

THE CONVERSATION OF FAITH

Victor Hall, prepared for word ministry, 4 April 2021

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Introduction

Good morning, and praise the Lord. Peter's word was very clear. Peter took the endpoint of what blamelessness is, and that is *the conversation of faith*.

I will go back and start at the beginning now. I'm going to read a portion from the book in a moment. But this morning, in my own personal devotions, I wrote up everything I am going to say here with you now.

The conversation of confrontation – 'I am a victim'

We have heard about 'the conversation of faith', and I'll run that versus 'the conversation of confrontation', based on the conviction that 'I am a victim'.

I will come right to the negative, the opposite way, and make the point that *Christ* hung on the cross *as our victim*.

He became the victim, but we did it because *we believed that we were the victim*. So, we were getting rid of the One who was victimising us.

Keep that in thought as we go through this. I will take you through a lot of Scripture, because the offence of the cross is what I'm speaking about here. It is the *reproach* that we laid upon Christ.

And you will quickly see that this reproach is that, under time and chance, we believe that we are a victim and, really, 'God is to blame for this, because it is the reproach against the Father for not looking after us as a dad should; the way we think He should'.

For that reason, we rejected Him and His Son, and we laid all of that reproach against the Father, upon the Son.

Now, my mother taught me as I grew up, in a house that somewhat struggled with its culture, that there are *no victims in Christ*. That was constantly a word on her lips.

And I do agree and believe that the first step of deliverance that we find through fellowship in the offering of Christ is finding deliverance from believing that we are a victim.

I will make a distinction between 'innocence' and 'righteousness' to help us to be clear about this point.

The poor in spirit are not offended because of Christ

Now, the question of *offence* arises here. We will read from the book of Matthew regarding the test of John the Baptist. Mat 11:4-6. This is the chapter where we are admonished to come to Christ and to enter rest.

Jesus departed after giving the command to His twelve disciples. Then we read, 'And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of His disciples, and said to Him, "Are You the coming One or do we look for another?"'

Now, John was in prison. He had been ministering and was wondering what this was all about. He has heard about 'the works of Christ'. 'So, are You the coming One, or do we look for another?'

'Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: the blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them".'

He straight away introduced what Matthew, in the Beatitudes, expounded, which is the basis of *blamelessness*; and that is 'blessed are the poor in spirit'.

So, only those who are poor in spirit can hear the gospel. Only those who can receive the gospel - the poor - have the gospel preached to them.

Then they enter the blessedness of the first of the eight 'blesseds' of the Beatitudes, which is 'blessed is he who is not *offended because of Me*'.

Now, if I were to say, 'Let us, as a congregation, every one of us, take hold of this 'jewel', and be illuminated on it and go home and begin to live that, begin to walk that way, we will have come a thousand miles straight away - and that is where *we are coming*.

Walking blamelessly

This brings us to Matthew's whole theme in his Gospel, and that is how do we walk blamelessly. And have you heard this gospel?

Now, there are many other gospels. So we wrote in the Preface of *The blessing of Abraham in families*, regarding the gospel that Paul preached, which is the gospel that Abraham preached.

I believe our writings are quite accessible there, and we ask you to give attention to that in the coming season.

The Lord is teaching us how to begin to walk before the Lord blamelessly. And we begin by not being offended in Him.

Deliverance from considering oneself to be a victim in order to bear His reproach

As I was reading through the Gospels today, I read in many places that wherever He preached, wherever He spoke, it said, 'And then many were offended at it', 'And these were offended at Him', 'And that was offended at Him'.

We can gather the whole statement of this word 'offence' up into the word 'reproach'.

We read, 'Therefore let us go with Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.' Heb 13:13.

But before we are able to bear that reproach, we have to be *delivered* from believing that we are a victim.

Walking blamelessly – the ground of headship

Now, Peter began with the point that *the ground of headship* is the ground upon which we start to learn how to walk in blamelessness.

We will keep unfolding this on the videos and preaching this to us, but let's just go to Abraham, because he was then 'commanded' in the second great visitation to his life.

Connected to Abraham according to the flesh

Abraham was *commanded*, at 90 years of age, to walk before the Lord and to be blameless, when the Almighty appeared to Him.

Let's encapsulate the blamelessness of Abraham's life. I know that most of us are understanding this, but the blamelessness of Abraham's life enabled Him to come 'above' Adam. That is our first father, Adam. When Christ died on the cross,

he took everything of Adam out with Him. In Adam all died; and the last Adam is gone.

It is only in Christ, and now connected to Adam, that are we made alive. We need to have a new connection - not Adam - even for our flesh.

