

CONTENTS

Where will you spend eternity?	2
Fellowship News	3
Salisbury Reformed Seminary	5
The Lord is My Shepherd	8
The Lord's Supper	11
Cry of the Blood	19
How Shall We Escape, if We Neglect So Great Salvation?	21
God's Answer to the Sinner's Question	22
Epilogue	27

WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

Dr. R. A. Torrey

Our subject is, Where Will You Spend Eternity? You will find the text in John 16:5, "*Whither goest thou?*" Jesus Christ was about to leave this world, He told the disciples that He was going, but none of them asked Him where He was going. He reproved them for not asking. Well He might, for the most important question that can face any man when he comes to leave this present world is "Where are you going?"

First of all, REMEMBER THAT THERE IS AN ETERNITY. That is certain. We may try to shut our eyes to the fact, but the fact stands. Look ahead – you may live five years, ten years, twenty years, thirty, forty, fifty years. But then what? The fifty years will soon be gone. Then what? ETERNITY! On it stretches before us, on and on and on. Never ending centuries will roll on, ages roll on, but still eternity stretches on and on. It will stretch on forever, never any nearer an end. Oh, thank God for eternity! If I knew I were to live a thousand years it would not satisfy me. I would always be thinking of the end that would come some time. I am glad that as I look out into the future I see an eternity that has absolutely no end. There is an eternity.

In the second place, REMEMBER YOU MUST SPEND THAT ETERNITY SOMEWHERE. The time will never come when you cease to exist. You will be somewhere throughout all eternity.

Remember in the third place that the question of WHERE YOU WILL SPEND ETERNITY is vastly more important than the question of WHERE YOU WILL SPEND YOUR PRESENT LIFE. Suppose I am taking a day's journey to a place where I will spend forty years. Which is the more important, the comfort which I have as I travel or the comfort which I have when I get there? This life is a day's journey to an endless eternity.

The next point to consider is that IT IS POSSIBLE FOR US TO KNOW WHERE WE SHALL SPEND ETERNITY. Jesus knew where He would spend eternity. He said, "*I go... to him that sent me;*" (John 16:5). Paul knew where he would spend eternity. He said, "*For me... to die is gain*" (Philippians 1:21). And again, "*having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*" (Philippians 1:23).

The fifth fact to bear in mind is that WE WILL SPEND ETERNITY IN ONE OF TWO PLACES – IN HEAVEN OR IN HELL. Heaven is a place of holiness, happiness and love. Hell is a place of violence, misery and hate. In one or the other you and I shall spend eternity. With Christ or with the devil. With the holy and pure, or with the wicked, the blasphemous, the vile. Which will it be for all eternity?

Just one more point. WHERE YOU SPEND ETERNITY WILL BE DETERMINED BY WHAT YOU DO WITH JESUS CHRIST. If you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour you will spend eternity with Him. If you reject Jesus Christ you will spend eternity away from Him. Listen to the sure Word of God, *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him”* (John 3:36). Listen again, *“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”* (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Where we spend eternity will be determined by what we do with Jesus Christ in this present life.

There is an eternity and we must spend that eternity somewhere. The question of where you will spend eternity is vastly more important than the question of where you will spend your present life. It is possible for us to know where we will spend eternity; it will be in one of two places. Where we spend eternity will be settled in this present life and will be determined by what you do with Jesus Christ. My friend, where are you going? **Where will you spend eternity?**

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

We have recently extended our ministry to the elderly by adding a second Care Home to our monthly visits. Having been holding a brief service at Gracewell Care Home for four years, we began in January regular visits to Milford House Care Home.

In a further effort to extend friendship to the ladies who live in the vicinity of the church, a monthly ladies' Coffee Morning was started in February at Grove House which, God willing, will take place on the first Wednesday of each

month. As always, our eyes are upon God to add his blessing to these small ventures to bring the knowledge of the Gospel to others.

Over the weekend of 17-18 February, we gave thanks to God for another anniversary: Pastor Watts' 47th, and the Church's 65th. We were very pleased to welcome as our guest speaker, on this, his first visit to Salisbury, Rev. Iain Smith. Mr. Smith is a minister of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) and, since May 2016, has been the Minister of the Leverburgh congregation on the Isle of Harris. The weekend began with a meeting on Saturday afternoon, when our thoughts were directed to the Lord our Banner - Jehovah Nisei (Exodus 17:15). This truth reminded us of God's kindness and His protection of His people; but it also challenged us to demonstrate, by our daily walk, that he is the Banner over our lives. We were pleased to welcome friends from other churches who joined us in sharing our thanksgiving, and refreshments after the service gave opportunity for further fellowship. At both services on the Lord's Day, Mr. Smith drew our attention to Luke Chapter 15, prompting us to appreciate afresh the wonders of the Gospel illustrated so movingly in this well-known chapter. At an After-Church Fellowship, Mr. Smith told us something of the Lord's gracious dealings with him, bringing him to salvation and then leading him into pastoral ministry. From beginning to end, it was a wonderfully blessed weekend. We give grateful thanks to God for His upholding of our Pastor over these 47 years. We also acknowledge God's singular blessing upon us in this past year, as we have seen the commencement of the Salisbury Reformed Seminary; and also the Installation of Rev. Simon Green as an Associate Pastor to work alongside Pastor Watts. Truly we have been blessed and we thank the Lord with all our hearts for His many and great benefits.

*"I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth."
Psalm 34:1*

RAILWAY STATION POSTERS

The church here is sponsoring three Trinitarian Bible Society posters at Salisbury Railway Station this year. God willing, each will be on display for four weeks and the texts are as follows:

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life", from 26 March. "Thou God seest me", from 21 May. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity", from 16 July.

