



## Calvary Covers It All



"Far dearer than all that the world can impart  
was the message that came to my heart;  
how that Jesus alone for my sin did atone,  
and Calvary covers it all.

"The stripes that He bore and the thorns that He wore  
told His mercy and love evermore;  
and my heart bowed in shame as I called on His name,  
and Calvary covers it all.

"How matchless the grace, when I looked on the face  
of this Jesus, my crucified Lord;  
My redemption complete I then found at His feet,  
and Calvary covers it all.

"Calvary covers it all, my past with its sin and stain;  
my guilt and despair Jesus took on Him there,  
and Calvary covers it all."

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us." - Ephesians 1:7

"How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! - Psalm 32:1

"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." - John 1:29

"Calvary Covers It All" is a testimony of faith from someone who had achieved worldly success, but whose life was spiraling out of control. Walter MacDonald, known as "Happy Mac," was a dancer who comedian Eddie Cantor said had the fastest feet in the world. Mac was talented, but he became addicted to alcohol, and was anything but happy. One night in the early 1930s, he stumbled into the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. Walter heard the gospel preached but did not respond. Time and again he returned but kept rejecting the offer of salvation in Christ.

The directors of the mission were Walter and Ethelwyn Taylor, affectionately known as "Pa" and "Ma" Taylor. Ethel's heart was burdened for Mac, until one day he confessed to her that his sin was too bad to be forgiven, and God could not, or would not save him. Ethel remembered a message she had heard from Percy Crawford, who also had been a rebel in his youth. The theme of Percy's testimony was, "Calvary covers it all."

Suddenly Mac could see with eyes of faith that Jesus had covered all of his sins as He died on the cross for him. He thanked Ethel for sharing that good news with him, saying, "Calvary does cover it all! My whole past of sin and shame." Mac turned from being a happy dancer to joyfully serving Jesus Christ as an evangelist. A few days after his conversion in 1934, Ethel wrote the words and music to today's hymn.

In the opening verses of Leviticus, the Lord told Moses to tell the sons of Israel to bring a male animal without defect to be offered as a covering for their sins. Verse 4 says, "He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf." The priest would then sprinkle the blood around the altar and burn the body of that animal according to God's direction. This offering by fire would then be "a soothing aroma to the Lord" (v.9).

The word "atonement" means "a covering," and it describes the whole saving work of Christ. The offering of a perfect sheep could not pay, or cover, for the sins of a human being, but these sacrifices looked forward to the perfect Lamb of God, whose death on the cross of Calvary provided redemption through His blood. This is the principle of substitution - the innocent dying for the guilty - as we read in Romans 5:6-8:

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. One will hardly die for a righteous man; although perhaps for the good man someone would dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

In John 12:27, as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus tells the Father that His soul is troubled, but there was no turning back because "for his purpose I came to this hour." He had come as the incarnate Word of God to be the Light of the World who would show men the Father. And as the Lamb of God, He opened the way to be reconciled with Him, delivering us from the powers of darkness into His Light by His death.

Paul explains what really happened at the crucifixion of Jesus in Colossians 2:13-15, saying, "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which condemned us; He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

And we know that Jesus did not stay in the tomb, but arose on the 3rd day, as He had told His disciples. This is a fact of history, not just a fabricated tale by those who wanted to preserve His legacy. So let us live in the light of the risen Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us as the atonement for our sins.