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"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

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He Swapped With Me

"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" (II Cor. 5:21).

Speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul says, "For our sakes He (God) made Him to be sin who Himself knew nothing of sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." In a word, Paul is saying that God the Father treated Jesus Christ, the Son, as a sinner or unrighteous person, so that we sinners might be treated as righteous persons.

A missionary was once preaching from this text to a group of natives in a foreign land. When he had finished his message, he was desirous to know whether they had understood it or not. So, he asked them to tell him in their own words just what it all meant to them. The chief of the tribe spoke up and said, "It means that the Lord Jesus swapped with me." And I might say that this puts the way of salvation just about as plain as human language can put it. He Who was without sin took the place of sinners under God's Holy Law, so that sinners might have the place of sons before God the Father. Christ, the righteous Son of God, took the place of the guilty and bore their sins in His own body on the tree of the cross. He Who was rich became poor for our sakes, that through His poverty, we might become rich. Christ died as the Just One for the unjust ones, that He might bring us into God's favor.

A man was once asked if he would like to be saved. He replied, "Yes, if God can save me without doing wrong." This man was a thinker. He saw a problem in a just God saving unjust people. He realized that a just God must punish

sin. He confessed that he was a sinner, and that if God was just in dealing with him, He would have to punish him for his sins. This was Job's problem in the long ago when he cried out, "How then can man be justified with God?" Their reasoning is after this fashion: "If God is holy and righteous, and all men are sinners and deserve punishment, how can they justly go unpunished?" The answer is in the blessed and glorious gospel truth that the Son of God swapped places with sinful men and redeemed them from the curse of the law by being made a curse for them.

In swapping with us, He took our place under the law of God and obeyed the law for us. The sinner is saved by obedience, but not by his own obedience. Romans 5:19 says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." If we had obeyed the Holy Law of God, we would have been righteous in our own name and on our own record. God will never punish a good man. If a man can be found who has never sinned, that man will live before God as a matter of justice. He will need no grace or mercy, but only justice. But the truth is that no such person has ever lived except the sinless Son of God. The Bible is very clear on the fact that all have sinned—that none is good—that there is none righteous, not even one.

The Chief of Police in a Western town received a letter from a woman, asking him to put her in touch with a perfect man with a view to matrimony. The Chief did a very sensible thing: he sent the letter to the Bureau of Missing Persons. The perfect man is missing, and there is no kind of bureau that can locate him on this earth. The spirits of the just made perfect are even now in heaven. There once lived a perfect man, the

Lord Jesus Christ, and He kept the law for sinners, and all who trust Him have His righteousness—the righteousness He provided—and stand justified before God. “There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

The Lord Jesus obeyed until death; that is, He obeyed all the days of His life here on earth. He never had a sinful thought; He never did a selfish or sinful thing; He never spoke a sinful or even idle word. He did the will of God in all things, at all times, and in all places. When He came to die, He could truly say, “I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4). And let us remember that all that work was for us, to make us right with God. I reject with abhorrence any religion that adds anything to the precious blood of Christ as the ground of salvation. The Bible says that it is the blood of Christ that cleanseth us from all sin. I John 1:7. The Bible says that when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Hebrews 1:3. And the redeemed sinner delights to confess, “Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling.”

The Lord Jesus Christ obeyed unto death; that is, He obeyed at the cost of His life. The word “unto” denotes both time and degree. The time of His obedience was until He died; the degree of His obedience was at the cost of His life. In swapping with sinners, Christ had to settle with the holy law of God for all our sins. As sinners, we were responsible to settle with the law we have broken. But this would have meant our eternal ruin, for the wages of sin is death. As Saviour, Jesus Christ paid our sin-bill, and as believers in Him, we delight to sing, “Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe.”

Let us look a little deeper into the meaning of the death of Christ. He died the death that denoted a curse. In His death, He was being cursed by God. In Galatians 3:13, Paul says, “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.” He adds a quotation from Deut. 21:23 which says, “he that is hanged is accursed of God.” In saving sinners, God had planned that His Son would die the kind of death that denoted a curse. And so Christ died while the Romans were in power. If Christ had died under Jewish law, He would have been

stoned to death. But God had decreed that His Son would die on a cross, and the Scriptures had foretold this kind of death; and so in divine providence, Christ died on a Roman cross as a sign that He was being cursed by God. It was more than physical suffering Christ endured for us; He suffered separation from God. On the cross, the Father turned His back upon His Son because He was being made sin for us. The Father was forsaking His Son for a while that He might not, in justice, forsake us forever. If God had been with Christ on the cross to help Him bear our sins, He could not have redeemed us. To

save us, He had to be forsaken and punished by God, and this is what constituted His terrible suffering. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32).

