WRATH DELIEVERD, ABSORBED, & REMOVED

I. 1 Kings 22:51-53 2 Kings 1:1-18 1 Thess. 1:8-10 1 Thess. 5:9-10 Rom. 5:6-10

A. In the Bible, First & Second Kings is about just that; *Kings*. After Kings Saul, David, & Solomon, the nation of Israel, made up of twelve tribes, divided. Ten tribes formed the confederate north while Judah & Benjamin were in the south, maintaining Jerusalem as their capital and God's temple, built by Solomon, as their place of worship. Further, all the kings up north, did evil in the sight of the Lord. The kings of Judah were not much better but a handful of them actually did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

B. Out of all the kings of Israel, the worst of the worst was Ahab and his Phoenician queen, Jezebel. *(Even among the Amish you won't find a gal named, Jezebel!)* It was Jezebel who infamously introduced Baal worship to Israel. She was an evil wicked queen, a daughter of darkness, and she bewitched her husband and God's people. The deaths of Jezebel and later her husband, Ahab, were brutal and bloody. But today's message isn't about them, it features their son, King Ahaziah. Of him 1 Kings 22:51-53 (ESV) says: ***51*** *Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel.* ***52*** *He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.* ***53*** *He served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done.*

C. So Ahaziah takes after his wicked parents and as we'll soon see, he'll pay the consequences. Today's story is a sad one. While we do see God's justice on full display, we don't get to see His redemption. Ahaziah is looking for help and healing in all the wrong places. It costs him and many others, their lives...

D. 2 Kings 1:1-18 (ESV) tells the story...

1) V1: ***1*** *After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel.* **(That's just a geopolitical statement that we won't delve into today...)**

2) V2: ***2*** *Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick;* **(Did sickness cause the king's fall or did he fall and lay sick and dying from injury? Don't know...) s***o he sent messengers, telling them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness."* **(So who's Baal-zebub? A false god for one. His name means, *"Lord of the flies."* Baal is also worshiped as the storm god. In the Gospels, an off take of the Baal-zebub, i.e. *Beelzebul*, becomes another name for Satan, Prince of demons. The shoe seems to fit. In 1 Cor. 10:20 Paul writes that,***"What pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God."*****)**

3) V3-8: (Next we read about God's prophet, Elijah...) ***3*** *But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?* ***4*** *Now therefore thus says the LORD, You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" So Elijah went.* ***5*** *The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, "Why have you returned?"* ***6*** *And they said to him,*

*"There came a man to meet us, and said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" **7** He said to them, "What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?" **8** They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."* **(John the Baptist would later take his fashion cues from Elijah plus add locusts & honey to his regular diet. Anyway, the king immediately knew who Elijah was by the description given by the messengers who encounter him.)**

4) V9-10: ***9*** *Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty.* **(SWAT Team)** *He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.'"* **(Perhaps his command came with a haughty disrespectful attitude?)** ***10*** *But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.* **(The king didn't like the truth Elijah uttered. Sometimes those who don't like what they hear retaliate. But the ultimate retaliation from Above happens--the wrath of God comes down bringing immediate judgment! No doubt there were witnesses. Somebody had to inform the ailing king. Meanwhile he isn't getting better physically or spiritually. He's a slow learner!)**

5) V11-12: ***11*** *Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty.* **(SEAL Team)** *And he answered and said to him, "O man of God, this is the king's order, 'Come down quickly!'"* **(More brash bravado! More attitude!)** ***12*** *But Elijah answered them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.* **(So as the king's health continues to fail, in the natural and the spiritual, what does he do?)**

6) V13-15a: ***13a*** *Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty.* **(DELTA Force) (But there's something unique about this captain: He's no doubt a fierce warrior but also humble! He's courageous and bold, but he has a healthy fear of God Almighty. Watch...) 13b** *And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, "O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight.* **(Have mercy!)** ***14*** *Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight."* ***15a*** *Then the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him."* **(This captain is indeed humble but also trust-worthy!)**

7) 15b-17a: ***15b*** *So he* **(Elijah)** *arose and went down with him to the king* ***16*** *and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron--is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?--therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" **17a** So he died according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken.* **(Not a happy Hallmark ending! What if the king had sought the One true God with humility?)**

8) 17b-18: ***17b*** *Jehoram* **(Ahaziah's brother)** *became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat,* **(Yes, a different Jehoram)** *king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son.* ***18*** *Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?* **(The End.)**

