

Christ's willing and sovereign sacrifice (Quality: Very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 September 2008

Preacher: Crowter, Harold (1923-2011)

[0 : 00] I venture to ask your attention to the 10th chapter in the Gospel by John, reading by way of text, verses 17 and 18.

The 17th and 18th verses in the 10th chapter of the Gospel according to John. 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. Great words from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ, so personally involved in the interpretation of those things that he was expressing to those round about him.

He knew perfectly what lay before him. The ingredients of the cup that the Father had given into his hand to drink was known to him, and one of the wonders of our faith is this, that Jesus Christ, knowing all that lay before him, when he took our flesh into union with his deity, and came among us born of a woman, made under the law, he knew fully and perfectly what it was entailed in those experiences through which he must pass to fulfill the will of his Father, and the benefit, even the salvation of his people in all nations and to all generations.

[2 : 19] Now, it attracts our minds in the text to power, and the kingdom of God is in power.

My friends, all religion is the exercise of that sovereign power for his people and within his people.

And it's a great exercise and concern to the people of God, believing that the people of God are the subjects of this power spoken of in the text for them, as to the power of God within them.

And it is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of power, to take of the things of Jesus and reveal them to each and every one.

The world is a wonderful testimony of the power of God.

[3 : 46] We read of the Lord Jesus Christ, all things were created by him. All things were created by him. He was involved in the power of the bringing forth of the world in the wonder of creation.

While we live in a day seeking to undermine our faith and bring to a conclusion such an evil as is propounded in evolution, my friends, we hold fast to the wonder, the ministry of God in nature.

All things were made by him. And without him was not anything made that was made. Look, we cannot look upon the book of nature without seeing the wisdom and power and maintaining sufficiency of the Lord as the creator of all things.

He not only created the world for the present in those six days of creation, but he made due regard for the future, the succession of creation down through these almost 6,000 years that the earth has been sustained.

Oh, how wonderful it is to believe, and my friends, that you and I be defensive of the truth in this particular.

[5 : 31] If anybody suggests to me that a lesser power than the power of the almighty God brought this world into being, I dismiss it in a moment as the lie of Satan.

because God is glorified in creation and in scripture we have a recurring testimony that God was in the beginning.

In the beginning was God, and without God, nothing was brought into being. Well now, there are various exercises.

I touch upon creation, and of course the text particularly associates with the truth of salvation, the great work of God.

Really, the end and purpose of God in creation was the salvation of his people. And my friends, we rejoice that that salvation has been maintained right through the generations of time, and the Lord has brought to pass those miracles of his power, whereby sinners born in sin, born with that nature that is at enmity to God, is not subject to the law of God, neither can be.

[7 : 07] Nevertheless, a new nature is given, which is absolutely the sovereign, gracious gift of God.

And everyone blessed with that saving blessing is a child of God, will know the exercises of godliness in life and in death, will prove the ultimate triumph over truth, over evil, in all the truth of God's saving purposes.

Well now, the Lord Jesus Christ here obviously is in the company of those that were rejecting even that plain evidence that was in him and finding expression in his words and in his works as he ministered here below among the sons and daughters of mankind existing at that particular time.

He draws our attention to the fact that the love of his father was defined expression in his work, in being clothed with a body like our own, sin accepted, and in that period appointed for him to pilgrimage here below doing the wonderful works that God ordained he should fulfill.

He draws near to the end of, and in that sense, the crowning will of God that he should be the savior of God's people and he should perform everything that was necessary to the reconciliation of the father to the church and also to the church toward God as their heavenly father and as their benefactor of salvation through the person and work of himself, his well-beloved son.

[9 : 59] And wherever we touch saving religion, we're in contact with the love of heaven. Listen, therefore doth my father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again.

The love of God the father to the son was from everlasting. This is not just as it were the commencement of affection between those two persons in the Godhead that the Lord Jesus Christ descended into human flesh and fulfilled the work there which his father gave him to do.

The Godhead is the very expression of pure and perfect love from all eternity. the father loved the son and Christ when he left heaven and took flesh what what a different environment presents itself to our meditation.

What the perfection of love in the bosom of his father was the estate of Jesus Christ from eternity.

and then he takes flesh and he comes into this world and he comes into contact with the terrible enmity of fallen mankind to him and in many cases focused in a very special way against him suggesting that his professions concerning himself were not true but they were a deception and Christ seeks to remedy as it were that error of judgment by declaring his authority and interest in love of God that love which was in the father to the son and that love which was in the father to the church and the Lord loves his people with the same love that he had toward his son in eternity past and the whole gospel to salvation is the expression of the love of

[12 : 45] God the father therefore does my father love me because I lay down my life now he goes on and he says this I have power to lay it down I have power to lay it down what power the Lord Jesus Christ needed to lay down his life for the salvation of his people if we think of any exercise of a human kind his love to the salvation of his people brought into captivity every vestige of self interest in personal protection personal defense as it were wishing and desiring to be free from that which he foreknew would be his experience and my friends there's a sense in which the

