

THE FATHER'S ANSWER TO THE CLAIMS OF THE SOVEREIGN REDEEMER

Rolfe Barnard
(1904-1969)

Now if you have your Bible and wish to follow me, turn to John's Gospel, and as God shall enable me now I want to speak somewhat to this subject, "THE CLAIMS OF THE SOVEREIGN REDEEMER AND THE FATHER'S ANSWER TO THOSE CLAIMS." In the book of John, in just three chapters, you may pick out very easily 12 tremendous claims that our Lord Jesus made while He sojourned down here in the body of His humiliation. These are not all of His claims but every last one of them brand Him as the world's greatest pretender or as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There are no if's and and's about it. He is either Who He claimed to be or an impostor. He is either the Lord of Glory or He is not worthy of even our mention of Him. And there is no place of neutrality here. Thank God, man has to face that fact. Now in that sense every sinner can make a decision as to whether he shall pursue his effort to have a personal acquaintance with the One Who was here and went back to Glory and is here now in the Holy Ghost – or whether he will ignore Him and go on and live as if God did not exist.

I. LET ME MENTION THESE 12 CLAIMS OF THE SOVEREIGN REDEEMER. I just want to mention them to excite your interest as I come to the main part of the subject, WHAT THE FATHER HAS DONE IN RESPONSE TO THE CLAIMS OF HIS SON, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

1. In the first place, in the second chapter of the Gospel of John, our Lord while He was down here *claimed to know what was in the heart of all mankind*. John 2:24-25: "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man." You know, that would make your hair stand up on your head if you believed it. He knows everything about you. He knows everything that is in you. Nothing can be hid from His presence. He knew what was within men.

2. In the second place, in the third chapter of John at verse 13, He made the most stupendous claim that I have ever heard, I think, fall from the lips of any man. He said, "*I came down from heaven.*" Listen to it, John 3:13: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven. "If that is so, then He is God. If that is so, He is the Sent One of God. He is God's anointed One. He said, "I didn't come like anybody else." He said, "I came down from heaven; God Almighty sent Me down here."

3. Then in the third place, He said, "In the order of God's providence and the economy of salvation, *I came down here for the express purpose of dying and being raised from the dead.*" That is in John 3:14-16, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal

life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Imagine that: A man saying, "I came not to live, but I came to die and to be raised from the dead." Then in verse 34 of that third chapter He says, "I speak the very words and only the words that the Father gives to Me so that if you hear anything that I say, you are listening to God – God is speaking to you." Notice, "For He Whom God hath sent speaketh the Words of God."

4. Then He says in that same verse that *He was given the Holy Ghost without measure*. "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him."

5. Still again in verse 35, what a stupendous claim my Lord made. This is John chapter three. He said, "The Father loveth Me and hath given A-L-L, *ALL things into My hand*." John 3:35 – hear it! – "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." Isn't that a tremendous statement? Now anybody that can make a statement like that is either the biggest liar this world ever saw, or you need to bow down to Him right now and say, "Oh, God, I will spend the rest of my life seeking You, whatever You do with me."

6. Then He says in the fifth chapter in verse 19 that He does and *He did while He was here only what He saw the Father do*. John 5:19: "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

7. Again in verse 21 comes such a tremendous statement, "That as the Father quickeneth whom He will, even so *the Son giveth life to whom He will*." John 5:21: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." My, what a clear assertion of the sovereignty of Christ in making dead sinners live according to His good pleasure! Oh, how that makes me pause and thank God that I have so many good reasons to believe that He spoke to my own heart and gave life to my dead soul. For it says that He giveth life to whom He pleases and that means that you are in His hands.

8. Still again, He claims in verse 22 of that fifth chapter of John that *all judgment hath been given into His hands*. Nobody else is equipped to judge anybody. John 5:22: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Nobody else has a right to judge a world of sinners, but the Lord in this sense bought the world and in this sense redeemed the world. And in that sense, the world has been turned over to Him. Therefore, in virtue of that, He is going to be the Judge and is the Judge of all mankind.

9. Our Lord goes a little deeper when on down in the 27th verse He claims not only to have had judgment turned over to Him, but He says, "The Father has given Me *authority to execute judgment*." Hear it! John 5:27-29: "And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "Not only will I be the Judge, but I will have the power and authority to carry out the sentence of the court" – my soul! I read in the Bible about men weeping and wailing. Nobody will willingly jump into the Lake of Fire. And I read that sinners are going to be C-A-S-T, CAST, into the Lake of Fire.

