

# “So Send I You”

## 15

### *From Glory to Glory*



Character development is said to be the most important work, ever entrusted to human beings. During the next hour we will explore both our privilege and our responsibility to become Christ-like in character. Join us now for this powerful time of personal renewal as Pastor Stephen Wallace takes us "From Glory to Glory."

Good evening, my dear friends, and blessed and happy Sabbath to you. You're really going all out to make a Montana boy feel at home. There's actual snow on the road, and that has been, I guess, a bit intimidating for some of you folk down here in the South, where you don't get a lot of that stuff. But thank you for braving the elements and choosing to come tonight.

It's a privilege to study with you the most important work ever entrusted to human beings. And that is what class? Character building. **Education, page 225.** Say it with me. Remember it's a course requirement, you must have it memorized by the time we're down to the end of these studies. Here we go: **"Character building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings, and never before was its diligent study so important as now."** A lot of you did better on the last word than you did on the rest of the statement there. Character building, indeed, the most important work, and never more important than now because the King is coming soon.

But we have much to do. **We have a gospel to take to every nation, kindred, tongue and people {Rev 14:6}, and we have our own lives to prepare. {Rev 14:7}** But again, the successful accomplishment of both of those tasks depends upon the very same thing, and that is the development of a Christ-like character. Because we can be neither effective witnesses for the King nor fit citizens for the kingdom unless we have a Christ-like character. My dear friends, there's not much time. **It takes time to develop a Christ-like character. {5T 618.1}** We have none to waste. Thank you for coming back and studying diligently with me what saith the Lord regarding our cooperative role in this character-building process.

We cannot make ourselves Christ-like in character, we must be changed **"from glory to glory, even as by..."** whom? **"...the Spirit of the Lord."** **{2 Cor 3:18}** But the Holy Spirit can't change us unless we cooperate. And it is imperative for us to know how to cooperate. And we are looking at this juncture in our series, at the twofold provision and what it makes possible. The twofold provision we find as we kneel at the foot of the cross, symbolized in **the blood and in the water that flows from the pierced side of Jesus. {Jn 19:34}** We've studied carefully that by the blood we are justified. By the water we are sanctified. And it is by means of this twofold provision of grace, that Christ's glory is restored in us. The blood provides the foundation. The water provides the power. And as we learn to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, which is what the water symbolizes, we can build a character temple to the glory of God, that will not only survive time, but will last for eternity. Amen? {Amen} ...last for eternity. But such a character must be built on the bedrock of righteousness by faith... in Christ alone.

And my dear friends, to successfully build such a character, we must be powerfully and rightly motivated. I want to repeat that: We must be powerfully and rightly motivated. Why? Because it takes diligent, persevering effort to cooperate with the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. As we've already noted, we are to learn **to keep the heart with all... what? ...diligence. {Pr 4:23}** Does **"all diligence"** imply a certain amount of effort? Oh, it certainly does. And why is it that we must learn to keep the heart with all diligence? Because **as man thinketh in his heart, so is he. {Pr 23:7}** And

remember, that is really what character is. It's the activity of the heart. And the heart, as we've defined, is really the soul as it comprehends both the intellect and the affections.

What's the activity of the intellect called? The thoughts.

What's the activity of the affections called? The feelings.

And remember, what is our working definition for "character"? **"The thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character." Testimonies, volume 5, page 310.** So it only stands to reason then, if we are going to develop a Christ-like character, we must learn to diligently govern our thoughts and feelings. Amen? {Amen} We must learn to have the mind of Christ. **Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. {Phil 2:5}** That's what being a Christian is all about. It's much more than just talking the talk and walking the walk. It's first and foremost thinking the thoughts. Amen? {Amen} And my dear friends, we have ourselves fooled so often thinking that just because we do a pretty good job of talking the talk and walking the walk, that we are Christians, when we might not be at all. You may not be what you think you are, but what you think, you are. **"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." {Pr 23:7}** And learning to govern the thoughts requires all diligence, persevering effort.