We pray for God's blessing to rest upon His precious Word.

SALISBURY REFORMED SEMINARY

On Monday, 8 January, at 9am., Trustees, lecturers, students, and other Christian friends met together in Grove House for a time of worship. Malcolm Watts led the service which, after a Call to Worship, began with the singing of Psalm 86, verses 11-17. David Kay of Barnstaple was then called upon to read from the Holy Scriptures, Numbers, chapter 14, verses 1-24. After this, Dewi Higham of Cardiff was asked to lead in prayer, which he did, seeking the Lord's presence and favour for the service and the opening of the Seminary.

Malcolm Watts then spoke on the words of Numbers 14:24: "My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it." In the address, it was pointed out that Caleb was distinguished by *his inner life* ("another spirit with him") and by *his outer life* ("[he] hath followed me fully").

The other spirit in this man evidently refers to his disposition, as imparted, strengthened and activated by the Holy Spirit – something which made him very special and quite different from the majority of his contemporaries (cf. Ezra 1:5). His was a godly, sincere, and earnest spirit (Ps. 51:10; Rom 12:11), which sought God's glory above everything else (Phil. 1:20; 1 Pet. 4:11) and was ready to take every opportunity of rendering service to Him (Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:16).

His following of the Lord fully implies that he was under the direction and influence of God's Word and Spirit, worshipping Him, cleaving to His truth and ordinances, and keeping carefully to His revealed Will made known through the Holy Scriptures (Deut. 10:20; 11:22; 13:4).

The challenge of this verse was directed to all present. The trustees should dedicate themselves to "following the Lord fully" as they seek to lead the Seminary in a godly, reformed and spiritual way. The lecturers too should excel

in this, ensuring that they prepare as well as possible and seeking always to inform the mind, warm the heart, and direct the will. And finally, there are the students: let them mind this in all their studies, aiming to reach the highest standard in order to please the Most High God.

The congregation then sang Psalm 63, verses 1–8, the last verse of which read as follows:

In shadow of thy wings I'll joy,
for thou mine help hast been.
My soul thee follows hard; and me
thy right hand doth sustain.

The service was concluded with the Benediction.

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During this first week of studies, the subjects covered were as follows: **Monday:** *What is a Pastor?* (David Kay); *Introduction to Church History* (Roland Burrows); *Introduction to Biblical Studies* (Neil Pfeiffer); *What is preaching?* (John Saunders). **Tuesday:** *Introduction to Systematic Theology* (Malcolm Watts); *How to study* (DK); *Worship – the Sabbath* (DK); *Revelation* (MW). **Wednesday:** *Inspiration* (MW); *Introduction to Greek* (Simon Green); *Benefits of Greek* (SG); *Inerrancy* (MW). **Thursday:** *Preservation of Scripture* (MW); *The World before Christ* [1] (RB); *The World before Christ* [2] (RB); *The Being of God* (MW). **Friday:** *Names of God* [1] (MW); *Mandate for Evangelism* (JS); *Goal of Evangelism* (JS); *Names of God* [2] (MW).

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A further weekend of intensive study was arranged for 9-10 February. The subjects then covered were: **Friday:** *Ephesians* (1) (MW); *Greek* (1) (SG); *Spirit of the Evangelist* (JS); *Prayer and Evangelism* (JS); *Attributes of God* (1) (MW). **Saturday:** *Ephesians* (2) (MW); *Scripture's Authority* (John Thackway); *Scripture's Sufficiency* (JPTh); *Scripture's Perspicuity* (JPTh); *Attributes of God* (2) (MW). All the lectures were received well and we were thankful to God for His blessing upon them.

Due to the limited time the students have on site at Grove House, Simon Green has continued teaching Greek online, via Skype, with Alex. It is hoped that these sessions will continue every Wednesday morning at 11am for the rest of the year. Our prayers have also been answered in that our application for Charitable Status has been approved by the Charity Commission (Licence Number: 1176241). We see the Lord's hand in this. Most of the lectures are being given by the Seminary's trustees. However, on Friday, 8 June, and the morning of Saturday, 9 June, we have a guest speaker: Michael Haykin, Professor of Church History and Biblical Spirituality at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and, God willing, he will be lecturing on 'The Particular Baptists and the Revival in the 18th Century.' These lectures will be held in the large meeting room at Grove House, 18 Wilton Road, Salisbury, SP2 7EE, which is where all Seminary lectures take place. Over the two days, a series of eight lectures will be given by Professor Haykin: the first starts at 8.30am on the Friday morning. As we plan and prepare the course for the next two years, and finalise the details for this year, we would be most grateful for your prayers. We need the Lord's guidance in every aspect of the course and in all our endeavours to obtain the right balance, maintaining academic standards yet emphasizing true spiritual experience. Our thoughts go beyond the training of men for the ministry. We pray for men to furnish our churches with faithful ministries, preaching Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, all to the glory of God and the furtherance of His Kingdom.

When Sion by the mighty Lord
built up again shall be,
In glory then and majesty
to men appear shall he.

The prayer of the destitute
he surely will regard;
Their prayer will he not despise,
by him it shall be heard.

For generations yet to come
this shall be on record:
So shall the people that shall be
created praise the Lord.

Metrical Version, Psalm 102:16-18

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Douglas MacMillan (1933-1991)

(who once worked as a shepherd on the family croft)

‘He leadeth me beside the still waters’

The Psalmist then goes on to say, ‘He leadeth me beside the still waters.’ I think that is a beautiful picture. Remember that the country he was living in was not like our own; it was very short of water. They only got rain twice in the year, the early rain and the latter rains. What a precious thing water was, especially to our shepherd! People say to me, ‘Surely sheep don’t drink water.’ Well, a sheep has to drink water or it will not survive. A sheep is made up of 70 per cent fluid – and there is a lot of fluid in you too. We have to have it because it keeps tissue healthy and builds muscle.