And I know that the only One that will have power to cast anybody into the Lake of Fire is the Lord Jesus Christ. So I say, "Oh, my soul, isn't it wonderful that instead of being my coming Judge, He is now my present Lord and Saviour. Hallelujah and Glory to the Lamb!"

10. I read still a more tremendous claim in verse 26. Here my Lord claimed *that all life was in Him*. John 5:26: "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself "Christ came down here into a vast cemetery. Nothing but death – putrid, stinking death, and He had life in Himself. He had life in Himself! Then when I read that He gives life to whomsoever He will, my hair stands up on my head as I see people going around all over this country listening to preachers telling them to save themselves and go through some motions! I tell you that all life is in Christ Jesus and therefore you are as dead as a doormat unless you have been identified with and personally joined to this Lord Jesus Christ; for He is the source of life.

11. But I continue and in verse 25 of that fifth chapter of John, I read that the Lord Jesus Christ gives the most glorious promise that I have ever heard and that is found in these words: "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming, and [N-O-W] NOW is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Praise God, He said, "*I have got life within Myself. I give life to whomsoever I will*, and there is life in My voice; and when I personally single out a sinner, and speak, bless God, that Lazarus will come from his grove, spiritual death, and be raised to life eternal to be vitally joined to me in Whom is all life and Who has been made a life-giving Spirit." John 5:25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." And so I know that there is nothing, nothing, nothing – just emptiness – outside of being personally joined to the Lord Jesus Christ!

12. When our Lord was down here *He claimed to have power to give eternal life* in John 17:2: "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." Then He tells us what eternal life is in verse 3 – and this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.

Now those are some of the solemn claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. My friend, you are a fool if you don't face them. While there are a lot of things a poor old lost sinner can't do, there are some things he can do. He can try to see himself in the mirror of God Almighty's Law. He can try to draw near unto God Almighty. He can do everything he knows to listen as for eternity. Listen to Him Who speaketh from the heavens and when He personally speaks there is no resistance – there is, thank God, life from the dead. I tell you, you had better roll up your fists and become a candidate for salvation. For I am not much persuaded that God Almighty is just going to grab you up by the nap of the neck and force you to come to Him. I think that He works in other ways.

But I want as solemnly as I know how in the rest of this message to bring to you three tremendous facts that grow out of the claims of the Lord Jesus. These facts attack this one question:

II. WHAT IS GOD'S ANSWER TO THE CLAIMS OF HIS WELL BELOVED SON?

What has the Father lodged entirely in the Son as His answer to the claims that His Son made when He was down here on the earth?

1. In the first place, *the Father has placed the exclusive conduct of the human race in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Oh, that is God's answer to the perfect life and the death and the resurrection of His Blessed Son! He says, "I have found somebody that has got a right (and has got a right because of His death) to guide men and to control men and to do with men as seemeth good in His sight. And that One is My Well Beloved Son." The most hair-raising thing that you will ever face, my friend, is that as you listen to my voice now, without peradventure of a doubt, your conduct and your destiny for time and eternity have been placed by the Godhead into the keeping and in the hands and under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, I hear Him pray in John 17:2, praying to the Father: "As Thou hast given Him authority over all flesh, ALL flesh, ALL FLESH!" – that includes you, if you are a member of Adam's lost and ruined race.

Then my Father has given my Lord absolute authority over you. And you are the biggest fool this side of hell if you do not face that fact! My, wouldn't it be awful to live all of your life thinking that you are the fellow who decides things. I tell you, you are in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I am glad it is that way. I do not have sense enough to know which direction to go and neither have you, but I can sing, "Take my hand, Precious Lord." I am glad that the destiny and conduct of mankind is in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ – not in my hands, not in your hands, not in the hands of some cruel something called fate – but it is in the hands that were pierced by the nails. Praise God! Oh, I want Him to lead me. My soul! He would not ask me to go anywhere He had not been before and taken the sting out of every danger that I will ever have to face and removed the teeth from all the devices of Satan.