And that requires powerful motivation. You and I will not persevere, in learning to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ - which remember is our goal - we will never persevere in reaching that goal unless we are powerfully motivated. And tonight I want to consider with you that which alone is a sufficiently powerful and appropriate motivation. Very important study tonight. We're going to take a look at the Lord's commission to us. Having provided at infinite cost to Himself the blood and the water, that all-sufficient twofold provision of grace, whereby God's glory might be restored in us for Christ's sake, He commissions us with remarkable and familiar words. Title of tonight's study: **"So Send I You"** Ah, the significance of that, that simple but remarkably comprehensive commission is what we need to turn our attention to.

But before we open the Bible, what must we pause to do? Open our hearts... Remember our memory device? Never let yourself open the Bible, unless you've, what? Opened your heart. So please kneel with me for a few moments of silent prayer, personally inviting God's Spirit into your own heart. And please, I covet your prayers tonight. Pray for your brother as well.

*Father in Heaven, I thank You for this sanctuary in time, that we have entered this holy day. And I thank You as well for this sanctuary in space, this holy house of prayer. And I thank You that time and space is holy when Your Holy Spirit is present. And that's what we invite just now... Your Spirit. Come into this place... fill every moment of this time. Most importantly come into our hearts. We know that You are here, in our midst as a congregation for You have promised, "Where two or three are gathered in My Name, there I am in their midst." But we are not content to only have You here in our midst as a congregation. We want You in our midst as individuals. So we open wide the door of our body temples, and we say: "Come in heavenly Guest, come in, please." Quicken and energize our mental and spiritual faculties. Give us that spiritual discernment that we must have if we are going to be able to grasp the truth with the intellect, embrace it with the affections, and most importantly, submit to it with the will. Lord God, please help us to understand, especially tonight, how we can and must be rightly motivated to persevere in the building of a Christ-like character to the glory of our Savior and to Your glory, a character building that will last through time, and for all eternity. Please guide and direct my thoughts and words. I want to speak the truth and only the truth in Your behalf. Cause my tongue to cleave to the roof of my mouth should I say anything that would misrepresent the truth. But loose my tongue and guide it and direct it that I might proclaim, with clarity and with accuracy, the truth as it is in Jesus. I give You my whole being to that end. Please condescend to use me. I ask it in Jesus' name, amen.*

The title of our study, **"So Send I You,"** is taken from **John 20:21**. We are on page 34, under lesson 15, **"So Send I You."** **John 20: 21: "Then Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'" Now that is the New King James version. The more familiar King James is "so send I you."** My dear friends, please consider with me the profound significance of that commission. Jesus is commissioning us to do for Him what He did for the Father. Is that clear? **"As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."**

What did the Father send the Son to do? We've already studied that: He sent Him on a twofold mission. What was it? To reveal God's glory to man, and restore God's glory in man.

My dear friends, please know that that is precisely what Christ is commissioning us to do for Him. **"As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."** You see, Jesus is just about to go back to the Father. And He is fully aware that there must continue to be on planet Earth a right representation of His character. Because after all, Satan will continue to lie to the human race and seek to misrepresent the character of God. Therefore, there must be someone to set the record straight. Amen? There must be someone to reveal the truth regarding the character of God. And who is that to be? That is to be His disciples... those who submit themselves to His Lordship and His discipline, which is what it means to be a disciple. It means to be under the discipline and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It means to be His people.

