

"Jesus, Cursed For Us"

Christian Liberty

Galatians 3:10-14

Don Maurer

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Don: All right. The Lord be with you.

Men: And also with you.

Don: You know, the other night a friend of mine was telling me that he was watching the Pirates game last weekend when the Pirates were playing the Nationals. And there was someone who looked like he had an Amish outfit on. And there was a sign on the outfit. Do you know what the sign said?

Participant: No.

Don: Swing and a mish! (*Groans and laughter.*) All right!

Participant: Is that the best you can do? (*Laughter.*)

Participant: We want Sig back. (*Laughter.*)

Don: Boy, we're really desperate now! (*Laughter.*) Okay, you have a song in front of you, hopefully—the lyrics of a song. I thought it would be very appropriate for us to sing the first verse of "What Wondrous Love." Thank you. I can't even read my own writing here. So I will lead us, and let's see if we can sing it. (*The men sing*):

What wondrous love is this,

O my soul, O my soul!

What wondrous love is this, O my soul!

What wondrous love is this,

That caused the Lord of bliss

To bear the dreadful curse

For my soul, for my soul,

To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

Don: Amen!

Men: And Amen!

Don: Father, we come before You this morning with thanksgiving and worship and praise. Lord, not only is it true that "*what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?*", but indeed, Father, who are we that You could take us wretched sinners, deserving only your wrath and curse, and send Your only-begotten Son to bear that curse for us? Father, I can't begin to do this justice. I just pray, Father, that You would help me just to attempt to convey this message in some small way, what it must have been like for Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to bear that curse for us. I pray, Father, that You would give us attentive hearts. And give me, Father, the words to say that will be honoring to You and conforming to Your truth. For we pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Men: Amen.

Don: Okay. Well, of course, Jonathan Watt for the past three weeks did a masterful job of covering Galatians 2 and 3, talking of course about Paul's rebuke of Peter and the fact that we are justified not by works of the law, but by faith in Christ. And then he talked

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about how it was that the Galatians could have been bewitched. And then last week he dealt with that very difficult passage on promises and covenant and faith and law, and how it all works together. He did a very good job.

But I want to go back. Rather than going into Galatians 4, I want to go back to a few verses in Galatians 3, verses 10-14, and just elaborate on those, because I think there is some great and rich truth. And I have to say here that I'm very much indebted to R. C. Sproul and his insight. If you've ever heard his speech at the 1978 conference on Reformed theology on "Sacrifice and Satisfaction," it is to me his best speech. He's given a lot of great talks, but this is the best he has ever given, on how Christ became a curse for us. So I need to give credit where credit is due. I'll be saying a lot of things on my own, too. But there are a lot of good insights from him.

So I want to read from verses 10-14 of Galatians 3 from the ESV translation, although you'll see on your handout that I kind of fluctuate between the ESV and the New King James. I'm like Jonathan Watt—mentally disturbed. And a lot of people will attest to that. *(Laughter.)* But anyway, here we go.

"For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse. For it is written: 'Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, and do them.' Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for 'the righteous shall live by faith.' But the law is not of faith. Rather, 'the one who does them shall live by them.' Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree', so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This is the word of the Lord.

Men: Thanks be to God.

Don: Amen. Bruce has said it before. Several people have said it before. The most important word in the Bible is—

Participant: But God.

Don: Well, that is important. But that's not the one I have in mind. Actually, it's a Greek word. So you probably wouldn't get it.

Participant: Hupr.

Don: Hupr. Very good! Someone was either paying extra special attention to what Bruce said a year-and-a-half ago, or he knows Greek, one of the two. But it's *hupr*. It's the word in Greek which in English is translated "for us," or "in behalf of," or "as a substitute for, in our place."

We see it expressed with the lamb that was provided as a substitute for Isaac. We see it in the Passover, where the lamb was the substitute for all the people of Israel. And in Galatians 3:13, it is said that Christ has become a curse for us. So we're going to be talking about that. But I want to give a little bit of the background before that.

Now in verse 10 it says that those who rely on the law to be right with God, to be justified, are under a curse. You know, Jonathan Watt talked last week about his experiences over the years. For example, he talked about the Jewish rabbi who said that he didn't need a mediator. He said, "The law is my mediator. I hope to be right with God by obeying the law."