At certain seasons of the year a sheep does not have to drink much water because it gets the water in the dew – ‘still water’ coming down. I remember going out in the early spring and early summer at three and four o’clock in the mornings. I was shepherding in the most westerly point on the British mainland, where we had a later sunrise than they had on the south or east coast. As soon as the sun rose you would see the sheep coming down off the top of the hills into the valleys where the green grass was. You would sometimes see whole plains or moors glittering with dew, looking like a field of pearls, and there the sheep would eat and drink at the same time. God promises, ‘I will be as the dew unto Israel’ (Hosea 14:5); such is his gentleness in feeding the sheep and nourishing them and leading them on.

Then there is something else which tells me that this psalmist knew his sheep. A sheep will never drink out of a fast-flowing stream. I discovered that in a very simple way. When we were bringing our sheep into the farm, we used to have to gather them and drive them down the hill. Coming from the furthest corner of our hill, we used to have to ford two streams or ‘wee burns’ with them; and after being driven on a warm day for almost three miles in a huge bunch, the sheep would sometimes be so thirsty that their tongues would literally be hanging out. However, at the first stream we forded there was a lot of gravel and stones. It was a fast-flowing stream, with many ripples, and not a single sheep – not even a thirsty one – would stop to drink in it. I often wondered

about this. But the next stream we came to, just half a mile further on, was a very broad ford where the water hardly moved, and at these 'still' waters every sheep would stop and drink. I don't know why – perhaps it was just that the water ran up its nose – but the sheep did not like fast-flowing water.

The Word and the Spirit

This man knew his sheep, and he knew his Shepherd, too. He knew God, and he knew he had to have not merely the bare Word, but God coming in the Word and with the Word. He had not only to eat, he had to drink at the same time.

Water is very often used in Scripture as a symbol for the Holy Spirit 'as floods over thirsty ground'. What a beautiful picture! Of course, our need of water is always there; we need the Holy Spirit to teach us; we need him every time we go to the Word. A Bible read without prayer for the life and the teaching of the Holy Spirit is worse (and I say this after a lot of thought) than a Bible not read at all.

Why do I say that? Let me try and illustrate. On part of our shore, the western part of it, there were very steep cliffs which ran almost sheer down into the sea. If you stood and leaned over them with your stick, they curved away underneath you in places. I suppose they would be three or four hundred feet high, but they were broken up and there were ledges and wee tracks on them that only a sheep could use. On those ledges there grew a very green kind of grass. A sheep, just like ourselves, fancies the grass on the other side, and the grass in the most difficult and dangerous places always looks the best. The preacher in the next church down the road is always a lot better than your own, too. The grass is always greener on the other side. How foolish we are!

Our sheep used sometimes to go down these tracks on to the cliffs; they could get down, but very often they could not get back. I remember once some lobster-fishermen ringing us and saying, 'Douglas, we were way round the point today and we saw one of your sheep in the cliff on a ledge.' So my brother and I had to set out over the hills to the cliffs, and we found her away down the cliff on a big ledge with very green grass on it. The green grass had been nibbled down, for she had been on it a long time, perhaps four to seven days or even longer. You see, she could jump down on to the ledge, but she could not jump the seven feet back. And you know, Christian believers, it is always easier to get into a sticky wicket than it is to get out of it. Remember that!

Well, she had had plenty to eat, but nothing to drink, and although we had managed to rescue her, she died two days later. Why? Well, I opened her up and found that all the grass she had eaten had hardened into a solid ball. Ultimately, instead of nourishing her, it had choked life out because there was no fluid. She was what we would describe in medical terms as completely dehydrated, and she could not use the food she had eaten.

The Word and Prayer

I believe that one of the curses in the church today is a Bible that is read and not prayed over, and I believe that one of the weaknesses in our preaching today – and we have to recognise them – is preaching that is not prayed over, and sermons that are prepared without prayer. I feel that that is my greatest weakness in my own ministry. But this should not be.

I can never forget the man who was my minister when I left home to begin study, and who is now in glory. He was Kenneth N. Taylor, an Englishman and a great man, a great preacher. He said to me before I left home, when I began preaching: ‘Douglas, I want to say something to you. If I was asked to preach a sermon within an hour, I would want to spend three-quarters of the time on my knees before God, and only a quarter of an hour with the commentators.’ He was saying, ‘Divide your time wisely.’ He told me that he had sometimes put as many as 30 hours of work into one sermon. How much of that time was prayer I don’t know, but it showed in his preaching. There was an unction and a dew coming down when Kenneth Taylor was preaching, and there are people here today who could testify to that same truth.

That is not just for preachers; it is the same for those who are hearing and reading Scriptures. Take time! I said the dew was there in the early morning. Do you know that very often before 7.30 on a summer’s morning, and certainly by 8.30, the dew was gone? The sheep had to be out early to catch it. When you read through the biographies of the great saints of God – Spurgeon, McCheyne, the great Scottish Covenanters – invariably you find one thing: they got up to spend time with God before they ever went near men.

Young Christians, let me say this to you. I believe that if you are faithful in having a time of prayer and Bible reading, even if you only read and meditate on two verses before you begin your day, then God will keep you and feed you, and he will make you grow and go on. I have ministered among young people for a long time, and I have never yet met one person who backslid and

grew cold who did not later confess to me that their backsliding began when they stopped praying and when they stopped reading the Bible with prayer. That is where all backsliding begins. Why should we seem to think today that periods of coldness and backsliding are inevitable? They are not. The Shepherd does not want them. He can feed us and make us grow, and he wants to do it. 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.' *He* does it, you see – recognise that! Without him we can do nothing.