**Steps to Christ, page 115;** listen to this remarkable statement: **"The children of God are called upon to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the goodness and mercy of the Lord. As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love. 'As Thou hast sent Me into the world,' said Jesus, 'even so have I sent them into the world.'" Do you see the direct parallel between Christ's mission to the human race, that was given Him by the Father, and our mission given to us by Jesus? It's clear, it's direct. You see my dear friends, please understand the very serious responsibility that one assumes when they claim to be a "Christian." We, as such, are to be Christ's ambassadors. We are to represent Him in this world.**

And please know that the world has a right to draw conclusions regarding what Jesus Christ Himself is like on the basis of how Christians act. Amen? Don't they? Yes, they do. We are to be living epistles, known and read by all men. And the message that we give is to be a revelation of what Jesus Christ is like. That's a solemn responsibility, isn't it? I plead with you, my brother, my sister, don't take Christ's name in vain! And I'm not talking about swearing, am I? I'm talking about a much more subtle form of taking His name in vain. I am talking about claiming to be a Christian, while being unchrist-like in character. Is that taking His name in vain? Oh, most definitely it is.

One of the most frightening and solemn indictments to be found in Scripture is that which God pronounces regarding His chosen people. He says of them, **"My name is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles because of you."** **"My name is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles because of you."** {Rom 2:24} You see, they were known as God's chosen people, but did they rightly represent Him? Did they tell the truth regarding His character? No, and God got some very bad press on account of those dead epistles. My dear friends, God forbid that anyone here should have to have such an indictment pronounced regarding them. **"My name is blasphemed because of you."**

And I insist that the responsibility that rests upon us as Seventh Day Adventist Christians is especially great because you see, we... claim not only to be Christians, but we claim to be God's remnant people, with a very special and solemn mission to accomplish in these closing hours of earth's history. Amen? {Amen} And I believe that with my whole heart, my dear friends. It doesn't make us better than anyone else, but you better believe it makes us more responsible than anyone else. {Amen.} We have a very solemn responsibility.

We have been raised up and denominated and given a very special message to proclaim to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. What is it? It's the three angels' messages. And how does it begin? **"Having the everlasting gospel..." {Rev 14:6}** Oh, please don't forget that context. We can't possibly rightly proclaim the three angels' messages unless we have the everlasting gospel. **"Having the everlasting gospel, saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give... {glory} glory to Him.'"** What does it mean to give glory to God? It means to reveal His character in our own, my friends. How, pray tell, can we successfully fulfill our mission and proclaim such a message if we ourselves are not revealing God's character? ...and thereby giving glory to God? So, I insist that the responsibility rests even heavier on Seventh-day Adventist Christian shoulders.

Here's another statement; **Review and Herald, April 30, 1889: "Christ came to represent the Father to man. He revealed the nature of God to the world. Satan had misrepresented the Father. He had pictured Him as a being full of revenge, who had no forbearance, no mercy, no patience, no love. He clothed Him with his own attributes; but Christ came, and took upon Him humanity, that He might reveal to humanity the true character of the Father; and we are to represent Christ to the world, as Christ represented the Father."** Do you see the direct parallel? Oh my brother, my sister... what a solemn responsibility. What a solemn thought.

Now, how can we fulfill this commission? How? How can we do for Christ what He did for the Father? How can we be used of Him to reveal His glory to man, and to cooperate with Him, that His glory might be restored in man? How? Only, I insist, only by coming daily to the foot of the cross and receiving by faith the twofold provision of grace, symbolized in the blood and in the water. And my friends, we have, in the immediate context of the commission, both of those provisions. And I want you to note carefully the order in which they are presented. It is profoundly significant. Let's look at the larger context of the commission.

The commission is found in **John 20:21. "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."** But note it in its larger context; let's pick it up at verse 19. **John 20:19: "Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'"** Oh, precious words of greeting. Did you hear them? **"Peace be with you."** What's the significance of those words? Please note **verse 20: "Now when He had said this, He showed them His..."** what? **"His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Then Jesus said to them again,"** verse 21: **"Then Jesus said to them again: 'Peace to you.'"** What is the significance of that twice-repeated assurance... that they have peace? What is its significance? My dear friends, He is assuring them that on the basis of the blood, they are justified, and thereby have peace with God.

