



Without the Shedding of Blood, There is No Forgiveness of Sins

Series: Hebrews – An Anchor for the Soul

Hebrews 9:15-28

August 7, 2016

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This morning, beloved, we are standing on holy ground. My prayer for us is that God would give us the grace to really comprehend and understand the greatness of what is before us, that our hearts would swell with gratitude for all that we have through the blood of Christ poured out for us, that we would be deeply encouraged to lay hold of all that is our inheritance in Christ, and that we would be moved to stay close to Christ.

All throughout this letter, the writer of Hebrews has been systematically presenting to us the superiority and perfection of Jesus Christ, His uniqueness as the Son of God, His glory as the final revelation from God, His work as the founder of our salvation, His perfect identification with us in the way that He has become like us and been tempted, yet without sin, so that He can be our merciful and faithful help in time of need. And now, over these last several chapters, the writer of Hebrews has been presenting Jesus as our Great High Priest, the High Priest that we need to make atonement for our sins and bring us to God, to cancel our very real debt of sin, our very real guilt, before the Lord, who can secure for us an eternal redemption, the one who actually take away all of our sins – past, present, and future, and the only One who can actually cleanse our consciences. The very things that crush our consciences, the sense of our past sin and the sinfulness that is still in us -- Christ's blood has the power to cleanse that great weight from our souls. His death preaches to us that the debt has been paid for all our sin – all of it. An infinite atonement has been paid for it, to relieve us from the burden of all our guilt.

More than that, He is the High Priest who has set us free from dead works – the things that those with a burdened conscience and still under the guilt of sin pursue so religiously – building kingdoms that will fall, buying things that never satisfy, serving sin that leads to the grave, trying in vain to find significance or merit with God, feverishly trying justify themselves and their glory, pursuing whatever they can find to salve a guilty conscience. We

have been set free so that we can serve God – offering worship, prayer, gifts, praises to His worth, testimonies to His goodness, gospel declarations, and the fruit of holy lives that bear the marks of His grace, presenting ourselves daily to Him as living sacrifices.

And all of this, all of it, is the result of His sacrifice of His life on our behalf, to pay for the penalty and the debt of our sin before God the Father, because of His willingness to suffer the wrath that our sins deserved, in our place, so that we could be forgiven and accepted by God. All we are and all we have, we owe to the precious blood Christ. That’s why Charles Spurgeon, the prince of preachers, was moved to say: **“To deny the great doctrine of atonement by the blood of Jesus Christ is to hamstring the gospel, and to cut the throat of Christianity. Leave out the cross and you have killed the religion of Jesus. Atonement by the blood of Jesus is not an arm of Christian truth; it is the heart of it.”**

The writer of Hebrews is going to speak more to us today of the precious blood of Christ, of His perfect sacrifice. And His purpose in doing so is to keep the Hebrew Christians and to keep us from falling away, to keep us from the proneness to wander from devotion to Him to anything else. The first thing that He is going to show is

Jesus Christ is the Perfect and Only Mediator (15) Read verse 15 with me. He says, **“Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.” (Hebrews 9:15, ESV)** Now, there is a lot in this verse and we are going to really need to focus if we are going to grasp and appreciate what the writer is saying here. The writer of Hebrews identifies Jesus as the **mediator of a new covenant**, the better covenant, the better relationship that we have with God the Father. The word “therefore” indicates that the writer is basing this declaration on everything that he has just written before – all that I summarized at the beginning of this message.

Now we are familiar with the word, **mediator**, aren’t we? A mediator is someone you call in to bring two parties that are at odds with one another into agreement. If you have ever had kids, you have played the role of mediator with them. Sometimes marriages devolve to such a point that a mediator needs to be brought in. Sometimes friendships get broken to a point

that a mediator is necessary. You see in commercial settings sometimes with employers and employees. But Christ's role as mediator goes far beyond that, right?

As the mediator appointed by God, Jesus' role is to bridge the vast gulf between sinful man and holy God, between you and me and God. His role is to bridge the chasm that our sin has created with God, the divide that our willful and deliberate sin has produced and to make a way for our entrance into God's presence to bring us to God. That's no easy task. The Bible is explicit in declaring the holiness and the justice of God. He will punish all sin. He must or He stops being holy. He is the God of Love, yes, but His love does not allow Him to set aside His holiness, His justice, or His rightful wrath against sinners.