The blamelessness of Abraham's life enabled him to come above Adam with his other law, which governed his life after the Fall. That has governed us until we began to find how to walk blamelessly.

Blamelessness joined Abraham to offering and headship. Can I just add that to you? The offering and headship of Christ enabled him to be joined to the Father. No-one comes to the Father except through the Son; joined to the Father.

Now, our issue is against the Father. As disobedient sons and daughters, we have a conflict, an issue, with the Father.

Blamelessness, joined to the offering and headship of Christ, enabled Abraham to be joined to the Father; and then, from that, to become the father, after the flesh, of all of the sons of God. Abraham became the father, after the flesh, of you and me.

The gospel is preached to the poor in spirit

We have read the word to John the Baptist in Matthew Chapter 11. And John the Baptist was in a bit of a quandary, asking, 'Who are you? Are you the One?'

And he sums up all of these miracles, but, more than that, the gospel is being preached to the poor and blessed. Blessed are the bankrupt in spirit; blessed are those who mourn; blessed are those who are not offended in Me.

Offence in family life; not being poor in spirit

We will read some Scriptures now regarding family life.

'A brother offended is harder to be won than a fenced city.' Pro 18:19. A brother offended - a son offended in a house, a daughter offended in a house, offence against parents and parents against children. All of these things become harder to be 'won', harder to get over or to resolve, 'than a fenced city'.

We know that the crisis ahead of us in God restoring families, outside of the fellowship and the headship of Christ, is not bridgeable. We see this happening with young ones of 14 and 15

years. They already despise their parents, and they never 'look over their shoulder' for the rest of their life, and particularly do not look after their parents in old age.

There is a tokenism of relationship, but there is no fellowship. Once destroyed, it cannot be revived except by *exanastasis* life, which is in Christ.

Resolution for conflict in a household

Now, there's a good side and a bad side to Abraham's prayer for Ishmael. The bad side was that he did not properly believe that Isaac would come from His own flesh and through Sarah. Isaac is even named in that one. So, he said, 'Oh, that Ishmael may live in your sight.' And the Lord said, 'You have prayed that prayer; therefore I'm going to give you twelve more 'Ishmaels', so you are really going to have a troublesome time now.'

And that is the basis for the trouble in the Middle East today, in all the nations, with everything fermenting. However, the Lord is going to speak even to that, because the prophetic Scriptures tell us, out from Bosra, out from Ishmael and Esau, and also gathered to that were the children of Lot and all of those nations that came from there - 'the rams of Bosra' - out of those nations listed by that in the prophets in *our* day, from the Arab nations, God is also going to bring out a multitude which no man can number into the body of Christ. That is an amazing thing.

So, there is a resolution for this issue of conflict in the house, even though, for that family, it has gone on even to this present day.

We will consider a few more Scriptures regarding offence.

We read that the Lord wants us to be sincere. This is how it works with blamelessness and without offence. Php 1:10. So, God is delivering us from our propensity to being offended, to be without offence, until the day of Christ.

There are many more Scriptures that you can look up on the subject of offence.

Esteeming the reproaches of Christ

We read in the book of Hebrews regarding when Moses caught this understanding of the reproach of Christ. Now, I'm saying this to all of us who do serve the Lord.

If Moses had not caught hold of this understanding, he could not have survived - and he actually almost didn't survive when he hit the rock twice - the constant provocation of the offence of the children of Israel

For, heaped upon him and upon the Lord, constantly, were the reproaches of Christ.

And if you want to see a victim attitude, you will find it in Moses, because a few times he really did 'blow up' and 'spit the dummy' and say, in effect, 'I'm a victim of all this. I didn't bring all of these people into the world. They're not my children.' He probably could have said, 'They are Abraham's children' or something.

Anyway, whatever it was, as we look at all of this, and Moses finally hit the rock, the Lord said, 'You rebels. You did not sanctify me in their sight.' Num 20:9-12.

So, in a way, Moses was called to blamelessness. He did embrace that. And, when I look at Moses, I really 'take my hat off' to him. Yes, he blew it here and he blew there but, by and large, he did find strength. He did embrace and treat the reproaches of Christ as being 'greater treasure than all of the riches of Egypt'. That may be a new thought to some of us.

We will consider Moses, the friend of God. We will look at the faith of Moses, and at what he endured; his own struggles with feeling that he was a victim when he was doing what God called Him to do, when the Israelites all claimed to be victims.

What is the *fruit* of a victim? It is grumbling and complaining. They grumbled, and grumbled and grumbled, and God said, in the end, that He could take no more of them because of their *unbelief*.