The means of grace

I have to recognise that every time I go to a pulpit. (God help me the day that I don't recognise it.) I have to recognise it every time I go to my Bible, every time I attempt to witness. But I have to recognise something else too: 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' How does he strengthen me? In all means of grace – conferences like this, worship on the Lord's Day, the prayer meeting in the middle of the week.

I cannot understand Christians who do not go to prayer meetings. After I was converted I would finish a day's work often at seven o'clock in the evening, and then I would motorcycle seven miles to a prayer meeting, and I did not think I was doing anything splendid. I quite honestly cannot understand professing Christians who do not want the fellowship of their fellow believers, and of their shepherd, and of the shepherd's Shepherd, in the prayer meeting and the Bible study.

*Submitted by Caroline Gahan
Concluded*

THE LORD'S SUPPER

John Willison (1680-1750)

Part 1

John Willison was an eminent minister in the Church of Scotland, distinguished throughout his life for his personal piety, his evangelical belief, and his unshrinking faithfulness.

Born in 1680 near Stirling, where his father was laird of a small estate, he evidenced from his youth a godly disposition, with an aptness for learning.

Called into the ministry, he entered on the study of divinity, and prosecuted it with remarkable ability and success. Having qualified himself for his sacred calling, he was almost immediately invited, in 1703, by a unanimous call, to the pastorate at Brechin. Here his ministry was greatly blessed and deeply appreciated. In 1718, he was unanimously called by the church in Dundee. He accepted that call and moved there, remaining as minister of that church until his death in 1750.

Question. What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal or carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace: to the confirming of their union and communion with Christ, renewing of their covenant with God, and their thankfulness to Him, and their mutual love to, and fellowship one with another, as members of the same mystical body. Matt. 26:26, 27, 28; 2 Cor. 11:23, 24, 25, 26; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

Q. Who is the author of this sacrament?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the glorious King and Head of His Church, to whom alone it appertains to institute her ordinances.

Q. What may we learn from its being Christ's ordinance?

A. That we ought therefore to have a special regard to it, and beware of either neglecting or abusing it.

Q. When did Christ institute this ordinance?

A. In the same night wherein He was betrayed, and immediately after He and His disciples had eaten the Jewish Passover.

Q. Was not that a very remarkable night?

A. Yes, it was a night ever to be had in remembrance, being the last night before Christ's death, the night wherein he began His bitter agonies, and sweat the bloody sweat for us; a night wherein He saw heaven, earth, and hell, even justice, men, and devils, all drawn up in battle-array against Him.

Q. Why did He institute this sacrament at such a time?

A. For these reasons: 1. Because this ordinance was to commemorate His death, and so it was very fit to appoint it when He was going to die. 2. To encourage and strengthen the hearts of His drooping disciples, now when he was about to leave them (as to His bodily presence) and they were to meet with many trials. 3. To show the great weight and import of this ordinance: had it not been a matter of the greatest concern to our good and His glory, it had not taken up the thoughts and care of our great Redeemer just when he was going to die, and undergo such unspeakable sufferings. 4. To lay the greater obligation upon us to attend this ordinance, and religiously to observe the charge and instructions He gave concerning it: as being the words of a dying man; nay, of a dying Saviour, who did more for us that night He spoke them, than all the angels of heaven, or relations on earth could or would have done.

Q. Did not Christ's matchless love to us appear wonderfully, in choosing such a time to institute this ordinance?

A. Yes; 1. In that He minded and spoke so much of us, when His time was so short. 2. That He provided so carefully for us, when His danger was so great; which shows that still His people lay nearest His heart, that He regarded their interest more than His own, and preferred their comfort to His own safety: for though He saw all His enemies in a full march against Him, and His all at stake, whence it might have seemed high time for Him to be providing for His own safety: yet He spent much of the short time He had, in providing a sweet feast, and bequeathing rich legacies to His poor people that He was to leave behind Him.

Q. Why did Christ institute this sacrament immediately after the Jewish Passover?

A. To show that the Passover was thereby abrogated, and the Lord's Supper come in its room.

Q. Are we not bound to receive this sacrament at night, after Christ's example?

A. The circumstances of time, place and company, in the first administration, not being essential to the ordinance, were not intended for our imitation. We are no more required to receive it at night, than to do it in an upper-room, with but twelve in company. Moreover the time was occasioned by the Passover

that was always eaten at night, and in private families: in the room whereof, and after which the Lord's Supper was to be instituted. But now when we have numerous assemblies for religious worship, the night would be highly inconvenient for them.

Q. What are the usual names and designations given to this ordinance?

A. It is called the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Table, the Communion, the Breaking of Bread, the Cup of Blessing, the Feast, Christ's Testament, the Eucharist. 1 Cor.11:20; 1 Cor. 10:16; Acts 2:46; 1 Cor. 5:8; Luke 22:20.

Q. Why is it called the sacrament?

A. It is called so, by way of eminency; and because here we take a most solemn oath of fidelity to our Redeemer.

Q. Why is it called the Lord's Supper?

A. Because, 1. It was instituted when Christ was eating the Passover supper with his disciples, which was at night. 2. The supper was then accounted the principal meal of the family. 3. It is ordained only for those that dwell in Christ's family, and abide with Him both day and night.

Q. Why is it called the Lord's Table?

A. Because He is the author of it, yea, He is both the maker and the matter of this entertainment; the feeder and the food also.

