

Christ and Him Crucified

Sunday, August 3rd, 1986

1 Corinthians 2:1-2

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

If you have your Bible, I would like for you to open it with me to the 1 Corinthians Chapter 2. I’m going to speak on this subject: “CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.”

This is what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians Chapter 2, verses 1 and 2: *“And I brethren when I came to you preaching the Word of God, when I came to Corinth,”* (where he had been there 18 months). *“I didn’t come preaching in a clever, intellectual, witty and showy way.”*

“I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom.” I didn’t come with eloquence, with enticing words of man’s wisdom. I didn’t attempt to be intellectual. I didn’t attempt to debate your scholars and your philosophers. But rather, I determined not to allow anything to distract from the real issue, which is *Christ and Him crucified.*

Paul said, *“I was determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”* Who is Jesus Christ? Why was He crucified? What did He accomplish by His death on the cross and where is He now?

Paul is saying, “My message was then and my message is now, *Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*” In 1 Corinthians 1 verse 22, he said, *“The Jews require a sign.”* They always want a sign and they say, “Show us a sign, show us a miracle.” *“The Greeks, (the intellectual), seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ and Him crucified.”*

My friends, since the apostle Paul is the pattern of conversion, (and that is what he calls himself), *“a pattern of conversion,”* since the apostle Paul is the first world-wide missionary, and he is the preacher’s pattern, then we ought to study Paul’s message and Paul’s method.

I have studied Paul’s message and I have studied Paul’s method. I know what Paul is saying. I know exactly what he is saying here. He is saying, “If we are faithful in preaching Christ and Him crucified, we will in declaring Christ and Him crucified, *“preach all the council of God.”*

Did you know that? If we preach Christ Jesus the Lord and Christ's redemptive work, Christ's death, Christ's burial and Christ's resurrection, if we are faithful in preaching Christ crucified, we will, in preaching that, declare all the council of God.

You might say, "How can that be?" Let me show you. If we preach Christ and Him crucified, if we are faithful in declaring Christ Jesus and His redemptive work, then we shall preach the eternal purpose, covenant and will of God which gave birth to the cross.

Do you see what I am saying? The cross of Christ was no afterthought of God. The cross of Christ was not something that God, in a hurry, devised. It was not some scheme that He came up with after certain schemes and plans had failed. The Scripture says, before man was created and before man fell, "*Christ was the Lamb slain, yea, before the foundation of the world.*"

In Revelation 13:8, the Scripture said; "*And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*" In other words, all which God does in time, He decreed in eternity.

Christ is the Surety and the Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of an everlasting covenant. The Scripture says, "*Known unto God are all His works from the beginning.*" So, if we faithfully preach Christ and Him crucified, then we are going to faithfully declare the council, wisdom, purpose and will of God which decreed the death of Christ long before the world was ever created.

Second: If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we must preach the fall of man. If man is not a sinner, there is no need for "*Christ and Him crucified.*" If man is not lost there is no need for a cross, for the Scripture says; "*He came into the world to save sinners. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.*"

This is what Paul is saying in Romans 5:12; "*Wherefore, by one man, sin entered this world and death by sin so death passed upon all men.*" Several things are revealed about man's sin in the cross of Christ.

First of all: There is the sinfulness of sin. Oh, if it required the death of the Son of God to save my soul, what a wretched, corrupt and sinful soul I must have! Paul described it this way, "*the exceeding sinfulness of sin.*" Only the death of God can put it away.

Did you know that sin is hard to put away? All the Jewish sacrifices will not put away sin. Repentance won't put away sin. Death won't put away sin. Judgment won't put away sin and hell won't put away sin. *"He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."* Sin is a stain that only the blood of Christ can remove. Oh, *"the exceeding sinfulness of sin."*

Not only that, but there is the inability of men. The disciples said, *"Then, who can be saved?"* Christ said, *"With men it is impossible."* It takes the death of Christ to save a sinner.

There is also the certainty of judgment. The Scripture says, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die."* What can wash away my sin? What can wash away the corrupt, defiled, sins of men? Only the blood of Jesus Christ can wash away sin. Do you see what I am saying?

When we look at the cross, it tells us something about what happened in the Garden. When we look at the cross and see that God sent His Son of necessity to that cross of Calvary, because that is the only way that a holy God can save sinners; there is no other way.

Oh, how lost man must be! Sin is not just some infraction; it is not just some omission; it is not just some mistake or slight failure; sin is a transgression against the Law of God. Sin is rebellion against a holy God. Sin is to be a traitor in the kingdom of God. Sin is so terrible and so deep that it takes the death of God to take it away. Do you see that?

