



CHRIST

*the
Object of True
Saving Faith*

L.R. SHELTON, JR. (1923-2003)

CHRIST: THE OBJECT OF TRUE SAVING FAITH

Contents

1. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself.....	1
2. Salvation through Faith	5
3. The Surety of the New Covenant.....	9
4. God's Willingness to Save Sinners	14
5. Christ and His Precious Blood	19
6. Looking to Jesus.....	24
7. Some Concluding Thoughts	28

© Copyright 1999 Chapel Library. Printed in the USA. All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless noted otherwise. Chapel Library does not necessarily agree with all the doctrinal positions of the authors it publishes. Permission is expressly granted to reproduce this material by any means, provided

1. you do not charge beyond a nominal sum for cost of duplication;
2. this copyright notice and all the text on this page are included.

Chapel Library sends Christ-centered materials from prior centuries worldwide at no charge, relying entirely upon God's faithfulness. We therefore do not solicit donations, but we gratefully receive support from those who freely desire to give.

Worldwide, please download material without charge from our website, or contact the international distributor as listed there for your country. This and hundreds of other books, booklets, and eBooks are available at www.ChapelLibrary.org.

In **North America**, for additional copies of this booklet or other Christ-centered materials from prior centuries, please contact

CHAPEL LIBRARY

2603 West Wright Street
Pensacola, Florida 32505 USA

Phone: (850) 438-6666 • Fax: (850) 438-0227
chapel@mountzion.org • www.ChapelLibrary.org

Please see also *Looking unto Jesus* by Adolph-Theodore Monod (1836-1912) or the *Free Grace Broadcaster* 225 "The Work of Christ"—both available from Chapel Library. The *FGB* is a quarterly digest of six to ten messages from prior centuries, all on one theme, with a different theme each issue. Request a subscription

- worldwide, eBook via email: www.ChapelLibrary.org/broadcaster/fgb-subscriptions/
- in North America, printed copy sent via mail: write Chapel Library
- in a country with an international distributor, printed copy sent via mail;
write to them directly: www.ChapelLibrary.org/broadcaster/fgb-distributors/

CHRIST: THE OBJECT OF TRUE SAVING FAITH

1. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself

Dear friend, we have spoken to you at great length in past messages on the subject—*Decision: True or False?* I believe we have been enabled by the Holy Spirit from the Scriptures to open up to you this message that demands our close investigation, showing you the decision that is true and the decision that is false. My one desire has been to be true to my living God, to His unbroken Word, and to your never-dying souls. So I leave the results of these messages in the hands of Him Who said, “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa 55:11).

Now as I have laid before you the ingredients of saving faith in our past messages, I have been led by the Holy Spirit to consider with you *the object of true saving faith, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself*, Who came for the express purpose of bringing many sons into glory, and to Whom we are commanded to look for God’s salvation. For the Scriptures are plain that God has set before us His only begotten Son as *the object* of true saving faith; they have plainly declared and warned us that *only in Christ* are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and that the way to the Father and the glories of heaven is by and through the Son, Who declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Joh 14:6). Oh, may the Holy Spirit direct our hearts unto *Christ, the object of saving faith*, as you follow me into this subject!

John the Baptist, who came upon the scene as the forerunner of God’s Substitute for sinners, said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (Joh 1:29). In effect, he was saying, “If you desire salvation, forgiveness of and deliverance from sin, and a home in heaven at last, then look to Him and Him alone.” And when he said, “Behold the Lamb of God,” John the Baptist was speaking the key words of *all* the prophets, evangelists, and apostles.

To the large crowd gathered on the day of Pentecost who had been convicted in their hearts of the sin of crucifying the Lord of glory, Peter declared, “God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Act 2:36, 38). To whom did Peter point these awakened souls? Not to themselves, not to their conviction, not to the church, but to *the object* of saving faith, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who had offered Himself without spot to God, that by His one offering for sin many could be made righteous (Heb 9:14).

Also, when he stood before the Sanhedrin with John in Acts 4, Peter declared that there is salvation in none other but the Lord Jesus Christ—“For there is *none other name* under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Act 4:12). Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ is the *only* Person to Whom we can look for salvation and deliverance from the power and penalty of sin.¹

In Acts 5 we find that when all the apostles were brought before the Sanhedrin (that body of men who had our blessed Lord put to death), Peter again firmly and boldly declared that it was Christ Jesus the Lord, *and Him alone*, Whom God had exalted with His right hand to the place of honor, to be a Prince and a Savior, “for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Act 5:31). Once again we are told that *the object* of saving faith is none other than the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was lifted up for our offences and raised again for our justification.

Then in Acts 8 we find the story of Philip the Evangelist, being sent to Gaza to instruct the Ethiopian eunuch. And how did he instruct him? Why, he took the very Scripture which the eunuch was reading (Isa 53) and began to preach unto him *Jesus*, how He was God manifested in the flesh, sent to bear witness of the righteous and holy Father, being full of grace and truth. Yes, Philip preached unto him *Jesus*, Who came to save His people from their sins. He preached unto him *Jesus*, Who came to die for the ungodly, so that ungodly sinners, by faith in His precious Person and shed blood, and in His gracious redemptive grace, could be saved from the wrath of God and the never-ending second death in hell. You see, Philip pointed this precious soul unto the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

As we go further in the book of Acts, we find in chapter 13 that Paul, in his message at Antioch, proclaimed, “Be it known unto you therefore, men and

¹ See Erroll Hulse, *The Only Savior*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

brethren, that *through this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (vv. 38-39). You see, he pointed them to a Person Who was to be *the object* of their faith, for He alone could forgive them of their sins.

Also, when answering the question of the convicted and convinced Philippian jailor as to what he must do to be saved, Paul and Silas answer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Act 16:31). Again, for it to be true saving faith, the *object* of his faith was to be *the Person* of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Him the jailor was to see his only hope for deliverance from the power and penalty of sin. He was to see in the *Lord* Jesus Christ his King and Ruler. He was to see in *Jesus* his Savior and High Priest. And he was to see in *Christ* God’s anointed One, Who was to teach him. The *object* of his faith was to be the whole Savior, the mighty Deliverer in all of His offices: as Prophet to teach him, as Priest to die for him, and as Lord to rule over him. Oh, what a blessed Person then is held before us in the gospel, this wonderful Person of the Lord Jesus Christ!

My dear friend, let me lay it out before you in love. For our faith to be true saving faith, it must have the whole Christ as its *object*. It must have in view the Lord Jesus Christ in *all* of His offices; or the eye of faith is not singular, but double. You see, for faith to be saving, it must have in view *the Person* of Christ Himself, not the fruits of salvation, not what He gives, but His Person. The benefits of this looking to Him will come, for He gives abundantly, but these benefits are not the object of our faith. His Person is to be the object of our faith. Salvation will come; remission of sins He will give; justification will be ours; He will be made sanctification unto us; spiritual life and light will be given. But we must look to *the Person* of the Lord Jesus Christ for these things. Without Him, *His Person*, being *the object* of our faith, none of these benefits will be ours. Don’t get me wrong: I am not taking away from His blessed benefits, for surely these are the tokens of His love; but it is *Himself* that He desires us to be taken up with, not so much His gifts.