Q. Why is it called the Communion?

A. Because in the right partaking of this ordinance, we have communion and fellowship with Christ, share with Him in the benefits of His death and purchase, and also have communion one with another.

Q. Why is it called the Breaking of Bread?

A. Because in this ordinance, bread is broken and made use of, as the outward symbol and seal of Christ's wounded and broken body, with all the glorious benefits flowing there from.

Q. Why is it called the Cup of Blessing?

A. Because, 1. In the using it, we bless God for his free love to us in Christ. 2. It contains, offers, and sealet to us, in a sacramental way, all the blessings of the new covenant.

Q. Why is it called Christ's Testament?

A. Because in this ordinance we have Christ's testament and latter-will sealed, and a copy of it put into the believer's hand, containing the rich legacies He hath left them.

Q. Why is it called a Feast?

A. Because hereby the believers are richly entertained by Christ, have sweet intimacy with Him, and great expressions of His love; and their souls are nourished and strengthened for duty. It is both a marriage-feast and a feast of commemoration.

Q. Why was it called the Eucharist by the ancients?

A. It signifies the thanksgiving; because, 1. When this sacrament was instituted, it both began and ended with the giving of thanks. 2. Because the great design of it is, to keep up the thankful remembrance of Christ's death and redeeming love. And believers, when they partake, should with their whole souls give thanks to God because He is good; and sing glory to God in the highest.

Q. What parts doth the Lord's Supper consist of?

A. Of two parts; 1. The outward sensible signs. 2. The spiritual and heavenly things thereby signified.

Q. What are the sensible signs made use of in this sacrament?

A. They are of three sorts; 1. Sacramental elements. 2. Sacramental actions. 3. Sacramental words.

The Sacramental Elements

Q. What are the sacramental elements here made use of?

A. Bread and wine.

Q. What are the things signified and represented by them?

A. The body and blood of Christ, with all the benefits and blessings flowing therefrom.

Q. What is the necessity of two elements, or signs, in this sacrament, bread and wine both: might not one suffice?

A. The Lord hath thought fit to ordain them both to be used; and for these reasons: 1. To show the fitness and certainty of His covenant, and to strengthen His people's faith the more in the belief of its promises. Why has He annexed two seals or sacraments to His covenant, but chiefly for this end? And why has He instituted a two-fold sign in this sacrament, but for the same design? What Joseph said of Pharaoh's dream, is most applicable here, Genesis 41:32, "The dream is doubled to Pharaoh twice, because the thing is established of God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." In like manner, O believer, you may perceive here, by the doubling of the sign, that the mercies and blessings sealed in this sacrament are firmly established to you, they are even "the sure mercies of David," and God will shortly bestow them upon you. 2. These two signs are both appointed, because of the unbelief, and hardness of our hearts. It is a sad truth of us all what Christ said to the two disciples going to Emmaus, Luke 24:25. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe what the prophets have spoken." Nay, we are slow to believe even that which Christ, the great prophet himself hath spoken, when he came in our nature to teach us. And therefore, for curing of this plague, the Lord gives us one sign after another, as he did to the hard-hearted and unbelieving Israelites in Egypt, when he sent Moses to deliver them: to convince them the more of his truth and faithfulness, he gave Moses two signs to show them; and saith to him, Exodus 4:8, "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe, nor hearken to the voice of the first sign they will believe the voice of the latter sign." 3. Both these signs are appointed here, that we may have a more full and distinct representation of Christ's death and sufferings; and may be helped to be the more distinct in our meditations and acts of faith upon this wounded and bleeding Saviour. 4. To show us the plentiful redemption that we have in Jesus Christ, that there is in Him not only sufficiency, but all fulness and abundance. That He hath suitable supplies for our necessities, and complete nourishment for our starving souls. There is here both the bread of life, and the wine of consolation.

Q. Are not bread and wine too mean things to be seals or signs of God's covenant?

A. Although they are but common things in themselves; yet having the stamp of divine institution, they become highly valuable, in respect of their signification and ends. A small piece of wax or lead is of little worth in itself; yet when appended to a charter by authority, it serves to give or confirm a right and title to a great inheritance. Of the same use are bread and wine in the Lord's Supper; they are seals appended to God's covenant by divine authority, and serve to confirm the believer's right to Christ's purchase, pardon of sin, and eternal life, and so are highly valuable. Our gracious Redeemer thought fit to choose for this end, things that were not costly or rare, but common and easy to be had (though most useful in themselves to human life) because he would not be burdensome to His people with any of His ordinances.

Q. Why hath Christ chosen bread to represent his body?

A. Because of the resemblance between bread and Christ's blessed body, in these things: 1. Bread, ere it be fit to nourish us, must be first sown, and die in the earth; so Christ's body must die, and be buried in the earth, in order to feed and nourish our souls. 2. Bread must be prepared by threshing, bruising and grinding in the mill, and baking in the oven; so Christ, that he might be a fit Saviour to us, was content to be bruised between the millstones of God's justice and our sins, and to be scorched in the oven of His Father's wrath. 3. Bread thus prepared, is most excellent and useful for nourishing and strengthening our bodies; yea, it is the most necessary thing in the world, none can live without it: hence it is often called the staff of life, as being the support of human life. So Christ's broken body is a most excellent and necessary means provided by God, for preserving our souls; without which we would eternally perish. 4. Bread is most pleasant as it doth refresh, strengthen, and satisfy our hungry bodies; and hence it is called "bread that strengtheneth man's heart" Ps. 104:15. So Jesus Christ and His broken body is most precious, pleasant, and satisfying to a sensible, needy sinner. The hungry believing soul will highly prize this food, though others, who are full and insensible of their wants, do loath and despise it. 5. Bread must be broken, eaten, and received into the stomach, before it can be of any use to the health and advantage of our bodies; so Christ's body must be broken, received, and fed upon by faith, ere it can be of use to the spiritual health and advantage of

our souls in this sacrament. 6. Bread, thus received and eaten, becomes one with our bodies: so we by a believing partaking of Christ's broken body become one with Him, John 6:56.