If we are going to be accepted by God, we need a mediator and God has provided Him in Jesus Christ. I want you to understand this clearly. Jesus did not enter into this role unaware of what it would cost Him, ok? If you have ever served in the role of mediator, you know that sometimes you get drawn into that role unaware of what all the issues are and you find yourself wishing that you had never accepted that role. Not so with Jesus. Jesus knew, better than we know, the holiness of God the Father. He is One with the Father in holiness. He also knew man's gargantuan debt of sin and the judgment that we all deserve. He knew what it would take to bridge the gap, the bridge the gulf, Jesus did what only He could do. He took upon Himself human flesh, became one of us, and lived in complete conformity to God's holy and righteous standards as our representative before God the Father, and then He offered Himself as the price of redemption, poured out His blood on the cross and endured the wrath of God, the price of death and judgment that God's justice demands, so that He could bring us to God and bridge the gulf of our sins forever by the cross of redemption. That is what Paul refers to when He says of Jesus, ***"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth."*** (1 Timothy 2:5-7, ESV)

Jesus is the ***mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.*** He is the mediator, the only one, so that everyone who is called by God to faith, effectually and irresistibly called to believe in Jesus Christ, can receive the promised eternal inheritance described by the writer of Hebrews when he quotes Jeremiah saying: ***"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after***

those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.'" (Hebrews 8:10–12, ESV)

So Christ is our mediator, by His blood, who gives to us all the blessings of the New Covenant, right? But there is more here and we can't miss it. Christ's mediation is effective not only for us, but for all those who were called to saving faith under the first covenant. The writer says: ***a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.*** A death has occurred – whose death? Christ's! – that is the death, the sacrifice that redeems God's chosen people under the first covenant.

What is the deal here? What the writer of Hebrews is saying in essence is that Jesus' redemptive death was both proactive and retroactive. In other words, Jesus' death, His redemption by His blood was active, was sufficient to pay for all the sins of everyone – past, present, and future – who believes in Him from the moment of His death forward, but it was also retroactive. It reaches back to the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve were clothed by the skins of a sacrificial substitute and where the two were given the promise of a Savior who was coming. It's the sacrifice that saves the OT saints like Moses, Joshua, Caleb, David – and all the others who offered sacrifice by faith. The point, then, is that those who were called by God to eternal life were saved under the old covenant through their faith in God – demonstrated by the various sacrifices as they humbly acknowledged that sin deserved death and they placed themselves at the mercy of God. Their sacrifices were not the means of salvation, but they as they were offered in humility and repentance, they were evidence of faith-filled, believing hearts. For these, Christ's blood extended its retroactive saving power.

Leon Morris says it like this: ***"The death that inaugurates the new covenant, Jesus' death which brings about this new covenant, is seen as providing the way of forgiveness, even for those transgressions committed under the first covenant. The obvious inference is that such sins could not really be forgiven under the first covenant"*** – they were only covered for a time until Jesus came to pay for them with His own blood – ***"and that, therefore, the new covenant was an absolute necessity."*** Paul says the same in the book of Romans, ***"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift,***

through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." (Romans 3:23–26, ESV)

Now understand the power of this statement to the Hebrew Christians who were being tempted to escape persecution by going back to the old covenant. The writer of Hebrews is saying pretty forcefully, "If you take away Jesus, none of the sacrifices, none of the blood spilt in the old covenant means anything. Take Christ away and it meant nothing. They are absolutely worthless. But, with Christ's sacrifice, those sacrifices take on the significance, the worth, of being the precursors to the true and powerful sacrifice of Jesus." In fact, here's the thing. The fact that God even gave to the Israelites the sacrificial system, the fact that God gave to them rituals to offer sacrifices to cover their sins, lets you know that God was already knew that His chosen people, even the most faithful, would violate the covenant and break His laws. There was never a possibility of salvation, never a possibility of full forgiveness and fellowship with God without divine atonement. There was never a possibility of salvation in this fallen world apart from the grace of God in Christ. Well then, why didn't God just send Jesus immediately, after the fall of man in the Garden of Eden? Here's why. Apart from the law that showed the depth of our sins, apart from all of the sacrifices that showed all the ways in which we needed to be cleansed of our sin, apart from all of the laws that demonstrated the holiness of God, apart from the witness of the old covenant, we would never have known our need nor would we have any context for understanding the magnitude of what Christ did, the ways in which He saved us by the sacrifice of Himself.