Lord Jesus Christ exercised tremendous power you remember it's recorded in John's Gospel that when they came to him with Judas as their leader and their purpose was to apprehend the Lord Jesus Christ those enemies that were so engaged in the business of Judas at that particular time they fell they fell backward when he confessed the reality of his person he says I am he I am he I'm the one you're after I'm the one you're looking to to take into bondage and captivity

I'm the one I'm he he had power to say that what happened they fell backward they fell backward they were insufficient to accomplish their evil purpose at that particular point and while he manifested his power that it was his own willingness that it's the secret of his subjection to all the experience of apprehension and the experience in the courtroom of Pilate and the eventual fulfilment of every feature of crucifixion that became his experience as the sin bearer in the place of his people

I have power to lay down my life I have power he had power to as it were bring death to everyone that was motivated in contrary attitude toward him he had power to command their death and destruction and his power upon them was limited they fell backward but they still could continue in their life here below but he exercised that power and what power the power of his love the power of his love nothing could hinder the progress of divine purpose and wisdom in the ultimate apprehension the ultimate courtroom experiences of the

Lord Jesus Christ and in the fulfilment of his undertaking that he should lay down his life for his people I have power to lay it down and my friends we see Christ as it were walking through the terrible bitterness and enmity of Jew and Gentile we see him forsaken to a great degree by his friends they all forsook him and fled the women standing afar off all those experiences of his loneliness as he came to fulfil the will of God in sacrifice he was exercising a restraint as it were upon his sufficiency to overcome any enemy any enemy and we see him as a sheep before her shearers is done so he openeth not his mouth or his the power that was present the power of God in the person of Jesus

[18 : 51] Christ is so evident in the experience as it matured as it were toward his crucifixion upon the cross of Calvary nothing was done against him without submission to the will of God and the undertaking of his mission as the saviour of sinners nothing of an adverse nature took place without his knowledge and a measure of personal restraint oh we think of him he could have cast the whole multitude Jew and Gentile into the bottomless pit if he had freedom as it were but what was the restraint his love for the people his love for the people for whom he was coming to Calvary's tree as he was wending his way through the terrible bitterness the wretched deception and the multiplied lies of Satan who was exercising the multitude in an attempt to discredit him but my friends the power that he exercised in restraint is an evidence for all of us to see how he was very God as well as very man as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he openeth not his mouth oh he says even to

Pilate himself the Roman representative he says thou hast said it he was quiet resigned ready to do whatsoever was essential for the salvation of his people and while we see the subjection of the spirit of Jesus Christ when he said this commandment have I received of my father nevertheless there was a spirit in him that was absolutely pure and perfect in the design of his love to his people yea he loved the people all his saints are in thy hand my friends if we are children of

God we were in the hand of Jesus Christ as our surety as our redeemer as our deliverer he was suffering for the sins of his people though he was pure and free from all sinful contagion I have power to lay down my life what what an ignominy associated with his crucifixion between two thieves on that cross of wood outside of Jerusalem's gate the fact that he died outside of Jerusalem's gate is something that required his submission to the will of his father and the very means of his crucifixion cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree we see him made as it were the subject of that condemnation as he took to himself the sins of all his people and suffered for their sakes

I have power to lay it down I have power to lay it down my friends Christ was not there as one struggling against earthly enmity creature powers whether they be Jew or Gentile religious or profane they were all united in the most terrible attempt to make him manifest as a deceiver but he was the very embodiment of pure holy truth I have power to lay it down he laid down his life by the very means that were necessary in the discharge of his great work and undertaking the expression of his infinite love for his people he walked through that deep place of experience in the laying down of his life for his people love now we lose sight of the very sweet fact of the sufferings of the saviour if we in any way deviate from any detail being fulfilled in the spirit of love love and reconciliation to the essential necessities of his father for the acceptance of his people as free from all sin and guilt he says no man taketh it from me but

I lay it down of myself Christ was absolutely in control he was absolutely in control they were not doing what they were doing because they had the mastery no my friends he had the mastery because this was the only way whereby peace could be known by the church and in eternal consequence that is in the everlasting salvation of his people oh the the wonder of the kingship of our lord Jesus Christ as he laid down his life for his people no man taketh it from me but I lay it down of myself I have power to lay it down yes he had power to lay it down and he did lay it down he died he died in the sinner's place he fulfilled as it were the sentence of the law that sin sin is judged and condemned by death and he died on Calvary's tree a spectacle known to the world as a great end of his religion but no it was the proof of his salvation that whatever was necessary in the laying down of his life for his people his power enabled him to execute it prosecute it fulfill it to perfection he gave the law its requirement he magnified the law and made it honorable it was his power that were brought to pass as such a silencing of

[28 : 24] Moses as it were against the sins of the church and he went to the end of the law for righteousness so that the law has nothing to say against anyone of the Lord's people for whom Christ offered himself a sacrifice for sin I have power to lay down my friends the comprehension with all the revelation of scripture both prophetic and in the fulfillment of the new testament all things that associated with the death of Christ were perfectly fulfilled and the power that accomplished was the power of his