He will give eternal life; He will give rest in heaven and on earth. He will give us access to God. He will give us the gift of the Holy Spirit; but it is *to Him* that we look for all of these precious gifts. I praise the Lord that the Scriptures declare Christ to be our peace; but the object of our faith is not our peace but *Christ Himself*. To have peace without Christ is to have nothing but a bubble that will burst. The Scriptures declare Christ to be our joy, but the object of our faith is not our joy, but *Christ Himself*. Alas! How many poor

souls make peace and joy the objects of their faith, so when peace and joy have fled away, they have no salvation. They are looking to their peace and joy, instead of unto Him of Whom it is said, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb 13:8)—the One who changes not.

The apostle Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, declared, “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Heb 12:1). Doing what? Looking to the hardness of the way? No. Looking to the depravity of our own hearts? No. Looking to our doubts and fears? No. Looking to our joys and our peace? No. Looking to our fellow traveler? No—But “*looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb 12:2). He tells us to go outside of ourselves and have in view one Person, and one Person only, the Man Christ Jesus—the One Who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, that He might die in the place of His people and pay their sin-debt in full. Oh, that I could cry around the world, “*Look unto Jesus!* He is the Author and Finisher of our faith!”

In Philippians 3, Paul declared his prayer was that he might be found *in Him*, that he might *know Him*. It made no difference what else he had or what else he knew; his only desire (which was truly a saving desire), was to know the Person of Christ and to be in Him; and then he would be satisfied. And the Lord Jesus Himself, in His high-priestly prayer of John 17, tells us, “And this is life eternal, *that they might know thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (v. 3).

Further, we declare unto you today that the Scriptures set forth *all things* as being in Christ, a Person; therefore, we must know Him; our eye of faith is to be upon Him. We are to embrace Him, if indeed we exercise true saving faith.

To know Christ, then, is to be accepted in Christ, to be identified with His Person, and to be saved and safe forever in Him. Listen to how the Scriptures bring forth this blessed truth—“Accepted *in the beloved*” (Eph 1:6); “Made us sit together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*” (Eph 2:6); “Created *in Christ Jesus* unto good works” (2:10); “*In Christ Jesus* ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (2:13); “Ye [are] light *in the Lord*” (5:8); “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are *in Christ Jesus*” (Rom 8:1); Nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is *in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (8:39); “Therefore if any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2Co 5:17).

What a blessed portion is that, then, for those who have the Lord Jesus Christ as *the object* of their faith. They, and they alone, have a place in Him, are accepted in Him, known of Him, and blessed by Him. They can say with the apostle Paul in Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

Therefore these know the blessedness of Song of Solomon 2:16, “My beloved is mine, and I am His,” which allows them to say with blessed assurance that “being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and *rejoice in hope of the glory of God*. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom 5:1-5). Yes, by having the Person of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ full in faith’s sight is indeed a blessed hope!

My friend, can you say, “My beloved is mine, and I am His”? If not, I can tell you today where to get this faith, and that is by searching His precious Word, crying for the Holy Spirit to work this faith in you, because “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom 10:17). Come to Christ for this gracious gift, for “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Act 5:31).

“As the act of healing through the eyes of the Israelites and the brazen serpent went together; so, in the act of justifying, these two, faith and Christ, have a mutual relation, and must always concur—faith as the action which apprehendeth, Christ as the object which is apprehended; so that neither the passion of Christ saveth without faith, nor doth faith help unless it be in Christ, its object.”—*Daniel Cawdray* (1664)

2. Salvation through Faith

As we continue our present series, we have been setting before you *Christ, the object of true saving faith*—yes, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Lord of Glory, Who was sent to work out God’s salvation by the shedding of His own precious blood.

The Scriptures, the holy Word of God, teach that God’s salvation in Christ is received by the awakened, lost sinner in his *understanding, affections*, and

will by the means of *faith*. They plainly declare that it is by the grace of God in Christ that we are saved; and the means by which we receive Christ and His so great salvation is through faith. Further, it has pleased our sovereign God that the just shall live by faith, and that *the object* of that faith shall be the Lord Jesus Christ. And it has pleased our sovereign God that all of the blessings that come to us through His eternal Son are to be received through the channel of *faith*. Therefore, we hear it stated in Hebrews 11:6 that “without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

We read in Romans 3:25 that the blessing of sins forgiven comes to us through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. Also, it is stated that we are justified before God (counted righteous before Him) as we look to Christ and His perfect righteousness by faith (Rom 3:22). Again, it is set forth in Galatians 2:20 that all spiritual life is received into the soul “by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” We read in Galatians 3:26 that we are “children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Also, we read in Ephesians 3:12 and Romans 5:2 that our access to God, our coming into His very presence, is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is set before us as *the object* of our faith and hope.

Scripture further states that this faith which has the Lord Jesus Christ as its *object*, produces in the heart of the believing sinner *hope* that is not made ashamed (Rom 5:5). It produces “*joy* unspeakable and full of glory” (1Pe 1:8). It produces *peace* that passes all understanding (Rom 15:13; Phi 4:7). And it produces *assurance* that rests all in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ (Isa 28:16; 32:17).

We see, also, that it is by this faith which has as its *object* the Lord Jesus Christ, that the child of God lives, for Christ is his life (Gal 2:20). It is this faith by which he stands, for Christ is our foundation (Rom 11:20). It is by this faith that he walks daily in the Christian life, for Christ is our only way (Rom 4:12). It is by this faith that the child of God overcomes the world (1Jo 5:4), and is more than conqueror over sin, Satan, and the flesh, for Christ is in him the hope of glory. Yes, “we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom 8:37). Why? Because, as Romans 8:38-39 tell us, the child of God, the one who has Christ as *the object* of his faith, is persuaded that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

I believe that we have given Scriptural proof that the just shall live by faith, and that without faith it is impossible to please God. The question that I am sure you would now ask is: “*What is faith, and how is it described in the Scriptures?*” Listen now as we try to answer this question.

The act of faith, the coming to Christ as the *object* of our faith, is described in the Scriptures under many names. In Isaiah 45:22 we find the word “*look*” to describe saving faith: “*Look* unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.” This same thought is brought out in Hebrews 12:1-2 in these words: “Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, *Looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith.” Again this same truth of using the eyes of the soul to see Him Who is invisible is given us by John the Baptist in John 1:29: “*Behold* the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Yes, the eye of faith goes out of oneself to Him Who alone has been lifted up by our transgressions and raised again for our justification.

The *ear* is also used to show the way saving faith comes into the soul. In Isaiah 55:3 we read, “Incline your *ear*, and come unto me: *hear*, and your soul shall live.” John 5:25 tells us that the dead (the spiritual dead) “shall *hear* the voice of the Son of God [as He speaks from His Word by His Spirit]: and they that *hear* shall live.” Romans 10:17 tells us that “faith cometh by *hearing*, and hearing by the word of God.” So in all these Scriptures faith is described as hearing.

Again, the Scriptures use the expression *take* as a means to describe saving faith. Revelation 22:17 says, “And whosoever will, let him *take* the water of life freely”; or, as John 1:12 puts it, “But as many as *received* him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Here we see faith described as a hand that takes and receives.