What is so significant about all of this? For the Hebrews, they had to realize that going back to Judaism, going to back to the old covenant, would be foolish and worthless because its effectiveness is tied completely to Jesus Christ. Take Jesus away and it means nothing. It is like us trusting in baptism, or church attendance, or the Lord's Supper, or good works, or anything else apart from Jesus Christ. Take Jesus away and none of that matters. He is the center of it all. He is the only mediator.

So, he firmly establishes Jesus Christ as the perfect and only mediator of the New Covenant, right? And now, he is going to illustrate this truth using illustrations drawn from everyday

life and then from the pages of Scripture. Using the picture of a will and the inheritance connected to it, he wants us to see that:

Jesus is the Testator and the Executor of the Divine Will (16-17) Look at what he says here, ***“For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.”***

(Hebrews 9:16–17, ESV) Now there are some technical translation issues in this verse, but the writer of Hebrews is thinking here of the blessings of the new covenant as an inheritance like he did in verse 15 and he wants to drive home an important point, ok? Watch this.

We are all familiar with wills, aren't we? A will is the stated intention of a testator, of the person who is making the will, of how his riches are to be distributed to his heirs at his death. You may be the heir of incredible riches, incredible wealth, a mansion, a fleet of cars, season tickets to the Pittsburgh Steelers, but you never actually come into possession of those things unless the testator dies. The point that the writer is making is that all the blessings of the inheritance of God's people could never actually be enjoyed and possessed unless Jesus Christ die. In His death, He paid the penalty of our sins, answered the justice of God on behalf, He paid our curse so that we could have blessing -- ***“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.”*** (Galatians 3:13–14, ESV)

He died so that the blessings of God, that we had forfeited by our sins, could be ours eternally and even now – forgiveness, a cleansed conscience, peace with God, wholeness, a life of worth, freedom from the enslaving power of sin, a heart and mind to love and obey God, the indwelling Spirit of God, communion with God, and ultimately eternal life in Heaven. Christ's death activated for us His incredibly rich will. That's point that he is making.

But even more – get this now – by His resurrection and by virtue of the fact that He is seated at the right hand of God the Father in Heaven, He is also the executor of that will. The executor's job is to ensure that the inheritance is given in its fullness to all the heirs. And that is what Christ ensures for us. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is not only the One who died to

release the Father's inheritance in your life; He is also the one who rose from the dead and is the sovereign executor of the Father's will and ensures that you get all the inheritance of God in this life and in the next. And all of this is predicated on the blood of Christ, shed for sinners. In fact, look what he does now. He wants us to see how this fits in redemptive history. He wants us to see how essential Christ's blood is and so he takes us to see that

The Old Covenant Was Activated by Blood (18-22) The writer of Hebrews says in verses 18-22, ***“Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.” And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”*** (Hebrews 9:18–22, ESV)

He's reaching back to the OT, to describe how blood was at the heart of the establishment of the old covenant. Exodus 24 describes how it all went down. The Ten Commandments had been given to Moses and the Book of the Covenant, the grounds for God's relationship with Israel and the blessings that He would pour upon them as they were obedient to Him and the curses if they were not, and the people all responded with one voice, saying, ***“All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.”*** And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord.” (Exodus 24:3–4, ESV) Then starting in Exodus 24:5, we read: ***“And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.””*** (Exodus 24:5–8, ESV) Imagine that scene. It isn't pretty except in its rich symbolism. The altar, the people and the book of the covenant were all dripping with blood.

Not only was the start of the covenant steeped in blood, so was the beginning of tabernacle worship. On that day, as the writer of Hebrews describes, the tabernacle itself and all of the vessels that were used in it were also sprinkled with blood. And out of this comes the principle: ***under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of***

blood there is no forgiveness of sins. There were exemptions given for the extremely poor, but the principle is clear – **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**

The old covenant was established by blood to emphasize two important truths. First, to emphasize the death-dealing nature of sin, the way it alienates from God, the way it is rooted deeply within us. Sin and its cost cannot be alleviated by anything we could do. And second, so that we would understand the costliness of forgiveness. It requires blood – the blood of Jesus. And that’s where he turns next. In commenting on the blood in the old covenant, he now turns to

The Power and Blessing of the Blood of Christ (23-26) Look at this now. It is going to bring it all home. ***“Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”*** (Hebrews 9:23–26, ESV)

Why the blood of Christ? Check this out because it is going to blow your mind. The tabernacle and everything in it had to be sprinkled with blood in order for it to be cleansed from defilement of men because sinful men constructed and fashioned it. And what was the reason for the cleansing? So that God could dwell with the nation of Israel, in their midst as their God, albeit behind the great veil of the Holy of Holies like we talked about last week. That was the earthly things.

