

THE GATEWAY TO THE GREAT WAY

God considers Israel to be the central land on earth and Jerusalem is the epicenter. At the time of Jesus it was a gateway to the world. What took place there at the Cross where Jesus died is the crossroads of history. Jesus told his disciples that he was the door or gate to the sheepfold and that He would lay down his life for the sheep. What took place at His crucifixion was a blood covenant. Just as Jesus was dying on the cross, sacrificial lambs were being offered by the Jewish priests for the sins of the people at Passover. A lamb for a family was common practice. Jesus would be the Passover Lamb for the whole human family. Middle East cultures are familiar with covenants. Those familiar with blood covenants today are those who belong to gangs, secret societies and various tribal groups in the world. I began to learn about blood covenants over 30 years ago. The one we are most interested in is the one that Jesus made for us as he shed his blood at the time of his suffering and crucifixion.

Jesus came to open the door for us into a new world, but in order to do so, he would have to take upon himself all that the sinful world had to offer: sin, guilt, shame, sickness, pain, sorrow, darkness, despair, dire poverty, curses, fear and hate. (A new and living way - Hebrews 10:19-20). When a covenant is made for a group, one person is chosen to be a representative for them. Since Jesus was the Son of Man and the Son of God, he was chosen to represent both sides of the covenant, God and all of mankind. Jesus was a perfect mediator between God and man as he had status in both worlds. - Job 9:33. The word covenant comes from the Hebrew word *berith*, which means *to cut*. When two persons made a covenant, their palms or wrists would be cut and then they would clasp hands and let their blood mingle. I remember talking to a gang member in Florida many years ago who said he did that very thing for 5 hours. The other person was becoming his blood brother. Sometimes the blood brothers would take charcoal and rub it over the cut to create a permanent scar. We know from the Bible that Jesus has permanent scars in his hands as a memorial of his blood shed for us at the cross. The supernatural world of evil was fully unleashed upon him as he suffered and shed his very life blood. Jesus took all of the negative once for all upon himself.

On the other side of the cross we discover all the things that Jesus made available for us. It is the positive side of the cross where we see our grand inheritance in Him. Through the blood covenant we are no longer aliens but have become members of the Father's household. We have a new identity, a new position, new authority, new resources and much more. We are not just believers in and followers of Christ. **We are IN CHRIST.** That phrase 'in Christ' occurs

about 172 times in the New Testament. We are in covenant with God through Jesus. We will spend the rest of this life and the next discovering our rich inheritance in Him. We have entered another supernatural world.....the kingdom of God! The reverse side of the Cross includes the resurrection life and the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit that we have only begun to tap into. God is unleashing his mighty power around the world today and it will only increase as the final harvest is gathered before Jesus returns to Jerusalem, the place where he died and rose again. In the meantime, the goodness and power of God will be on display through his believers. At the core of their belief are the following truths.

‘I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.’

Galatians 2:20 NIV

1. **I died with Christ.** The old man is gone. I am free from my past.
2. **Christ lives in me.** The new man lives! The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in me. My present life is fulfilled as I live and walk in the Spirit. Fulfilled means I am filled full and satisfied as I am walking in Shalom.....completeness IN CHRIST.
3. **I live by faith in Christ who lives in me.** The test of this belief is in what Jesus proclaimed to his disciples.

‘A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will **BE** like his teacher.’ - Luke 6:40 NIV This speaks of the character traits of Jesus.

‘I tell you the truth, anyone who has **faith in me**, will **DO** what I have been doing.’ - John 14:12 NIV

The four gospels in the N.T. are not just a history of the public ministry of Jesus Christ. We should read them as apprentices of Jesus and study how Jesus walked in the Spirit. His very life in us should inspire us to realize that nothing is too hard for God and all things are possible. Our lives should reflect the same love, compassion, wisdom and power that he walked in. Of course, God spreads his gifts in the body of Christ as he purposes, but every Christian should be willing and available to express the supernatural life of Jesus to the world as he directs. We should have faith in the Name of Jesus and walk in love. 1 John 3:23

4. **I am loved and forgiven.** God has been gracious to us. We are to grow in grace and show that grace to others. Grace is not just a word for salvation but we are to **live by grace**. Christians should not act mean spirited when someone ticks them off. We should be 'gracious' to them as God was to us!

Jesus is the gateway to the great way of living and loving. Becoming a Christian is to enter a blood covenant relationship, for we are betrothed in marriage to Jesus Christ - 2 Corinthians 11:2. All covenants are not to be entered into lightly as we shall see in our next messages. Because few Christians understand the importance of the blood covenant, far too many are fickle in their faith, their commitment to Christ, to his kingdom, to the body of Christ and even to their spouses. The divorce rate among Christians is little different than that of the secular world. It is partially due to a lack of understanding about blood covenants. Years ago I memorized the following blood covenant scripture which has been a great encouragement to me. Perhaps you will find it helpful too. My comments are in parentheses.

**'They overcame him (the accuser)
by the blood of the Lamb (God's covenant)
by the word of their testimony (our confession)
they did not love their lives so much as to
shrink from death. (our covenant commitment)
- Revelation 12:11**

There was a great exchange that took place at the cross. Jesus took our place, our sins, our past. In turn, we now can receive his righteousness and glorious future. We come to the cross and kneel before Jesus who is our Savior. We realize that we died with him, but there is new life on the other side of the cross. It is resurrection life and all the benefits that Jesus purchased for his benefactors. On the next page we get a glimpse of the great exchange that took place through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

JESUS EXPERIENCED



INJUSTICE, CONDEMNATION

SHAME, HUMILIATION

SCORN

NAKEDNESS

SORROW

WOUNDS

BROKEN HEART

REJECTION

ANXIETY

WEAKNESS

CURSE

WRATH OF GOD

DEATH

HELL

MY INHERITANCE



JUSTIFICATION

DIGNITY, HONOR

ACCEPTANCE

RIGHTEOUSNESS

HOPE AND JOY

HEALING

NEW HEART

SONSHIP

PEACE

STRENGTH

BLESSING

FATHER'S LOVE

ETERNAL LIFE

HEAVEN

Have you received your inheritance? It is In Christ. Receive Him and walk with Him.

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