'By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, *esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt*; for he looked to the *reward*,' in the same way that Abraham did. Heb 11:24-26.

So, we've read that and preached, 'Good old Moses; he refused Pharaoh and he suffered with the Israelites.'

But there was an A and a B side to Moses' life. The B side is that he suffered more under the

rebellions of God's people, Israel, than he did even under Pharaoh's house and the Egyptians.

Sanctification is a process of walking blamelessly

We read in Hebrews that 'we have an altar'. Heb 13:10.

Then, 'Therefore Jesus also, that He might [sanctify us; 'holify' us] *sanctify* the people with His own blood.' Heb 13:12.

This means to process us through blame to blamelessness. Sanctification is a process of walking blamelessly. That is how we are *sanctified*.

'Therefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, *bearing His reproach*. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek for one to come.' Heb 13: 12-14.

Being joined to the offering of Christ deals with offence

I will sum up as we walk this through.

Reproach, then, is *an expression of offence*. When I 'reproach' someone, it is because I am offended by them in some way. Reproach is an expression of offence.

Offence, then, must be overcome, and only in the blamelessness of Christ is this possible.

It is not possible for me to go through life without reproaching others or without being offended with others, *unless* I am joined to the offering of Christ.

Only in the blamelessness of Christ is this possible, and that is what Jesus said to John. 'Blessed is he who is not offended in Me.'

So that's where we begin; that's where we walk.

Offence with the headship of the Father

Now, when Christ was before Pilate, the angry crowd of the Jews who rejected Him said - and because of the way in which preachers preached when I was young, I always used to think that they said - 'Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him, crucify Him. We will not have this man *to reign over us*.'

In actual fact, when I went through it this morning, I saw that we need to put Mark 15:13 and the accounts in the other Gospels, with

Luke 19:14, where Jesus spoke the parable. His own people, by parable, said, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' So, in reality, that's what they were saying when Pilate said to them, 'I will release Barabbas.' They said, 'No, no, we do not want him.'

Some have actually translated it as, 'Away with Him, away with Him. And so we will not have this man to be our Head.'

I'm bringing it back now to the headship question. We 'will not have the headship of this man' because of the headship that He represents, which is the headship of the Father - and we are *offended* with the Father.

Offence is overcome only in the cross; in the blamelessness of Christ

Let us see why. Offence must be overcome, and it will only be so, *in the cross*.

When He was pierced and the blood began to flow, they began to mourn. Only then, could this offence that was in them - this gnashing of their teeth; that's how intense it was - could they be delivered from that which so bound them.

And only in the blamelessness of Christ can this happen to *us*.

We cannot be self-righteously blameless. It is not possible.

So, offence must be overcome; only in the blamelessness of Christ is this possible. And we noted that 'blessed is he who is not offended in Me'.

His headship reproached

So, the multitude, the mob, cried, 'Away with Him, crucify Him. We will not have this man to reign over us', putting those two Scriptures together.

Or we could say, 'We refused', and 'We had no respect.'

'We refuse Him. We have no respect for His headship and the headship of the Father that He represents, and says that He represents.'

So, it is on this ground of headship, because it was Melchizedek, King and Priest, who was taken out and crucified. And that headship dimension of our King-Priest was being reproached.

Jesus said, 'Reproach has broken My heart.'
Psa 69:20. We have ministered quite a bit on that.

And He said, 'The reproaches of those who have reproached You [the Father] have fallen upon Me.' Psa 69:9.

This is the definition of 'iniquity'. So, our iniquity is our reproach; but the fundamental, bottom line of our iniquity is, why are we reproaching Christ?

Our reproach against fatherhood – an expression of pride

Now let us look at reproach against fatherhood and motherhood; reproach in a family.

Reproach against fatherhood has two elements.

It is first the refusal of a parenting initiative because of self-centredness and the lawlessness that was conceived in all of us when we were conceived in our mother's womb.

And it is the expression of *pride*.

I remember that, at the age of four, when my mother would say to me, 'Vic, you must do "this" or "that"', many times I would say, 'Mummy, I have a better idea.' 'Mummy, I have a better idea!' I had another idea of what I wanted to do; a better idea so that I could do what I wanted to do.

That is the foolishness that is bound up within the heart of a child, but correction, discipline, chastening, will drive it far from them.

So, I kept saying, 'My way is best.' And what is that at its bottom line?

It is *an expression of pride*.

The first dimension of our reproach against the fatherhood of God - that first dimension of why we refuse His parenting, and refuse Him as our Father, and refuse to be His son - is because of the pride that was conceived in us when Satan sowed that other law within us - 'my way is best'.

We believe that lie. That is self-centredness.