Praise God, I am so glad that I have found out and it has been made real to my soul that Rolfe Barnard is turned over to the Lord Jesus Christ, and I have been mighty happy as He is leading me to the desired haven. The conduct of the human race is not in the evil bent will of mankind. The destiny of mankind is not going to be decided by the devil or by men. It is already decided by the Triune God. My Lord Jesus Christ is reigning now, and the devil can't bat an eyelash, and neither can you, which will surprise God. This old world is in good hands, and I am glad for the hope that is within me that I fled to Him, that He is my Refuge and He's my Lord and He's my God!

2. There is the second thing that we need to face that grows out of the claims of our Blessed Lord – namely, *the Father has deposited all of His love and favor for men and women in His Blessed Son*. Outside of Christ, there is nothing but the withering blast of the vengeance and judgment of Almighty God, but joined to Christ (in Christ) there is the distinguishing love and grace and favor of God Almighty world without end. The old-time preachers were nearer the truth than we are now when they told men and women outside of Christ that they were not in nearly so comfortable a position as people think they are now. For the old-time preachers would warn men to flee from the wrath to come. And the Apostle John will tell men that, he that obeyeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him right now! He is under the wrath of God until he flees to Christ for refuge and stays there, for the only safe place for anybody is at the feet of Christ – trusting in Him. There is no place of safety for you. I don't care if you have been serving the Lord for 90 years, the only place of safety is to be sheltered by the blood of Christ and encompassed by His wings and guided by His strong right hand.

Oh, the love and favor of the Godhead for a lost and dying world has been placed in the Lord Jesus Christ! Now, you can argue about it. You can talk about your theories of atonement. I used to talk about it. But, oh, the blessed work of my Lord is too big to argue about. And it is too big to try to understand! I tell you, the need of somebody's heart listening to me now is simply this, that it will be made real to you that the Lord Jesus Christ did what He did for you, that He actually died in your room, in your stead, that He was actually raised from the dead so God could set you free. Never mind about somebody else. Oh, it needs to be made real to you. The most real thing this side of heaven is that the Lord Jesus Christ hung on a cross for Y-O-U. I tell you, apart from that being made real to you, you never will be saved, and you know it. The cry of your heart must be that all other theories will go out the window and you will quit worrying whether Christ died for somebody else or not, and the one concern of your own heart is that this shall be made real unto you. Oh, that is the work of the Holy Spirit.

That is the cry of our hearts as we go up and down the land. I am trying to preach for the Lord as He would want me to do. Now I am trying to say to you that you are going to go to hell as sure as I am preaching to you unless it becomes a personal reality with you that Christ died for you; that He was raised for you; that He intercedes for you; that He is coming for you; that you are His and He is yours. I pray that the Spirit of God might make that real to somebody as this message goes out. Oh, my soul, the reality that is in Christ Jesus. Do not be satisfied with anything else!

I had the flu years ago, and I closed a meeting with the flu racking my body on a Sunday night. I rested a little while Monday morning. But at 11 o'clock Monday morning I got on a train at Winston Salem and journeyed to Illinois in my flu-weakened condition. I got there about noon on Tuesday and the pastor met me and took me to a room and called a doctor. The pastor told me there wouldn't be many people to hear me preach that night because they were having some sort of an entertainment at the school. While he apologized, the doctor treated me. I went over that night and preached. I must have preached a powerful sermon because all hell broke loose. The chairman of the board of deacons stood out on the steps after the service and raved and raved, and said, "That man is a false prophet and he is going to tear our church up." I didn't know all about this. I had gone on back to the room to my sick bed. This deacon said to the pastor, "Here is a check for \$400. I will give it to you if you will pay that preacher off and don't let him preach any more." You know I must have preached a powerful sermon – just one little sermon!

They didn't tell me anything about that and the next night I went over and preached. And it must have been powerful too. I did not understand it, but as soon as I was ready to pronounce the benediction, the pastor said, "I want to meet all the deacons down in the basement." I didn't know what was going on. I slipped out the back door and went back to bed. I was pretty sick. They told me later about how the pastor walked the floor and said, "That preacher is going to ruin us and he is going to tear our church all to pieces," and everybody agreed with him except an old silver-haired deacon. When they got around to him, he said, "Boys, you fellows had better let that preacher alone. He is preaching the Gospel. You folks have never heard it, and you had better not put your hands on him." I didn't know about all of these things.

