

The Might and Malice of the Cross - Matthew 27:45-53

Take the infallible record and turn to Matthew 27:45-53. “Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?’ And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ And immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. But the rest of them said, ‘Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.’ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split, and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.”

Recently I was watching a news program where a political pundit was being interviewed. He was mocking the moral positions of most Bible-believing Christians. Of course this is nothing new, we see this all the time. Paraphrasing what he said, he put it this way. It was inconceivable to him that there are people who still believe that there is only one way to heaven and that is through Jesus. It is inconceivable to him that there are people who actually believe the Bible was written by God Himself, and that Jesus was really God, and He died on the cross for everyone’s sin because we’re really that bad. It is inconceivable to think that He was literally raised from the dead, and worst of all that He’s going to come again. It’s inconceivable that people actually believe these things. He closed his little rant by saying of course it wasn’t too long ago when men thought the world was flat and they also used to bleed people to fight disease.

This is the expected mindset of the unregenerate, those who see the Word of God and it is foolishness to them. As Christians we shudder at the unregenerate’s heart, those who have been deceived by the hardness of their heart, and those who find great pleasure in their ignorance and sin. When we hear such things, we shudder at the blasphemy, knowing that if they could really comprehend the dreadful state that they are in, if they could for one moment grasp the wrath of God that abides upon them, if they had even the slightest understanding of their true condition before a holy God, then the horrors of the hell that await them would drive them to their knees in humble repentance.

Unfortunately when we consider the things of Christ, even as Christians, I find that there is a staggering ignorance, especially concerning those things surrounding the cross, the crucifixion of Christ. Many of us saw the movie “The Passion of the Christ.” Millions of people saw that, and if you watch it you will see a profound distortion of what Christianity is all about and what really happened on the cross. You can watch that film and there is no understanding by anyone of the message of Acts 4:12 that “there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.” You’ll not see that in the movie.

There’s no understanding of why only a man that is fully God and fully human without a sin nature could satisfy the wrath of God. There’s no understanding that only Jesus was the One who could give His life as a ransom for many. There’s no understanding how His righteousness must be imputed to the sinner in order to be reconciled to God. There’s no understanding that on the cross of Calvary the Lord Jesus Christ took upon Himself the curse of divine justice which should have been ours. There’s no understanding of 1 Peter 3:18 where we read that “He died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.” There’s no understanding of the depths of sinfulness. Therefore people are not amazed at the divine provision of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But rather than that, when they look at things like it, but specifically that movie, you hear them say “Well this is all about the power of the human spirit. When Jesus died on the cross this helps us understand man’s potential for love and sacrifice for fellow man. Christ’s death on the cross helps us understand our need to maintain freedom of religion and put down the tyranny of religious bigotry.” Or as the professor of theology at Vanderbilt University, John Thatamanil says, “Jesus is a model of nonviolent resistance; the cross a symbol of dying to self.” Or as the director of the film, Mel Gibson, described his rationale for doing the movie, “I went to the wounds of Christ...to cure my wounds...My wounds were healed by His wounds...I had to tell the story of those wounds.”

Dear friends, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and what Christ did on the cross, has nothing to do with curing personal wounds. The gospel of Christ has nothing to do with boosting our self esteem. The Lord Jesus Christ never preached a message on healing our memories, or overcoming addictions, or having a better marriage, or rising above personal pain, or conquering depression or personal disillusionment, or how to be more successful. He came to call sinners to repentance, that by faith in Him we might be reconciled to a holy God. That is the gospel. In fact, the gospel of Christ is not about this life but about the next.

The crucifixion is all about reconciling sinful man to a holy God. In 1 Peter 2:24 we read that “He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree.” He bore the wrath of God in our place to satisfy divine justice. But often, even as believers, I find that we have a shallow understanding of what really happened at the cross. We might have some familiarity with the events of the cross, but no understanding of their significance. So by the power of the Holy Spirit I would have us examine six miraculous messages revealing the might and malice of the cross. We will look at six supernatural events that manifest the infinite power of the Almighty and His infinite hatred of sin. All of which reveal the purposes in the crucifixion of Christ, and also provide a preview of impending judgment on all who disregard what happened there.

