

THE BRIDGE

By

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To recognize Christ's entrance into the world is not only to recognize one of the greatest miracles, but it is also to recognize the need of man which the world tries in very possible way to evade.

The first act of sin was when man took things into his own hands and tried to run his life apart from God. From that day it has been man's nature to think of himself as self-sufficient. Were this the case there would have been no need for the Son of God to make the radical plunge from heaven to earth, to enter the stream of human life to die and build a bridge between man and God.

Man was created to reflect the image of God. God is Himself perfect, and since He created only that which was perfectly good, there could be nothing better for man than for him to live according to the instructions of the Creator. To turn from the Creator to follow a different purpose was sin of the highest degree. Yet, the more man dwells on his own accomplishments, the less awareness he has of sin. To much of the world God is only a vague power somewhere out there with little concern for individual morality. But, as one reads the gospels he cannot help noticing that when men came within range of this perfect God in the flesh, suddenly they were overwhelmed by His holiness and their own sinfulness.

God is such absolute moral perfection that evil cannot be allowed to continue in His presence. A sinful person is in peril of his life before the perfect One Who created that which is to reflect His nature.

Only by God's entrance into man's realm could man be represented before God. Only by such a representative to suffer the consequences of evil could the absolute justice of God be satisfied. In Christ sin is dealt with in Divine justice and a bridge is built to give man access back into the fellowship of his Creator.

God sent only one Son. He built only one bridge. The popular expression that "all roads lead to God" is the ultimate blasphemy. It says that Christ's amazing sacrifice is nothing more than any other sincere man's effort at religious satisfaction, that the way He marked is only one of many ways, making it actually unnecessary.

This is why the cross of Christ is a stumbling block and an offence to the world. No one minds if you worship Christ, even if you call Him the Savior. Just don't insist that He is the *only* way, that He is the only Savior, unless you want to be branded as a bigot and bring down on your head the wrath of the world and many in the modern church. But, if one thinks seriously he must realize that God would never have built such a bridge as Christ if the great gulf can be crossed in dozens of other ways anywhere along the line.

The bridge says more. Christ's entrance into the stream of humanity to allow himself to experience the terrible maliciousness of man and suffer the ultimate consequence of evil (death) not only accents the enormity of man's sin but also the inexorable love of God. It says that God is incredibly concerned with the creatures who have treated His purpose so carelessly and with such crass indifference.

Were God indifferent to man He would never have made such a fuss about his sin. God is not only holy and just but He is amazingly persistent about His own purpose for man. Having created him in His own image, He plunges to the depths of horror to build, at terrible cost, the bridge by which the lost and dying creature may leave the dark regions of ruin to walk in fellowship with the Creator and gain the glorious goal.

The object of the bridge is not to eliminate the distinction between heaven and earth nor to give man a false sense of security because God has condescended to come down in love and mercy. The purpose of the bridge is for crossing.

When crossing a bridge, the closer you get to one side the farther you get from the other. The closer one gets to God the more alienated he becomes to the world; and the friendlier you are to God the greater enmity you will feel from the world.

To be related to God, to live for the purpose of conforming to His image sets one apart from the world which has purposes of its own. Jesus warned, “IF you were of the world the world would love its own: but because your are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:19).

Christ’s coming is proof that the world does not offer “the good life,” that, in fact, this present life is only an introduction, and hardly that. Jesus pictured all in the world as temporary and foreign to the real world from whence He came and to which He returned. He showed that we are only temporary residents here, that this world does not —cannot — provide the essential ingredients for which we are created. Only God can do that and He does it through Christ.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me” (John 14:6).

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