

Title: **WHERE'S THE MIDDLE BAR?**

Text: Exodus 26:26-30

Subject: *Christ in You*

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Tape : Exodus #91

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Introduction:

The Tabernacle of the Congregation which is described in such great detail in Exodus 25-40, is without question the fullest, most instructive type and picture of Christ that was given in the Old Testament Scriptures. It typified and portrayed our blessed Savior himself; and it typified and portrayed our salvation in him

1. It began with a plan. God showed Moses the pattern that had to be rigidly followed (Exodus 25:9, 40; Romans 8:28-31).
2. Everything in the tabernacle focused on a sacrifice — The Altar of Sacrifice — The Laver of Cleansing — The Vail of Separation (Revelation 13:8).
3. The central thing in the tabernacle was the mercy-seat, the place of atonement (Exodus 25:22; 1 John 2:1-2).
4. The Shekinah above the mercy-seat spoken of Divine acceptance by the blood of the sacrifice (Ephesians 1:6).
5. The bread on the table spoke of Christ the Bread of Life.
6. The Light of the Golden Candlestick spoke of Christ the Light of the World.
7. The curtains over the tabernacle represented the covering of our souls with Christ's garments of salvation.
8. The loops and buckles (taches) spoke of our union in Christ by God the Holy Spirit, who joins us together as one tabernacle.
9. The 48 boards of the tabernacle declared that all God's elect shall be joined to Christ.
10. The bases, the sockets of silver in which each board was set, represented the atonement (They were made by the atonement money.) which is the singular foundation of the whole structure.
11. The bars of shittim wood overlaid with pure gold spoke of our security in the omnipotent arms of our Redeemer.

Let's read about these bars that wrapped the boards and held them together (Exodus 26:26-30; 36:31-34).

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(Exodus 26:26-30) “And thou shalt make bars *of* shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, (27) And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides westward. (28) And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end. (29) And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings *of* gold *for* places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold. (30) And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the mount.”

How we ought to rejoice and give thanks to our God for the security of our souls in his arms of mercy. It is a security that involves every attribute of the triune God.

- His Immutability and His Faithfulness
- His Mercy and His Grace
- His Justice and His Truth
- His Righteousness and His Holiness

Now, notice carefully, that Moses speaks of five bars on each of the three enclosed sides of the tabernacle, fifteen in all. But if you will look at any picture or model of the tabernacle, you will never be able to find more than twelve. Count them, and count them again. Believe me, I have. There are only four bars on each side of the tabernacle. I can see four and feel four; two upper and two lower bars on each side; but I cannot see, or feel, or find the fifth one. So I've got a question that just has to be answered. — **Where's the middle bar?** Look at verse 28 again.

(Exodus 26:28) “And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end.”

Turn to Exodus 36, and you will find out where this middle bar was placed.

(Exodus 36:31-34) “And he made bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, (32) And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the sides westward. (33) And he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other. (34) And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their

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rings of gold *to be* places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.”

The middle bar was seen by no one. It ran inside the boards. It was shot “*through the boards from the one end to the other.*” Everything else in the tabernacle could be seen by the eye of man, either from the outside or from the inside; but this middle bar no mortal eye could see. Everyone knew it was there; but no one could see it, except the Lord God himself.

What do you suppose that middle bar represents? Turn to Colossians chapter 1. As you read the chapter with me, I'll guarantee you, when we get to it, you will immediately see what the middle bar of the tabernacle represented.

(Colossians 1:12-29) God our Father “hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: (15) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: (16) For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (17) And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

(18) And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

(19) For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell; (20) And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

(21) And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled (22) In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (23) If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature

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which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; (24) Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: (25) Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; (26) *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: (27) To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (28) Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: (29) Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."

The middle bar represented Christ in you, the hope of glory.

- Everything else in the tabernacle represented the works of Christ for us.
- The middle bar represented the work of Christ in us.
- Without the middle bar the tabernacle would not have been complete. And there is no salvation for any sinner, no hope of glory, until Christ is in you. — Christ in you is the hope of glory! Read verse 27 again.

(Colossians 1:27) "To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

- The essence of God's salvation is Christ himself.
- The sweetness of it is Christ in you.
- The anticipation of it, the hope of it, is glory!

Let me talk to you a little about this middle bar — Christ in you.

The gospel of God's free and sovereign grace in Christ is a mystery hidden from the unregenerate man, hidden from every unbeliever, but revealed by his Spirit to his saints, — "*To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" There are three things revealed in this 27th verse.

