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Christ's Gift Of Himself

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"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 2:14).

Without introduction, I want to plunge directly into our text. There are three big words that cover the truth of it, but I'll try to make these big words simple and plain. These words are "self-bestowment," "emancipation," and "self-acquisition." Christ gave Himself for us—that's "self-bestowment"—that He might redeem us from all iniquity—that's "emancipation," or freedom from guilt of sin—that He might purify unto Himself a people who should be His own—that's "self-acquisition."

HIS SELF-BESTOWMENT

He gave Himself. To give one's self for a cause or a person is the token of supreme devotion. As we seek for illustrations of what Christ did in giving Himself, we find that there are no parallel cases. His gift of Himself is unique; there has never been anything like it. Yes, we know what it is for a person to give himself for a cause or for a person. But usually that cause or that person had an appeal—an attraction for the person. We have seen happy husbands and wives give themselves to each other in mutual service, but this was because of mutual attraction which led to mutual love. We have seen parents

give themselves for their children, but this was because of relationship. We see men give themselves for a cause, but this cause had an appeal to them—they believed it to be a worthy cause. Napoleon had such an attraction for his men that they counted it an honour to fling their lives away for him.

But there is no parallel to Christ's giving Himself for us. There could be nothing about us to attract Him, for there was nothing in us to merit esteem or give the Creator delight. He gave Himself for us sinners—for his enemies—for deformed and depraved sinners. A woman went to an orphan's home and asked for a child to adopt as her own. The matron naturally thought she would select the most attractive and beautiful child there. But to her surprise the woman said, "I want the ugliest and most unattractive child you have—the child nobody else would want. I don't want a child for what it can be to me, but for what I can be to it. I have a craving to show pity and gracious love for somebody who is miserable and helpless. I want a child to bestow myself upon." And so Christ's love for us was a gracious love that longed for expression in helping the unworthy and miserable. Otherwise, He would not and could not have loved us.

Christ's gift of Himself was expensive; it exhausted His resources. He who was rich for our sakes became poor. In giving Himself for us, He let Himself down from glory. He gave up the pre-

rogative of deity to become the servant of sinners. To put us on top, He sank lower and lower until He went into the grave after the shameful death on the cross.

EMANCIPATION

That He might redeem us from all iniquity (lawlessness). Our lawlessness had brought upon us the curse of God's law. Christ redeemed us from the curse by being made a curse for us. Never did anybody's emancipation come at such a cost. He settled with the law that we might not have to settle with it. Suppose you had to settle with the law of God in the day of judgment! What do you think would become of you? Some people are so ignorantly self-righteous as to think the law of God will be satisfied with them. They are wrong on the requirements of the law. What does the law require of us? It requires obedience to its every precept and at all times. To keep one law will not make us righteous, or to keep all the law a little while will not make us righteous. To be righteous with our own righteousness, we must keep all the law all the time. And to keep all the law all the time is to love God all the time and our neighbor as ourself.

Here's the trouble with many sinners: they don't see and realize that they are under the curse of Divine law. People who are in trouble with human government show concern. If guilty of some crime, they look for a way of escape from the punishment due them under law. They will try to escape by lying or by pleading for mercy. And sometimes they will cheat justice. But nobody can cheat Divine justice. To deny guilt is to add to guilt. To plead for mercy at the expense of justice is to plead in vain. Begging God for mercy, while refusing to trust His Son will be of no avail. If the sinner wants mercy from God, let him trust God's Son. Mercy comes through Him.

Every sinner potentially is as mean as the devil. Christ told some religious sinners their father was the devil and that they were doing his bidding. The only reason any of us has not been worse than we have been is not due to any good in us, but it is due to restraining grace. Did you ever hate anybody? Christ called that murder. Did you ever have a lustful look? Christ called that adultery. What hope is there for any man in his own record under law? None in the world. If there was, there would be no need of Christ, and every man would be his own saviour. Christ does not save by enabling sinners to keep the law, but by redeeming them from its curse. The only reason any man will not be cursed by the law is that Christ was cursed for him.

That He might purify unto Himself a people for His own possession. He not only gave Himself to redeem us from the curse of the law, but also to fit us for His presence that He might have us for His own possession. He died not only to keep us from hell, but to fit us for heaven. He purifies as well as justifies. He gave Himself for me that I might give myself to Him. In the commerce of love, nothing but a heart can buy a heart. He bought me at Calvary, and in my conversion by His Spirit, He brought me to Himself as His possession. If we have really been converted—born again—we have not only trusted what He did on Calvary in order to redeem us from all lawlessness, but we gave Him our hearts. We said with Saul of Tarsus: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Surely, no conversion is genuine where there is no giving of self to the Lord. He is both Lord and Christ. Saving faith is belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. Saving faith has other concerns besides keeping out of the fires of hell. Christ is the one and only Saviour, but He is a Saviour to be served. If He has redeemed us, He is also purifying us and fitting us for His presence and for His service. We do not serve to be saved—that would be self-salvation—we serve because we are saved. We do not serve for fear of hell; we serve for love of the Saviour.