You see, **Romans 5:1**, what does it tell us? **"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have..."** what? **"peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."** What is the only basis upon which we have peace with God? Being justified by... what? ...by faith. Faith in His... what? **Romans 5:9: "having now been justified by His blood."** It is by faith in the blood of Christ that we have peace with God. I believe that that is why after Jesus said, **"Peace to you"** the first time, ...what did He do? He pointed to His what? His hand. What flowed from His pierced hand? Blood. And He pointed to His what? His side. What flowed from His pierced side? Blood. It is as if He is saying, *"This peace is based upon My shed blood. And because of what I have done, and you have received by faith, you have peace with God."* You see my friends, this is the foundation, that we must build a character-temple upon. And this is the only proper motivation to do so.

Now follow closely what I mean by that. It is profoundly significant that before Christ asks His disciples to do anything for Him, He twice assures them that they already have peace with God on the basis of what He has done for them. That I insist is profoundly significant. I want to repeat that. Before

He commissions the disciples, and as it echoes down, before He commissions us with this remarkable commission, "**As the Father has sent Me, so send I you.**" What does He twice assure us all of? ...that we have what? Peace with God on the basis of what He has done for us. Now, why is that so significant? Why is that so significant?

Because my dear friends, Jesus wants us to be rightly motivated to do for Him what He did for the Father. You see, this is why He didn't say, "*As the Father has sent Me so send I you, and if you do as good a job for Me as I did for Him, you'll have peace with God.*" Praise the Lord, He didn't put it that way. Amen? If He had, what would we have done? We would have all rolled up our sleeves, gone to work and tried to earn our acceptance, our peace with God, on the basis of our performance. Are you following this? And Jesus knows full well that human nature is altogether too prone to do that anyway. So to protect us from that very human tendency, twice before He asks us to do anything for Him, He assures us that we already are accepted and have peace with God on the basis of what He has done for us. Now my dear friends, we are to go to work for Him, not in order to earn our acceptance, but because we already are accepted. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

And that, by the way, is the most powerful motivation that the human heart can know. You see, please understand... and by the way, modern psychology and psychiatry is recognizing this. Please understand that the greatest need in the human heart is for acceptance. Did you hear that? The greatest need in the human heart is for, what? Acceptance. And please understand further, that that which motivates us most powerfully is that which meets our greatest needs. Did you follow that step? That which motivates us most powerfully is that which meets our greatest needs. And what is our greatest need? It's to be accepted. Now this need is so powerful that all of us put forth great effort in reference to this need.

But everyone can be divided into one of two groups. There are only two, one of two groups: those who put forth effort in order to earn or gain acceptance, and those who put forth effort because of gratitude and appreciation for the fact that they already are accepted. Did you catch that? This need for acceptance is so great, that everyone works in reference to it, but everyone falls into one of two categories. Those who work in order to gain acceptance, or those who work because they already are accepted.

Is the Christian to put forth effort when it comes to fulfilling this commission? Oh, yes he is, my dear friends. It takes persevering effort to do for Christ what He did for the Father. And whenever you begin to talk about effort in the Christian experience, what, almost inevitably, do people start to do? They start to get uncomfortable and conclude that you're getting into what? Righteousness by works. Ah, my brother, my sister, please hear me on this. Is human effort categorically works? Is it? Is human effort categorically works? Is it always works? Absolutely not. As in righteousness by works, most emphatically no. What makes human effort legalism? ...makes it righteousness by works or not? What makes it... It's the motive behind it, right? It's the motive behind it that makes all the difference. If we are putting forth effort in order to earn our acceptance that's, what? That's works, that's legalism.

But if I am putting forth effort because I love and appreciate Jesus so much for the free gift of acceptance that He, at infinite cost to Himself, has given me as a free gift, and I want to do and be all I can, to show Him how much I love and appreciate Him for it, is that legalism? A thousand times no. That's **faith that works by love and purifies the soul.** {Gal 5:6, 1 Pet 1:22} Amen? {Amen; Praise the Lord.}

And my dear friends, I'm here to tell you that nobody works harder than somebody who's motivated by love. And they don't even count it a chore or a duty. Indeed it's a delight. Amen? It's a delight.