THE RICHES OF GLORY

*First, **all the riches promised, proclaimed, and presented to sinners in***

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the gospel are in Christ. The riches of the gospel are **spiritual riches.** They are called, “*The riches of the glory of this mystery,*” because the glory of the gospel is, in great measure, to be seen in the riches of grace it holds in store for sinners who trust Christ.

What are these riches? They are **the rich truths of grace,** compared to gold, silver, and precious stones, by which God builds his holy temple (1 Corinthians 3:11-16). **They are the rich truths of the gospel:**

- sovereign election,
- substitutionary redemption,
- almighty, irresistible, saving grace,
- and the infallible preservation of God’s saints in grace.

The riches Paul speaks of are the rich treasures of grace laid up for sinners in Christ. In Christ there are immense and infinite treasures of grace laid up in store for God’s elect (John 1:16; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:9-10).

(John 1:16) “And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

(Colossians 2:9-10) “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

All the promises of God, relating to this life and to the life to come, are in Christ yea and amen, sure and infallible. In Christ we have

- free justification (Romans 3:24-26),
- absolute pardon (Ephesians 1:7),
- complete reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:17),
- eternal adoption (1 John 3:1-2),

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- and eternal life (Romans 3:23).

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL

Second, **Christ is also the glory of the gospel.** Read Colossians 1:27 again. — “*To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ.*”

It is written, “*His glory shall be great in thy salvation*” (Psalm 21:5). — The gospel is the revelation of the glory of God; and the glory of God is Christ. We see the glory of God in the face of Christ. That is to say, by faith in Christ every believer sees that which was revealed to Moses in Exodus 34: God’s glorious, sovereign goodness and inflexible justice in the exercise of his saving grace in Christ (Isa. 45:20). God’s glory is known and revealed only in Christ, the incarnate God, the sinner’s Substitute (John 1:18; 17:3; 2 Corinthians 4:6).

(John 1:18) “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.”

(John 17:3) “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

(2 Corinthians 4:6) “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

THE HOPE OF GLORY

Third, **the believer’s hope of glory is Christ.** — “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*” We live in hope of immortality and eternal life in heavenly glory, “*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*” The basis, foundation and ground of our hope is “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*”

- The cause of our hope is the grace of God in Christ.
- The basis of our hope is the finished work of Christ.
- Our hope itself is “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*”

“*Christ in you*” is what the middle bar represented; and “*the hope of glory*”

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is the subject of Colossians 1. The glory which the saints will have with Christ will be the enjoyment of him forever in heaven. **This hope of glory in which we live is brought to light by the gospel** (2 Timothy 1:9-10).

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) God “hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

Christ is our hope of glory. Christ crucified is the basis of our hope. But Christ crucified is not our hope. Christ in you is the hope of glory. It is Christ in us that gives us hope, the confident expectation of glory. Christ in you (formed in you, living in you, reigning in you) is the hope, the confident, pleasurable expectation of eternal glory.

Religion that is all experience and feeling is worthless, useless religion. But religion that has neither experience nor feeling is just as worthless and useless. Hope, like faith and love, is an internal thing, something felt, experienced, and known in the soul. You can talk about faith all you want to, and define it with unmistakable precision, but until you experience it, you will never know what it is. You can read books about love, and even write books about love, but you will never know what it is until you experience it. And once you experience it, you will laugh at the definitions men attach to it. **The same is true of hope. Hope is not a theory, a doctrine, or just something to talk about. Hope is something born in you, something felt in the heart and known only by experience.** — “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*”

“Glory itself is in his hands. The gift of it is with him and through him. He has made way by his sufferings and death for the enjoyment of it, and is now preparing it for us by his presence and intercession. His grace makes us worthy of it. His righteousness gives us title to it. And his Spirit is the earnest of it” (*John Gill*).

The hope of glory which we have in Christ is built upon Christ himself alone. It is a hope founded upon his blood, righteousness, intercession, and grace. Here are **THREE FACTS** revealed in the Scriptures which assure us that our hope of glory is a good, well-grounded, and sure hope. I hope to go

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to heaven when I die. I have hope of eternal life with Christ. I confidently expect the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. I am looking for and expecting immortality and eternal life in glory with Christ. But is that reasonable; or is it just a pipe dream? Let's see.