Brethren and sisters, let us analyze our profession of faith. What happened when you made your profession and joined the church? Did you see yourself a helpless sinner on the road to hell? Did you see that your only hope was in Christ? Did you trust what He did on Calvary to redeem you from the curse of the law? Did you follow that trust up with obedience to His command to be baptized? Did you give yourself to Him for service? All these things are a part of an experience of grace. Let us keep our experience fresh and up-to-date by considering these questions. What is my hope of heaven? If it is a true hope, we will have to say, "It is what Christ did for me on the cross when He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." What further use have I for Christ? If our experience is genuine, we will gladly say, "He is my Lord, and I must obey Him. I must love Him and His people and His Word and His church. I must remember that I am not my own, that I belong to Him, and must be zealous of good works."



I WANT TO KNOW!

In 1492, Columbus said, "I want to know," and discovered America.

Benjamin Franklin said, "I want to know," and discovered electricity. Alexander Graham Bell said, "I want to know," and invented the telephone.

Henry Ford said, "I want to know," and gave us the automobile. Colonel Charles Lindberg said, "I want to know," and made the historic solo flight to Paris.

American scientists said, "We want to know," and the terrifying A bombs and H bombs became a reality.

I once said, "I want to know," and found that it IS possible to have everlasting life here and now—and to be sure of it. Like so many, I felt it would be impossible to be sure of heaven until after death—and then I came face to face with God's promises in the Bible. I had to choose between my own feelings or the unmistakable declarations of my Creator and God. I chose to believe God. The peace, assurance, security and hope He has imparted since that step of faith are beyond description. Truly, I know!

God has given in the Bible unmistakable directions so that all may know. You who read this—you may know! Here is what God says in the Bible: First, that you have sinned against Him and deserve eternal death: "All have sinned. . . the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Second, that a holy God loves you: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). Third, that Jesus loves you and died for you: "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Fourth, that you must, by faith, receive Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Saviour: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through His name" (John 20:31).

Friend, don't let anything hinder you from entering into this "Know-so" salvation which God freely and fully offers you at this moment. I beseech you, find a Bible and look up these wonderful promises of God. Millions living on the earth today have entered into the blessedness and joy of the knowledge of sins forgiven, the very peace of God abiding within, and the assurance of eternal life in heaven with our lovely Lord. You, too, can know these eternal blessings.

Listen! The Bible says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God. . . we know that when He (Jesus) shall appear, we shall be like Him . . . We know that we have passed from death unto life . . .

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (I John 3:2; 14; 5:13).

Some people hope they are saved. Many think they are saved. Others wish they were saved. The Bible says you can know you are saved!

—COPIED



HELP NEEDED FOR BOBBY ALDRIDGE TO GO TO BRAZIL

To our friends and sister churches and pastors:

The expenses for getting Brother Bobby Aldridge to Brazil are beginning to be great. We have a GREAT GOD! Therefore, we are letting these needs be made known. Listed below are a few which must be met!

1. Salary (\$800.00 monthly).
2. Expenses while here visiting churches . . . (churches helping by love offerings).
3. Medical examinations (Over \$400.00).
4. Trip to New York to see a certain doctor, which is a must. (Plane fare and expenses).
5. Brother Dempsey Henderson must represent Brother Aldridge in Brazil. He must make a trip to Brasilia, the capitol, which is about 1,500 miles away. (Cost of Brother Henderson's plane fare and expenses).

These are a few of the expenses incurred. WE NEED YOUR HELP THAT WE MIGHT SOON HAVE BROTHER ALDRIDGE ON THE FIELD AS THE LORD HAS CALLED HIM. We recommend him in every way to all the churches. He is a true man of God, and deserves all the support of the Lord's people.

Please consider this before the Lord. Mail all support (designated for Bobby Aldridge) to:

Bryan Station Baptist Church
3175 Briar Hill Road
Lexington, Kentucky 40511

The reason we ask that you be sure and designate who your check is for is because we have other missionaries who are being helped by other churches, and we must know to properly use it in the right place.

Al Gormley, Pastor
Bryan Station Baptist Church