The first miraculous message of His might and malice is seen in *the darkness that fell upon the earth*. Notice in verse 45, “Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon the land until the ninth hour.” The sixth hour would have been 12:00, midday. He was crucified beginning at 9:00 A.M. We see that the Light of the World was symbolically extinguished to a world that prefers darkness over light. It fell over the land, which can also be translated earth. We don’t know for sure the full scope of the darkness from this text. It could have been regional or worldwide. It makes little difference—God can do both. Luke describes the darkness with the word *ekleipo*, we get our word eclipse from that. The word in Greek means to fail utterly. To put it this way, the lights of heaven were completely turned out.

We know this was not a lunar eclipse, as some might want us to believe. Passover was celebrated at the time of the full moon, and that would have been the time when the sun would have been in the very opposite direction. There are several extra-biblical reports that comment on the eerie darkness of that day, including one from Pilate to Tiberius remarking on the widespread darkness of those three hours from 12:00 noon until 3:00 P.M.

What we do know is that during that time, the darkness of divine judgment fell upon the Son of Righteousness. I cannot help but believe that the darkness covered the whole earth as a preview of yet another period of judgment that will come over the whole world someday. The Lord Jesus commented on that time in Matthew 24:29, in fact He had commented on it just a few days prior to this time of

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darkness, that time of catastrophic judgment during Daniel's 70th week, just prior to His second coming. We read that "immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers will be shaken."

The prophet Isaiah in 13:9-10 speaks of this time as well, a time that could literally be a few years from now. He says, "Behold, the day of the **LORD** is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light." If you look at the prophets Joel, Amos and Zephaniah you will hear the same thing describing this season of judgment. They will speak of a day of darkness and gloom, of wrath, destruction, trouble and distress, a day of clouds and thick darkness. In fact, Scripture repeatedly uses darkness as a mark of divine judgment.

We know, according to 2 Peter 2:4 that fallen angels have been "committed to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment." According to Jude 6 they are currently "kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day." Jesus, speaking of man's sinful nature, said in Matthew 6:23, "If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" Of course those who prefer darkness rather than light will have their way for eternity unless they repent, because Jesus has said in Matthew 8:12 that "the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

So God's first miraculous message during the crucifixion of His Son demonstrated the infinite might of His judgment and the immeasurable malice that He has toward sin, by cloaking the world with darkness. This, of course, being a preview of that day yet future that will come upon all who refuse His gift of forgiveness.

The second message of His might and malice can be seen in *the alienation of the Father*. Notice in verse 46, "About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?'" I confess here I speak of a matter infinitely beyond my ability to comprehend. The soul of the Man of Sorrows collapses under the weight of the infinite justice of God. The One who had no sin of His own is now being immersed in a vast ocean of it. The Lord has now had our iniquity laid upon Him.

We can only imagine the joy of fellowship that the Lord had up to this very moment. Holy fellowship. Can you imagine that? Fellowship that is utterly separated from sin, utterly bereft of its ravages. We as believers hate sin and its offense to God, however, the way we perceive sin is frankly infinitesimal when compared to God's hatred of it. And now this holy union is shattered. The darkness of the day bears witness to the darkness of our Lord's spirit. The heart-rending wail of our Lord reveals the ultimate extremity of anguish, the very bottom of the abyss of sorrow.

Spurgeon comments on this time this way: "Our Lord was then in the darkest part of his way. He had trodden the winepress now for hours, and the work was almost finished. He had reached the culminating point of his anguish. This is his dolorous lament from the lowest pit of misery—'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' I do not think that the records of time or even of eternity, contain a sentence more full of anguish. Here the wormwood and the gall, and all the other bitternesses, are outdone. Here you may look as into a vast abyss; and though you strain your eyes, and gaze till sight fails you, yet you perceive no bottom; it is measureless, unfathomable, inconceivable.

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This anguish of the Saviour on your behalf and mine is no more to be measured and weighed than the sin which needed it, or the love which endured it. We will adore where we cannot comprehend.”

As I lived with this passage, I began to realize that all of the agonies of torture that He had experienced up to this point had been born in silence—the beatings, the ridicules, the scourging, the crown of thorns beaten upon His skull, the nails in His wrists and feet—but dear friends the pain of divine desertion was a pain too great to bear. So here, from the depths of His tormented soul, His heart breaking in unendurable grief, His voice penetrates the darkness saying, “My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Notice He did not say, “Peter, why did you forsake Me? Judas, why did you forsake Me? Disciples, why have you forsaken Me? Israel, why have you forsaken Me?” No human abandonment can compare with the divine abandonment, with the desertion of the Father Himself. That’s an experience we will never have to bear. But now as our Redeemer bears the curse of the Law in our stead, the holy Judge who cannot look upon sin must now turn His back on the One who must be made to bear it. As Habakkuk 1:13 says, “Thine eyes are too pure to approve evil, and Thou canst not look on wickedness with favor.”