So that is the first reason why they rejected and refused Christ, and crucified Him.

Our reproach against fatherhood – questioning motive and competence

The second element of our reproach is an accusation against the fatherhood of God or against a parent, questioning their motives and their competence.

Today, the rage of the world, the fury of that, against the idea that God is also a judge, if you raise that point, is beyond all bounds, isn't it? Rage overflows at the thought that God the Father is a judge; and that He will judge in His own house.

So, second, in families, it is an accusation against a parent, questioning their motive and competence.

First of all, they question what is God's motive. And many people's concept of God is as a cruel judge. They don't see Him as Father.

Many have a 'soppy' idea of God as such a loving character that they have invented a vicarious gospel, because it suits how they think God should look after them. We create our own 'atonement' gospels, because we won't accept the reality of who He is.

So, we question His motive or we question His competence, and we *express* this.

The response of indignation

This is *expressed with indignation*.

The Bible often refers to indignation, and it speaks about the generation in which we now live. And the Lord is telling us that He wants to hide us from the indignation that, for example, presently boils over in Canberra every week, boils over in the media, boils over everywhere.

The Lord doesn't want us to be interfacing with that. He wants to hide us from that, in His pavilion. Come and hide until the indignation is passed over, or passes over. Isa 26:20.

He has *hidden us in Christ's death*, where this is resolved for us.

So, reproach in a family is an accusation against a parent, questioning their motive and competence. This is expressed with indignation. It is an offspring's repudiation of a parent, claiming that their former relationship has resulted in them becoming a victim of their circumstances in life.

The child claims, 'You didn't deliver. I didn't get the life for my family that I wanted. I was going to become Prime Minister; it didn't happen.'

Their expectations are not fulfilled. They want now to cut themselves free from any relational ties and obligation, and to make their own way in life.

We see this throughout society. Fifteen year-olds are now allowed to 'divorce' their parents in the community. Entire counselling organisations have been set up for almost no reason.

This is the world we live in, where it speaks of a generation whose 'teeth are sharper than knives'. Pro 30:14. 'Maintain the rage', and all that goes on, is now being taught to our children in the education system. It is the promotion of indignation. We saw all this happening in the American elections; the constant promotion of indignation.

The Lord wants us to not touch that. And He has an answer for us in *blamelessness* so that we can be beyond that and can be delivered from that.

That kind of fury, that person, is always saying, 'I am the victim. I am the victim.' And, to them, at that point, we are the victimiser.

Let's look at how this indignation works. The indignation that results from the claimed self-righteousness of a victim can be extremely vindictive.

Innocence is not righteousness

Now, let's not confuse the word 'innocence' with the word 'righteousness'.

Let's go strong on this. A victim, by definition, is not a victimiser. That is the mechanism that is so often used; 'I'm a victim'. They maintain all the time that they are a victim. Any time that you touch it, they respond, 'I'm a victim. That's my righteousness. I could not be unrighteous, therefore my wrath, my indignation, is righteous anger. I'm the victim.'

However, it could be true that, on some point, they are innocent. They are the victim, and they are innocent; but let's not make 'innocence' to be 'righteousness'.

You were *not* born righteous. You were born innocent. Innocence at this point is not righteousness. We were all initially innocent at birth, but we were not righteous.

The cross answers the effects of time and chance, of which we are victims

The first work of the Holy Spirit is to open our eyes to see that, even though we are the victim of our circumstances - and we are all victims of our circumstances because of Adam's sin - our abuse of Christ is a crime.

And what is that? It is time and chance.

Everyone is born under time and chance, and that is a system of victimisation. Time will eventually wear you down, because your body begins to die from the day that you came out of your mother's womb.

And then, all around you, time and chance happens to them all. And like a cruel net takes a bird, eventually, we are all taken. Ecc 9:12. We are a victim.

So, within us, we see this point of our mortality and we strive to live; and we struggle with this sense of being the victim.

The cross answers that.

Living blamelessly under time and chance

With that kind of intensity and that kind of attitude, we took hold of Christ, and all of the reproaches against the fatherhood of God, because we didn't ask to be born, but here we are, and we suffer all this.

In Toowoomba, they put to me some questions about dealing with the impact of medications on us, and particularly in old age, where, because of these things, we may become depressed or anxious.

Does the blameless walk of Christ deal with those?

I spoke to that for quite a while in the second session, and showed how, in these matters, there is grace; there is blessing. We *can* find blamelessness before God and we *can* find peace.

So, wherever we look at this subject of blamelessness, it does touch every contingency where we live under time and chance.