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And then he talked last week about his experiences with E. E., Evangelism Explosion. And I've done that as well. I've gone a number of times on E. E. visits door to door. The answers that I've gotten to the second diagnostic question are very interesting. If you were to die tonight and stand before God, why should He let you into heaven?

And the answers vary from "Well, I'm a member of so and so church, or a part of this denomination or that denomination" to the answer Jonathan gets, "I haven't killed anybody." But the answer that I got most frequently when I was on my E. E. visits was, "Well I'm a good person. I've tried to live the best life that I could." A lot of people say that. And a lot of people say that all religions are basically the same, that it doesn't matter who you put your trust in or what you believe as long as you're sincere. Of course the Bible says, "Cursed is he who puts his faith in man and turns away from the LORD."

But the people who say that just don't realize that they are under a curse! Matthew Henry and the Westminster framers—the so-called Westminster divines—said that the covenant of works—in other words, God's requirements to get into heaven if we're going to get there by our works—are "perfect, personal and perpetual obedience" to the law of God.

Perfect obedience. That means not only our outward actions. We don't even do those perfectly. Far from it; we sin every day. But our motives, our thoughts, our desires.

The other night an elder at my church picnic talked to us. And he said, "How would you like it if someone were able to take a pill and then he would know all of your motives for doing what you do. He'd know all of your thoughts." You'd go insane, wouldn't you? You'd go nuts! Well God knows all of our thoughts and all of our motives. And we know that our thoughts and motives aren't pure, even if it could be that our external actions were.

Not only does it have to be perfect, but it has to be *personal*. We don't just go through the motions. And it's not a group thing. It has to be you, me, individually, because we individually stand before God.

And not only that. It has to be *perpetual*, in other words, continuous and forever. The obedience has to be uninterrupted. And if there's any interruption, any sin of thought, word or deed, we are under the curse. And of course that's what happened with our first parents, Adam and Eve. And that put us under the curse. When they sinned, we sinned. That's original sin.

What does it mean to be under the curse? First of all, let me just say what it means in our culture. Usually, when we hear the word *curse* or *cursing*, what do we think of? We usually think of profanity, right, where someone takes the name of the Lord in vain. Or witchcraft—The Wizard of Oz, or whatever. The wicked witch puts a spell on Dorothy. We think of that. Or I remember the song "Snoopy Versus the Red Baron" from 1966. The red baron says, "Curses foiled again!" That kind of thing.

Please indulge me for being silly. But we've heard about the Boston curse, when the Red Sox wouldn't win the World Series for the longest time. Some of you know a good friend of mine, Paul Deffenbaugh.

Participant: Oh, no!

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Don: Oh, yes! Clouser is squirming over there. Anyway, I would sit with his family at our Thanksgiving dinner that we still have at church. And every year, without fail, our table was always last. So I said, "It has to be the Deffenbaugh curse." (*Laughter.*)

Bill McCoy pointed out to me yesterday, "Every place that you've played at, that we've played at, bellies up." It happened again the last time that we played. He says that I'm cursed. Of course I said that the reason that it bellied up the last time is because the owner kept singing the song "Imagine" by John Lennon and suffered the judgment of God. (*Laughter.*)

But the word is used several times in Scripture. For example, in Galatians 1 it says that if anyone preaches another gospel other than the one that I (Paul) preached, "*let him be accursed.*" In Deuteronomy we have "*cursed shall you be*" if you don't obey the law, and Scriptures like that.

Now sometimes the most effective way to define a word is to use its opposite and to know what that means. And so you have these Scriptures on your handouts. I'd like someone to read Numbers 6, verses 22-26. Let's see. Bill McCoy, would you read that for us, please?

Bill: "*And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: 'The LORD bless you and keep you.
The LORD make His face to shine upon you
And be gracious unto you.
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you
And give you peace.'"*

Don: Thank you. Now blessing is the opposite of the curse. When we use the term *bless* or *blessing*, we usually mean benefits from God. And we could just enumerate them for the rest of the lesson, couldn't we?—common grace, sunshine, the rain that falls, family, food, etc. But when Scripture uses the word, it conveys something more. We see the favor of God.

