



WEEKLY SERMON

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Text: Isaiah 53:1-12

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

The words of many of our favorite hymns are born out of life-changing experiences.

Charles Wesley composed the joy-filled "And Can It Be" after his dramatic, personal conversion experience. And Horatio Spafford penned the words of comfort found in "It Is Well with My Soul" after the tragic death of his children in a shipwreck over the Atlantic Ocean.

On the other hand, the words of some hymns spring not from a traumatic occurrence in the writer's life but in the midst of the daily routine. That is just the case in the writing of one of the 20th century's most loved hymns: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness."

Thomas Chisholm was born in a simple log cabin in Franklin, Kentucky, in 1866. Lacking any college training nor even a high school education, he became a school teacher at the age of 16 and later entered the newspaper business. The following years found him ordained a pastor, but poor health forced him to leave the ministry. After a time of recuperation, he moved to New Jersey to work as an insurance agent. A prolific writer of poetry, in 1923 Chisholm sent a collection of his poems to his good friend William Runyan, a musician associated with Chicago's Moody Bible Institute, who also worked for a hymnal publishing company.

While on a trip to Baldwin, Kansas, Runyan leafed through the poems sent by Chisholm and was immediately taken in by the depth of meaning and lyrical beauty of the words found in the poem "Great Is Thy Faithfulness."

Years later, Runyan recalled, "This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry over its message in a worthy way." Out of a simple prayer, Runyan's melody took shape, and the completed hymn was published by Runyan that same year.

Due to Runyan's association with Moody Bible Institute, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" became a favorite with the students and faculty alike and has become the Institute's unofficial college hymn.

Yet, it was slow to catch on in churches across the United States until Billy Graham began to include the hymn in his crusades. It was introduced to the people of Great Britain during Graham's crusade there in 1954 and has since become one of England's most popular hymns.

The hymn's first verse is a simple expression of God's unchanging faithfulness, based on Lamentations 3:22: "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

Verse two continues with an expression of God's faithfulness to us in the natural world He created—the changing of the seasons, the movements of the celestial bodies—all joining together in praise to their Creator.

The hymn culminates in the final verse with the testimony of peace that comes through redemption, God's abiding presence in our daily lives, and the blessed hope of heaven. The refrain echoes the infinite faithfulness of God to extend mercy and compassion: "**They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness**" (Lamentations 3:23).

Looking back on the writing of the hymn, Chisholm recalled in 1941, "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness."

It was not until 1945 when George Beverly Shea began to sing **Great is Thy Faithfulness** at the Billy Graham evangelistic crusades, that the hymn was heard around the world. Thomas Chisolm died in 1960 at age 94. During his lifetime, he wrote more than 1,200 poems and hymns, including **O To Be Like Thee** and **Living for Jesus**.

**Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father!
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not:
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.**

**Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness,
morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided-
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

**Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.**

**Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow-
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!**

In ***HIS*** Amazing Grace,
Pastor David Miklas

**From: God
To: To all of my believing Children on earth
Date: Today**

Good morning, I am the Lord your God. Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help. If the devil happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, DO NOT attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFJTD (something for Jesus to do) box. It will be addressed in MY time, not yours.

Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold on to it or attempt to remove it. Holding on or removal will delay the resolution of your problem. If it is a situation you think you are capable of handling, please consult me in prayer to be sure that it is the proper resolution. Because I do not sleep nor do I slumber, there is no need for you to lose any sleep. Rest my child. If you need to contact me, I am only a prayer away.

**Love Eternally,
The Lord your God**

“Jesus, a Friend of Sinners”

INTRODUCTION: Isaiah 53 is one of great chapters of the Bible.

Isaiah 53, like Mt. Everest, stands out in beauty and grandeur, but only because it reveals Jesus Christ the Servant and takes us to Mt. Calvary.

Isaiah 53 is quoted some 41 times in the New Testament making it the most quoted Old Testament chapter in the New Testament.

Isaiah 53:1-4 describes The life and ministry of Jesus:

“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? (2) For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. (3) He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (4) Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”

Isaiah 53:5-8 describes The death of Jesus:

“ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (6) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (7) He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. (8) He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.”