The *mouth* is also described as a means of faith, for we read in Matthew 7:7, “*Ask*, and it shall be given you,” and in Romans 10:13, “For whosoever shall *call* upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Yes, we are to ask and we are to call, and this is an act of faith.

To sum it all up, we read these words in Romans 10:9-10: “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Oh, how gracious our living God is to us, to give us such an array of descriptions by which we may know how to come to Christ savingly. Yes, the

members of the physical body are used to describe how the soul comes. With the feet we walk and stand in faith. With the eyes we behold by faith Him Who is invisible. With the ears we hear His voice by faith as He speaks to us out of His Word. With the mouth we call upon Him in faith. And then, with all our affections (described as the heart), we believe and trust Him as He is lifted up out of the Word by His Spirit.

Also, as we have described in past messages, this *saving faith works by love*, the affections being drawn out to Christ as He is shown us in the gospel as the Holy Spirit Who has been given unto us makes us willing in the day of His power to close in with Christ.

Now, if you will turn with me to Hebrews 11:1, we will find a Scriptural definition of faith: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." As the Amplified Translation puts it, "Faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title-deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality—faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses." I believe if we would take these words and refer them to saving faith, we would understand them to mean *confidence* in the Lord's character and motives, *confidence* in His ability to perform all that He said He would do, and the *assurance* that He cannot lie; therefore, He is faithful and true.

Let me review it again. I believe when these words refer to the faith which a lost sinner must place in the Lord Jesus in order to be saved, the words "confidence" and "assurance" are included in the record that the Scriptures set before us of Christ. Yes, it is the act of considering the Lord Jesus *worthy of trust* as to His character and motives. It is the act of placing confidence in His ability to do just what He says He will do. It is the act of entrusting the salvation of our souls into the hands and care of the Lord Jesus. This means then, a definite taking of one's self out of one's own keeping and entrusting one's self into His keeping. Yes, true saving faith is going out of yourself unto Christ, the *Living Word*, Who is set before us in the written Word as the Deliverer of our never-dying souls.

Therefore, how important it is for us to search the Word of God! For it is the Word that testifies of Christ and His ability to save. Search the Scriptures to find in them the foundation for our hope. Then, when we have searched them, how important it is to believe what we read and the witness God gives of His Son, as 1 John 5:9-12 brings out: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified

of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

The question then is asked, “What is the record God has given us that testifies of His Son’s ability and willingness to save?” Briefly I will set this before you and then go into it more in detail in the next messages in this series.

Our living God wants us to see in the Scriptures that the Lord Jesus Christ came voluntarily from heaven’s heights to earth’s depths to be born of a virgin, to take upon Himself the nature of man, “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil,” that He might “deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb 2:14, 15).

Our living God would have us understand from the Scriptures that the Lord Jesus Christ emptied Himself so He could manifest the glory of the Father here upon earth and do the will of the Father that He might pay our sin-debt in full by the giving up of Himself upon the cross as God’s substitute for sinners. He was to die, the just for the unjust, the godly for the ungodly, the righteous for the unrighteous, so He might bring many sons into glory. Yes, by the shedding of His precious blood, God’s holy Law and justice would be satisfied.

The record we are to believe is that in His death, burial, and resurrection our blessed Lord has opened the way for poor sinners to come back to God in repentance and faith and that God can be just in justifying every poor sinner who comes unto Him through Christ.

Yes, the Scriptures set forth our blessed Lord as *the object* of our faith, and “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (Joh 3:14-15). So let me urge you today to prayerfully search the Scriptures for they testify of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of glory, Who is set before us as God’s way of salvation; and then as you search them, saving faith will come by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

3. The Surety of the New Covenant

My heart’s desire and prayer is that each one of you would know personally the Lord Jesus Christ in that living, loving, and lasting union of salvation

which God Himself has prepared for all of His people. Yes, my prayer unto my living Lord has been that He, by His Spirit, will so work in your hearts and lives that you may hunger and thirst after the Person of Christ, to be found in Him, not having your own righteousness, but “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ” (Rom 3:22).

We showed you previously that it has pleased God to save poor sinners by His grace, and the means He uses is faith; this is the channel through which this salvation is received into our souls.

Today I desire to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ in His Person as our *surety*, the *surety of the new covenant*. Listen to these Scriptures: “By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament...He is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises” (Heb 7:22; 8:6). “For all the promises of God in him [Christ] are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (2Co 1:20). “He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure” (2Sa 23:5).

Now let us look at Christ, the surety of the better covenant, the new and everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for God’s people. This takes us back to the ages before the Fall and the revelation of God’s mercy.

In the counsels of eternity, the covenant was made between the Father and the Son; and there the Lord Jesus, our “great shepherd of the sheep,” signed that covenant (as our Surety) in His own precious blood (Heb 13:20). Then, foreseeing the ruin that was to come upon the human race through the awful power of sin, God the Father entered into a covenant with His beloved Son. He guaranteed to Christ, on the condition that He [Christ] would assume the liabilities and the nature of His fallen people, to give to Him a complete salvation, ordered in all things and sure, for His blood-bought people. Yes, He promised to give to Christ, as our representative, all those for whom He died; and He promised to give them to Christ as a reward, to share His glory and be heirs with Him in His kingdom and glory.

On the part of Christ as our surety (since we have sinned and come short of the glory of God), it was necessary that He should take the sinner’s place, stooping from His high and exalted position and become not only a Man, but a despised and rejected Man, a Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief (Isa 53:3). He was to die upon the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of His people who had forfeited all claim to God and His salvation. It meant that Christ was to be made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2Co 5:21). It meant that at the cruel cross He was to bear the taunts and cruelties

of men, the pains of death, the assaults and insults of the devil and all his legions. It meant that Christ should go down into hell itself to pay the supreme sacrifice for His people, that the justice of God and the holiness of God would be satisfied. Oh, what a wonderful and beautiful Savior is set before the eye of faith in the gospel!

Not only was Christ to die beneath the sins of those for whom He became surety, but He was to take their sins far away into the grave and leave them there, showing that He had paid for them in full by His rising the third day, in the morning of the resurrection. Yes, Christ was to come forth as the first-born among the dead, so for the ages to come He would sit upon the throne in heaven, interceding for them as a merciful and faithful High Priest. For as part of the covenant, as their High Priest He would undertake for them, bearing the burdens of His people, making continual intercession for them, enduring with much patience their many infirmities and failures, and guarding them with unceasing love until His work might be completed in all their lives. What a wonderful and beautiful Savior is set before the eye of faith in the gospel! Christ sits at the right hand of the Father today in heaven as the High Priest and representative of His people, ever living to make intercession for them, that He might present them faultless in Himself in the last great day!

Let us see then, what the heavenly Father would do as His part of the everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things, and sure. The Father promised on account of the fulfillment of these conditions met by Christ, that He would give eternal life to all that received His Son and came to Him by faith. He promised that He would freely forgive and justify them from all their transgressions, and create within them a new heart. He also promised, [in order] to ensure all of this, that He would send His Holy Spirit to work in the hearts and lives of each one for whom Christ died. The Holy Spirit would sanctify and perfect them in holiness. He would supply them with all needed grace, power, love, and blessing, and impart to them a new divine nature that would hunger and desire after Christ.