Q. Why hath Christ made choice of wine to represent his blood in this sacrament?

A. Because of the resemblance betwixt wine and His precious blood, in the following particulars: 1. Wine, in order to prepare it for our use, must be pressed out of the grape, which for that end is crushed and bruised in the winepress; so our blessed Saviour was crushed in the winepress of his Father's justice, till the precious juice of his sacred body did gush out, for the saving of our souls. None could afford our perishing souls this remedy but Christ alone. Hence he saith, Isaiah 63:3, "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me." 2. Wine doth refresh and cheer the heart of man, Ps. 104:15; so Christ's blood doth much more cheer and refresh the soul of a humble penitent sinner that makes application of it by faith. 3. Wine doth warm the cold heart; and much more doth Christ's blood warm the cold affections with the heat of divine love. 4. Wine is useful to animate and encourage the faint hearted: much more doth Christ's blood revive and embolden the poor drooping and disconsolate soul. It encourages him to go with a holy boldness to the throne of grace; yea, to "walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no ill." 5. Wine is good for medicine: it cleanses and cures; so the blood of Christ is the most medicinal thing in the world, for it cleanses and cures the putrefying wounds of the soul, 1 John 1:7; Isa. 53:5, 6. Wine, however, excellent in itself, can be of no use to us, unless it be drunk and applied; so Christ's blood, (though the most sovereign thing in the whole world for our perishing souls) will do us no service, if it be not received and applied by our faith.

To be continued

CRY OF THE BLOOD

Amy W. Carmichael (1867-1951)

The tom-toms thumped on all night, and the darkness shuddered round me like a living, feeling thing. I could not go to sleep, so I lay awake and looked; and I saw, and it seemed like this:

That I stood on a grassy sward (an expanse of short grass), and at my feet a precipice broke sheer down into infinite space. I looked, but saw no bottom; only cloud shapes, black and furiously coiled, and great shadow-shrouded hollows, and unfathomable depths. Back I drew, dizzy at the depth.

Then I saw forms of people moving single-file along the grass. They were making for the edge. There was a woman with a baby in her arms and another little child holding on to her dress. She was on the very verge. Then I saw that she was blind. She lifted her foot for the next step... it trod air. She was over, and the children over with her. Oh, the cry as they went over!

Then I saw more streams of people flowing from all quarters. All were blind, stone blind; all made straight for the precipice edge. There were shrieks as they suddenly knew themselves falling, and a tossing up of helpless arms, catching, clutching at empty air. But some went over quietly and fell without a sound.

Then I wondered, with a wonder that was simply agony, why no one stopped them at the edge. I could not. I was glued to the ground, and I could not call. Though I strained and tried, only a whisper would come.

Then I saw that along the edge there were sentries set at intervals. But the intervals were far too great; there were wide, unguarded gaps between. And over these gaps the people fell in their blindness, quite unwarned; and the green grass seemed blood-red to me, and the gulf yawned like the mouth of Hell.

Then I saw, like the picture of peace, a group of people under some trees, with their backs turned toward the gulf. They were making daisy chains. Sometimes when a piercing shriek cut the quiet air and reached them, it disturbed them and they thought it rather a vulgar noise. And if one of their number started up

and wanted to go and do something to help, then all the others would pull that one down. “Why should you get so excited about it? You must wait for a definite ‘call’ to go. You haven’t finished your daisy chains. It would be really selfish,” they said, “to leave us to finish the work alone.”

There was another group. It was made up of people whose great desire was to get some sentries out; but they found that very few wanted to go, and sometimes there were no sentries for miles and miles at the edge.

Once a girl stood alone in her place, waving the people back; but her mother and other relations called, and reminded her that her furlough was due; she must not break the “rules.” And, being tired and needing a change, she had to go and rest awhile; but no one was sent to guard her gap, and over and over the people fell, like a waterfall of souls.

Once a child caught at a tuft of grass that grew at the very brink of the gulf; the child clung convulsively, and it called but nobody seemed to hear. Then the roots of the grass gave way, and with a cry the child went over, its two little hands still holding tight to the torn-off bunch of grass.

And the girl who longed to be back in the gap thought she heard the little one cry, and she sprang up and wanted to go; at which her relatives reproved her, reminding her that no one is necessary anywhere – the gap would be well taken care of, they knew. And they sang a hymn.

Then through the hymn came another sound like the pain of a million broken hearts wrung out in one full drop, one sob. And a horror of great darkness was upon ME, for I knew what it was – the cry of the blood.

“Then thundered a Voice, the voice of the Lord; and He said, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And He said, Go and tell this people.... Jesus said, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. . . and lo, I am with you always.” (Isaiah 6:8; Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:20).

HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE, IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?