Isaiah 53:9 describes The burial of Jesus:

“ And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.”

Isaiah 53:10-12 describes The resurrection and exaltation of Jesus:

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt 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. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (12) Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

The theme that ties the chapter together is that, “the innocent Servant, Jesus Christ died in the place of the guilty.” In theological terms this is called the “Vicarious sacrifice of Christ.”

In verse 7 Jesus is compared to a lamb, which is one of the frequent symbols of the Saviour in scripture. Remember at the Passover in Exodus 12 a lamb died for each Jewish household, and at Calvary Jesus, “The Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.” He not only died for His people as well as all the world.

In verses 2-3 we have the life story of the servant from the cradle to the cross.

In verse 2 He was despised (counted as nothing) because of his lowly background. “there is no beauty that we should desire him.

In verse 3 He was rejected because of His message.

In verse 3, He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief because of His earthly mission.

We also conclude from verse 5 "**He was stricken, smitten and afflicted.**" To understand this go back to Chapter 52:14. The literal rendering presents a shocking picture: "**so marred from the form of man that his appearance was not that of a son of man.**" In other words, Jesus was so beaten by the soldiers that he was not even recognized as a human being.

In verses 4-6 we have the heart of the passage as well as the heart of the Gospel message: "**The innocent Servant dying as the sacrifice for sin.**" The emphasis in verses 4-6 is on the plural pronouns:

OUR griefs, **OUR** sorrows, **OUR** iniquities, **OUR** transgressions. **WE** have gone astray, **WE** have turned to our own way.

He did not die because of anything **HE** had done but because of what **WE** had done. Notice verse 5.

He was "wounded," which means "pierced through." as Jesus was with the nails in His hands and the nails in His feet and the spear in His side.

He was "bruised," which means "crushed under the weight of a burden." What was the burden? Verse 6, "the Lord laid on Him (that is upon Jesus) the iniquity of us all." Sin is indeed a burden that grows heavier the longer we resist God.

He was "chastised," which means he was "punished" for our peace.

The prophet gives to us the seriousness of sin in the words, in verse 5.

Transgression, which means rebellion against God, daring to cross the line that God has drawn.

Iniquity, which refers to the crookedness of our sinful nature.

In other words, we are sinners by choice and by nature. Verse 6 is the "**ALL**" verse, as it begins with and ends with this word, "**ALL we like sheep have gone astray...the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us ALL.**" Like sheep, we are born with a nature that prompts us to go astray; and like sheep, we foolishly decide to go our own way. Under the Law of Moses, the sheep died for the people; but under grace, the Good Shepherd died for the sheep. Thus Christ took our hell that we might partake of His heaven.

Now as you move through this tremendous chapter:

You think of the Suffering Savior and the Sorrowing Saviour.

You think of the His omnipotence and His omnipresence and His omniscience.

You think of His Glory and His deity as well as His humiliation.

Then you come down to the end of verse 12 and you discover something very significant about the Suffering Saviour. Notice the last part of the verse.

He was numbered with the transgressors.

He bore the sin of many.

He made intercession for the transgressors.

In Luke 7:34 we read, "**The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!**" Here is the statement in which our Lord is called a "**friend of publicans and sinners.**" Think about this for a minute. Our Lord, until His birth, had never been around sin. Only one time had anybody ever sinned in the presence of our Lord, that was when Satan sinned before the world was even created and he was cast with his angels out of Heaven. So from eternity past to the foundation of the world, until Bethlehem, Jesus had seen sin only once. Then strangely and suddenly He was thrown into the midst of sin and sinners. He who was sinless now lived in the midst of sin. Think of it!

He whose lips never utter a sinful word,
He whose mind never had an evil thought,
He whose feet never trod a sinful path,
He whose eyes never looked and lusted on sin,
He whose fellowship had been with the father in Heaven,

Now must deal with sin and sinners. This brings us again to the last part of Isaiah 53:12, "...and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

He was Numbered with the Transgressors: Jesus was a friend of sinners.