E. So let's talk about God's wrath. His isn't a petty, rash, or petulant anger like ours; His is a holy and righteous revulsion against evil. The Bible says God's throne in built upon righteousness and justice. Most of us don't really like the word wrath, it's too harsh, it's not a dainty notion. Our nice Jesus never mentioned it, did He? Well John the Baptist certainly did. Matthew 3:7 (ESV) says: 7 *But when he **(John the Baptist)** saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* **John 3:35-36 (ESV) records more of the Baptist's words:** ***35*** *The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.* ***36*** *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.* ***"Wrath to come?" "Wrath of God remains on him?"*** **Could that include us? But what if I were to tell that Jesus' love includes the removal of the wrath upon us!**

F. Listen as Paul applauds the young Christians in Macedonia. 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10 (ESV) says: ***8*** *For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything.* ***9*** *For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,* ***10*** *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.* **(But how does Jesus deliver us from wrath?)**

G. In his classic work, *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers (1874-1917) writes these profound words: "We trample the blood of the Son of God if we think we are forgiven because we are sorry for our sins. The only explanation for the forgiveness of God and for the unfathomable depth of His forgetting is the death of Jesus Christ. Our repentance is merely the outcome of our personal realization of the atonement which He has worked out for us. It does not matter who or what we are; there is absolute reinstatement into God by the death of Jesus Christ and by no other way, not because Jesus Christ pleads, but because He died. It is not earned, but accepted. All the pleading which deliberately refuses to recognize the Cross is of no avail; it is battering at a door other than the one that Jesus has opened. Our Lord does not pretend we are all right when we are all wrong. The atonement is a propitiation whereby God, through the death of Jesus, makes an unholy man holy."

H. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 (AMP) sets us straight this way: ***9*** *For God has not destined us to incur His wrath [that is, He did not select us to condemn us], but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,* ***10*** *who died willingly for us, so that whether we are awake (alive) or asleep (dead) at Christ's appearing, we will live together with Him [sharing eternal life].* **(The fire of God's wrath against us was unleashed upon Jesus on the cross, absorbed and extinguished by our Savior & Lord, and it has been removed from us altogether--if indeed we are truly His!) (Glory be to God!)**

I. Ahaziah fell sickened with a terminal disease. Instead of seeking God Almighty, he sought the Lord of Flies. He suffered and died a cruel death! We were born with a terminal disease called *sin*. But instead of dying with it, we revere and bow to *The One* who died to remove it. His name is Jesus! 1 Peter 2:24 (NIV) declares: ***24*** *He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed."* **(I pray this is true for each of you!)**

J. I urge you--do not seek the gods of our culture to save you from your affliction of sin. Nor the gods of health & wellness. Nor the gods of recreation & entertainment. Certainly not the gods of government. Neither the gods of dollars & cents, fame or fortune, and especially not the god you see in the mirror. *Is there no God where you live? Is there no God in your sphere of life that you can call on?* Call on Jesus!!

*** In the movie, *Gran Torino*, Clint Eastwood plays the part of Walt Kowalski.** Walt's a Korean War Veteran and recently widowed. His own family has essentially deserted him and he lives alone in a modest home in Michigan. Kowalski is a gruff guy, calls a spade a spade, and does so with very colorful language. Walt's neighbors are Korean and they have a teenage son named Thao whom Walt calls, *Toad*. At first the relationship with his Korean neighbors is strained. Walt's prejudices aren't hidden. He'd actually killed a young North Korean soldier trying to surrender to him and his guilt still plagues him. Thao's cousin and gang leader pressures Thao into stealing Walt's custom built 1972 Gran Torino as a rite of initiation into the gang. He tries but fails. Confronted by his widowed mother, Thao's made to humbly apologize to Walt and essentially become his servant for a time. Hard on the boy at first, Walt works the kid hard, gets him a job, helps him overcome dating fears, and and becomes Thao's mentor unto manhood. Meanwhile the gang continues to rear its ugly head. Gang members beat up Thao causing Walt to retaliate. The gang then assaults Thao's sister, Sue, brutally raping and beating her inches from death. Fearing more gang violence, the family refuses to report the crime to police. Walt then, who owns plenty of guns, goes unarmed to the gang's haunt and stands before them defiantly. Gang members are locked and loaded. Countless witnesses are looking on. And then Walt reaches into his jacket as though reaching for his gun and when he yanks out his cigarette lighter as though armed, the gang members open fire, riddling Walt's body with bullets. He dies instantly. Walt absorbed the wrath of this vicious gang to extinguish their threats and preserve the lives of his neighbors. As for his modest home, he wills it to his church. As for his prized 1972 Gran Torino, much to the chagrin of his estranged family, he leaves it to Thao. As for us, God's wrath towards us was delivered upon His Son, absorbed and removed altogether.