Hebrews 2:3

A salvation great indeed, beyond description, or conception, contrived by the wisdom and love of God for my poor lost soul! A salvation, procured by the death of the only begotten Son of God. How near was I to the brink of hell! How deeply was I fallen! How many and great my sins, to make such a salvation necessary! How dangerous must it be to neglect it! God has no other Son to give. If you are unconcerned about it; if you take no pains to secure it; if you are unaffected with your danger and with the salvation that is proposed to you; how can you escape? It is impossible. You reject the only Saviour, and therefore commit the greatest sin: you spurn at God's free mercy in Christ. Are you not shocked at such a thought? Be assured that every careless sinner is guilty of this. There is no relief provided for those who finally reject Christ. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." Their ruin is certain, is near, and will be eternal and intolerable. Remember, this is the accepted time, this the day of salvation, 2 Corinthians 6:2. If you die without Christ, you can never see the face of God with comfort. You must hear the Judge pronounce your sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepare for the devil and his angels", Matthew 25:41. God forbid! Once more I entreat you, my fellow sinner, before you close the book, stop and think. Nay, go upon your knees, and pray to God to awaken your conscience, and give you the knowledge of Christ. My poor prayers are offered up for your salvation. I have no motive in putting this into your hands, but your eternal good. "O God, may this little book be productive of good to the reader's soul, in time and eternity. Follow it with thy blessing, and may thy precious truths, therein set forth, be 'the savour of life unto life, and not of death unto death.' Grant it O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

GOD'S ANSWER TO THE SINNER'S QUESTION

Frederick Whitfield (1829-1904)

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
(Micah 6:6-8)

The Word of God directs the sinner's eye to the finished work of the Lord Jesus for peace. It tells him to look to Jesus, to look *now*, and to behold in that finished work his own eternal salvation – that which has brought him nigh to God. It bids him accept it, and go in peace.

It is not generally, however, that the sinner looks directly to Christ. He takes a *circuitous* path, and goes through a *process*, without which he conceives he cannot attain salvation. Thus, instead of believing in the finished work of Jesus for his soul, and rejoicing in it, he makes his salvation a matter of *attainment*. Hence the *circuitous* path. Hence the *long process*. Very often this is not the fault of the sinner so much as the obscure way in which the gospel has been accustomed to be put before him. It has been so hampered by conditions, or the *finished* work of Jesus has been put forward in so *unfinished* a manner as to leave him under the impression that he dare not appropriate it without something of himself – of his good life, or his prayers, or his repentance, to *make* it his.

To tell him that it is *his* without any of these, and simply because he is a *sinner* – that his *sin* is his title to it and not his *goodness*, and that he has only to receive it and rejoice – is to tell him that which he cannot believe. He prefers working to believing. He cannot take it as a *gift*. He must *earn* it.

The passage we have selected for consideration brings before us the history of such a soul. Let us learn its solemn lessons in the light of God's Holy Spirit.

It will be observed that the first five previous verses are occupied with the testimony of God to Israel. Israel is asked to hear, and to plead with God. God brings before them His redeeming love, His watchful care, and declares to them His righteousness. *One* is brought before us, as affected by this testimony. He is represented as being awakened up by it to inquire about his own relation to God and acceptance with Him. He exclaims, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" It is a blessed thing when we can get the sinner into any state of *concern* about his soul. The crying sin of the majority of those to whom the testimony of the Lord is continually addressed is indifference. When through the Holy Spirit's teaching we can get a man to be concerned – to exclaim, "What must I do to be saved?" "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" the sleep is broken, and there is hope.

And this is the way the Spirit of God does it. He presents the *Word*, and brings it home to the conscience. Concern is awakened. The state of the sinner's soul begins to occupy his thoughts more than it used to do. Again and again he tries to banish it. He cannot. Again and again the mournful cry comes up from his heart, "What must I do?" "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?"

Now comes the circuitous route the sinner takes, the long process and weariness of soul. All this time Christ has been presented and was presented at the very first awakening. "He *hath showed* thee, O man, what is good," is the Lord's rebuke to him afterwards. The "good" *had been shown* at first, but the soul would not look there, and preferred a way of its own.

Mark the stages through which it passes. They form a climax. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and *bow myself* before the high God?" This is the first stage. There is a sense of the greatness and majesty and holiness of God. The religious thoughts of the man are at work, and he seeks to "*bow*" himself. He practises humility. He mortifies the flesh. He says many prayers. Still all is vain. He has not peace. Sin is there. It weighs heavily. All he has done yet has not removed it. Again he cries, "What shall I do?" "Wherewith shall I come?"

Mark the next stage. As the sense of sin increases, so do the man's efforts. He makes greater sacrifices. "Shall I come before Him with *burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?*" These are great things, valuable, precious. So he tries them. More attention to religious duties, long prayers, alms for charitable purposes, better attendance at church, the observance of fasting and other such-like religious duties. Still there is no peace. The man is ill at ease. The heart is not at rest. Sin is there, and conscience holds it before the man. He cannot get rid of it, turn what way he will. It is the spectre in his path, night and day. Again the cry comes up from his perplexed heart, "What must I do?" "Wherewith shall I come?"

Mark the next stage. "Will the Lord be pleased with *thousands of rams* or with *ten thousands of rivers of oil?*" Sin weighs more heavily, and with it the sinner again increases his efforts. Larger sacrifices, longer prayers, scrupulous attention to religious duties, the poor heart deeply probed to root out all its evil weeds, - what a process! Still there is no peace. Conscience is more uneasy than ever. The soul is well-nigh in despair. Agony is reaching the climax. Again it cries out with a mournful and bitter cry, "What must I do?" "Wherewith shall I come?"

Mark the next stage. It is the climax. "Shall I give my *first-born* for my *transgression*, the *fruit of my body* for the *sin* of my soul?" It has tried everything the mind could invent or the heart devise. It has lacerated the flesh and torn the limb. It has been on its bare knees for hours with head uncovered. It has punished the flesh in every way. It has spent hours, or days, or weeks it may be, in prayer. It has given alms of a prodigious character. It has fasted till the flesh has forsaken the body. Still sin is there. Still conscience holds up the dark picture to view, now darker than ever. The heart is tossed to and fro in a tempest of agony and despair. There is no peace - no, none! All is dreariness and misery. All midnight darkness in the soul. One despairing cry comes up from the heart, under the pressure of which it seems ready to burst, "What *must* I do?" "Wherewith shall I come?"