In Luke 5:27-32 we read,

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. (28) And he left all, rose up, and followed him. ²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. (30) But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? (31) And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. (32) I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Here Levi, a hated Tax Collector, had just been converted. He decided that he wanted everybody to hear about his new-found faith in Christ and about His new-found Saviour. So he had a meal and called all the Publicans and sinners together. He said, "Folks, I want you to know I am resigning my position. I am leaving everything to follow Jesus Christ. Let me share my faith in the one who has made all this possible."

Hold it, would you have the courage of Levi to go and invite all your unsaved friends over and in the midst of your Barbecue say, "Folks I have some good news to share with you. I am a Christian, I have been Born Again by faith in the Lord Jesus. I realized I was sinner but yet there on the cross, Jesus with His precious blood paid the penalty for all my sins." That was the courage of Levi, would that be your courage also?

Now Jesus was there at the feast with a crowd of the most motley people you ever saw in your life. Jesus is sitting there, perhaps at the head of the table and the Pharisees said, in verse 30, "Well Jesus eats with Publicans and sinners." Again notice our Lord's response in verse 31-32. **They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. (32) I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

I am glad He said that, as our Lord defended the fact that He was a friend of sinners, and numbered with the transgressors.

In Luke 7:36-39 we read,

"And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. (37) And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, (38) And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. (39) Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner."

Here Jesus goes to the house of a Pharisee to eat. The Bible says while He was there a woman, which according to verse 39 "was a sinner," came to the house and took this expensive ointment and anointed Jesus with it.

Notice Judas Iscariot, old money bags himself said, "Wait a minute! That could have been sold and given to feed the poor." Then our Lord spoke and defended this lady whom the

Bible says was a sinner.

Praise God Jesus was always after sinners. That means he was interested in all of us since "all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God."

Jesus died to save "self-righteous sinners.

Jesus died to save Church going sinners.

Jesus died to save sinful sinners.

Jesus died to save those on skid row as well as those who live in mansions.

Jesus was numbered among the transgressors.

In Luke 15:1-2 we read,

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. (2) And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

Here again Jesus was accused of being a friend of sinners. Then our Lord tells the parable of the lost coin, the parable of the lost sheep and the parable of the lost boy.

In verse 7 if a shepherd has lost one sheep, he will go into the wilderness, leaving the 99 behind to bring back the lost sheep.

In verse 10 when the lady lost her coin, she searched diligently until it was found.

In verse 11-32 in reading about the parable of the prodigal son, you will discover again Jesus was speaking concerning sinners...

In all these examples, Jesus was simply showing that He was a friend of the fallen one. There was more.

In Luke 19:1-19 Jesus was a friend of another little tax collector Zacchaeus with whom He went home to eat.

In Mark 10:46-52 Jesus was a friend of blind Bartimaeus, who was found beside the road.

In John 3 Jesus was a friend of the ruler Nicodemus who came to Him at midnight.

In John 4 Jesus was a friend of a fallen lady married 5 times and now living with a man to whom she was not married. And yet he sat on that well and talked with her.

Oh, Jesus was a friend of sinners. He loved them, He cared for them. Criticized though He was, He was always helping sinners. And every one could say with the hymn-writer,

**I met Jesus at the foot of the cross
When I was bound in sin;
Jesus met me, cleansed my heart of its dross,
He gave sweet peace within.
I met Jesus at the foot of the cross,
I met Jesus at the foot of the cross;
All my sins were washes away;
Sin's dark night turned into day,
When I met Jesus at the foot of the cross.**

We ought to be like Jesus reaching out and being a friend of sinners. He came to redeem sinners. We now need to carry that message to sinners. So let me ask again, why do we exist as a church?

Is not our purpose found in the "Great Commission," which is to reach out and carry forth the gospel to the lost and sinful people of the world?

Is not our purpose to "Rescue the perishing, Care for the dying"?

That means we are to reach out to sinners. That means we are to become friends of sinners to reach them for Christ. The biggest responsibility of this ministry is to reach out to people for whom Christ Died.

