

## Near The Cross; Hebrews 12:1-2

- i. Keep Me Near
  - a. Comfort food
    - i. Food that provides a nostalgic or sentimental value to someone,
    - ii. This food may be characterized by its high caloric nature, high carbohydrate level, or simple preparation.
    - iii. The nostalgia may be specific to an individual, or it may apply to a specific culture.
  - b. We all remember that feeling when we sit down to eat this comfort food, safety, security, and maybe even contentment
  - c. Calvary offers us safety, security, contentment
  - d. "There a precious fountain, free to all"
- ii. Come to Calvary
  - a. "Free to all, a healing stream, flows from Calvary's Mountain"
  - b. We have come to Calvary, "Jesus keep me near the cross"
    - i. Hebrews 12:18–24 (ESV) <sup>18</sup> For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest <sup>19</sup> and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. <sup>20</sup> For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." <sup>21</sup> Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." <sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.
    - ii. Imagine the Israelites at the foot of Mount Horeb
    - iii. Exodus 19:16–19 (ESV) <sup>16</sup> On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. <sup>17</sup> Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. <sup>18</sup> Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. <sup>19</sup> And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.
    - iv. It is no wonder that they "could not endure the order"
  - c. Calvary is so much better than anything else
    - i. "The heavenly Jerusalem"
    - ii. Revelation 21:2–3 (ESV) <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the

dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

- iii. The bride is (almost) always the prettiest one at the wedding
- iv. That is the church! The 'enrolled in heaven'
- v. Just look at this descriptive language God uses for His people
  - 1. Mt Zion
  - 2. The City of the Living God
  - 3. The Heavenly Assembly
  - 4. The Church of the Firstborn
  - 5. The righteous made perfect
  - 6. Hebrews 11:39–40 (ESV) <sup>39</sup> And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, <sup>40</sup> since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.
- d. The church is a beautiful group of flawed people made perfect (complete) in Christ
- e. God has saved us because of His love and mercy
- iii. Love and Mercy
  - a. "Near the cross a trembling soul, love and mercy found me"
  - b. Ephesians 2:4–6 (ESV) <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
  - c. God is calling every person that He has created
    - i. He wants each one of us to choose Him over everything else
    - ii. Even though we were "dead in our trespasses" his love breaks through our rebellion and covers us with Jesus' blood
    - iii. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us
    - iv. Romans 5:8–10 (ESV) <sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
    - v. God shares this message love and mercy through the Gospel, the Creator's message to His creation
    - vi. 2 Thessalonians 2:14 (ESV) <sup>14</sup> To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - d. The message of love and mercy is from the very beginning
    - i. The foreshadowing of Jesus in Genesis three
    - ii. The greatest commandments (for Israel under the law of Moses and for us under the perfect law of liberty)
    - iii. Mark 12:28–31 (ESV) <sup>28</sup> And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well,

asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' <sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

- iv. There is no other religion whose God loved His creation so much that He offered up the perfect sacrifice (Himself, Jesus) for it (us)
- e. Why would anyone want anything other than the cross?
- iv. Lamb of God
  - a. John 1:29 (ESV) <sup>29</sup> The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
  - b. The purpose of the Lamb comes from the Passover
    - i. Deuteronomy 16:1–2 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> "Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. <sup>2</sup> And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose, to make his name dwell there.
    - ii. The Passover feast commemorates the exodus of Israel from Egypt
    - iii. It comes from the tenth plague where God struck down all of the first born in the land of Egypt
    - iv. God passed over every house that had the blood of the lamb on its lintel and the two doorposts
    - v. Exodus 12:26–27 (ESV) <sup>26</sup> And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' <sup>27</sup> you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.' " And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.
    - vi. Christ is our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7)
  - c. A Christian has in intimate relationship with God
    - i. Revelation 19:9 (ESV) <sup>9</sup> And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."
    - ii. The picture of the church and Jesus is that of a bride adorned for her husband
    - iii. Revelation 21:2–3 (ESV) <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.
    - iv. The dwelling place of God is with man, the Holy Spirit dwells within us!
    - v. The idea of the Lord's Supper brings with it the concept of marriage

- vi. 1 Corinthians 10:16 (ESV) <sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a **participation** in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a **participation** in the body of Christ?
- vii. Close association involving mutual interests and sharing, *association, communion, fellowship, close relationship* (hence a favorite expr. for the marital relationship as the most intimate between human beings <sup>1</sup>)
- viii. We celebrate our marriage to Jesus every time we participate in the Lord's Supper
  - ix. Is it any surprise that God calls us blessed
- d. "Help me walk from day to day with its shadow o're me"
- v. In The Cross
  - a. "In the cross, in the cross, be my glory ever"
  - b. "Till my raptured soul shall find rest beyond the river"
  - c. We will truly find rest (safety, security, contentment) when Jesus comes to get us
  - d. Rest at Calvary because of the love and mercy of the Lamb of God
  - e. "Jesus, keep me near the cross"

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<sup>1</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 552.