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THE WORD

The blood of my son, poured out for you at such a price – wasted.

I gave you the gift closest to my heart, and I trusted it to you.

You have let the gift be lost.

The cross, flown so proudly, my son once lifted so high, now is nothing to this land.

How my heart grieves.

Yet for the sake of the cross I will not forget you. For the sake of my son I will not abandon you.

Return, and I will bless you and show you a new way.

Yet I know that many of you will not do so. But the young, the poor in spirit, the old, the helpless – these will hear me, share my grief, and this will mark a new beginning, a new hope for this land.

Once again, the flag of the cross will fly.

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THE WAY OF THE CROSS

2

In this section, I have expanded on each section of the word, with biblical references, to help those who wish to test this word.

WORD:

The blood of my son, poured out for you at such a price – wasted.

I gave you the gift closest to my heart, and I trusted it to you.

You have let the gift be lost.

The cross, flown so proudly, my Son once lifted high, now is nothing to this land.

BIBLICAL BASE:

1 Peter 1:18 *“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ...”*

Lamentations 1:12 *“Is it nothing to you all you who pass by?”*

COMMENT

These three lines show God’s heart. This experience is worse than Gethsemane.

How can we speak of the blood of Christ as being wasted?

In these ways:-

- Men are not on fire for it.
- Men are not committed to it.
- Men are not sacrificing everything for it and to it.
- Men are substituting other things for it.
- Men are adding to the sacrifice.
- Men are diluting the sacrifice.

The sacrifice of the blood was enough, and if men do not see it so, consequences follow:

- The broken heart of God.
- The sins of Revelation – hardness, lukewarmness, tolerance of sin, love of position in the eyes of men.
- The ultimate destruction of the church.

These things come on us through our own making:-

- Through carelessness.
- Through looseness in concentration and discipline.
- Through bad shepherding (Luke 15) or downright wantonness.

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The consequence is the same – the flag of the cross becomes meaningless to the powerful, the satisfied, and **especially the young**. It becomes nothing more than a symbol of emptiness, of national pride, to be waved at football matches. THIS – the mark of the sacrifice of the Only Son.

3

The cross was the place of shame. All that was filthy was taken there and poured out on Jesus. The cross should be the place of glory, power, yet we are repeating the shame. It is ridiculed, ignored, trod down. “Is it nothing to you?” asks Isaiah. What can Iceland answer?

Something very serious has happened.
We have to appreciate the tragedy from God’s perspective.
We have to accept the responsibility.

WORD:

How my heart grieves.

BIBLICAL BASE:

Genesis 6:6: “The Lord saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.”

COMMENT

In Hebrew thought, the heart is the seat of emotion, understanding and will. In his heart, the Lord felt grief, affliction and disappointment in what he had created. It’s so easy to forget that God has emotions, and those emotions, described in the Bible as “grief” are stirred over what he sees in Iceland. His people – those for whom His Son died – have let the precious gift slip through their hands. If more of His people could see his pain, surely more of them would want to respond to it in some way.

WORD

Yet for the sake of the cross I will not forget you. For the sake of my son I will not abandon you.

BIBLICAL BASE:

1 John 4:10 “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

COMMENT:

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God can abandon his people, because he is righteous and holy. He cannot allow his name to be dragged down. Yet for the sake of the cross – the very sacrifice which has been neglected, God is going to offer mercy again. The covenant has not been broken from his side.

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WORD

Return, and I will bless you and show you a new way.

BIBLICAL BASE:

Hosea 6:1 *“Come let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us. He has injured us, but he will bind up our wounds.”*

COMMENT

Our God is a loving and a healing God. He only wants from us what he has always wanted – that we should walk closely with him. If we have strayed, then he will speak hard words to us, but only to bring us back.

What are these three phrases to mean?

RETURN:

The Lost Son (Luke 15) had to recognise where he had come from, and to what depths he had come to. Then he had to discover that the path lay not forwards, but backwards to the point of the original sin. There, are only there, with a repentant heart, could he find forgiveness and new beginnings.

The path of return has to be marked, as always by repentance.

I WILL BLESS YOU:

The blessing for the son was to receive mercy, to be given back the position he had so easily given up, and consequently and experience of the joy of the Lord.

SHOW YOU A NEW WAY:

His subsequent path is not explained, but it must of necessity have been a path of service and obedience, within the context of the mercy of God.

WORD

Yet I know that many of you will not do so.

BIBLICAL BASE:

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Jeremiah 6:16 *“This is what the Lord says “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, “We will not walk in it.”*

COMMENT

This is not a new phenomenon. Jeremiah knew that the people would not listen, even having asked the prophet for God’s word. When Jesus made clear the cost of following many no longer went around with him. (John 6:60 ff) Isaiah even had it in his commission. (Isaiah 6) The people of God have ever been blind of the truth – especially when it does not sit comfortably with their own suppositions, their current way of life, or their future.

WORD

But the young, the poor in spirit, the old, the helpless – these will hear me, share my grief, and this will mark a new beginning, a new hope for this land.

BIBLICAL BASE:

Matthew 5:1 *“Blessed are the poor in heart, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.”*

COMMENT

The young, poor in spirit, old, helpless – why has this list been gathered together?

Simply because the young have always been aware of injustice, or compromise, of sham and pretence. They are not yet captured by the sins of conformity, compromise and comfort. They have always been willing to burn brightly for a cause worth dying for - and they will see the re instatement of the sacrifice of the cross as one worth dying for. They won’t be put off by being told “we’ve tried all that before.”

The poor in spirit have always been open to the heart of God – to feeling his pain and walking his way, whatever the cost. They are so greatly aware of the mercy of God, that they would never dream of not sacrificing for him.

The old have had many years of experiencing the power of God, and are often acutely aware of the power which has gone from his people over the years.

The helpless – because they know that no one else can do it. They are not inhibited by pride, arrogance, wealth, security.

WORD

Once again, the flag of the cross will fly.

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COMMENT

6

God has something planned for the land, conditional on a change of heart in his people. The route is to be found in seeking God's heart in repentance, and in a release of the Spirit's power.