The biggest job that you and I have as a Christian is running after and being a friend to sinners, to the down and out, to the high and low, the rich and the poor.

Let's not lose sight of our priority giving out the good news, the message of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ, a message that is for all who have "**sinned and come short of the Glory of God.**" We ought to be a church and people known for our desire to be a friend to sinners for the Gospel's sake.

Now let's return to **Isaiah 53**. and notice the next statement in verse 12, "...and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." In life Jesus lived and walked among sinners. In death Jesus bore our sins. I Peter 2:24 tells us, "**Who His own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.**" Jesus died to bear our sins.

Remember the fallen woman at the well? Jesus removed the sin of adultery from her and put it on His record.

Remember the tax collector Levi? Jesus removed his sins and put them to His own record.

Remember the robbery of the dying thief was put to Christ's record.

Remember the pride of the Pharisees was also put on His own record.

And yes, every sin of every human being that has ever lived, and is living, and shall live (and that my friend includes you and I) has been put to Jesus Christ's record. He bore all those sins. Can you sing

**Wounded for me, wounded for me,
There on the cross He was wounded for me;
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,
All because Jesus was wounded for me.**

With your sins and mine on His own body, against His own record. Perhaps Jesus looked up and thought "**Here is one place I can look.**"

My family has forsaken me.

My own race has forsaken me.

My own synagogue has forsaken me.

My disciples have forsaken me.

My own creation has forsaken me.

But there's One Who will not forsake me, My Father in Heaven. He always looks down and smiles upon me." But that day Jesus saw no smile from the Father, all he could see was the Father turning away. Then in so many words Jesus said, "**Father, I expected all others to forsake me, but, 'My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?'**"

Do you know why He was forsaken? Jesus who was numbered with the transgressors is now baring their sins, while on the cross, He became our substitute for all our sins.

Again in Isaiah 53 we come to the last phrase of verse 12, where Jesus is now back in Heaven making intercession for transgressors. He is now where no sin ever enters. He is back where He doesn't have to be associated with sinners anymore. He is back with the Father.

He has sat beside the well with the fallen woman.

He has eaten with a Pharisee and a Publican tax Collector.

He was a friend of sinners.

He was numbered with the transgressors.

He bore all their sins in His own body while on the Cross.

But now He is back in Heaven where He is interceding for sinners as He sits on the right Hand of the Father. Therefore, according to Hebrews 4:16 we can now "**.... come boldly**

unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

"Jesus is the friend you need,
Such a friend is He indeed;
He Who noted every tear,
He will banish every fear;
Jesus is the friend you need."

What a "friend we have in Jesus" Amen.

Now to summarize verse 12, we see Jesus.

**In Life, He was numbered with the transgressors. He went after sinners.
In Death He bore the sins of many. Jesus died for sinners.
In Glory He makes intercession for the sinners.**

Over two hundred years ago a document was signed. The purpose of which was to produce liberty, yours and mine. Little did those men realize that their signature would give birth to a nation strong and mighty, the greatest land on earth. I'm grateful that our nation is one of liberty.

But you know ... two thousand years ago a more important pact was signed. It gave to all people everywhere a chance that's yours and mine. For on a cross, between two thieves, hung God's beloved Son. The document that Jesus wrought was signed in His own blood. The document my Saviour signed was addressed to "whosoever will".

Now in closing let's ponder the words of one of my favorite hymns, "My Saviour's Love".

**I stand amazed in the presence Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me, A sinner, condemned, unclean.**

**For me it was in the garden He prayed: "Not My will, but Thine."
He had no tears for His own griefs, But sweat drops of blood for mine.**

**In pity angels beheld Him, And came from the world of light,
To comfort Him in the sorrows He bore for my soul that night.**

**He took my sins and my sorrows, He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calv'ry, And suffered and died alone.**

**When with the ransomed in glory His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages To sing of His love for me.**

**Refrain: How marvelous! How wonderful! And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful! Is my Savior's love for me!**

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon, "**Jesus, a Friend of Sinners,**" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"

Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**"

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know? Please send an e-mail to, pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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