GOD'S PROMISE

1. **God has promised eternal life and glory to his elect.**

It is written, "The Lord will give grace and glory" (Psa. 84:11). God promises to believing sinners not only spiritual life that now is, but also eternal life which is to come (1 Timothy 4:8). This promise of eternal life, life with Christ forever in glory, is the principle, all-encompassing promise of the gospel. It is the center of all the promises of God. Indeed, all other blessings of grace terminate in this. — "*This is the promise that he promised us, even eternal life*" (1 John 2:25).

It is a promise made by God, who cannot lie, before the world began (Tit. 1:2). **This is a promise that can be depended upon. It is sure and certain. When this life is over God's saints shall enter into eternal life in glory.** — "*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried,*" when he has been proved by the trials and afflictions of life in this world, "*he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*" (James 1:12). And the crown of life is the "*crown of glory that fadeth not away*" (1 Peter 5:4).

CHRIST'S PREPARATION

2. **The glory of eternal life in heaven is a glory that God has prepared for his elect.**

It is a glory unseen, unheard of, and inconceivable to the minds of men and women in this world. But it is a glory prepared by God for them that love him and revealed to us by his Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

This preparation of eternal happiness was made for us before the world began. Heaven is a kingdom prepared for God's elect from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34).

(Matthew 25:34) "Then shall the King say unto them on his right

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hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:”

It was prepared in the counsels and purposes of God, which cannot be defeated, frustrated, or made void by any means.

This kingdom of glory was prepared for us by our blessed Savior's sin-atoning death as our Substitute (John 14:1-3).

(John 14:1-3) “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”

And this kingdom of glory shall, most assuredly, be given to those men and women for whom it was prepared by God (Matt. 20:23).

(Matthew 20:23) “And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

It will not be given to any but those for whom it was prepared. It cannot be purchased, earned, won, or in anyway merited by the works of men. But it shall be given freely to those for whom God prepared it.

MY EXPERIENCE

3. **God's elect in this world are men and women he has prepared unto glory** (Romans 9:23).

(Romans 9:23) “And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.”

Not only has God promised and prepared a kingdom of glory for his elect, but his elect are “*vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory.*” **Every work of God's grace is a preparatory work by which he prepares his people to enter into and enjoy everlasting glory.**

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God prepared us unto glory **in sovereign predestination**, having ordained us unto eternal life. He has prepared us for glory **by blood atonement**. And he prepares us for glory **by the experience of his grace**, making us partakers of the divine nature, putting Christ in us by the mighty operations of his Spirit. At God's appointed "*time of love*" (Ezek. 16:8), those who were ordained unto eternal life are given grace to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and effectually caused to come to him in faith by the Spirit of grace (Acts 13:48; Psa. 65:4).

(Psalms 65:4) "*Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.*"

(Acts 13:48) "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Those whom God has ordained to eternal life and caused to believe on Christ shall most assuredly enjoy that life in eternity to which they were ordained from eternity. The means of bringing God's elect into eternal life in glory as well as eternal life itself has been infallibly fixed by God's decree (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).

(2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"*God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation,*" not from the beginning of your repentance, faith and conversion, but from the beginning of all things, from the beginning of time, from eternity. All who now believe, and all who ever shall believe, were chosen by God to salvation before the world began. The means by which God determined to save us is plainly revealed.

- "*Through sanctification of the Spirit*" — Regeneration.
- "*And belief of the truth*" — Faith in Christ.
- "*Whereunto he called you by our gospel*" — The preaching of the gospel.

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That salvation and eternal life to which we have been elected, predestinated, and called is eternal glory – *“To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* **We shall obtain that very same glory which Christ has entered into and now possesses for us.**

- **He has it in his hands to give to God's elect** (John 17:2).

(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.”

- **He declares that it is ours** (John 17:5, 22).

(John 17:5) “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

(John 17:22) “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”

- **We have been predestinated to it** (Romans 8:29).
- **He has prepared it for us and us for it.**
- **And we shall have it** (Romans 8:28-31).

(Romans 8:28-31) “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (31) What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?”

Here is a marvelous, golden chain of grace which cannot be broken. It begins in predestination and ends in glorification. — *“Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified!”*

Now, go back to our text and look at the 30th verse of Exodus 26 again. — *“And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof*

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which was shewed thee in the mount!” The whole tabernacle was set up by just one man — Moses, who also typified the Lord Jesus Christ. The whole work of salvation was finished and reared up by one man, Christ Jesus the Lord, according to the pattern of God’s eternal decree, to praise of the glory of his grace!

Amen.