

# Blessed Is The One Not Offended By Jesus

October 27, 2024

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled, "Blessed is the One, Not Offended by Jesus." Thank you to Earl, Dave, and Don for being part of the service. The scripture reading is Proverbs 18, verses 18 to 20. Happy birthday this week to Ellis and Heather, and happy anniversary to Debby and Len.

## Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning everybody. Happy that you're here with us. Seems that the weather may be taking a turn after a nice fall, but we're happy that you're here. Happy that it's warm and dry and we're here to give honor and praise to our God for all the goodness that He's given to us. So, some announcements this morning. Connie and John have their anniversary this week. I'm not sure what number it is, but anyway, the midweek Bible study, Wednesday's at 7.30, and Carmen was baptized this past week. And Neema and Peter welcome a baby daughter, Lightness, born October 10th, a little premature, but everything's going well. Pam asked for prayers on behalf of her dad who are suffering from a number of health issues at this time. And Dianne's neighbor Rene has been in and out of hospital with breathing issues, and she's now home on new medication. So hopefully that will make a difference for her. And Missy's son Christopher underwent a gallbladder surgery this past week, and please pray for his recovery.

This is Preacher Appreciation Sunday. I don't know if you knew that, Don. So, Don has been with us for over 29 years. [Applause] And Don, could I call you up here, please? [Do you want me to preach now?][Laughter] We just want to say thank you so much, and appreciate all you've done for us over so many years. And we totally appreciate it. (Don): Thank you very much. (Earl): And another person that's very much involved in the on-goings of our worship service, as well as many things, wears many hats, helping out on our Wednesday night program, organizing the these services, leading the children in their little Sunday morning singing, and of course wearing the maintenance hat, looking after building and grounds. We certainly do appreciate Adam and want to recognize his efforts as well. (Applause) Let's go to God in prayer as we begin our service.

Our Father, we thank you for the family that we have here. We thank you for your love, your goodness towards each person. We pray Father that you will help us to be supportive of one another. And when one of our number is undergoing issues, whether it be financial or health related issues, we pray that you will help us to be your hands and your feet as we serve each other. We thank you for Don and Adam and their work amongst us. We thank you for their leadership, their example to each of us. And we pray that you will help us to honor them, not just today, but always as we appreciate their service. We thank you for each person here, and we pray that you will help us to be your servants, and we pray that you will help us now as we worship you. We thank you for your goodness towards us. We thank you especially for sending Jesus into this world, that he lived a life of example for us, and we pray that you will help us to try to follow that example, but ultimately that he paid the price on the cross for our salvation, and we pray that you will help us to honor you as we live our lives. In Jesus name, Amen.

Thank you Earl, and good morning everybody. I invite you to stand this morning if you would like to as we raise our voices and song together. We have a couple of late-breaking prayer requests. We also want to keep Lorena in our prayers. She is sick with some gallbladder issues right now, and baby Christopher has laryngitis, which means he can't talk, but also he can't talk. So we do pray for swift healing in that household.

## Communion

Psalm 118, the last three verses. "The Lord is God, and He has made His light shine upon us, with bowels in hand, joined in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will give you thanks. You are my God, and I will exalt you. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever."

This is the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, if you will. And so I thought there was a little thinking about Thanksgiving. It really shouldn't be a one-day holiday in our mind as a once-a-year event where perhaps we overindulge and eat too much and sit back for a brief moment and reminisce how good we have it. I think Thanksgiving should be more of a lifestyle. What would our lives look like if all of the complaining, frustrations, the anxiety and confusion, the criticizing and the grumbling were swallowed up in a life of Thanksgiving? If the fragrance of Jesus was our life, as opposed to all of the problems that surround us.

One of the words that is used to refer to this Lord's Supper is the Eucharist. And one of the meanings of this Greek word is "Thanksgiving." Whenever we do this, Lord's Supper, it should stimulate us to be more thankful and perhaps infuse in us a fresh and rich meaning to our holiday. When we take these simple elements, it's an action of pure Thanksgiving for the greatest gift and sacrifice ever made, the death and life of Jesus on our behalf. As we ingest the bread and the fruit of the vine, we remember and make a declaration, "He is in us." Jesus meets us here and nourishes us with Himself and strengthens us to love and obey Him in a life of heartfelt Thanksgiving. We come to the table with humility, thanks and joy. Let's pray.

Thank you, Father, for this most precious of gifts, the life of your one and only Son. And may our lives be refreshed and strengthened in spirit as we take the bread and the fruit of the vine, His body and blood. Empower us to live our lives as thankful servants. In Christ's name, amen.

## Scripture Reading

### Proverbs 18:18-20

Scripture reading this morning is Proverbs 18 verses 18 to 20. Casting the lot settles disputes and keeps strong opponents apart. A brother wronged is more unyielding than a fortified city. Disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel. From the fruit of their mouth, a person's stomach is filled. With the harvest of their lips, they are satisfied. Amen.