*** Romans 5:6-10 (ESV) takes us home:** ***6*** *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.* ***7*** *For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die--* ***8*** *but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* ***9*** *Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God.* ***10*** *For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.*

*** Close with Prayer...**

Sermon Scriptures & Quotes

1 Kings 22:51-53 (ESV)

51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. **52** He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. **53** He served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done.

2 Kings 1:1-18 (ESV)

1 After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel. **2** Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick; so he sent messengers, telling them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.” **3** But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? **4** Now therefore thus says the LORD, You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” So Elijah went. **5** The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, “Why have you returned?” **6** And they said to him, “There came a man to meet us, and said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” **7** He said to them, “What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?” **8** They answered him, “He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.” **9** Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’” **10** But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. **11** Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, “O man of God, this is the king's order, ‘Come down quickly!’” **12** But Elijah answered them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. **13** Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, “O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. **14** Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight.” **15** Then the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king **16** and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron--is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?--therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” **17** So he died according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken. Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. **18** Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

1 Thessalonians 1:8-10 (ESV)

8 For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. **9** For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 (AMP)
9 For God has not destined us to [incur His] wrath [that is, He did not select us to condemn us], but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, **10** who died [willingly] for us, so that whether we are awake (alive) or asleep (dead) [at Christ's appearing], we will live together with Him [sharing eternal life].

1 Peter 2:24 (NIV)
24 He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed."

Romans 5:6-10 (ESV)
6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die-- **8** but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.

Unholy Made Holy
By Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)

"We trample the blood of the Son of God if we think we are forgiven because we are sorry for our sins. The only explanation for the forgiveness of God and for the unfathomable depth of His forgetting is the death of Jesus Christ. Our repentance is merely the outcome of our personal realization of the atonement which He has worked out for us. It does not matter who or what we are; there is absolute reinstatement into God by the death of Jesus Christ and by no other way, not because Jesus Christ pleads, but because He died. It is not earned, but accepted. All the pleading which deliberately refuses to recognize the Cross is of no avail; it is battering at a door other than the one that Jesus has opened. Our Lord does not pretend we are all right when we are all wrong. The atonement is a propitiation whereby God, through the death of Jesus, makes an unholy man holy."
- Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*.

Gran Torino - Absorbing Wrath
By Pastor Steven A. Bush (02/19/26)

In the movie, *Gran Torino*, Clint Eastwood plays the part of Walt Kowalski. Walt's a Korean War Veteran and recently widowed. His own family has essentially deserted him and he lives alone in a modest home in Michigan. Kowalski is a gruff guy, calls a spade a spade, and does so with very colorful language. Walt's neighbors are Korean and they have a teenage son named Thao whom Walt calls, *Toad*. At first the relationship with his

Korean neighbors are strained. Walt's prejudices aren't hidden. He'd actually killed a young North Korean soldier trying to surrender to him and his guilt still plagues him. Thao's cousin and gang leader pressures Thao into stealing Walt's custom built 1972 Gran Torino as an a rite of initiation into the gang. He tries but fails. Confronted by his widowed mother, Thao's made to humbly apologize to Walt and essentially become his servant for a time. Hard on the boy at first, Walt works the kid hard, gets him a job, helps him overcome dating fears, and and becomes Thao's mentor unto manhood. Meanwhile the gang continues to rear its ugly head. Gang members beat up Thao causing Walt to retaliate. The gang then assaults Thao's sister, Sue, brutally raping and beating her inches from death. Fearing more gang violence, the family refuses to report the crime to police. Walt then, who owns plenty of guns, goes unarmed to gang's haunt and stands calmly yet defiantly before them. Gang members are locked and loaded. Countless witnesses are looking on. And then Walt reaches into his jacket as though reaching for his gun and when he yanks out his cigarette lighter as though armed, the gang members open fire, riddling Walt's body with bullets. He dies instantly. Walt absorbed the wrath of this vicious gang to extinguish their threats and preserve the lives of his neighbors. As for his modest home, he wills it to his church. As for his prized 1972 Gran Torino, much to the chagrin of his estranged family, he leaves it to Thao. As for us, God's wrath towards us was delivered upon His Son, absorbed by Him, and removed altogether. He who has ears, let him hear...

Additional Scriptures, Quotes, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Do Not Sugarcoat God's Wrath - R.C. Sproul (Ligonier Ministries)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Nw-NVxx2nU

Six Truths About God's Wrath- John Piper (Desiring God)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWLCyecSfzI

"Jesus Thank You" - Pat Sczebel
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_AU9JPZXqRQ&list=RD_AU9JPZXqRQ&start_radio=1

Isaiah 53:3-6 (ESV)

3 He was despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as One from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. **4** Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. **5** But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. **6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Romans 1:18-20 (NIV)

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, **19** since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. **20** For

since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--His eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

Romans 2:4-7 (NIV)
4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? **5** But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed. **6** God "will repay each person according to what they have done." **7** To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life.