Further, He promised that His Spirit would take up His abode in them and witness with their spirits that they have indeed been made heirs of His glory and partakers of His divine nature. He promised that the Holy Spirit would write this new covenant upon the hearts of each one who comes to Christ, so they would endure to the end.

Further, He promised that the Holy Spirit would take the things of Christ and reveal them unto these precious, believing sinners so they would be taken

up with *the object* of their faith, the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, He promised that the Holy Spirit would at last raise them from the dead and glorify them with the Lord Jesus in the ages to come, with a place of honor and blessing higher than Adam ever knew, higher than angels shall ever possess, and more than compensating for all the evils and miseries of the Fall. What a wonderful and gracious Savior is set before the eye of faith in the gospel! Yes, this is solid, meaningful truth on which faith can rest as the soul goes out of itself unto the Person of Christ.

I know what you are asking: “What was Christ’s answer to the Father when this everlasting Covenant of Grace² was proposed?” Listen to Psalm 40:7-8, where it is recorded that our blessed Lord Jesus accepted this covenant and became our surety: “Lo, I come [His glad answer]: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Yes, He willingly and joyously agreed to the terms of the everlasting covenant; for He said while He was here on earth, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (Joh 10:17-18).

So our blessed Lord and surety came, lived, loved, and died, and at last could say in His closing prayer, as He committed His work to the Father, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (Joh 17:4); and on the cross He could shout, “It is finished” (Joh 19:30). Yes, it is finished; Christ has finished the work of redemption. Praise the Lord! This is the word of faith that we preach to you, that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom 10:4), and “that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom 10:9-10). What a wonderful and gracious Savior is set before the eye of faith in the gospel!—One Who was willing to bear in His own body on the cruel cross all of our sins!

² **Covenant of Grace** – covenant among the Persons of the Godhead, consisting of God’s gracious, eternal purpose of redemption, conceived before the creation of the world, first announced in Genesis 3:15, progressively revealed in history, accomplished in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, and appropriated by faith in Him. See FGB 236, *God’s Eternal Purpose*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Then the question is asked, “How do we know that God the Father is satisfied with the work of Christ as set forth in the everlasting covenant?” I answer, because He raised Him from the dead³ and set Him at His own right hand, the place of honor and glory. Yes, the Father put His seal upon the finished work of Christ by raising Him from the dead and so declaring forever that the covenant had been fulfilled, the conditions met, and the great redemption completed. Therefore we can conclude that Christ’s resurrection from the tomb and His ascension into glory is the *seal* of all this.

These precious words in Hebrews 1:3 always stand out as proof that Christ has finished the work of salvation: “When he [Christ] had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” If there had been *one* sin of His people that had not been paid for in full, Christ would not have been accepted back into heaven. But He was, which is clear proof that as our surety He had accomplished all that was required of Him; therefore He set down at the right hand of the Father as our representative, and we have been accepted in Him, the beloved One. What a wonderful and gracious Savior is set before the eye of faith in the gospel!

We have further proof that the heavenly Father was satisfied with the surety’s work, because when Christ returned to heaven, He sent the love *gift of the Holy Spirit*, the Comforter, to His people. Listen to Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost: “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Act 2:33). Yes, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was a *second seal* that the surety’s work was complete and that the everlasting covenant was ordered in all things and sure.

The salvation of every believer since that day has been a further seal that the covenant is satisfied and forever holds fast. Yes, every answer to prayer in the name of Jesus and every blessing that comes to our spiritual life are echoes from the cross, repeating, “It is finished,” and we know that the covenant is fulfilled and ordered in all things and sure.

This is the ground of our salvation. It is not because *we* have a covenant with God, but our Lord Jesus has; and we are accepted in Him as we come to Him by faith, looking only to Him as our surety. And it is all in Christ. We come into His covenant by His power; for He could say to the Father in John 17:2, “Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.” And then He could add, “Keep through

³ See FGB 235, *Resurrection*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (v. 11).

What a wonderful and gracious Savior is set before the eye of faith in the gospel! So look to Christ, and live; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom.10:17). My prayer is that as you have heard the Word of God in this message, the Holy Spirit has enabled you to look to *the object* of true saving faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, our eternal surety.

"The first line of the Covenant of Grace is Jesus Christ; the last line of the Covenant of Grace is Jesus Christ; and all in between is the Lord Jesus Christ. Begin with Him as A, go right through to B, C, D, E, F, and so on till you end with Z, and it is all Jesus Christ. He is all; yea, He is all in all."

—C. H. Spurgeon (1892)

4. God's Willingness to Save Sinners

It is with joy that I come before you today to bring God's message. My prayer has been, "Blessed Lord, by Thy Spirit take Your message home to the heart of every listener. Cause them to hear as for eternity. Work Thy work of grace in their hearts. Send the effectual, irresistible call of grace to their hearts to cause them to close in with Christ." Oh, that the Lord would revive His work in the midst of the years, and in wrath that He will remember mercy (Hab 3:2), is my prayer!

You who are on pleading grounds and interceding terms with the Lord, I ask of you to join me in pleading and wrestling with the Lord, that He will rend the heavens and come down and pour upon us His Spirit, that souls may seek His face and turn in repentance and faith to Him.

I desire to continue this series on which we have been for some weeks now, entitled *Christ, the object of true saving faith*. Let me repeat today that the Person, or Personage, set before us in the Scriptures as *the object* for saving faith to lay hold of, is the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is alone set forth in the Scriptures as God's salvation. The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians that after he had been awakened by the Holy Spirit to his awful, ruined, sinful condition before God, he was made to cry after Christ, to desire Him above all things, and to know Him as He was lifted up in the Word: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my

Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him” (Phi 3:7-9).

Yes, as with the Apostle Paul, so with every sinner whom God saves: he is made to hunger and thirst after the Person of Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures, as He is lifted up in His offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

In this message I feel led of the Holy Spirit to lay before our hearts Christ as *the object* of saving faith, revealed in the Scriptures in His *willingness to save sinners*. May the Lord be pleased to take His Word home to our hearts!

In Revelation 3:20 we read, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” In opening up this text upon Christ, *the object* of our faith, as seen in His willingness to save sinners and have communion with them, I trust to bring before our hearts three things: (1) Christ’s willingness as seen in His incarnation; (2) His willingness as seen in His walk among men in the days of His flesh; and (3) His willingness as seen in His death on our behalf.

First, let us see Christ as *the object* of saving faith in *His willingness to become man*. As we showed you in our last message, the Lord Jesus Christ agreed to become the surety of the everlasting covenant and to die in the place of His people. From eternity He agreed to the terms of the Covenant of Grace by telling the Father, “Lo I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God” (Psa 40:7, 8). The terms of the covenant were that He would make His soul an offering for sin, so that He would see His seed and the travail of His soul, and would be satisfied (Isa 53:10). Yes, He put a high value upon our souls by submitting to such costly terms to redeem us. Therefore this willingness on the part of our blessed Lord to become man for us is set forth in the Scriptures as something solid for saving faith to lay hold of, and it shows His love for poor sinners.