Godhead he was God as well as man Emmanuel God with us and in consequence he was possessed of a power to do everything that was required and he waited in that terrible sea of sufferings he waited until all was accomplished that must be done and then he said with a loud voice it is finished he had power to lay down his life he had power to finish the work which his father gave him to do he had power to produce a way to escape for sinners from the wrath to come he shed his blood for the remission of their sins he opened the door of paradise that those deserving to be banished from the presence of God could be welcomed into heaven and made possessors of that glorious inheritance which the Lord has prepared for his people the price has been paid sin in the case of each for whom

Christ suffered bled and died has been discharged as it were that the Lord paid to the uttermost father all that God required well now I have power to lay it down I have power to take it again I have power to take it again the third day the Lord Jesus Christ rose again from the dead it needed his power to lay down his life and it needed his power to take his life again he came forth triumphant over sin death and hell he manifested in his resurrection from the dead the sufficiency of his sacrifice to bring peace to his people my peace

I give unto you he says to his disciples after his resurrection my peace I give unto you not as the world giveth I unto you you see a perfect peace an accomplished salvation I have power to lay it down I have power to take it again the all sufficient Jesus having led captivity captive he received gifts for men yea even to the rebellious also says the scripture I have power to lay it down I have power to take it again and we see Christ as the surety of his people experiencing all that was associated with his apprehension and his crucifixion and we see him descend into the tomb the great stone rolled against the mouth of that tomb of

Joseph of Arimathea nevertheless I have power to take it again the stone is rolled away and he comes forth and makes himself known to those favored disciples and those women and others that were chosen of God at that particular juncture of the world's history to witness his resurrection his conquest over sin and death and hell I have power I have power to lay it down all what power he needed to pay that price to submit to those things that were so terrible as we think upon the sufferings of the saviour but nevertheless he had power to submit to death itself and to be laid in that new tomb of

[34 : 37] Joseph of Arimathea it hadn't been defiled by the entrance into that place made by Joseph for his own burial there had not been a preceding burial there no it was a pure tomb he was not contaminated by any result of death such as we we die and decay enters into our experience as mortal creatures but he saw no no result in that way of disease entering into that pure body that he came forth as pure the third day as he entered into the experience when he was laid in

Joseph's tomb I have power to lay down my life I have power to take it again I want just to come to the union that exists between the Lord's people and this perfect all sufficient conqueror of the enemies of the church a union existed between the Lord Jesus Christ and his people one one power was the secret of his personal deliverance the same power is the secret of the deliverance of the church of

God and his every member from the consequence of sin of death and of hell I have power to lay it down I have power to take it again and my friends though the church of God according to the will of God is subject to the experience of death nevertheless the power that was present in the experience of Jesus Christ in the laying down of his life and the resurrection of his body is the security of the people of God in every individual and personal case one with him there is one of our hymns that comes from one one when he triumphed all hell's defeat

I can't just call the hymn to mind but it's known to you all that have knowledge of the hymn book and it speaks of the oneness of Christ and his people and the power that he exercised in his own experience in death and resurrection is the power which exists to bring his people into his triumphant presence in the very place of paradise eternally our deliverance stems from the power that he exercised in submitting to death even the death of the cross and ultimately taking that life again into possession as he rose triumphant over all his enemies and all his people's enemies that they are made more than conquerors through him that loved them now what

I've tried to do this morning and I'm drawn to a close is to say to sinners the power that was sufficient for Jesus Christ as he entered into the will of his father and brought victory to himself and to his disciples who were witnesses after his resurrection is the power that secures the triumph the victory of the people of God each and every one as individuals if God before us who then can be against us if the Lord Jesus Christ was paid the penalty of our sins upon Calvary's tree and taken as it were the punishment of those sins in his own person and endured what was necessary to the reconciliation of the father toward us then my friends that power is exercised for our ultimate deliverance from sin from death and from hell and the people of

[40 : 52] God can say in absolute assurance by faith in the saviour and the perfection and accomplishment of his salvation thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ we wrestle against sin we wrestle against Satan we're wrestling as it were in an enemy's land but the ultimate victory has been gained for us by the saviour and the saviour will not in any wise lose one of his sheep all that the father giveth me shall come to me they shall come to me whoever whatever may be their situation as sinners before

God justly condemned for their salvation for their sin in heart and in conscience but nevertheless if Christ has paid the price for our redemption if he's gone to the death of the cross if he's overcome our enemies the grave and death itself then my friends the victory is ours by the gift of God to us in the person of his own dear son I have power to lay that that power is the security of the church it's the defense which is impregnable by all their enemies thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus

Christ I hope you've been able to follow my thinking on this great subject of salvation firm and sure the great thing is what think he of Christ what think he of Christ whose son is he are you trusting him for your salvation or are you looking somewhere else for there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved his name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins amen