While the love of the Father for the Son never waned, the expiation of sin required that sweet communion to be withdrawn, for His back to be turned upon the One who was bearing the sin. The substitute for the guilty must now drink the cup of divine wrath to the very dregs. There on that tree the One who came to “give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28) not only bore our sin but He literally “became sin on our behalf,” as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:21. In Galatians 3:13, He became “a curse for us.” He takes upon Himself our sin and we receive His righteousness. Inconceivable. And now in the furnace of divine wrath, when the heat is at its hottest, the constant comfort of divine fellowship is broken and thus we hear the Savior’s lugubrious lament as He cries out quoting Psalm 22:1: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

I believe that only those who have known great love can even begin to appreciate such deprivation. The infinite joy of the Lord’s eternal fellowship in the Triune Godhead is beyond our ability to comprehend. Our current state of unredeemed flesh only allows us a trifling sample of such intimacy with our God and with others. Yet even that is an experience that exceeds all others. What joy there is in worship. What joy there is in fellowship. And you can multiply this by an infinite number and still not be able to calculate the joy and fellowship within the Triune Godhead.

I have known many a mate who has soon departed after their loved one dies. The enormous vacuum left by their soul-mate becomes more than they can stand and many die of a broken heart. I cannot imagine my life apart from my precious wife. But as precious as that is, I cannot fathom my life apart from the One who created my life and sustains me. I cannot imagine that. I cannot imagine living apart from having the Spirit of God, and frankly the Triune Godhead, living within me. It’s like oxygen in the air we breathe. He is always there to comfort and to guide. But He was withdrawn from the Lord upon the cross. I can echo Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want... Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” But this was not the case for the Lord.

In Psalm 139 the Psalmist speaks of our experience when he says, “Where can I go from Thy Spirit? Or where can I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Thy hand will lead me, and Thy right hand will lay hold of me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness

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will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night,' even the darkness is not dark to Thee, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to Thee." But the darkness of the Father's desertion left our Lord hanging upon that tree to suffer all alone. We can rejoice in that He will never leave us nor forsake us. Because of God's great love, none of us will ever know the experience of God's abandonment.

I need to add that I believe this is a prelude to hell. One of the greatest torments of hell will be the eternal separation and isolation from the unappreciated benefits of God's blessing. Even the lost experience His presence in common grace. The rain falls on the just and it falls on the unjust. Even the rankest sinner enjoys the spillover of divine blessing that He pours out upon the righteous. You see that even in this country. But in hell this will not be the case.

I think of the joy of knowing that the Lord will never leave us nor forsake us. We all have experiences that we can share where in the middle of our greatest trial the Lord was there. I wonder how the Lord could possibly have stood what He endured on the cross. Even as the Lord joined Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, giving them supernatural comfort and sustaining grace, even so, down through history, dying saints describe the peaceful joy that is theirs when God gently summons them into the realms of glory. He is always there, especially in the midst of the greatest trial, when the torch has been lit to those at the stake. They describe the joy of the Lord in the midst of the flames. He will never leave us alone in our hour of great trial. But not so when Jesus hung upon the tree. Again, I speak of things that I cannot fathom. I have no point of reference to compare to the loss of a conscious presence of the love of God in my life.

So as Jesus cried out in desperation to His Father, the wicked mockers continued to taunt Him saying in verse 47, "This man is calling for Elijah," and in verse 49, "But the rest of them said, 'Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.'" Even in the mysterious darkness of this three-hour period, when the torches had to be lit, even the darkness did not mitigate their blasphemies. Nor will it mitigate their blasphemies in the eternity of hell.