Our reproaches were laid upon Christ

The first work of the Holy Spirit is to open our eyes to see that, even though we are the victim of our circumstances, of time and chance, yet our abuse of Christ - there is no excuse for this - is a crime.

And what was the crime against? It was against ourself. By killing Him, we have locked ourselves away from love and from the predestination that we were created to inherit.

As we look upon Christ, whom we are piercing, we have made Him our victim, because we claim,

with our wrath, that we are the victim in situations to do with brothers and sisters and others where, in reproaching them, we are reproaching Christ.

So, we look upon Christ whom we are reproaching and rejecting because we believe that He has not lived up to our expectations. And whoever you feel is letting you down, it actually is God letting you down, if you take it all the way back.

The Scriptures sum it up as, 'The reproaches of them who reproached You [the Father] have all fallen on Me.'

Every reproach that we have, where we believe that we are a victim, was laid on Christ. We laid it upon Him, and we pierced Him, saying, 'We are the victims of You.'

Christ enables us to look upon Him whom we have pierced and to mourn; we are blessed

The Lord meets us then, and He enables us by the Spirit to look on Him whom we have pierced. We then begin to be bankrupt in spirit; we begin to mourn.

And so, blessing comes. 'Blessed is he who is not offended.' You are being delivered from being the victim.

The next time that 'grabs' you and something is said, something is done, some expectation, somewhere you poured it out and it didn't work out like you wanted, you become deeply offended. The brother offended; the sister offended. Harder to be won now than a fenced city.

The Lord wants to *bless* you as you look on Him whom you have pierced and, by grace, to *deliver* you from that offence.

Then you are able to mourn. You are bankrupt.

If you can't get above this offence, then mourn. Mourning leads to repentance; repentance means a change and a shift.

This is what the Lord is bringing to us as we are learning, and there are not any exceptions to this.

We look upon Him, and He enables us, as the spirit of grace and supplication flowed from His pierced heart. That is the river of life. That is the stream that is flowing from the throne and from

the Lamb. From where does the river of life come? It comes from the throne and from the Lamb.

Now the Lamb is beginning to stand up in judgement, so we have to be clear about this when we look at what will take place in the earth yet ahead of us, when we see the wrath of the Lamb.

As we look upon Christ, whom we are reproaching and rejecting because we believe that He has not lived up to our expectations, and has not delivered us, and has not given to us the fulfilment in life that we have craved, He is delivering us from that.

His grace and mercy when we are joined to the fellowship of His offering

We spoke in Toowoomba about our whole healing theology, and how much of what we had, with a vicarious approach, was crafted by us, and we felt that the Lord hasn't 'come through for us'.

The Lord is trying to say, 'I never was going to come through for you that way. I have joined you to the fellowship of My offering and sufferings, and every day there is *grace*.'

So, the first word is *mercy* - mercy, 'not of him who wills, nor him who runs, but of God who shows mercy'. Rom 9:16.

The second word is *grace*. 'We have access by faith into this grace.' Rom 5:2.

The third word is *blessing*.

Then, from blessing, we proceed as *blameless*.

And there are those eight statements of blessing outlined in the early part of the book of Matthew.

The Holy Spirit is giving us the capacity to mourn and to repent, and to be *joined to Christ and His offering*.

That is what happened to those who went mourning, and beating their breasts. They were joined to Christ's offering, and they were able to go to their house, to repent, and then to be joined to the church when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost.

So, that is the One whom we have reproached and killed. And we are being joined to His offering; to His death. And we 'show that forth', which we will be doing in our *agape* fellowship here shortly.

Blamelessness is resurrection life every day

God then grants us *resurrection life*.

Now, let us make this clear. The key to *blamelessness* is *resurrection life every day*.

I am able to draw a line under each day when I go to bed. When I get up each day, mercy is new in the morning; grace is new.

I am then able to lay aside the sense of being a victim; to rise no longer as a victim, for there are *no victims in Christ*. I then show an attitude of ease.

That is what God is asking; where you forget what is behind, reach forward to what is before - and we do this because of *exanastasis* life.

The 'number one' benefit of *exanastasis* is the fact that you can 'get over yourself'. Isn't that a good one? You need resurrection life, or a new way, in order to get over yourself. You can't get over it yourself.

He grants us resurrection life in the midst of our sin and death, enabling us, by this means, to live a blameless life. The Lord bless that to us.

Conclusion

That was my meditation in the Spirit this morning. Please read page 29, and look at the middle paragraph to do with the order of headship that was recovered to Abraham. He replaced Adam, who lost the order of headship, and now Abraham is able to command his children; to relate to his children after him.

God is restoring that and, unless that is restored, there will be no restoration in extended family relationships.