Jesus in the Beatitudes, for example, says, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit.*" ... "*Blessed are those who mourn*", etc. It's not just being happy. But the favor of God is upon you despite your circumstances, as Bruce has noted several times.

But this classic benediction in Numbers, which by the way was sung at Dale's ninetieth birthday party by a good choir and that was a lot of fun to hear, is an example of what we call Hebrew parallelism. In other words, the same theme is stated three different ways. It's common in the Psalms. We see it there, too. And if you don't get it the first time, you can always read the other stanzas that make it more clear.

And so it says, "*The LORD bless you*" with His favor, "*and keep you*"—something that the Jew of Christ's day and before longed for, that even the Jews of today long for. We certainly know all about that, don't we? He longs for security. He longs for a home. We know the homeless of course today long for that too.

And it's further elaborated again. "*The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to You.*" Ever since the sin of our first parents in Eden, the one thing forbidden to everyone, including us, is what? To see the face of God, to see Him in His fullness.

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Sure, people got a glimpse of Him. Moses got a glimpse of His back side, as He put it But we have not had the privilege of seeing God.

I've said it several times. Above all else, what makes heaven heaven? The very thing that is going to be promised to us in heaven is that we're going to see God in His fullness, in His unending glory, His unending presence and grace. Whatever else heaven is—the absence of pain and suffering, all of the glories and the work we'll have and the activities in the new heavens and on the new earth—those will pale into insignificance in that we will see Christ as He is, as 1 John 3 says.

And then it says this. *"The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace)*—again, something very elusive to the Jews, something very elusive to all of us. I mean, war has plagued us since the beginning of mankind, hasn't it? It started with Cain killing Abel. It's as current as our daily headlines.

And peace in the Bible isn't just the absence of conflict, is it? It's rest, it's contentment, it's unending satisfaction. Romans 5:1 says that *"being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* That is a present reality for us, isn't it, brothers? It certainly is. And Christ says, *"my peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you."* And so that is what the Jew, the Israelite, wished for his fellow Israelite—*shalom*, peace, the blessing.

Well if this is blessing, what is the opposite? It would be the curse of God, where the light of God's face is removed, where the grace of God is eliminated and obliterated. And so we experience not God's peace, but His everlasting wrath.

R. C. has said that he has had a lot of people say this. Maybe you've heard a lot of people say this too. R. C. is asked, "Is hell a lake of fire?" And he has said, "No. It's not a lake of fire. Those are symbols."

"Oh, that's so wonderful to hear! It's not a lake of fire. It's just separation from God." What people don't realize is that yes, a lake of fire is just symbolism. But a symbol always points toward something more, doesn't it, not toward something less?

Now I think it's more correct to say that hell is separation from the comfortable and gracious presence of God. Yes, it does say in 1 Thessalonians 2:10 that those who do not obey the gospel will be separated from the presence of God. But what does that mean? It means from the gracious and comfortable presence of God, where there are no benefits of His love, no benefits of His grace, only His wrath.

We say, for example, that war is hell. And I would suppose that war is the closest thing to hell on earth. Or we say that disease is hell. Living in this marriage is hell, or whatever. But that's not true, because there is no circumstance that you go through, and there is no place on earth, no matter how bad it is, where the grace of God somehow doesn't penetrate. But see, when someone experiences the full blown curse of God, His grace and blessings are totally absent. And the opposite—distress, misery—is in its place. Can you imagine that forever? I can't.

All right. So to highlight the contrast between blessing and the curse, Rich Clark, would you read Deuteronomy 28:1-2, please?

Rich: Yes, sir. *"And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to observe all His commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God*

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will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you obey the voice of the LORD your God."

Don: Thank you. And of course He enumerates those blessings. And they're temporal blessings to be sure, but certainly promised to Israel if they would obey Him, which they did not, as we know.

Also, in verse 15 of Deuteronomy 28, it talks about curses. Tom Hans, would you read that for us, please?

Tom: *"But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God, or be careful to do all His commandments and His statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you."*

Don: Yes. And then He goes into all of them, a whole list. "Cursed will you be when you come in and when you go out, when you lie down and when you rise. Cursed shall you be in the city and in the country. Cursed will be your basket and your kneading trough." And He goes on and on and on. Your life will be just one big curse, all right?