Thursday night came and the house was just packed and jammed. I wondered what was going on. But unbeknownst to me all of this was going all over the city and here they were coming. Friday

night came and the house was packed and jammed. I still didn't know what was going on. Saturday night came, and, lo and behold, the house was crowded and a fellow got up to sing a solo. He didn't mean to do it, but he sang in the power of the Spirit. I saw God take a song, sung in the Spirit, and apply what I had been preaching and pierce hearts with the truth of the Gospel. As he stood up there and began to sing, the Holy Ghost took charge of him. He began to sing:

"Love sent my Saviour to die in my stead,
Why should He love me so?
Meekly to Calvary's cross He was led;
Why should He love me so?
Nails pierced His hands and His feet for my sin. (Not for somebody else's.)
Why should He love me so?
He suffered sore MY salvation to win, (Not somebody else's!)
Why should He love me so?"

While he was singing all hell began to pop. The organist quit playing and screamed out, "I am lost! I am lost!" That is the sweetest cry that I have ever heard this side of eternity. That is the prelude to the cry, "I am saved." She began running to the prayer room. It was the pastor's wife. Then I heard somebody else sobbing, and that poor pastor said, "Oh, my God, I am lost! I'm lost! I'm lost! I'm lost!" And here he ran. Then I saw 14 Roman Catholics; I saw the Sunday School superintendent; I saw seven deacons; I saw (I don't know, just so many) as they screamed out before that man could finish his song. They were in the prayer room on their bones sobbing out their souls to God. Because of my preaching? No. Because the Holy Spirit took a song, the truth of it, and made this thing personal and brought the truth of the Gospel and pierced the hearts of those people.

Some people there saw for the first time in their lives that Christ died for them; that He agonized for them; that the nails were put in His hands for them; that He was raised for them. And bless God, if He did all of that for you, I don't think He would have a bit of trouble saving you. Do you? I think you could trust a God Who would do that much for you! Oh, that the Holy Spirit would make it real to somebody listening to my voice right now, that Christ died for you. Died for you! Oh, He died for you! Not for somebody else, but for you. He loved you! He loved you! He loved you, sinner. If He loved you enough to die for you, my soul, you cannot afford not to give Him the all-out response and love of your poor withered heart from now until eternity!

3. There is another thing that is true because Christ is what He is and did what He did. Not only has the conduct of the human race been placed in His hands; not only is all the loving favor of God for human beings put in Christ so that outside of Christ is nothing but judgment. Outside of Christ is nothing but hell on this earth, and hell forever. But *the Father has also given to the Lord Jesus Christ the power to awaken faith in the souls of dead men*. Nobody else has that power, but thank God He has, and He speaks to sinners. Bless God, when He speaks to you personally and singles you out, all the devils in hell can't stop the work of salvation. When He speaks, Lazarus comes forth. Yes, sir!

Paul writing to the church at Thessalonica said, "I know about you, brethren. I know you are God's elect." How? "I know it – knowing therefore your election of God." How did you find it

out, Paul? "I came over there," Paul said, "And I preached; and my Gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power, and in the Spirit, and in the Holy Ghost" (I Thessalonians 1:4-5 and I Thessalonians 2:13). Now what does that mean, Brother Barnard? Here it is – I have just a minute. Listen to me! Listen, sinner! It means that in order to be saved, some of these days there are just going to be two people alive on this earth as far as you are concerned – you and the Lord. You may be in a crowd of a thousand people. You won't know it, but Somebody will speak to you. He may not speak to anybody else. He will single you out. He will rout you out, and He will speak to you. He will speak through the Gospel. But for the first time in your life He will be speaking to you and He won't let you alone. Praise God! He will kill all of your idols and destroy all of your places of refuge, and you will HEAR the voice of the Son of God. And when He speaks, dead souls are made alive. Glory Hallelujah! Praise His Holy Name! Now I want to say this: this is in the realm of the miraculous. This is in the realm of the mysterious, but I would not have it otherwise. The whole business is miraculous, but it is so simple because the Holy Ghost so sweetened it.

Listen, don't be satisfied until you have had a personal visit from the Lord of Glory. He will speak through the Gospel to you. The Holy Spirit will take the truth of the Gospel and make it alive and make it real, until you can stand on a stack of Bibles a mile high and swear that if they are going to burn you alive in the next five seconds. God has actually spoken to you in the Gospel, and that you have heard Him and that your soul has been touched by the Divine fire of the Lord Jesus Christ speaking to you! □

[Brother Barnard preached this over the radio in New Orleans, LA in 1959]