Oh painful process! Oh dreary and desolate route for the sinner to take! And yet it is the history of thousands! How does Satan darken the mind, and lead the soul astray! And what multitudes prefer the path *he* suggests, to the clear,

simple testimony of God, "The Lord *hath laid* on Him the iniquity of us all;" "It is finished;" "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;" "Go in peace - thy sins *are forgiven* thee;" "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good."

The Spirit of God now *reminds* this soul of something He had before presented to it. There is a *rebuke* implied in the words for its *unbelief*. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." Look at that He has shown you long ago. Look at that, and not to your doings, for peace. How long will your soul go mournfully exclaiming, "Who will show me any good?" Look at Jesus - there is good, the very good you need. The word "good" comprises everything to be found in the work and life and character of Christ. It contains within itself *all* that God can give to the soul. Look there, sinner, and see all thy salvation. There is the answer to thy troubled heart and sin-burdened conscience. All is in that "good" thing, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And observe: "He hath *showed* thee." It is not something to *do*, but something *done* - *look* at it. It is not to call forth fresh efforts after salvation from *thee*.

It is to *behold* salvation accomplished. Thou art the guilty one bitten by the serpent's sting of sin; "*behold* the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "He hath *showed* thee what is good." It is an object presented to the *eye* of the sinner's soul, to which he is directed to look. And the One thus "*shown*" is to be the *attraction* of the soul ever afterwards. He is to be before the redeemed one as the object of delight, of wonder, love, and praise. "*Looking* unto Jesus," he is to "run with patience the race set before him." The One whom God has shown to his soul is to *draw* him onward and upward till he stands before the throne.

Now that Christ is presented to the soul, the creature *may, must* begin to work. "What doth the Lord *require* of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" "Mark, reader, in this passage, how the order of the natural man is reversed. The one who is here represented as saying, "Wherewith shall I come - before the Lord?" has all his thoughts directed to doing and sacrificing first. God shows him the "good" first, and *then* tells him to do. Thus the order of the natural man is entirely reversed. He is not to work *for* salvation, but *from* it. It is not "work," and you shall see "good." It is "look at

the good,” and then work. It is not “Go and sin no more,” and *then* “Neither will I condemn thee;” it is “Neither *do* I condemn thee,” then, “Go and sin no more.” It does not *mock* the sinner by telling him to work for God while it gives him no *motive* for working. No. It gives him a motive for working - the love of Christ to his own soul in the full and free forgiveness of all his sins, and says, “Now go and work for me.” “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things God has done for thee.”

But mark what the redeemed one is told to do. First, “*do justly.*” *Justice* has reference to a *law*. That law is the law of God - the Word of God. This is *now* to be his guide - the great rule by which he is to act in all the relations of life.

Second, “*love mercy.*” And why? Because the Lord has shown *such* mercy to *him*, therefore his heart is to be full of it to everyone else. He is to be merciful as his Father in heaven is merciful. The censure, the unkind construction put upon another's words or deeds, the looking at every one in the worst light instead of the best, - all this is to be for ever put away. He is to “*love mercy.*” And this he will do if he knows anything of himself and what the Lord has done for him.

And lastly, “*humble thyself to walk with God*” (see margin). Why is this? Because God can only walk with the humble. “The proud He knoweth afar off.” And if the Christian be not going down daily in *dust and ashes* at the feet of Christ, God *cannot* walk with him. The simple meaning of the passage is this - put yourself each day, each hour, in such a posture of soul that you may have companionship with God. O reader, are you doing this? What does your daily life say to this? What know *you* of having God as a living, abiding companion? Where is your *holiness*, where your *heavenly* mindedness, where your self-denial, gentleness, patience, forbearance, love? Have these indeed a conspicuous place in your daily life? Oh see to it! Have not the worst of all mockeries, the name of Christianity without the power of it. If conscience tells you that you have it not, *seek* it, *pray* for it, *wrestle* with God for it. Rest not till you bear in your daily life a brighter image of Christ than you have done. “Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.” Remember, reader, this is no *optional* thing with you. Forget it not - the Lord “*requireth* of thee” to do this. May He find you thus living when He comes!

EPILOGUE

“If ye love me, keep my commandments” John 14 v 15

The words of the text are those of our Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples in the final hours of his life but are applicable to all Christians. Our obedience to Christ’s commandments is a “litmus test” to show how much we love Christ.

King Saul thought that God would be pleased with the sacrifice of the spoil from his war against Amalek. However, he had not followed the Lord’s command to destroy the people and their animals, and Samuel rebuked him with the words *“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice”* 1 Samuel 15 v 22. His disobedience was punished by God who rejected him as king.

In Matthew 22 v 37 – 40 we read *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”*. This summarises the Ten Commandments given in Exodus 20, and all the other moral laws of the Old Testament. Also included is the amplification of these laws given by Christ in the gospels and those found in the epistles. e.g. 1 John 4 v21

One of these laws is that we are all called to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Failure to do so in this life is a sin (John 16 v 9) and will lead to condemnation and eternal damnation. However, believing in Christ will lead to justification and glorification. Even the thief on the cross knew this in the last hours of his life and now rejoices in heaven with Christ (Luke 23 v 43).

Obedience to God’s laws is instrumental in our sanctification and glorification. Unlike Christ, our obedience is not perfect and therefore can never save us – we need to have Christ’s perfect obedience imputed to us for our salvation. But while we live we must strive every day to keep Christ’s commandments, to demonstrate our love for Him.

Bill Norton