And we have to understand that those outside of Christ, even though they may not realize it, even if things may be going very well for them, are under the curse if they have not kept the law. And none of us have.

Now of course I just want to comment very briefly for the sake of time on verses 11 and 12. *"The just shall live by faith."* That's how we are justified. *"The just shall live by faith"*, whereas those who are under the law have to live by every part of the law, as I said before.

But for the sake of time now, I want to spend most of the time on verse 13, because this is so precious. *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us."* What does that mean? What does it mean that Christ became a curse for us?

I want to go back to Gethsemane, the night before His crucifixion. Bob Busteded, would you read Mark 14:35-36 for us, please?

Bob: *"He went a little farther and fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.'"*

Don: Okay. That's a very poignant passage, isn't it? I mean, what was going through Jesus' mind? He uses the very affectionate term for Father in the Greek—*Abba*. Papa or Daddy is really what it could be translated as. What was going through Jesus' mind that night?

You know, we're all anxious when we anticipate something that we dread—a doctor's appointment, when someone checks us and finds a growth or abnormality or a lump or something and we have to get a biopsy. Or your boss calls you in. "I want to talk to you." Whatever it is.

And Jesus was so troubled that Luke's account tells us that He sweat drops of blood, which is a psychological condition by the way, a true condition in the medical literature. Why? Why this agony?

Well, we know that crucifixion was a horrible, brutal, horrendous, ignominious way to die, probably the most cruel way of dying that man ever came up with. And though

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Scripture doesn't go into detail about crucifixion because it was something very familiar to the people in Jesus' day, we know from historians what happened. And if you ever get a chance, or if you've ever read C. Truman Davis's "Christ's Crucifixion From a Physician's Point of View," he goes into unbelievable graphic detail of the agony that Christ experienced during those hours—not only on the cross, but before. I just can't even believe what He experienced physically for us. Oh my, it's just heart wrenching—pain from head to toe, nonstop, as the victim is hung and suspended, unable to breathe, dying of suffocation, or in the case of Jesus, heart failure. Was it this that was causing Jesus this agony? Or was it something in addition to that which made our Savior shrink from what He was called to do?

Doug Manges, would you read 2 Corinthians 5:20, please?

Doug: Yes. *"For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."*

Don: Thank you. The sinless, spotless Son of God was made sin for us—in our behalf, *hupr*—right? How? How did that happen?

Well, I think that a passage in the Old Testament will shed light on this. Sig and I were talking about this a couple of weeks ago. Sig was encountering it in his study. So Sig, would you read the Scripture there from Leviticus 16?

Sig: *"And he", referring to Aaron, "shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering. He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD's lot fell and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness. Then he shall kill the goat for the sin offering, which is for the people. Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. The goat shall bear on itself all the iniquities to an uninhabited land, and he shall release the goat in the wilderness."*

Don: Thank you, Sig. Okay, what's going on here? It's something very interesting. You know, Leviticus is a rather obscure book. But wow, the Day of Atonement—*Yom Kippur*. The Jews celebrate it every year minus the goats, the most important part.

Interestingly enough and amusingly enough, Matthew Henry says that goats may have been used because of their disagreeable odor to symbolize sin. A lot of the Puritans liked to use typology in everything. They may have overdone it sometimes. Nevertheless, it's an interesting point there.

Anyway, there are two goats. One is a sin offering. It's a sacrifice. It's killed. Of course we know that Christ's death fulfilled that.

But it's what happens to the other goat, the scapegoat (or some of your translations may use the Hebrew transliteration Azazel.) It's what happens to this goat that is even more interesting.

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For the Jew, as R. C. points out, that scapegoat meets a fate worse than death. He isn't killed. Instead, the high priest—Aaron in this case—confesses all of the sins of the nation of Israel, putting his hand on the head of the goat. That must have been an all day job. Can you imagine? I mean, how in the world did that work? Every sin of the people, wow! Symbolically bearing the iniquity of the people of Israel. And that goat is taken into the wilderness, outside the camp, isolated.