## Sermon

### Blessed Is The One Not Offended By Jesus

Good morning, everyone. Good morning. Thank you for being with us today. As was already spoken, I've been preaching for this congregation now for 28 years. Believe it or not, I've been full-

time preaching for 46 years, and I'm very grateful to be one of the people that enjoy his occupation. [He's getting good at it!] Yeah, thank you. (Laughs) Another 28 years to go. (Laughs)

Maybe a personal question. Have you ever been embarrassed because you're a Christian? Jesus said, "Blessed is the one who is not offended by me," meaning Jesus. Now, Jesus is different than what I do, for sure. I stand behind this little pulpit, and I try to share 15, 20 minutes or something of a spiritual figure, but that wasn't Jesus. Jesus wasn't in a church building. He was what was called a peripatetic preacher, meaning he was a walker and a talker. He would go from village to village and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, the Church is a Christ that I've been part of over the years. I guess it's passed away these days, but there used to be a lot of gospel meetings. I'd preach in different places for a week or a half a week or so forth, and it was just to be an encouraging time.

But the interesting part about all this is that Jesus didn't really do that. He just walked and talked, and people listened to him. So here's some scripture. Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues. He went through all of these towns, preaching the good news of the kingdom. Have you ever thought of this church being a kingdom? We belong to the kingdom of God. Jesus was healing every disease and sickness, and when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed. Have you ever been teased by someone calling you a Christian and then saying a negative word about that? I hope that you haven't. The crowds were helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. And Jesus said to his disciples these words, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. "Ask the Lord of the harvest therefore "to send out workers into his harvest field."

You know, I don't know many people who've said, "I wanna be a full-time preacher." It's not the easiest job in the world, but once you get into it, you wouldn't change it. The love for God, the love for Jesus, the love for the Holy Spirit, the love for the Scriptures, and the love for Christians, and an amazing wife that allowed me to be preaching in different places for many, many years. We've moved more than I could count, I think, but being here has been a wonderful blessing.

Jesus isn't just with us. He lives in us. He says these words, "I will never leave you, I will never forsake you, "I am always with you." If you're having a bad day, if things have gone wrong, if you've had money troubles and all kinds of troubles, remember the words of Jesus. "I will never leave you, I will never forsake you, "I am always with you." That doesn't mean everything's always gonna be okay, but it's the reminder of, "I'm with you even in your difficulties." In many ways, our lives are in partnership with Jesus. He said these words that is profound. "I knew you before you were born. "I knew the exact places where you would live."

So in the first century, being a Christian was perilous. If we said, "Jesus is king," it amounted to treason because they said, "Emperor is king." The king is king, no, no, Jesus is king. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. And God honors us by allowing us to talk to him. He hears us every time by prayer and meditation and so forth. So the gospel of Jesus has changed people's lives. For some, they felt lost, alone, but when they heard the simple story, the gospel of Jesus, and reached out and realized that Jesus is not just a historical figure, but rather, Jesus desires a relationship with him. 2,000 years ago, people needed a relationship with Jesus, and he gave it to them, death, burial, and resurrection. And those teachings have passed on for 2,000 years and continue to.

So there was a man, some of you know this story quite well, whose name was Saul, and he was doing his best to get rid of Christians until Jesus got hold of him. He became one of the greatest Christians of all time. He turned the world upside down. He became an illustration of how a leopard can change his spots. From Saul, a non-believer to Paul, who is responsible for the writing of the majority of the New Testament. And here's what he said, "I'm obligated." I'm not so sure that's what we would like to say as a job. I'm obligated. That's my job, I'm obligated. Well, we are obligated. We're obligated both to Greeks, non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish, and that's why we are eager to preach the gospel, because we're obligated to do it. Maybe not standing behind a pulpit, but just sharing, talking about it, sharing the joy, being part of the sorrows, being involved in weddings, being involved in burials, knowing that one day, a new heaven and a new earth will come, and we'll be part of all that. So obligation isn't a bad thing. Being obligated to Jesus Christ is one of the greatest things we could ever do.

So Paul says there are words that will last throughout eternity. Have you ever been ashamed of being a Christian? Because here's what he said, "I'm not ashamed." I'm not ashamed of the gospel. The gospel being the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, because it's the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. So do you believe? Do we believe? We're obligated to him, and it's one of the greatest obligations anyone could ever have. Never leaving us, never forsaking us, always being with us. So God promises blessings by faith. He said no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the old law, the old 10 commandments. That's not gonna work. They offered sacrifices of bulls and goats with no results other than getting blood all over themselves.

And Paul says, "But now a righteousness," that's a word that we don't hear very often, righteousness, purity, joy. There's this righteousness from God who gives it to us in the form of belief in Jesus Christ. Do we really believe? If Paul continues, there's no difference for all of us, because let's face it, we've all sinned, we've fallen short for the glory of God. However, God allows us to be freely justified, freely set free, arms around us by God. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, not just with us, but their arms around us.