Romans 5:8-11 (TLB)
8 But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. **9** And since by His blood He did all this for us as sinners, how much more will He do for us now that He has declared us not guilty? Now He will save us from all of God's wrath to come. **10** And since, when we were His enemies, we were brought back to God by the death of His Son, what blessings He must have for us now that we are His friends and He is living within us! **11** Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God--all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done in dying for our sins--making us friends of God.

Ephesians 2:1-5 (NIV)
1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. **4** But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.

1 John 4:7-12 (AMP)
7 Beloved, let us [unselfishly] love and seek the best for one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves [others] is born of God and knows God [through personal experience]. **8** The one who does not love has not become acquainted with God [does not and never did know Him], for God is love. [He is the originator of love, and it is an enduring attribute of His nature.] **9** By this the love of God was displayed in us, in that God has sent His [One and] only begotten Son [the One who is truly unique, the only One of His kind] into the world so that we might live through Him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation [that is, the atoning sacrifice, and the satisfying offering] for our sins [fulfilling God's requirement for justice against sin and placating His wrath]. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us [in this incredible way], we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has seen God at any time. But if we love one another [with unselfish concern], God abides in us, and His love [the love that is His essence abides in us and] is completed and perfected in us.

Hebrews 2:14-18 (ESV)
14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. **16** For surely it is not angels that He helps, but He helps the offspring of Abraham. **17** Therefore He had to be made like His brothers in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18** For because He Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.

Proverbs 17:15 (NIV)
15 Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent--the LORD detests them both.

Quote by A.H. Strong (1836-1921)
"God requires satisfaction because He is holiness, but He makes satisfaction because He is love."

Quote by John MacArthur
"...Whether you're talking about redemption, justification, reconciliation; whether you're talking about the removal of sin and transgression, whether you're talking about propitiation or covering--all of those are corollaries in a sense to the great truth of substitution, that Christ took our place on the cross... To put is as simply as I can put it, if Christ is not my substitute, then I still occupy the place of a condemned sinner. If my sins and my guilt are not transferred to Him and He does not take them, then they remain with me. If He did not deal with my sins, then I must deal with them. If He did not bear my penalty, then I must bear it. There is no other possibility. It is either Him or me... The bottom line is this: either Christ took my sins and bore them or I will. Either He paid the penalty for my sin, or I will pay it in hell forever."
- John MacArthur, Sermon titled, *"The Suffering Jesus: Our Substitute and Shepherd,"* June 11, 1989.

Quote by A.W. Tozer
"The cross is the lightning rod of grace that short-circuits God's wrath to Christ so that only the light of His love remains for believers."

Quote by Matt Chandler
"The place the Gospel holds out for us is where God's kindness and severity meet. This place is called the Cross, and it is where grace and wrath intersect. It is this place of shame and victory that God, in the form of the man Jesus of Nazareth, the long-expected Messiah, offered in His death the blood atonement necessary to satisfy God's justice and secure our salvation."

Quote by William Barclay
"The Cross is the proof that there is no length to which the love of God will refuse to go, in order to win (people's) hearts. The Cross is the medium of reconciliation because the

Cross is the final proof of the love of God; and a love like that demands an answering love. If the Cross will not waken love and wonder in people's hearts, nothing will."

Quote by Hudson Taylor

"There dawned upon me the joyous conviction that since the whole work was finished and the whole debt was paid upon the Cross there was nothing for me to do but to fall upon my knees, accept the Savior and praise Him forevermore."

Cliff Barrows' Hard Lesson for His Children

The late Cliff Barrows was the longtime music director for the Billy Graham Crusades. He told of a time when his two children disobeyed him after being warned more than once not to do something. Barrows deeply loved his kids yet knew punishment was called for. But what he did next was extraordinary. Cliff called Bobby and Bettie into his room, removed his belt, took off his shirt, and knelt down by his bed. He then instructed each child to whip him ten times. This tore them up! Both kids sobbed aloud as they lashed their daddy's back. Then Cliff hugged and kissed them and they prayed together. Barrows commented on this painful event by saying, *"It hurt, but I never had to spank them again."* Cliff Barrows was a just father but also a loving father. In the same way, our Father in heaven is absolutely just and loving. And where did His justice and love meet together? At the cross where His Son paid the penalty for our sins!