The scapegoat is regarded with contempt. He's regarded as the lowest of the low, as the most pagan Gentile. Now what happens to Jesus? Is He stoned? Is He taken inside the temple and killed? No. He's mocked not just by His own, who *"received Him not"*, as the first chapter of John says. But He's delivered to the Gentiles—to Herod, to Pilate, to the pagan Roman officials. He suffers a pagan Gentile means of execution and death. And for all intents and purposes it's outside the city limits, outside the camp, in the wilderness, so to speak. He had a preview of that whenever He suffered the temptation of the devil that's recorded for us in Matthew and Luke. But He's in the wilderness.

In effect, Jesus suffered what the leper suffered in Leviticus. Would someone read Leviticus 13:45-46?

Participant: *"Now the leper on whom the sore is, his clothes shall be torn and his head bare. And he shall cover his mustache and cry, 'Unclean, unclean!' He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean. And he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp."*

Don: Thank you. Now think of it. Bill McCoy and I were talking about this yesterday. You wake up one morning. You see a rash. And you wonder, "Uh-oh! No! Could it be this?" And then you have to wait and wait. Read it for yourself. There are all kinds of elaborate ceremonies that someone has to go through with the priest and everything. That could take weeks and weeks to find out if it's leprosy. And if it isn't, all well and good. But if it is, oh my goodness! Not only do you suffer physically, but you are isolated. The person is isolated—alone, or at least with a group of fellow lepers suffering that disease.

We know that for a prisoner the worst kind of punishment is solitary confinement, right, with no comfort or companionship or consolation. Christ suffered with the criminals. And though He was sinless, He became sin for us, as if He were a sinner. The word is *imputation* that has been used so many times here in this study. Our sin is imputed to Christ and He is charged with all of our sin, all the sin of His people throughout history. He became the scapegoat in the wilderness. He was abandoned by God on the cross. I don't know how that happens. I don't know what that all entails.

But He screams, *"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"* I think that sometimes we're so familiar with that. We've read it and we've heard it on Good Friday. We're so familiar with it that it kind of loses its impact, doesn't it? I don't think that He just said it. I think he *screamed* it, as the lights go out, as it were, as He is bearing the curse of God, the equivalent of hell in addition to the physical pain!

Separation from God! I don't know what that must have been like. R. C. points this out. Was Christ even aware of the nails, going through that curse? He was bearing our sin and suffering the equivalent of hell for us. Rich, would you read Hebrews 13:11-12 for us, please?

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Rich: *"For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy Places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people with His own blood."*

Don: Wow! Jesus suffered outside the gate. And He screams, not just from the nails or the pain, but from the curse which He never, ever, ever experienced in eternity before, *"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"*, quoting from Psalm 22 verse 1.

Guys, I can't fathom what that fully means. Maybe you can't either. But I know this: that by the grace of God it is true, and that it happened for you and that it happened for me.

But thank God it doesn't end there, does it, unlike "Jesus Christ, Superstar." Remember that? I remember when I first heard that as a record—what's a record, right? But in high school they played the album. And even though I don't believe I was a believer at that time, I thought, "Wait a minute! There's no resurrection! It just ends with His death!"

And so, as it says in Galatians 3:14, we're justified by what He did, and we have the promise of Abraham by the Holy Spirit. Sig, would you read Isaiah 53:10-11?

Sig: *"When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul and be satisfied."*

Don: Okay. Wow! Think of it. *"When You"*—God the Father—*"make His"*—Christ's—*"soul an offering for sin"*,--and indeed that happened on the cross—*"He shall see His seed."* Last week Jonathan talked a lot about the seed. He sees His seed. He sees you! He sees me! He sees all of His people throughout the ages—the love gift! Bruce so many times has talked about the love gift that the Father gives to the Son, His people. What did Christ say? *"And I, when I am lifted up"*,--that is, when He is crucified, *"I will draw all people to Myself."*

"He shall prolong His days." He will forever reign with His saints. What does the hymn say?

"He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever with His saints to reign."