Jesus was an exile from heaven while here on this earth. Heaven was His proper and rightful place, where He enjoyed all the glory of God the Father. While here, He spake of the glory He had with the Father before the creation of the world. It is to be observed that after Jesus went to Calvary, no word came to Him from heaven and the Father. The heavens were as brass above His head. No help came in response to His cry. It was easy enough for our Lord to hear from home (from heaven) before He went to the cross. At His birth, myriads of angels came from heaven to celebrate the great event. They may have sung the songs He had heard them sing in heaven around the throne. At His baptism, the Holy Spirit came from heaven in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father was heard, saying, “This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.” On the mount of transfiguration, the Father’s voice was again heard, “This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him.” And all through His earthly sojourn, He was in constant touch with the Father. When He would pray in the silent hours of the night, He could hear the Father speaking to Him. When His enemies came to arrest Him, He told them that even then He could ask the Father and get twelve legions of angels for His defense. But on the cross, He had no word from God. Heaven was silent. The three hours of darkness symbolized this separation from God. God was making His Son to be sin for us, and, therefore, He could not smile or even look upon sin with any mercy. God spared not His own Son when He found Him in the sinner’s place. All that a Just and Holy God can do with sin is to punish it and pour out His wrath upon it. If God were to give us sinners what we deserve, we would not deserve salvation, but His wrath. Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, came and exposed Himself to the wrath due us that we believers might receive the blessings due His Son. Yes, blessed be His name,

He took our place as sinners that we might have the place of sons in the Father’s house. He took our guilt that we might have right standing with God. Yes, He swapped places with us: He was made to be sin for us that we might be righteous before God. It becomes us to sing with Charlotte Elliot those verses which so beautifully and strikingly set forth the experiences and hopes of the redeemed:

“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid’st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.”

“Just as I am and waiting not

To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

"Just as I am, tho' tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

"Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ swapped places with us. He took our place in guilt of sin that we might have the place under grace in Him. Hallelujah, What a Saviour!



AS THE LITTLE BIRDS perk up their heads when their dam comes with meat to their nest, and prepare their beaks to take it, striving who shall take most; so we are like birds, and God's ministers as the dam, and the Word the food; therefore we must open a mouth to take it—all of grace.

"For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." You will find this sentence like the tolling of a funeral bell repeated in the ninth and tenth chapters of Isaiah. It is a description of the repeated chastisements of Israel, because they pay no heed to chastisement. They go on sinning in spite of their affliction. And God will not let up on the punishment until they do return to him in genuine repentance. Calamities have come, but they said, "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars." Man cannot defy God. A stiff neck only invites his lash. The world has been undergoing a chastising under the rod of God. And the end may not be in sight. Certainly it is not in sight unless we can learn the lessons of his judgment and come to him with confession and contrition. It is for us to recognize the righteous judgment of God, to confess our sins of obstinacy, self-sufficiency, pride, arrogance and the misuse of all his gifts to us. He is saying to us, "Why should ye be stricken any more? If ye be willing and obedient ye shall see the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken."

—NEWS & TRUTHS

One Christian brother heard another talking about him in a derogatory manner. So he went to the tale-bearer and said, "Please be kind enough to tell me my faults so that I may try to correct them." The tale-bearer agreed.

The Christian who had been injured said, "First let us kneel and pray that my eyes may be open to see my faults as you reveal them to me. Will you lead in the prayer?"

When the prayer was over, the man who had sought the interview said, "Now proceed, my brother, with what you have noted in my life which has disturbed you." But the other answered, "After praying over it, it looks so little that it is not worth talking about. I realize now that by going around and talking about you, I have been serving the devil myself, and have need that you pray for me and forgive me the wrong I have done you."

The disagreement disappeared.

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Are You Depressed?

WHEN we feel depressed, or gloomy, or sad — God has given us who are born again Christians — His own prescription for the cure of this trouble:

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." Isaiah 61:3.

Begin to praise the Lord. Put on "the garment of praise," and keep it on — until your spirit gets warm and happy. In our natural life, if we are very cold, and put on our overcoat, we might have to keep it on a considerable time before we get all warmed up!

So you might have to keep on "the garment of praise" quite a while, if your depression is heavy — before your spirit gets warmed up and blessed, but keep on praising God — till God's remedy works in your case!

If you are able to breathe, you have the command of God's Word — to praise the Lord! "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord." Psalms 150:6.



One of Satan's favorite traps against believers is to engage them in negative conversation against others. As Christians, we have not been called to tear down (Gal. 5:15) but to build one another up (Eph. 4:19).