Oh brother, sister, please, let's avoid this knee-jerk reaction that we have when we start talking about human effort in the Christian experience. It's not categorically righteousness by works or legalism. It's the motive behind it that makes it such, or not. When we hear and accept that twice-repeated assurance of peace, and know that we are fully accepted, justified by faith in the blood of Jesus, and rejoice in the fact that we are accepted in the Beloved, and when we begin to understand the price paid by God the Father, and God the Son, that we might be such. Our hearts respond, at least they surely should, in love and gratitude. Amen? And we want to do and be all we can to show Him how much we love Him.

And what do we hear Him say? **"As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."** {Jn 20:21} **"If you love Me, keep My commandments,"** {Jn 14:15} *and let Me thereby restore in you by Spirit-empowered, love-motivated obedience, My character. For My Law is the transcript of My character.* **"The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."** {Ps 19:7} When we love it and keep its Spirit, which is supreme love for God and unselfish love for others. Amen? Supreme love for God enables us to obey the first four. Unselfish love for others enables us to obey the last six. **"Love is the fulfilling of the law."** {Rom 13:10} And when we, in gratitude, love Christ for all He's done to save us, we don't even think of obedience as a duty, we think of it as a what? A privilege and a delight. And we are changed from the inside out... changed from glory to glory.

Oh my friends, may we understand the profound significance of the twice repeated assurance of peace that precedes the commission, **"As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."** It's only as we understand that that we can be properly and powerfully motivated to do for Christ what He did for the Father. Now, having provided a sure foundation, and having provided a proper motivation, He gives us the commission. **"As the Father has sent Me, so send I you."**

Then immediately following the commission, what does He do? Here comes the water. What does He do? **John 20:21: "Then Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'" Verse 22: "And when He had said this, He..."** did what? **"...He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" There you have the water. Remember the water symbolizes the Holy Spirit. So in the immediate context of the commission, what do we find? The blood and the water.**

By the blood we have peace with God. And by the water we have the power of God.

And with the peace and with the power, my dear friends, we can do for Christ what He did for the Father. Amen? {Amen} We can... we can. The Holy Spirit that He breathes on us, what is its work? What does the Holy Spirit do? **Colossians 1:19 and 20: "For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross."** There's the peace, and that brings the motive of what? Love. **2 Corinthians 5:14 and 15: "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves but for Him who died for them and rose again."** The peace is the foundation. Power is the Holy Spirit; and what does the Holy Spirit do? **2 Corinthians 3:18, that's the text: "But we all, with unveiled face..."** our key text, **"beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by..."** whom? **"by the Spirit of the Lord,"** my friends. Only the Holy Spirit can change us. We cannot change ourselves. That is why, in order to fulfill the commission, Christ had to give us supernatural power. He had to inspire us. He had to inbreathe His Spirit within us that we might have sufficient power to do for Him what He did for the Father.

What does Christ say regarding the Spirit? **John 16:13 and 14: "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."** Very interesting; what does Jesus say the Spirit will do? **"He will glorify Me."** Please notice that the Father sends the Son to glorify Him. Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to glorify Himself.

But I have a question: Does the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus in just the same way as Jesus glorified the Father? No. Why? Jesus glorified the Father in His own visible person. Right? He could say, **"If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father."** {Jn 14:9} And He was the brightness of His Father's glory. Is the Holy Spirit a visible person here on planet earth? No. The Holy Spirit then obviously glorifies Christ in a different way than Christ glorified the Father. How is it that the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ? By restoring the character likeness of Christ in us my friends, yes, indeed. By restoring the character-likeness of Christ in His people. That's how the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ.