Secondly, I would set before you Christ, the *object* of saving faith as seen in *His willingness to assume our nature*. In Hebrews 2:16 we read, “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” Yes, He passed by the fallen angels, that He might take on the nature of fallen man, saving him from ruin. Romans 8:3 brings out this same truth in these words: “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” His body was not sinful, but perfect and holy; but He was made in the *likeness* of sinful flesh. Or, as John 1:14 tells us—“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.”

The whole life of Christ upon earth was an evident proof and demonstration of the desire of His heart to be in union and communion⁴ with us and to save us from the pit of destruction. He said in John 17:19, “For their sakes I sanctify myself,” or, “I set Myself apart unto death for them; I freely give Myself up to God as a sacrifice for them.”

His miracles were works of mercy, to show His willingness to save and sanctify sinners. His power was employed to heal, deliver, and save the souls of men. His first message in the synagogue of Nazareth was a message of grace. Listen to Luke 4:18-19—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

His *whole life* in this world was nothing else but a wooing, a drawing of the hearts of sinners. He rejected not the vilest of sinners, but plainly declared that He came not “to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mat 9:13).

His *doctrine*, His teaching, was an inviting doctrine. Never a man spake as He spoke. Whenever He opened His lips, heaven opened—the very heart of God was opened unto sinners! Listen to His gracious invitation to poor, undeserving, sin-sick souls: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mat 11:28). “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (Joh 7:37). Hear Him as He weeps over Jerusalem, and see Him as *the willing One* to save sinners: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!” (Luk 13:34).

Oh, my cry has been that I could so lift up Christ that you would see in Him a beauty and a glory in His willingness to save sinners!

The joy He always expressed for the success of the gospel speaks of His interest in saving sinners. Listen to Luke 10:21: “In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight.”

⁴ See Arthur W. Pink, *Spiritual Union and Communion*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

But I believe the third point of our message brings out the greatest scene of His willingness to save sinners, and that is *in His death*.⁵ Yes, the death of Christ is the fullest demonstration that He loves sinners, desires to save and have communion with them.

He was put to death in the flesh. His body was violently rent asunder by the wrath of man and God while He became sin for us. He died a cursed death, the cursed death of the cross. He hung on the cross as the accursed of God because He was made sin (that accursed thing called sin!) for us (2Co 5:21). He was made the vile, wretched sinner that we are as He hung in our place to pay in full the sin-debt that we owe to God's broken Law.

But as I see Christ lifted up in the Scriptures as my substitute, I believe the inward sufferings that He suffered were far greater than His bodily sufferings; for His soul was made an offering for sin (Isa 53:10), and it made Him cry unto God for the deliverance from sin to no avail, for He was the sinner's substitute. Oh, what suffering must the holy soul of Christ have gone through as He had to drink the bitter cup of our ruin! He felt in His soul that awful desertion by the Father that made Him cry, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Psa 22:1).⁶ Listen, poor sin-tossed soul, to that agonizing cry from the heart and lips of Him Who was made sin for you, and let that cry break your heart: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why? Because God is of purer eyes than to behold sin (Hab 1:13). He must punish it even when He finds it upon His only Son.

Oh, as you hear that cry from the cross from Him Who was forsaken of God for you, I ask: What think you now of the willingness of Christ to save your soul? Do you still listen to the voice of Satan, that Christ's death is not for you? Oh, do you not see, by faith, in His willingness to go to hell for you a sure sign that He will receive you and save you by His blood, by His power, and by His grace, if you cast yourself upon Him?

I hear someone say, "But Pastor, you don't know the vileness, the wretchedness, and guiltiness of my never-dying soul! Therefore, I am afraid He won't receive me." But, my dear awakened sinner friend, this is more of a reason for your closing in with Him; for He calls for the halt, the blind, the withered, the lost, and the sinful to come unto Him and find salvation, deliverance, hope, and mercy. Your very vileness commends you unto God, for He came to save

⁵ See FGB 226, *Christ upon the Cross*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

⁶ See Arthur W. Pink, *The Seven Sayings of the Saviour on the Cross*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

sinners from their sin. Listen, and let me tell you that heaven is filled with dunghill sinners washed by faith in the blood of the Lamb. Heaven is filled with sinners who, being lost, cried after Christ for deliverance and mercy and were saved. Yea, heaven is filled with dunghill sinners, while the self-righteous are left on the outside.

See in the death of Christ His willingness to deliver us from sin, self, Satan, and the world! See in His death the full payment of all the demands of the broken Law! See in His death the complete righteousness for guilty sinners! O dear friend, see in the death of Christ full payment to the justice of God for the Law you have broken! Yes, see in His death a cleansing from all sin and a putting away of sin forever! Hear Him when He says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa 43:25)! Hear Him when He says, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Isa 44:22)! With the ear of faith hear Him saying, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). Flee to Him for refuge, as you see Him with the eye of faith pouring out His life's blood to fill the fountain of cleansing for your never-dying soul!

I hear someone say, "Lord, I am convinced that I am nothing but an unclean thing. I have nothing but a hateful, sinful heart and nature. Oh, I am nothing but a heap of uncleanness, an abhorrence to God and myself! How shall such a heart as mine be cleansed?" O my friend, let me tell you today that Christ hears you as you mourn over sin. Listen to what He has to say: 'Come unto Me, for I am a fountain of cleansing opened to cleanse you from all your sins and to wash you whiter than snow.' Therefore, let me persuade you to close in with Christ; for He loves your sinful soul, and His desire is to save you. Come, find in Him all that God has prepared for sinful men! Come just as you are! Come wholly as you are! Come only as you are! Come to Christ and find in Him a sure resting place for your sinful, darkened, never-dying soul! May God the Holy Spirit enable you to come is my prayer.

*I was once far away from the Savior,
And as vile as a sinner could be;
I wonder'd if Christ the Redeemer,
Would save a poor sinner like me.
I was wandering on in the darkness,
Not a ray of the light could I see,*

*And the thought fill'd my heart with sadness,
There's no hope for a sinner like me.
And then, in that dark, lonely hour,
A voice whispered sweetly to me,
Saying, Christ the Redeemer has power,
To save a poor sinner like me.
I listened and lo, 'twas the Savior,
That was speaking so kindly to me.
I cried, I'm the chief of sinners,
Thou canst save a poor sinner like me.
I then fully trusted in Jesus,
And oh, what a joy came to me,
My heart was filled with His praises,
For saving a sinner like me.
—C. J. Butler*

5. Christ and His Precious Blood

Dear friend, everywhere in Scripture the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us as *the object of true saving faith*, and that to know *Him* is salvation. To know Him in that living, loving, and lasting union should be the one desire of every soul under the sound of my voice today; for to know Him is to have life, eternal life. To know Him is to have your sins forgiven and blotted out forever before the face of a holy God. To know Him is to be partaker of the divine nature of God (2Pe 1:4), and to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5). To know Him is to be made suitable to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col 1:12). To know Him is to be delivered from the power of darkness and to be translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col 1:13). Yes, to know Christ is to know the power of His cleansing blood and to know the preciousness of that blood which flowed from Emmanuel's veins.

