinfulness of sin. The Father was withdrawing from Him.

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59:2.

Your sins, my sins, were being placed on Christ; placed upon this innocent Lamb, and the effects of Isaiah 59:2 were happening. God was turning His face and Jesus recognized it. The light of His love and His countenance and His glory and His mercy were withdrawing from Christ.

"Father; if there is another plan! Nevertheless, not My will, because I don't want to do it, but Thine be done."

"Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." Luke 22:42. 43.

Gabriel came down to strengthen Him to drink the cup; to take the cup of death for every man. What did he place before Him that strengthened Him to drink the cup? What was placed before Him that strengthened Him to go forward to do something that He did not want to do?

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2.

It was the joy that was set before Him; the joy of seeing us saved, the joy of seeing every individual, every man and woman, boy and girl turn to Him; the joy of seeing that these people could have a chance. That's what caused Him to go to the cross! He looked down and He saw us, and He said 'I am going to go to the cross for them'.

He was strengthened to drink the cup and rose to meet His betrayer. Now He went from Gethsemane to that mockery of a trial. He went before Caiaphas, and He was sent to Pilate; then He was sent to Herod; then He was sent to Pilate again. He was spit upon, He was buffeted, He was slapped, His beard was torn out; all these different things. He was whipped, He was scourged, He was mocked.

Yes, all of these things took place and that's the emphasis given to the Gospel. 'Oh Jesus, the death that He died, oh! He was beaten!' And that's what we think is the Gospel. that's why we don't weep; that's why we are not touched when it is talked about, because we don't have the real Gospel.

He's on Calvary now, He's gone through all this suffering:

Behold the Lamb

“Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Matthew 27:45, 46.

What does it mean to forsake? if we understood that statement, we would realize what was happening on Calvary. Here are some definitions for the term ‘forsake’; ‘to quit; to leave entirely; to desert; to abandon; to depart from; to renounce; to reject; to withdraw from; to fail.’

“My God, My God, why hast Thou Failed Me? Why have You quit Me? Why have You renounced Me? Why have You rejected Me? Why am I alone?” This was what was transpiring on Calvary!

The Father was there; hidden behind a veil of pitch darkness; but Jesus couldn’t see Him! Jesus could not see the Father’s reconciling face.

He looked down and one of His joys was that He saw His mother there—but do you know what was in His mother’s heart? As she sees her Son on the cross, she questions herself and says, ‘Must I now lose faith that this was even the Messiah?’ Yes, she was there, but she didn’t really have a clue what was happening, she had the belief of the rest of the disciples, who were waiting for Christ to set up His earthly kingdom!

They were waiting for Jesus to destroy the Romans. They believed God is harsh; God is exacting and when you break His Law, He destroys! That was the understanding, and that’s why many rejected Christ. The disciples were waiting for that day, and now He is dead! The disappointment settled in because of a misunderstanding of God’s character.

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;” Matthew 27:46-51.

When Jesus was there on the cross, the Bible tells us He became something;

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:” Galatians 3:13.

Jesus is there on the cross, and the Bible says that He became a what? A curse! You see that is the whole thing about the cross—you’re there suspended between heaven and earth; rejected by man and rejected by God. Earth doesn’t want you—God doesn’t want you either, you’re just THERE. Jesus became a curse for us; but more than that, He became something so offensive; something that forever God hates—He became sin.

Why does God hate sin so much? Because He knows how it hurts and destroys His created little ones! A Mother hates anything that will cause suffering and harm to her little children!

Behold the Lamb

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Again notice the transaction: Jesus was made sin for us, and we’re made the righteousness of God in Him. How much sin did Jesus know? No Sin! How much righteousness do we know? No righteousness! Yet Jesus became Sin so that we can become Righteous. The transaction is amazing. Jesus was made sin, and sin is so offensive to God that He turns away from it.

“And now the Lord of glory was dying, a ransom for the race. In yielding up His precious life, Christ was not upheld by triumphant joy.”

He not held up by Triumphant joy; it was gloomy on the cross! Yes the joy was laid before Him and He went through with it, He didn’t want to do it; but He did it anyway.

“All was oppressive gloom. It was not the dread of death that weighed upon Him. It was not the pain and ignominy of the cross that caused His inexpressible agony. Christ was the prince of sufferers; but His suffering was from a sense of the malignity of sin, a knowledge that through familiarity with evil, man had become blinded to its enormity. Christ saw how deep is the hold of sin upon the human heart, how few would be willing to break from its power. He knew that without help from God, humanity must perish, and He saw multitudes perishing within reach of abundant help. “Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all.” Desire of Ages 753

Now you know your own life and your own sins—imagine if God allowed the guilt of every sin that you have ever committed to rest upon you at one time. You would be crushed; you would have a nervous breakdown. But not only your sin; not only my sin; but everyone’s, from Adam to the last baby to be born, was laid on Jesus *at one time!*

“He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father’s mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father’s reconciling face.”

Imagine preaching your whole life about how much love the Father is—you showed them by your own example how you forgive—He laid it out point by point about how loving God is, but now, He can’t see it. Sin was so offensive that all that was eclipsed.

“The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt. Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb.”

What happened to the promises? What happened to the Old Testament Scriptures? What happened to the promise of resurrection? He knew it all, didn’t He? But now He couldn’t see how it would ever come to be. He couldn’t understand how He could ever be resurrected because He became *Sin*. He couldn’t see how the Father would ever turn back to Him in love again. And *still* He could have come down!

Behold the Lamb

Do you understand this? Jesus still at that point, all He had to do was think a thought and myriads of angels would have come—they were waiting, they wanted to come. They had to be held back! Jesus had to go through with it, and all He had to do was just cry out one time and they would have come and taken Him down off the cross.

But the joy was laid before Him; He was willing to die *Forever* that you might be saved. He was willing to give it all up so that you and I could take His place. That's the love of the cross. Was it a sacrifice? It was the greatest sacrifice—Jesus gave up *all* for us! And He gave it up, not thinking that He would receive a return. That's a sacrifice!

“Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.” DA 753.

Willing to give it all up—not thinking that God would even accept His sacrifice, He still laid it down because *maybe* you can take His place. If there was just a hope that one person could be saved He was willing to give it all up. That's what He was thinking; and here He is the chief of sufferers and we don't even fathom what He really gave up for us.

That's why He is able to go before God and plead in our behalf—and yet we still won't come. He gave up everything and He has not taken it back and yet we still won't come. Why did He waste it on us? Why do we not come when He gave it all up—when He gave everything?

After His resurrection, He ascended then, and He went before the Father and said, “Father, was it right? Did I do what You asked me to do?”

And the Father said, “Yes.” Then He said, “Father, I have one request, before the glory is back, before the crown is on, I want those who You have given Me to be with Me where I am.”

Jesus would not accept the glory back until you and I were assured the opportunity for salvation. Jesus Christ would not take it back until you and I were assured a place! That's the gift. That is the sacrifice. He loved us so much that He gave up everything and wouldn't take one thing back until you and I had a place assured of God.

He is our High Priest, and our Elder Brother, and He is praying for you today before the Father. Will you give Him your heart? That's all He wants; “Give me thine heart and let your eye observe My ways. Give Me your heart and then watch Me work.” Will you make the decision to allow the Power of the Gospel to work in your life today?