Third: If we preach Christ and Him crucified we preach the holiness and character of God which demands and requires the death of His Son. You see; in Isaiah 45:21 God says, *"I am a just God and a Saviour."* This is a note which is not being sounded at all today.

In Romans 3:26, God says; *"He sent forth His Son to be a propitiation (a sin-offering), that God might be Just and the Justifier of those who believe."*

When a person studies and takes a little time to look into and study and learn something of the character of God, of the attributes of God, then he can come to some understanding of the necessity of the death of Christ.

The death of Christ was necessary; it was absolutely essential to the redemption of sinners. It was absolutely essential because of the character of God. You see; God is

Righteous. He can be no less than perfectly righteous so that the Law must be fulfilled, in order for God to receive a sinner.

God is holy. He cannot overlook sin. God is Just, He must punish sin. God is merciful, He must save. God is love, He must express it. So, here you have all of these attributes of God and as far as we are concerned, they are in conflict.

The mercy of God says, "I will show mercy." Justice says; "no, not at my expense you won't." Love says, "I will be expressed." God's love must be expressed; it must have an object of affection. Righteousness says, "Not at my expense." Grace says, "Oh, God must be gracious." Holiness comes back and says, "Not at my expense."

So, how is God going to deal with us in justice and in love, in righteousness and in mercy, in holiness and in grace? You have to go to the cross and you will see that, for there at the cross David wrote years ago, "*Mercy and truth met together*" (in harmony).

Where can mercy and truth meet in harmony? There at the cross, "*Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*" The Righteousness of God which demanded the sinner's full obedience and the peace of God which would show mercy, they both are satisfied at Calvary. Do you see what I am saying?

The mercy of God which demands the sinner's salvation and the truth of God which says, "*The sinner must die,*" they met and kissed at Calvary. There the sinner did die. There the mercy of God was fully expressed.

No where, my friend is the full character of the Living God revealed as it is revealed at the cross of Calvary, in the full, effectual, redemptive work of the Son of God. That is preaching Christ crucified. If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we must preach the deity and glory of Jesus Christ which made His work effectual and sufficient.

Do you know what gives the death of the cross of Calvary its saving power? You have to look at who died. What gives the death of Calvary its effectual, saving, power? I could have died at Calvary and nothing would have been accomplished. Ten thousand or a million of us or ten thousand angels could have died, but who died on that cross?

Paul says, "*Who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that died?*" What gives the blood of Calvary its cleansing, saving, power? Whose blood was shed at Calvary? Romans 8:34 says, "*Who is it that condemneth, it is Christ that died, yea rather He is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God. Who also makes intercession for us.*"

You see; Jesus Christ the man is no ordinary man. He is not just a reformer who is dying on that cross or a martyr or religious prophet, healer, or preacher. He is the Son of God, the God-man. *“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.”*

So, if we preach Christ crucified, we reach back and talk about eternal purposes, eternal covenants, and eternal grace. If we reach back into the Garden, we talk about man’s tests, man’s failures and man’s fall and the consequences of it and the effects of it.

When we preach Christ crucified we reach out and take hold of the character of God, and the attributes of God. We fully cover the holiness, righteousness, justice, love and mercy of a living God which can only be satisfied in the death of His Son.

If we preach Christ crucified we preach who died, who suffered and whose blood was shed. That is what gives it sufficiency and efficacious power. Then my friends; if we preach Christ and Him crucified; we preach the fulfillment of all of the Old Testament prophecies, promises and pictures.

The Old Testament has no meaning and no message apart from Calvary, the cross of Christ. That’s right; there is no meaning and no message. Let me ask you, how do you explain the woman’s seed bruising the serpent’s head? Take a hold of that and work on that a little bit, the woman’s seed bruising the serpent’s head.

Well, the woman’s seed is the virgin-born Son and the serpent is the devil that tempted and tested Adam and Eve. The woman’s seed is Christ. In His death He defeated Satan by crushing his head or government. Christ’s heel was bruised. That is His human nature suffering and being crucified at Calvary.

How do you preach Abel’s sacrifice without Calvary or for that matter, any lamb slain in the Old Testament? What does that mean? Does it mean rivers of animal blood? Why, “All the blood of bulls and goats on Jewish altars slain could not put away one sin or remove one guilty stain.”