Do you have an interest in Christ? Can you say, "I know Him"? Can you say, "As a poor, lost sinner I lay at His feet in repentance with a hatred for sin, knowing the burden and guilt of sin, desiring to be delivered by the Lord Jesus Christ"? Do you know anything about the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (Joh 16:8)? Do you know any-

thing about mourning over sin as being committed against a holy God? Do you know anything about your powerlessness against sin, or about the evil heart of unbelief that possesses every soul outside of Christ? Do you know anything about waiting before God for the Holy Spirit to work faith and assurance in your heart through the Word of God?

If you can say, “Yes, Pastor, that is the way the Holy Spirit has dealt, or is dealing, with my heart; I want to know Christ and Him alone in the salvation of my never-dying soul,” then will you listen as we go into our message today on *Christ and His precious blood*⁷ as the *object of true saving faith*?

In 1 Peter 1:18-19 we read, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” Yes, it is by the redeeming blood of Christ that we are saved. It is through faith in His blood that we are cleansed from all sin. So we see in our text the precious blood of a precious Lord, shed for the remission of our sins. The precious blood of a precious God! The precious blood of a suffering Savior! The precious blood of a precious Lamb slain for the sins of His people! Therefore, the Scriptures declare that without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin (Heb 9:22).

We hear the Word of the Lord speaking to our hearts about the blood of Christ in these words: “When I see the blood, I will pass over you” (Exo 12:13); or, “When I see the blood of Christ applied to your heart by faith, then I will pass over you.” He said it is the precious blood of Christ that makes an atonement for your soul. It is the blood of Christ that reconciles you unto God. It is the precious blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, that cleanseth from all sin (1Jo 1:7). Let me repeat it over and over: It is “through faith in his blood” (Rom 3:25) that all the benefits of Christ’s death upon the cross become ours. It is not when we see the blood; but it is when, by faith, we apply that precious blood to the doorposts of our hearts and God sees the blood, that God’s condemnation and judgment no longer rests upon us. Yes, it is when He sees the blood.

O dear friends, today I press home to your hearts the value of the blood of Christ and this searching question: Do you have a personal interest in that blood that flowed from the Savior’s body on the cross? Oh, to have an interest in that precious blood, to know its power to deliver from sin, its power to cleanse from sin, its power to sanctify us in spirit, soul, and body! To know its

⁷ See William Reid, *The Blood of Jesus*, and FGB 155, *The Blood of Christ*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

power as it speaks to our hearts from the pages of Holy Writ should be the cry of each heart today.

Then the questions are asked, “Wherein does the *power* of the precious blood of Christ lie? *How is it set forth in Scripture* as the object of true saving faith; and *what will it do for me*—a poor, lost, guilty, vile, sin-laden sinner?” Listen now as we try, by the gracious Holy Spirit, to set before you this precious blood.

First, the precious blood of Christ has a *redeeming power*, because it redeems us from the curse of the Law. Listen to Galatians 3:13—“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.” Yes, because we were under the death penalty of God’s holy Law by breaking it in every point, then we could only be brought out from under its curse and its penalty if someone became a curse for us and paid to the Law the price due it. The Lord Jesus Christ, loving us with a real, self-sacrificing love, came and took our place, was made a curse for us, pouring out His lifeblood to deliver us from the curse of God. Therein we see the power of the blood to save us, because that was precious, holy blood—yes, God’s blood—that was shed for the remission of our sins (Act 20:28). So when as a poor, lost sinner we come with repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood, then our gracious God will justify us freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and deliver us from the wrath to come.

Next, the power of the precious blood of Christ lies in *its atoning efficacy*. “It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Lev 17:11). You see, my friend, God never forgave sin apart from the shedding of blood under the Law. The blood, and the blood alone, put away sin. God never forgave sin apart from a substitute, a sacrificial offering. It was only by blood that a sinner could appease a holy God. It was only by blood, the blood of the appointed slain animal, that the high priest could enter once a year into the Most Holy Place; for that blood spoke of the shedding of blood by our Lord Jesus for His people. So it is in the salvation of our never-dying souls. It is only by the blood of Christ, shed as an atonement for the soul, that any man can be saved. Christ, therefore, came and was punished in the place of all His people. Christ has made a complete atonement. God is satisfied with His cross-work and His rising from the grave, and so will accept poor sinners in Him.

Next, I would say that the value of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ lies in *its power to cleanse us from all sin*. In 1 John 1:7 we read these

precious words: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin." Not our good works, but the precious blood of Christ. Not the prayers of saints or priests or ministers, but the precious blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

It is on the basis of the shed blood of Christ that we are given the invitation: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa 1:18). Then I cry: O precious blood, which removes the hell-stains of abundant iniquity and permits me to stand accepted in the Beloved, notwithstanding all the many ways in which I have rebelled against my God! It was because of the cleansing effect of the blood that David could cry in Psalm 51:2-7: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin...Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Next, I would declare that the value of the precious blood of Christ lies in *its preserving power*. We have many examples of this in the Old Testament. When the children of Israel were in Egypt the night the Death Angel passed over, they were preserved and delivered because they had put the blood of that slain lamb upon the door posts of their homes. Also, we see the plagues stayed and the Israelites preserved in the wilderness as the high priest offered a sacrifice for the people. So it is with those who know Christ and His cross-work. They alone are preserved by the blood of Christ from the wrath to come.

Again, I would declare that the value of the precious blood of Christ lies in *its melting power*. We read in Zechariah 12:10 that when a poor sinner looks by faith upon Christ Whom he has pierced with his sins, then he shall mourn for Him with such a mourning as one does at the death of his firstborn. Oh, how precious this truth is, that one sight by faith of a bleeding Savior will break the heart of the most hard-hearted sinner, because he sees in Christ, as He is lifted up out of the Word of God, a precious Savior for him. He sees His love, grace, and beauty and begins to cry after Him, "O precious Lord and Savior, I see in Thee a suitableness for my sin-sick soul. Please have mercy upon me!" Yes, the awakened sinner, when he comes to the end of his way, finds in Christ's wounds a melting power that melts him at His feet, crying, "Lord, take me, save me, make me Thine own! Thou hast won my heart with Thy love."

Again, the value of the precious blood of Christ lies in *its pleading power*. We read in Hebrews 12:24 that we come "to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Abel's blood cried out for revenge.

Not so the precious blood of the Lamb of God. His blood speaks of mercy and shows compassion to the poor, repenting, believing sinner. His blood speaks peace to the troubled, sin-tossed soul. The Scripture says that there is no peace for the wicked; but those who have fled to Christ for refuge, who have looked to Christ by faith, have peace with God, because the blood speaks peace to their hearts out of the Word of God.

Praise the Lord for that God-given peace that comes from knowing Christ! Listen to Romans 5:1: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Listen again to Colossians 1:20—Christ “having made *peace* through the blood of his cross.” And as Ephesians 2:14 puts it, “He [Christ] is our *peace*.” Praise the Lord that those who are in Christ have peace with God all because the precious blood of Christ speaks for them! There is one other Scripture that brings this out most precious. Isaiah 32:17 tells us, “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.” O my friend, is Christ your peace? Do you have peace with God by saving faith in the blood of Christ?