Note this remarkable statement. **Desire of Ages, page 671: "Of the Spirit Jesus said, 'He shall glorify Me.' The Saviour came to glorify the Father by the demonstration of His love; so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing His grace to the world. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. The honor of God, the honor of Christ is involved in the perfection of the character of His people."** Oh, brother, sister... Please understand what's at stake here. First of all, how does the Holy Spirit glorify Christ? The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity... that's us. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by changing us from glory to glory, into the character likeness of Christ. By transforming us, by the renewing our minds, and enabling us to reveal in our words and in our actions and yes, even in our very appearance, to the fullness of our sin-damaged capacity the glory, the character of Jesus Christ.

Now mind you, when we do our very best... we, even in the power of the Holy Spirit, we still what? We still come short... we still come short. But that shouldn't discourage us. Look at this statement over on page 34, towards the bottom there; **Testimonies, volume 2, page 618: "He [Christ] had a mighty influence, for He was the Son of God. We are so far beneath Him, and so far deficient, that do the very best we can, our efforts will be poor. We cannot gain and possess the influence He had, but why should we not educate ourselves to come just as near to the Pattern as it is possible for us to do, that we may have the greatest possible influence on the people."** My dear friends, even the most godly of His people are still but a faint reflection.

How did Inspiration put it in a statement that we shared last night? **"The noblest and most gentle among men are but a..."** what? **"A faint reflection of the divine beauty of the character of Christ."** {MB 49.2} But that shouldn't discourage us. You see, God doesn't expect us to shine as bright as the Sun. But He does expect us to shine as bright as we can. Amen? **Jesus is the brightness of His Father's glory.** {Heb 1:3} He revealed an infinitely perfect character, He is the Sun of Righteousness. We at best are only full moons. Amen? Perfect in our sphere as He is perfect in His sphere, shining to the fullness of our sin-damaged capacity. But even a full moon is only a faint reflection of the divine beauty of the character of Christ. But God help us strive, for the love of Christ, to be full moons, amen? ...to be all we can for Him.

And back to the Desire of Ages statement: The last sentence is so significant. **"The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people."** Oh brother, sister, for anyone who loves Christ, that ought to be a powerful motivation. You see if we really love Christ we want to honor Him, don't we? Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} We want to honor Him. And how do we honor Him? By rightly representing Him. That's why we are told that the honor of God, the

honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people. Everything is at stake here... everything is at stake.

Let me share a story with you. My father told it to me, but he heard it from his father. My grandfather was a minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and so was my father. My grandpa, bless his heart, taught Academy, Bible, for all of his ministry. And he was a very effective Bible teacher. I know that because many times I have silver-haired saints come up to me and say, *"Are you possibly any relationship to Lyle Wallace?"* And I always smile and say *"Yes, he's my grandfather."* And then they typically get all teary-eyed, and they say, *"I can't tell you the impact that he had on my life in Bible class, in Academy."* He was known for the stories that he told to illustrate spiritual truths. And my father told me this one. And I wish that I could tell it as well as my father told it, and my father wished that he could tell it as well as his father told it. So it's probably deteriorated with the passing generations but I'm going to do my best, because it tells and illustrates the truth that I want to bring home to your hearts tonight.

Jesus has finished His mission to planet earth, to reveal God's glory to man, and to restore God's glory in man. He had finished both phases at the point of that victory cry **"it is finished."** {Jn 19:30} You remember... Even the second, in that He had fully restored God's glory in Himself in our behalf, but also in that He had made full and complete and all-sufficient provision, whereby His glory might be restored in us in His behalf. And having fully and without flaw fulfilled His mission, He comes back to heaven, to the adulation of all of the sinless universe. And as He approaches there is a cry, **"Who is this King of glory?"** {Ps 24:8, 10} **"Who is this King of character?"** And the answer comes. And then the question is repeated, not because they didn't hear the first time or didn't understand, but because they just want to hear their Lord, Whom they love with their whole hearts, praised. And the gates swing open, and He comes in, and all the angelic hosts rushed forward to bow down and worship Him, but He... holds up His hands; and He is not willing to receive their worship until He has the assurance of the Father, that His sacrifice has been sufficient for us to join Him there.