John's Gospel indicates that it was at this time, according to John 19:28, that "Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, said, 'I am thirsty.'" Then Matthew states in verse 48, "Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink." I found what John Trapp, the seventeenth century Puritan said with regard to this to be very moving. He said, "Sorrow is dry, we say. This man of sorrows, more to fulfill the Scriptures than for his own satisfaction, though extreme dry no doubt (for now was the Paschal Lamb a-roasting in the fire of his Father's wrath) he saith, I thirst, and had vinegar to drink, that we might drink of the water of life, and be sweetly inebriated in that torrent of pleasure that runs at God's right hand for evermore."

The sour wine that is mentioned here was an ancient thirst quencher. It would have been something tantamount to our Gatorade, but certainly not that tasty. It was a highly diluted wine. We read that it was put upon a sponge and a reed. The reed, according to John's Gospel, was a hyssop branch. The maximum length of a hyssop branch was about eighteen inches. This helps us understand that Jesus was not far above the ground, maybe a couple feet, for someone to reach up with their hand and an eighteen inch reed to give Him a drink. Here again we see the might and the malice of the cross. We see the might of the Savior's love and the malice of the Father's wrath.

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The third miraculous message of might and malice can be seen in *the surrender of the Savior's Spirit*. In verse 50, "Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit." Here you must understand that the miraculous nature of this event is cloaked within the language of the phrase 'yielded up.' This term in the original language means to deliberately let something go, or to deliberately, with conscious choice, send something away. On the cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus Christ did not commit suicide. Nor did His physical condition steadily deteriorate until finally He was exhausted and He died. You see, the stamina and recuperative powers of unfallen humanness could have sustained life had He chosen to go on living, but rather the text says that "He yielded up His Spirit." It was an act of His sovereign will. In fact, just prior to this in John 19:30, John recorded that He cried out from the cross. He did not faintly murmur, He cried out from the cross. Luke 23:46 adds that He said, "It is finished!...Father, into Thy hands I commit my Spirit."

Here again we witness the fulfillment of Jesus' words in John 10:18 when He said, "I lay down [My life] on My own initiative, I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again." Here we behold the might of our sovereign Savior who voluntarily surrendered His Spirit. We also see again the malice of two competing kingdoms that hate each other: the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. No human being could have taken His life from Him. Only God could yield it up.

At that moment, a fourth miraculous message was sent up from a holy God to a sinful man, a message of might for those who believe and malice for those who refuse. That is in *the rending of the veil*. In verse 51 it says, "And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom." Imagine the scene. All of the worshipers are in the temple. Suddenly the beautiful curtain that separated sinful man from the holy of holies is dramatically ripped asunder from top to bottom. You must understand that now, no longer would access into the presence of God be limited to the High Priest on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. But now God will meet with every man who enters into His presence by the blood of Christ. The barrier of sin was removed by the One who bore it. No longer is there a need for a yearly sacrifice. It is finished.

No human hands could have torn away that spiritual covering, for no one could ever stand in the presence of God who is a consuming fire, based upon his own initiative. As in the days of Sinai when He was first revealed through the Law, that time when man had to stand far back, they had to put a fence around it. They couldn't even touch the fence or get near the Mount. No longer must we stand far off from the One who would be our Judge, for now we have been reconciled and He has become not our Judge but our Father. These are the great truths of the gospel, dear friends. I rejoice that no longer is our God hidden from our eyes in the secret darkness of the holy of holies. The dividing veil has been torn asunder and now we can experience what Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

John MacArthur perfectly and succinctly summarized the significance of this miracle when he said, "...when Christ died...the Old covenant was abrogated and the New inaugurated!" Because of this, we don't need a priest to be our mediator. There is only one mediator between God and man, and that is Christ Jesus. I don't have to go through someone else to have access to God, which is indicative of the heresies of Roman Catholicism. In fact, according to Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need."

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Oh child of God, what fellowship is ours. We have been reconciled to God. Because of His malice of sin, we shall see God. While the worshipers in the temple stood back as the veil exposed them to the presence of God, yet another miraculous message shook the earth, literally. Fifthly we see the miraculous message of *the quaking of the earth* in verse 51, "...and the earth shook and the rocks were split." Here the almighty Creator shakes the earth in an act of divine judgment. Once again this is a preview of an even greater judgment that will one day come. Here God warns sinners of a terror that far exceeds that earthquake, and even the earthquake that He wrought upon Sinai. The writer of Hebrews says in 12:26, "His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.' And this expression, 'Yet once more, denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.'"