But what are the “heavenly things” that must be purified with a better sacrifice? It isn’t heaven. Heaven does not need to be purified. The “heavenly things” are nothing less than us! Just as the tabernacle and all of its vessels had to be purified so that God could show His presence there, even so, the people of God must be cleansed and sanctified so as to become, in the words of Ephesians 2:22, ***“a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”*** (Ephesians 2:22, ESV) Peter talks about this when he says, ***“you yourselves like living stones are being***

built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:5, ESV) In order to be this spiritual house, it is necessary that to be cleansed by **“sprinkling with his blood...” (1 Peter 1:2, ESV), “but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.” (1 Peter 1:19, ESV)** The church -- we -- are now the dwelling place of God by His Spirit because Christ has cleansed us for just that purpose. His blood that cleanses us from sin makes us a fit temple for His Spirit both individually and corporately. And He has made us fit to enter a holy heaven, to which he has gone on our behalf.

The writer of Hebrews says, **For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.** Jesus Christ, by virtue of the blood of His sacrifice, the blood of the only Son of God, is a far, far better representative before the Father than any High Priest in Israel could hope to be. As soon as He entered heaven, He took up His place as intercessor on our behalf, as our advocate before the throne of God. The Apostle John writes in 1 John 2:1, **“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1, ESV)** These are words of encouragement for faithful followers of Christ who as they are following hard after Christ, realize that everything we do is still mixed with sin. It is a word for true Christians who realize that God is holy and we still have failed in all the commandments of God. No matter how holy we have become, we still sin. The Apostle John wants us to fight against sin, but knowing we will never be free of it in this life, he does not want us to despair or to fear the condemnation that comes to rejecters of God and of His Christ. If we sin, we have an advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous. We fight sin from a position of forgiveness before the Father because of the death of Christ in our place, by which He paid the entirety of our sin debt. We fight sin as one cleansed by the blood of Christ. We fight sin as one forgiven and that makes all of the difference in the world.

The picture is not Jesus the loving and kind defense attorney, standing before this gigantic ogre in the sky who is itching to cast sinners into Hell, who has no love in His heart, and Jesus is coaxing this strict and judgmental hanging judge into showing mercy on His people. That’s not the picture at all. It’s not love – Jesus -- saying to justice, “Show mercy.” When Jesus stands before the Father on our behalf, it’s justice standing before love and saying, “You may show mercy and remain just because of what I’ve done.” Jesus as the Lamb slain for the sins of His people, is seated with God as the sin-scarred, eternal testament that God’s justice has been fulfilled for all who trust in Him through His death, and therefore God can

show grace and show mercy and show loving kindness justly because of what Christ alone has done.

His ministry on our behalf is so far greater than we can even imagine and the power and sufficiency of His shed blood is supreme. Christ's sacrifice was perfect and completely effective and so it needs no repeating. The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus did not enter heaven **to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world**, going all the way back to Adam and Eve.

But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Christ's sacrifice, the worth and power of His blood so great, that it does not need to be repeated. He has appeared once and for all. He was manifested in the flesh and lived the life we couldn't and died the death that we deserved and rose from the dead in triumph at the "end of the ages." Redemptive history comes to its climax in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. And now all that is left to do is to gather people from every nation through faith in the gospel before the end comes.

He sacrificed Himself, not the blood of another –not the blood of immoral man, not the blood of non-moral animals, but the divine blood of the Holy One of God, the most valuable person in the universe, the Son of God. John Piper rightly says, "If you ever doubt that you as a sinner could be made clean before God, ask yourself, 'Which is greater, the evil of my sinfulness and defilement, or the value and virtue of the Son of God?' And then be careful lest you blaspheme."

Jesus has put away, once and for all, the guilt of sin for all who truly trust in Him and receive Him as Savior and Lord. Sin is cancelled, nullified and taken away. Jesus writes in bold letters over our lives, "Forgiven!" **"Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."** (Romans 8:33–34, **ESV**) All of this is why we can be welcomed in heaven. This is what redemptive history is all about. Here is the invitation of God to sinners like you and me. "Come sinners, come rebels, come you defiled ones, you deeply stained by sin. Come to my heaven! My Son is there and

He has not died in vain. He has died and risen again to make you clean so that you can be in heaven with me forever. He has not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance and faith in His atoning death.”