You've got to love a Lord like that. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} You've got to love a Lord like that.

And when He goes to the Father and is fully assured that He has done everything necessary to make it possible for whosoever will come to the foot of the cross and receive by faith that twofold provision of grace to be there with Him for eternity and see Him as He is, to see His glory and to reflect it through the ceaseless ages. When He gets that assurance, then He goes out and He receives the adoration and worship of the angelic hosts... but not until. And then they proceed to ask Him questions regarding His mission. And they love to hear His stories, how He so perfectly and convincingly and irrefutably discredited all the devil's lies regarding the character of God, and how perfectly He revealed the truth. And there is a rejoicing in the hearts of all the angelic hosts as they realize how beautifully Christ has revealed the character of God to the fallen race.

But then, after a period of time, there is a group of angels that have obviously been discussing something among themselves. And one of them raises his hand, and the Lord recognizes him, and he says, *"Lord, we are so thankful, for the way that You perfectly fulfilled Your mission, to reveal the Father's character. We are so thankful for the way that You refuted and disproved all the devil's accusations regarding the character of God. But we do have a concern, and we were just wondering who is going to continue to do that on planet earth now that You are here? You see we know that Satan has not changed. He's continuing to lie regarding Your character now, as well as the Father's. And he's continually seeking to misrepresent You and alienate people from You, by convincing them that You're not really a God of love. And so we're fully aware that there's a real need on planet earth for somebody*

*to continue to reveal the truth regarding Your character. Who's going to do that now Lord, please? We're concerned... tell us who's going to do that now?"*

*And Jesus says, "Well, you don't need to worry. I've left some chosen men and women behind. There's Peter, and there's James and there's John, and there's Thomas and..."*

*The angels said, "Well Lord, you know that's what we're worried about. We know those men. Lord, You know, Peter... it was not all that long ago, he denied You with swearing. And James and John, those sons of thunder... they wanted to bring fire down and incinerate a whole city because they weren't treated right. And Thomas, You know how long it takes him to believe anything. Surely You're not counting on them. What if they let You down? I mean don't... don't You have a plan B? Surely You do, You must have an alternative, a back-up plan. I mean, You can't be really counting on them, can You?"*

*And the Lord said, "Well, not just them. There are others too... there are others. There's David... there's Mary... and there's Steve, and there's Jeff... there's Phil and there's Les."*

*And the angel interrupted and said, "Well Lord, You know we don't have Your foreknowledge, so we don't know those people, but aren't those all human beings that You're naming?"*

*And the Lord said, "Yes."*

*And the angel said, "Well You know, we're still worried. We're still worried, because You see... they have a pretty bad track record, Lord, You know that. They have all sinned and come short of the glory. Surely You can't be depending on human beings to reveal the truth regarding Your character. And You know at the end of this great controversy, there has got to be someone that reveals to the world Your character. That's what it's going to take to bring it all to a grand climax and finish it. So please tell us You've got a back-up plan, don't You? What if they let You down? What's plan B, Lord? Tell us... surely You've got a back-up plan."*

*And there's silence for a period of time and the Lord says finally, "No."*

*"I have no back up plan. I'm counting on them. They can't let me down. Everything is at stake."*

*Would you stand with me for prayer?*

*Our Father in Heaven, please help us not to let You down... in these closing hours of earth's history, when You must have a people to proclaim to every nation, kindred, tongue and people a vital message and reveal to them Your love. Lord, it is so crucial that we be such a people. Help us, for the love of Christ, to come to the foot of the cross and receive the blood and the water, the peace and the Holy Spirit, the pardon and the power, the forgiving grace and the enabling grace, that we might do for Christ what He did for You, please Lord. Help us not to let Him down. In His name we pray. Amen.*