What He is saying here is that He once shook the earth at Mount Sinai when He appeared to Moses. If you read the text you will read that "the whole mountain quaked violently" (Exodus 19:18). But when He returns to earth the next time, in final judgment, He is going to not only shake the earth, but the entire universe. Just prior to the Lord's return, the Holy Spirit of God revealed to John what will happen in the cataclysmic judgments of that day. In Revelation 6:13 we read that "the stars of the sky fell to the earth." This is what John saw in terms of what will happen someday. He goes on to say "as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." Days earlier the Lord said in Matthew 24:29, speaking of that day, "...the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

A day is coming when the suffering and the shame of the Savior will become the suffering and shame of sinners, all who have rejected Him. There will be no solid ground upon which to stand, neither physically nor spiritually. For those who have rejected Christ, the might of the Almighty that caused that earthquake will be unleashed upon all who refuse to believe. I can't help but allow my heart to overflow with a doxology and say how blessed is the man whose God is the Lord. We have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Because of this we can sing the great hymns of the faith with absolute confidence: "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand."

I think of that great hymn, of John Rippon's lyrics from the eighteenth century:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can he say that to you He hath said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?"

Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand."

Finally we see one last miraculous message of might and malice at the cross. We see this in, sixthly, *the bodily resurrection of selected saints*. My heart pounds within my breast with joyful anticipation. In verses 52-53 we read that "The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs." By the way, you should put a period there, that's the

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best translation. It goes on with a new sentence, a new complete thought, “After His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.”

Friends, the Lord Jesus was, according to 1 Corinthians 15:20, “the first fruits of those who were asleep.” The first of the resurrection harvest. Of course His resurrection guarantees ours. “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.” This was an amazing event. The spirits of selected old covenant saints, those who had placed their faith in God’s saving grace before the cross, are now united to a glorified body. They have been living with God in glory in spirit form. Now they are given a glorified body. Men and women who have been in the presence of the Lord for maybe hundreds of years now have a resurrected body and are sent back to earth. What an amazing testimony to the saving power of what happened there on the cross.

We’re not told what happened or what they did. They probably appeared to other saints and enjoyed a brief period of fellowship with them and then they quickly ascended back into glory. What a magnificent encouragement that must have been to the beleaguered saints in Jerusalem. The word would spread everywhere. Here they are, mourning the loss of their Savior. They are confused, frightened, and suddenly—again this is conjecture but it had to have been something like this—someone walks through the walls and says, “Shalom! My name is Miriam. I was a friend of Isaiah. I know you,” and she would mention their names because she would have the wisdom that God would grant a glorified body. She would probably say something like, “I’ve been in glory all these years. It’s years to you, it’s nothing to me. But I want you to know that all that Jesus has said and done is true. Be of good cheer. Do not be afraid. Christ has purchased your redemption. ‘There is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.’ The victory is yours, it is ours. Rejoice in the Lord.”

And then perhaps some other people would come into the room and they would introduce themselves. Can you imagine that? I don’t know what they did. But the point is, the other saints knew what was going on. This should be great encouragement to us. Oh child of God, what a Redeemer we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. What hope is ours because of the might of His saving grace and His malice toward sin.

In light of these six miraculous messages that reveal the height of His love by the depth of His suffering, I ask you: what manner of people should we be? When we ponder the price of our ransom, when we consider the cost to redeem us from the curse of the Law, how can we harbor sin in our heart? How can we pander and pamper that accursed thing that caused such agony to our Savior upon the tree? How can we let it entertain us on our television sets? How can we savor it in our mouths and hearts? How can we possibly allow it to satisfy our lusts, rule our emotions, deceive and harden our hearts and rob us of blessing? I ask you, why? Would you befriend a murderer who tortured and killed your child? Of course not, that’s insanity. And yet, how we love to pander our sins. Because of His infinite love, we have an infinite obligation.

The Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit summarized that so perfectly in Romans 12:1-2. He said, “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” This must be the passion of our hearts, all of us who know and love Christ.

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Finally, for those of you who secretly laugh at all of this, you who still mock the Savior in the darkness, for you the tender Savior will be a consuming fire; a holy Judge who will one day pour out His wrath upon you unless you repent, unless you place your faith in the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and be reconciled to God. I plead with you to flee into the mighty arms of the Savior while there is still time, lest you someday be consumed by the fierce malice of His wrath. His grace awaits you. May God have mercy on your soul.

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