But I believe one of the most precious truths (as if they were not all precious!) is that the value of the blood of Christ lies in *its power to give us entrance into the very presence of God*. In Hebrews 10:19 we read, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus”—boldness to come to “the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16). What a blessing to us who know Christ, that by His precious blood “we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand” (Rom 5:2). And we can come into the very presence of God and worship Him, offer the sacrifice of our lips, which is thanksgiving, and there find that mercy and grace which is so greatly needed in every time of need!

Then, last, I would say that the value of the blood of Christ lies in *its overcoming power*. Listen to Revelation 12:11, “And they overcame him [Satan, the accuser of the brethren] by the blood of the Lamb.” Oh, how precious that is! What a beauty and glory we find here in our Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His shed blood! Yes, by that blood we have the victory over our enemy, the devil. How many times since God saved me has this precious promise been fulfilled, to be enabled by the grace of God, the power of God, through faith in the blood of the Lamb, to overcome the accuser, Satan, and rout him with the blood!

Victory! Victory! This is through the blood of Christ. Oh, how precious is His blood to every born-again believer! I am trusting, my sinner friend, that you will find power in His blood to be melted at His feet, delivered from the power and the penalty of sin, and cleansed from all your sins and iniquities, to find preserving power in that blood, entrance into His presence by that blood, and overcoming power in that precious blood.

The real value of an object can be measured by the price one will give for it. He who made the soul, knew its worth and gave His life for it.

6. Looking to Jesus

In this final message on *Christ the object of true saving faith*, I desire by the grace of God and the Holy Spirit working in us, to look with you at the one expression in God's Word that more than any other, characterizes the subject we have been endeavoring to lay before your hearts. It is the expression found in Heb. 12:2 which reads: "*Looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith." I believe we find in the three words "Looking unto Jesus" the secret of the Christian life, the life that is in the Lord Jesus Christ, the life of faith whereby we are saved, justified, sanctified, kept, and comforted—by which also we overcome the world, sin, and Satan and persevere to the end.

As we look closely at these words, may the Holy Spirit open our understanding to the way of faith and how "looking unto Jesus" shall bring us home to Him at last. We are to look unto Jesus in the holy Scriptures to learn Who He is, what He has done and what He gives in His finished work of redemption. We are to look unto Jesus and His full satisfaction in our behalf to God's broken Law (Gal 3:13; Heb 1:3), vindicating God's justice, His name, and His character. We are to look unto Him for all the needs and wants of our never-dying souls.

We are to look unto Jesus *in His offices* of Prophet (Act 3:22), Priest (Rom 8:34), and King (Act 2:36; Eph 1:20-23). As Prophet He teaches us. As Priest He is our Substitute, Savior, and Intercessor; and as King He rules over us, delivering us from the power of sin (Rom 6:14), Satan (Col 1:13), and the world (Gal 1:4).

We are to look unto Jesus as *the great I AM* Who was sent by God the Father to be "the way, the truth, and the life," for "no man cometh unto the Father" but by Him (Joh 14:6). The Lord Jesus said Himself, "*I am* the bread of life" sent down by the Father to give spiritual life to poor sinners, so "he that

cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Joh 6:35). "*I am* the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Joh 8:12). "*I am* the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Joh 11:25). "*I am* the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (Joh 10:9). "*I am* the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Joh 10:11). "*I am* the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Joh 15:5). So in all these characters as the great *I AM*, we are to be "*looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith," for without Him we can do nothing, for He alone is our life (Joh 15:5; Col 3:4).

Let us go further! We are to look unto Jesus *crucified* as our divine Substitute, to find in His blood our only cleansing from sin before God (1Jo 1:7), our only justification before God (Rom 5:9), our only entrance into His holy presence (Heb 10:19), our only ransom from Satan's captivity (Col 1:13-14), our only deliverance from the wrath to come (Rom. 5:9), and the only lasting peace found in the whole universe, because He "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col 1:20). Yes, we are to "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Joh 1:29), as our offering, the One Who was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2Co 5:21). I say, Praise the Lord for the "precious blood of Christ" (1Pe 1:19), and for the forgiveness of sins, that by Christ all that believe are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses (Act 13:33-39).

Again, we are to look unto Jesus *risen from the grave* as our justification; for Romans 4:25 tells us that He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Yes, we serve a risen Lord, One Who lives at God's right hand for us, and "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1Co 1:30). He alone is our standing before God; for we who have believed upon Him to the saving of our never-dying souls have been "accepted in the beloved," in Christ Himself (Eph 1:6).

We are also directed in Scripture to look unto Jesus as the one whom God has "*exalted* with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance...and forgiveness of sins" (Act 5:31). Yes, repentance and faith are gifts from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, so we are to look to Him for these gifts which God requires of us. The Scriptures declare that without repentance we shall perish (Luk 13:3), and without faith it is impossible to please and

come to God (Heb 11:6). So, what a mercy! What a grace!—to have One Who *gives* these spiritual graces of repentance (Act 11:18) and faith (Eph 2:8-9; Gal 2:20)! O my dear friend, there is no end to all Christ Jesus our Lord has done for poor sinners and what flows out to us from His lovely Person as we lay down our arms of rebellion against Him in repentance, hoist the white flag of surrender to Him as *Lord*, turn to Him from sin, self, the world, and our own way, beholding Him by faith as the One Whom God has exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior!

Again, we are to look unto Jesus *glorified as our ruling King*, highly exalted. Listen to Philippians 2:9-11! “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Yes, He is King now, *my* King and Ruler, sitting upon David’s spiritual throne, “in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and [God the Father] hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph 1:20-23). And when the end comes, at His second coming, He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, “when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1Co 15:24-26).

Yes, dear friend, Jesus the Lord, the Christ of God, *reigns now as King* upon His throne, and we are to look unto Him as Lord and King now or we cannot be saved; for it is by His power as King that He delivers us from sin and its power. We must bow to His scepter now or we shall know nothing of His Saviorship and redemption. You see, the New Testament knows nothing of a future kingship of Christ sitting upon an earthly throne ruling as a political monarch from physical Jerusalem; but praise the Lord, it has much to say about Him ruling *now* as King over the sons of men as Sovereign and Lord, as the One Who received this place of honor by virtue of His blood-shedding and resurrection.

Again, we must look unto Jesus *glorified* to find in Him *our heavenly Advocate* appearing in the presence of God for us (Heb 9:24), ever living to make intercession for us (Heb 2:17-18; 4:15-16; 7:24). So we look unto Jesus for strength in our weakness, for wisdom in our stupidity, for grace in our afflict-

tion, for peace in our storms, for comfort in our sorrows, for joy in our depression, for mercy in our failures, for hope in our darkness, for life in our deadness, and for faith in our trials.

We are to look unto Jesus to keep us in His faith until the end, to keep us from falling, and to present us “holy and unblameable and unproveable” in God’s sight at the last great day (Col 1:22). We are to look unto Jesus to take us into the home which He has gone to prepare for us (Joh 14:2), and to present us to the Father, saying, “Behold I and the children which God hath given me” (Heb. 2:13); “I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost” (Joh 17:12).

We are to look unto Jesus and not to ourselves, our thoughts, our desires, or our purposes, but to all that God has made us in Him by His marvelous grace.

We are to look unto Jesus and not to the world, its lusts, its joys, nor its pleasures, but unto Him Who is our joy and pleasure, anticipating all that He will bring us into in that last great day; for “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1Co 2:9), even those who look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith.