This is the gift, the universal gift of all time. God promising to care us, I'll never leave you, never, never forsake you. And so we must trust in this faith. Way back in the Old Testament, in the Proverbs, we must trust in the faith in the Old Testament, in the Proverbs, it says, "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, "do not rely on your own understanding, "but in all of your ways, acknowledge him, "and he will make your paths straight." We'll fall sometimes, we'll get off the path sometimes, but he's always bringing us back.

I remember when our children were young, and going outside and running and so forth, with parents, you're looking and saying, "Stay away from the road, don't go here, don't go here." Safety, and in Christ, there is sometimes difficulties, sometimes troubles, but the reminder. "I'll never leave you, never forsake you, "I'm always with you." And then he says this, "Cast all your anxiousness, "all your anxiety on God, "because God cares for you." Each one of us. I think it's good to say to each other that we love each other, we love God, but I think it's also really important just to get by yourself sometimes, and just realize, talk to God, and listen to him. God, I love you, and you know what God's gonna say back? "I love you, I knew you before you were born. "I knew the exact time and places where you would be born. "I am with you always." So cast all your

anxiety on God, because he cares for us. And the God of all grace, who called you to this eternal glory in Christ, you may have had to suffer, suffer a little while, but will be restored. God will make you strong, firm, and steadfast. That's not my words, that's the words of Jesus, and the words of Paul. And maybe that's a wonderful definition of faith. Strong, firm, and steadfast.

James chapter four, in verse eight, a scripture that many people know, come near to God, and God will, anybody help me, come near to you. There are so many people who have great faith. Years ago, a man by the name of Robert Welch said this, "Christianity is not something I do in my life. "Christianity is my life." So be merciful to all, just as our Father is merciful. If you're holding a grudge, let it go. Set it free, set yourself free. If your anxiety is getting out of hand, give it away to the Lord by prayer, and the peace of God will appear out of nowhere with God's peace. Matthew, who was very much a story and wrote, the words that can bring us peace, when he records what Jesus said, "Surely I'm always with you." Even to the very end of the age.

Speaking of that, John writes what he saw, and what we can see through John's eyes. And if you would, just try to picture it. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, the first heaven and the first earth that passed away. And then I saw the holy city coming down out of heaven from God. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying these words, "Now the dwelling of God is with men and women, "and God will live with them." God lives with us. Never abandoning us, never nodding off, he's always with us. And even when difficulties come, and terrible, horrible things can happen sometimes, it's the reminder of you're not alone. You're not alone. I'm always with you. And remembering the words of I am making all things new. It may not seem like it at the time, but he's gonna promise us this. God's promises are true.

At one time, we may be foolish, disobedient, enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. But when the kindness of our Lord and Jesus Christ appeared, he saved us, washing us by the rebirth and renewal by God's Holy Spirit. And lastly, the Holy Spirit is always at work, helping us to do this, to put on love, God's love, to put on joy, God's joy, to put on the peace of God, which passes all understanding, patience, kindness, put on goodness, put on faithfulness, put on the gentleness that helps us have this self-control. The only thing that counts is faith, expressing itself through love. So this is a brief message, and I conclude with this. May we have an abundance of faith this week. And may our Lord be demonstrated in a godly way, remembering that where we go, he goes. He walks with us, he sleeps. When we sleep, he's always with us. He never sleeps. He is our Father. He is our God. He is our Savior. Amen.

## Closing

We thank Don for his message this morning. Certainly good to know that our God, Jesus, will never leave us, never forsake us. Always is with us, for us, watching out for us. So the reassurance that we have a God who loves us, who cares about us as individuals, is something we can take with us this week.

When I invited Don up at the beginning of the service, Barb, I guess she was in the-- I'm sort of focused on him, but she wasn't there. But she was back there, and she heard my comments. And Don did allude to the fact that for 29 years, at least in this place, and beyond, that she's been with him in support of his work. And we certainly want her to know that we care about her. And what she said to me was, when I sat down behind them, she turns around and says, thank you for your

kind words. Well, she's an encourager. And we appreciate Barb for her encouragement with us for so many years. Let's show her our appreciation. (Applause)

And we thank Dave for his comments regarding Thanksgiving. And ultimately, the thankfulness that we have because of what Jesus has done for us. Thanksgiving is a good thing. It's good to reflect on our blessings. It's good to acknowledge where those blessings come from. It's good to acknowledge the people in our lives who are blessings to us. It's good for us to acknowledge, how can I be a blessing to someone else even this week?

But it's good to be thankful. I've said this before. It's good to be grateful. It's good to count your blessings. But it's also even better to acknowledge, to verbalize, to say thank you, to say I'm grateful for whatever it is in your life and to whoever it is in your life that brings you those blessings. So it's one thing to be thankful, but it's another to express thankfulness. And I think that that's something we can all practice. We can all put into practice. And I challenge you to put it into practice this week as we move forward. Let's pray.

Our Father, we thank you for being the God who loves us, cares for us, and would even think of us in sending Jesus into this world. We thank you for the selfless gift of sending him and for his willingness to go to the cross on our behalf. We pray that you will help us to be thankful people and to express thankfulness even this week, is our prayer in Christ's name. Amen.

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