The power and perfection of Christ’s atoning death is the centerpiece of our salvation. Do you see that? Not the power or perfection of our faith, not the power and perfection of our Christian walk and virtues, but the power and perfection of Christ’s blood shed for us. Oh how we need to believe this. So many Christians today live without this confidence. They are continually, as it were, “being saved” or “asking Jesus into their hearts,” or “rededicating themselves.” Some Christians are baptized repeatedly and why? Because they feel this ongoing need to deal with the guilt of their sins. Maybe you are one of those people. It was true of me when I was young in the faith. Though truly saved, I still sinned. It’s true that God may times give grace for an immediate deliverance from some particular sins, and that is a wonderful thing, but total deliverance from temptation to particular sins and failure, and escape from our sinful nature, only comes when we are glorified in the presence of Christ, not at conversion.

And praise God, we are not saved by the power and perfection of our faith, but through faith in the power and perfection of Jesus’ sacrifice for us. Listen now, we are not saved by the power and perfection of our faith, but through faith in the power and perfection of Jesus’ sacrifice for us. Our faith is not constant, it is sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker. You and I have not sinned for the last time; we have not repented for the last time or had our last doubt, or felt the pain of our last failure. But the good news of the gospel is that you and I are not saved by the power or perfection of our faith, not by the power and perfection of our Christian walk and performance, but the power and perfection of Christ’s blood. His death saves us and purchases our forgiveness once and for all. His entrance into heaven to minister for us there saves us and He upholds our weak and sometimes wavering faith and that is once and for all. He has put away the guilt of all of our sins once and for all. Where can the blessings of salvation be found once and for all? Only in Christ alone.

Once and for all Jesus died on the cross; once and for all He rose from the dead; once and for all He appeared before God the Father and there He remains, bearing the marks of His once for all sacrifice. Because He is before the Father’s face on our behalf, our forgiveness is once for all and God’s love for us is forever. We don’t have to be saved over and over and

over and over but we can rest our hearts in Christ and live with a blood bought confidence in the great promise with which the writer of Hebrews closes this section.

The Blood Bought Promise of the Future (27-28) The writer of Hebrews closes this section saying: ***“And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”*** (Hebrews 9:27–28, ESV) Now, notice what the writer of Hebrews is doing, ok? He is making a comparison to emphasize the certainty of the future of those that have been purchased by the blood of Christ. Here is an established fact: ***it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.*** You’ve heard the old saying, the only things that are sure in life are death and taxes, well here is the biblical equivalent of that. Just as surely as judgment follows death, Jesus Christ will appear a second time – this time not to deal with sin, because He has already offered Himself once to bear the sins of many – but to finally and fully save His own, those who are eagerly awaiting Him – the many for whom He died.

John Piper in reflecting on these verses and their meaning says this, ***“If you ask right now, and you should, What must I do so that I may know that my sins are taken away by the blood of Christ, and that, when he comes, he will shield me from the wrath of God and bring me into eternal life ... if you ask that right now, the answer is this: trust Christ in a way that makes you eager for him to come. He is coming to save those who are "eagerly waiting for him." So how do you get ready? How do you experience the forgiveness of God in Christ and prepare to meet him? By trusting him in a way that makes you eager for him to come.***

This eager expectation for Christ is simply a sign that we love him and believe in him authentically. There is a phony faith that wants only escape from hell, but has no desire for Christ. That does not save. And it does not produces an eager expectation for Christ to come. It would rather that Christ not come for as long as possible so that it can have as much of this world as possible. But the faith that really holds on to Christ as treasure and hope and joy is the faith that makes us long for Christ to come, and that is the faith that saves.”

What matters really, then, is only one thing. Are you in Christ? Did He die for you? Will He return for you to save you from the judgment to come? How do you know for sure? Let me ask you, do you know your need for cleansing from sin? Do you know that you can do nothing to put away your sin – no penance, no personal reformation, no self-denial, no amount of good works? Then fully put your trust in Him. When you know and believe all that He has done for you, that faith and that hope must bear fruit in your life. We wait for His return and while we wait, we serve Him and worship Him with all our lives, bearing witness to a lost and dying world. That is the worship and devotion of those who have hope in Christ, who find their joy in Him, awaiting the great day when salvation comes in the return of Christ.

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