



## No Longer An Outsider Because of Jesus

*“Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...”* (Matt. 27:51).

Think about how it would have been to be present near that thickly woven curtain at the time in history when it was rent in two. I would have loved to have seen that! Strands, fibers and dust wafting in the air that was illuminated by the beams of temple sunlight. What an important event! I wonder how many saw this. Could you imagine a rabbi or a worshiper there just laughing for joy, waving their arms and yelling in Hebrew, *“Man, the veil of the temple was just torn in two, from top to bottom!”*

Was anyone up there to do it? God was. Now we’ve all heard about the inner court of the temple in Jerusalem, in the Holy of Holies, you know, that’s where the Ark of the Covenant was. That’s where the high priest would go in once a year to offer atonement for the sins of the people. A veil separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple and the people had grown accustomed to this separation.

When Jesus vicariously died for you -- when He was willingly murdered on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that’s when this heavy curtain was torn from top to bottom. It was not ripped from bottom to top, as though a man were ripping it. What man was there strong enough to rip it? Instead, it was slashed from top to bottom, because God was ripping it apart. It was like He was saying *“I hate being apart from you. Turn from your wrong-doing’s to Me. I don’t want you on the outside anymore. I don’t want your friends on the outside anymore! I so care about them! Salvation is a gift that anyone can open. Come close through the death of my sinless Son and say close to Me.”*

God was basically saying, *“You, in My Son, are as ‘insider’ as an insider can get. You no longer have to be on the outside. You don’t need to work your way into the inner circle—you can be there with Me forever. No charge. You can come in anytime and I will listen to you because you really matter to Me! My Son has made a way for you.”*

The apostle Paul explained how we can now draw near to God: ***“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith”*** (Heb. 10:19–22).

The veil was torn down ...when? As soon as God could get to it! *Let Me at it!* – that’s how God felt. He had an appointed time. Jesus is now our Intercessor. We don’t have to go through another person with an ecclesiastical title to reach God anymore. We don’t have to jump through all their large and dinky hoops. We don’t need anyone’s mother. We don’t have to kiss the papal ring or abide by all the details of man’s vain traditions or go through dead rituals anymore. Instead, Jesus made a new and living way for us to reach God. How can we take for granted the great access we have! Jesus paid it ALL! We can’t add to it, and that is so important to remember.

I have often joined in singing the chorus *“God is so good, God is so good, God is so good, He’s so good to me.”* I could sing this with sincerity, heartily thanking Him for my family, my many friends, and above all

my salvation. I often wonder how it would be if I were living alone and felt disenfranchised, marginalized, religiously ostracized, misunderstood or simply forgotten, and had very little to eat ...would I still feel like singing those words? I hope so. Many Christians experience this stuff. Maybe they're just left behind? Maybe they're vilified and written off? Maybe they were born the wrong color or kicked out because they couldn't pay their rent. Maybe they live right across the street and we don't even know their name or have a clue about the veiled circumstances of their departure from their mundane nine to five warehouse job?

Well, we can be confident that the Lord, in whom we have placed our trust, would give us the same grace to sing that song – the grace that He's given to millions who have nothing but Him. Imprisoned for their faith, undernourished in the Sudan, ostracized or painfully ill, they can rejoice in the Lord and declare His goodness.

Does it ever seem to you like God must love us more to have allowed us to be born in America? He really doesn't. Do you ever wonder how it would be to grow up in the 10/40 window where there are so few missionaries to tell the old, old Story? We need to pray for the forgotten ones, the irreligious and the cast-sheep with church-hurt, because Jesus remembers them. Reading about that blind son in John 9 is so encouraging to me. When the religious put him out, Jesus took him in. And if you've been rejected, Jesus will take you in for He said, ***“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”*** (Jn. 6:33).

You and I still have a missions mandate even though we might work as a lineman for Verizon or in sales at a Comp USA computer store. God told us to go, so how can we say no? If we don't have the cash we can go daily by prayer. God's love constrains us. ***“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*** (Jn. 3:16 emphasis mine).

Who's the who in "whoever"? It's you. It's me. It's everyone and anyone. That's who! See, I don't care what label you may wear, (or was posted on you). God doesn't care, He's so inclusive. None ostracized!--no one marginalized!--No one excluded. He wants all to be saved! ***“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end... The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this”*** (Isa. 9:7).

So, do you feel that you've made it into the inner circle yet? Has serious sin (or alleged serious sin) separated you? Were you distracted away from loving God most? You can come back to Christ as you are. He loves you!

*Whoever*, that covers everyone. If you already believe in Christ, thank Him for your salvation. If not, place your trust in Christ right now by a simple prayer and receive His gift of eternal life and all the blessings that accompany it—deliverance from condemnation (man's or real), forgiveness of sin, peace with God, and the promise of heaven.

***“When Jesus said ‘whoever,’ He included you and me;  
For no one is excluded from His offer full and free.” —Hess***

The outsider-club is big, but by inclusive, gracious faith God can use us to start emptying it and to fill up the family of God.

Have Kurt's fishing devos blessed you? Click on the "Contact" button and let him know!