"And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand." The pleasure of the Lord, the will of the Lord. His work is done. Now He is triumphantly risen and with the Father for all eternity, sitting at His right hand. And *"a great multitude which no man can number"* is going to be with Him in glory, as He gave His life *"a ransom for many."*

"He shall see the labor of His soul and be satisfied." Labor means travail. It's *travail* in the Old King James. It's labor pains. I understand that it's the worst pain that anybody can experience. It may be comparable to kidney stones or something like that. But He shall see the labor pains, the travail of His soul, *"and be satisfied."*

In other words, guys, do you know what He says? He's saying, "It was worth it!" The agony of Gethsemane, the denial of Peter and the betrayal of Judas, the trial, the kangaroo court, the beating, the mocking, the bleeding, the scourging by Pilate, the crucifixion, suffering the curse of God and the equivalent of hell—it was all worth it because of the love that Christ has for His Father and the salvation of His people, you and me.

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Why are you in the kingdom of God this morning? Why am I in the kingdom of God? Because Jesus was cursed for us. And not only that. It says that we, by faith, receive the promise of Abraham by the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 3:14.) And in Revelation 22:5, it says that *"there will be no more curse."* Hallelujah!

Men: Amen.

Don: Hallelujah! Any questions or comments?

Participant: Yes, Don. If you go back up to the garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus says, "Take this cup away from me," Could you elaborate on the meaning of the cup?

Don: Okay. Boy, I wish I knew the exact Scripture. I think it's in Psalm 75.

Participant: Psalm 75:8.

Transcriber's Note: Psalm 75:8. *"For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed. And He pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs."*

Don: Thank you. Thank you, Bishop. Do you want to talk a little about that, Bishop?

Bishop Rodgers: *(Unclear.)*

Don: It's a foaming cup of wrath, right? Something like that.

Bishop Rodgers: The cup was used in the Old and New Testament symbolically. About eighty per cent of the time it refers to God's wrath. So Jesus drinks the cup of God's wrath, that we might drink the cup of the Lord's Supper.

Don: Thank you, Bishop. There is a passage that talks about a foaming cup mixed with wine. And God will fill it to the dregs. And it's referring to His wrath. And He drank that cup for us.

Again, words fail and analogies break down. But Joni Eareckson Tada put it this way. "Christ experienced the Father's slap, that we might enjoy His caress forever." A very interesting way of putting that. So Rich, I don't know if that helps. But I think the bishop is absolutely right there.

Rich: It sure does.

Bishop Rodgers: Would you like me to read that?

Don: Please! Please do!

Bishop Rodgers: In the hand of the LORD there is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices. He pours it out, and all the wicked of the earth drink it down to the very dregs." And Christ drank that cup.

Don: Yes! Praise God indeed! Sometimes people say that God hasn't done enough. Oh, my goodness! Can you ever say that after knowing what Christ endured for us?

Participant: Don?

Don: Yes, Tom?

Tom: The other thing that's hard to keep in mind is that Jesus was one with the Father through all eternity.

Don: Right.

Tom: He's on the cross. He's cursed. Instead of saying, "My God"—Elohim, He says, "My God"—Eloi. The one form, not the plural form. He's a very personal God. He says, "Why have You cut Me off? Why have You separated Me?" All of a sudden He now experiences existence without God. And that's hard to imagine.

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Don: It is. It's hard to fathom what that means. He was the God-Man. Obviously, there was no dissolution of the Trinity. But in His human nature that's exactly what He experiences. And He doesn't say, "Father", does He? All the other times in Scripture He addresses God as Father. Not this time. And it's so hard for us to fathom that, in eternity to experience that. And no wonder the sun didn't shine for those three hours. No wonder there was darkness over all the earth.

Tom: He was forsaken—something we'll never know.

Don: No. It's something we'll never know. Praise God, right?

Participant: Yep. Amen.

Don: Well guys, thank you. Let us pray. O Father, words fail us, Father, as we think of what Your only-begotten Son endured for us. Father, I guess if we can say anything, we say what the words of Isaac Watts say in his hymn.

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

And Father, we could never, ever, ever, ever, ever hope to pay you. We couldn't. And so we thank You, Father, for the free gift of salvation. But Father, in gratitude, we do pray that we would love You because You have first loved us. O Lord Jesus, thank You so much. All the Brave Men said, "Amen!"

Participant: Thank you, Don. (*Applause.*)