How do explain the Passover Lamb without Calvary? The Scripture say, *“When I see the blood I will pass over you.”* What does the Tabernacle mean and the Holy of Holies? The Holy of Holies, the Mercy Seat, the Ark of the Covenant, the Atonement, the Priesthood what does that mean? What meaneth the smitten Rock? What meaneth the Brazen Serpent lifted up? How does one explain Isaac the miracle son or the son of the bondwoman, Ishmael, or the son of the freewoman, Isaac?

There is no way to satisfy, to give any satisfactory explanation for any of these Old Testament promises, prophecies, patterns or pictures without the cross of Jesus Christ. It was all fulfilled. That is what it says in Luke 24 when he opened the Scriptures and helped them to understand the Scriptures from Moses through the minor prophets (Hosea through Malachi). Christ said, *“These things are written about Me.”*

Listen, we preach Christ and Him crucified and we preach Christ’s love for sinners. Oh my soul, where do you see the love of God if not at Calvary, *“For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son.”*

Christ came to this earth not to get God in the notion of loving us but because God did love us. He is the gift of God’s love. He is the Son of God’s love. *“Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends.”* Nowhere is the love of God so evident as at Calvary; *“but God commended His love toward us that in while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

John says here, *“Herein is love.”* If you want the adequate definition *“herein is love, not that we love God.”* Don’t brag about your love for God. *“Herein is love. God loved us and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* That is love!

If we preach Christ crucified we preach justification by faith without works, that’s right. For if the Lord Jesus represents a sinner before the Law in perfect obedience, what is there for me to do? If the Lord Jesus fully satisfied the justice of God what is there for me to pay?

Salvation is not by works on our part; Christ fulfilled all the works that the Law demanded. Salvation is the gift of God; it is unconditional as far as we are concerned because Christ met all of the conditions:

“Jesus paid it all
All the debt I owe.
Sin has left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to the cross of Christ I cling.

Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know.
These for sin could never atone

Christ must save and Christ alone.”

Paul said it this way, *“By grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.”* Well, how can we preach an effectual redemption, a complete salvation, or a full ransom? The Scripture says, *“Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom.”*

How can we declare such a free salvation apart from any works or deeds of the Law by a human being? Christ did it all when He was crucified. The works, and prayers and deeds of those who believe, are not to gain acceptance with God, but because in the Beloved we have acceptance with God. *“We love Him because He first loved us.”* This kind of preaching doesn’t discourage good works; it puts them on the right basis.

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach the preservation, the security and perseverance of those for whom Christ died. Can you even imagine our Lord failing in such a momentous undertaking? You say that it is God on that cross in human flesh dying for His people; shall He fail?

He came to redeem a people. Shall He not have what He purchased? He came to pay a ransom, shall He not ransom? He fulfilled every Law and every requirement for those that the Father gave Him. Shall He lose His reward?

Oh no, 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. I came down from heaven not to do My will but the will of Him that sent Me. This is the will of Him that sent Me that all that He hath given Me, I will lose nothing but raise it up at the last day.”*

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach His glorious resurrection and ours. There can be no resurrection from the dead unless Christ died. He must die to be raised. There can be no acceptance of His work, if Christ be not raised, for His resurrection is God declaring to us that His person and redemptive work are accepted.

Paul said, *“If Christ be not raised, there is no resurrection of the dead.”* Christ said, *“If in this life only we have hope we are of all men most miserable.”* So, when we preach Christ crucified, we don’t stop there. We preach Christ buried and risen again. *“He was raised for our justification and because He lives we live.”*

If we preach Christ crucified, we preach His ascension, His exaltation, and His intercessory work. Without the cross there is no crown. Unless the Saviour purchases the Kingdom, there is no Kingdom.

The Great High Priest may enter the Holy of Holies but if he has no atonement he will not be received. The High Priest who represents his people before God must have a suitable sacrifice to put on the Mercy Seat. *“He must have somewhat to offer.”* I will tell you this, Christ did!

“Christ Jesus is entered not into the Holy Place made with hands but into heaven itself. There, not with the blood of others but with His own precious blood, He entered in and obtained for us eternal redemption.”

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach the Holy Spirit’s divine work. If Christ be not crucified what does the Holy Spirit have to do? Our Lord said, *“He shall not speak of Himself.”* Our Lord said, *“He shall glorify Me. He shall take the things of Mine and show them to you.”*

What are the things of His? There is justification, redemption, and sanctification. If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach Christ coming again. He said, *“If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am and you may be also.”*

Oh, I know what Paul meant; *“I am determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”*