We are to look unto Jesus and not to Satan in all his rage as a roaring lion, nor to all his flattery as an angel of light, for we are no longer in his kingdom and power, or under his authority because we have been *delivered* from the power of darkness and *translated* into the kingdom of God’s dear Son (Col 1:13).

We are to look unto Jesus and not to our meditation and prayers, to our pious conversation or edifying reading, nor to our meetings, our fellowship, nor our experiences; for all of these are sinking sand. Only Christ is the foundation stone of our souls; only in Him can we rest.

We are to look unto Jesus and not to our position in the church as pastor, deacon, elder, teacher, or song leader. We are to look unto Jesus, not to the church name we bear, nor to the doctrine which we profess. We are to look unto Jesus and not to our brethren who may fail us. We are to look unto Jesus and not to our baptism nor to any of our duties. We are to look unto Jesus and not to the obstacles which meet us on our journey, nor to our temporal blessings which we enjoy. We are to look unto Jesus and not to our own strength, nor to our own weakness, nor to our own sins. We are to look unto Jesus and not to the apparent success of our efforts, or the spiritual gifts which we have received. We are to look unto Jesus and not to the degree of grief which our

sins have caused us, or to the degree of humiliation which they produce in us. We are to look unto Jesus and not to the liveliness of our joy or the fervor of love; neither are we to look to *our faith*, but unto the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Dear friend, we are to look unto Jesus all the while we remain upon this earth, moment by moment, casting all upon Him, for He alone is our life, *the object* of our faith, and the lifter up of our head.

We are to look unto Jesus now; we are to look unto Jesus ever; we are to look unto Jesus alone; we are to look unto Jesus again and again. Yes, we are to look unto Jesus always; for it is by faith with open face that we behold the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory, by His Spirit Who has been given unto us who believe (2Co 3:18).

What a glorious way to spend our lives down here for His glory, just “looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” until we shall behold His face in righteousness as we see Him in His glory, and are finally made in His likeness forever (1Jo 3:1-3).

7. Some Concluding Thoughts

Having dealt with the subject of *Christ the object of true saving faith* in these six messages, we are brought to face these great truths:

1. There is no salvation in Christ apart from faith, and no instrumental means other than faith as these Scriptures bring out so clearly: “For by grace are ye saved *through faith*” (Eph 2:8). “The just shall live *by faith*” (Rom 1:17); and “*without faith* it is impossible to please” God (Heb 11:6).

2. Saving faith must of a necessity be a *gift* of God because it comes to us *by grace* through the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in our hearts by the Word of God: “For *by grace* are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph 2:8-9). When Apollos had come to Achaia, he “helped them much which *had believed through grace*” (Act 18:27). “When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which *effectually worketh* also in you that believe” (1Th 2:13). “That our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and *the work of faith with power*” (2Th 1:11). “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration

of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but *in the power of God*" (1Co 2:4-5).

3. Even though the Scriptures show plainly that true saving faith is a gift of God, worked in us by the Holy Spirit which comes to us by grace, yet in no place do they teach that the Holy Spirit believes *for us*; the Holy Spirit frees our wills and enables us to believe. Therefore the act of faith, the coming to Christ as *the object* of our faith, is spoken of in Scripture as the sinner abandoning all hope in himself to merit salvation, the going outside of himself to another for help, and the looking *only* to Jesus, the Christ of the Bible Whom he has personally trusted and obeyed. This is clearly shown in 2 Timothy 1:12 in these words: "For I *know* whom I have believed, and *am persuaded* that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

4. Saving faith is not an isolated act, but is *continuous* all the days of our lives. The Amplified brings this out in such a blessed way in Romans 1:17—"For in the Gospel a righteousness which God ascribes is revealed, both springing from faith and leading to faith—disclosed through the way of faith that arouses to more faith. As it is written, The man who through faith is just and upright shall live, and shall live by faith." The eleventh chapter of Hebrews tells us that the Old Testament saints were saved by faith, lived and worked by faith, and died in faith, as does every soul whom God saves.

As it was at conversion, so it is every day of our lives: the impulse to faith is a felt need, the motion of faith is always from self to another, and *the object* of faith is always Christ Himself. As we came then, empty-handed, to receive of Him (Joh 1:11, 12; Col 2:6), so we do now. As we came then, hungering and thirsting after Christ Who is the Water of Life and the Bread of Life (Isa 55:1; Mat 5:6; Joh 6:35, 50-56; 7:37), so we do now. As we came then, casting our heavy burden of sin and all of our ways and works upon Him (Mat 11:28-30; 1Pe 5:7), so we do now. As we came then, turning our weary eyes upon Him Who alone could save us, forgive us, and cleanse us (Isa 45:22; Joh 1:29; 3:14-15 with Num 21:8; Zec 12:10; & Heb 12:2), so we do now. As we came then, fleeing to Him as our refuge and our hiding place (Heb 6:18), so we do now. As we came then, to receive all our needs from Him (Joh 6:35, 37; Phi 4:19), so we do now. Surely the child of God follows the Lamb "whithersoever he goeth" (Rev 14:4) all the days of his life.

5. Therefore, since "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17), how important it is for us to heed our blessed Lord's admonition: "*Search* the scriptures; for...they...testify of me" (Joh 5:39). "And

beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luk 24:27). Search the Scriptures, for we find in them the foundation of our hope: it is the Word that testifies of Christ and His ability to save.

Then, when we have searched them, how important it is *to believe* what we read and the witness God gives of His Son. As 1 John 5:9-12 tells us, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

The question is asked, “What is the record that God has given us that testifies of His Son’s ability and willingness to save?” The record we are to believe is that the Lord Jesus Christ *came voluntarily* from heaven’s heights to earth’s depths to be born of a virgin, to take upon Himself the nature of man, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, that He might deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb 2:14-15).

The record we are to believe is that the Lord Jesus Christ *emptied Himself* so He could manifest the glory of the Father here upon earth, doing the will of the Father so He might pay our sin-debt in full by the giving up of Himself upon the cross as God’s Substitute for sinners (Phi 2:8). It is that He died, the Just for the unjust, the Godly for the ungodly, the Righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring many sons into glory, and by the shedding of His blood, satisfy God’s holy Law and justice (1Pe 3:18; Heb 2:10).

The record we are to believe is that in His death, burial, and resurrection, our blessed Lord has *opened the way* for poor sinners to come back to God in repentance and faith, and that God can be just in justifying every poor sinner who comes unto Him through Christ.

My dear friend, my prayer is that as you read the Scriptures, you will *meditate* upon them and *cry* unto the living God of the Bible that He, by His Spirit, will make the promises, which are beacons that lead us to Christ, real to your heart, so your faith will rest in Christ Himself Who is the very life of the promises, the very marrow and sweetness of the promise, Who alone can be our resting place, our refuge, our mediator, our salvation and our standing before God for time and eternity.

*Willing to take the cross was He,
Willing to suffer misery,
Willing to go to Calvary,
Laying His glory aside;
Willing to hang there on the tree,
Willing to bear the agony,
Willing to die for you and me—
Jesus the Crucified.*

—F. W. Hawkins

