

## **We Preach Christ and Him Crucified**

Sunday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 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.”*

I have something which God has laid on my heart for the message today. I believe it will be a blessing to you. I believe that you need to listen carefully and prayerfully and ask the Spirit of God to open your heart to receive His Word.

I'm preaching on this subject: **“WE PREACH CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.”** I have taken a text from 1 Corinthians 2:2 in which Paul spoke these very words while he was speaking to the great city of Corinth. He was speaking to the great philosophers, educators, intellectuals and to all those folks in that great city. He said, *“Brethren, when I came to you, (when I came down here to Corinth, this great city, to preach); I came not with excellency of speech.”*

Paul wasn't trying to impress them with worldly wisdom, knowledge, ability or oratory. *“I didn't come with excellency of speech declaring unto you the testimony of the Gospel of God: For I determined (in my own heart for the glory of God, for your good, and to fulfill my mission). I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”*

That is my ministry and that is my message. I believe that it is the ministry and message of every true God-called preacher.

The apostle Paul, (this same apostle), in speaking to the elders in the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of Acts said this; *“I kept back nothing profitable unto you and I have not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God.”*

Yet, he sums up his entire message with these words; *“I preach Christ and Him crucified. I am determined to know nothing else, (not to know anything, among you) except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”*

How can these statements be reconciled? How can this man say, *“I kept back nothing profitable unto you? I have not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God and yet I was determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”* How can these statements be reconciled?

The answer is very simple; you who know God out there have already answered the question. The Gospel of God is concerning His Son. The council of God is concerning His Son, and that which is profitable unto you is to know His Son. There is nothing profitable in not knowing His Son.

Everything, as Solomon said, is "*Vanity of vanities.*" The person and work of Jesus Christ in redemption is the Gospel of God, the council of God and the testimony of God. Listen to the Scripture; they said, "*We have Moses.*" Christ said, "*If you had believed Moses you would have believed me; Moses wrote of me.*"

What did Moses write? Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. Christ said, "The sum and substance of the first five books of the Bible is Me; "*Moses wrote of me.*"

They said, "*Abraham is our father.*" He said, "*If you were children of Abraham, you would love me because Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad.*" What brought joy to the heart of Abraham? He saw the coming of Christ.

When Isaiah saw Christ's glory, in John 12:41 it says, "*He spake of Him.*" In Isaiah 6, "*When he saw the Lord High and lifted up;*" he saw Christ. "*No man has ever seen the Father.*" Christ said, "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*" Acts 10:43 says, "*To Him give all the prophets witness;*" of whom is this speaking of? The answer is Christ.

In John 5:39 our Lord rebuked the religious people of His day; He said, "*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have life.*" You are busy searching the Scriptures and arguing, and debating the Scriptures, "*They are they which testify of me. You will not come to me that you might have life.*" They have missed the message of the Scriptures.

John 20:31 says, "*These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ.*" That is why these things are written, that we might believe. John said, "That is why I wrote this whole book." Don't you see that?

Luke 24:26, our Lord said this; "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?*" Ought not Christ to have been crucified, humiliated, shamefully treated, die on the cross, rise from the grave and ascend unto glory? "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?*"

So, "*Beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto the disciples in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself.*" That is what the Scriptures are all about. He

says in Luke 24 verse 47, *“All things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Jesus Christ.”*

When our Lord was transfigured on that mountain and His clothes glistened and the glory of God shone about Him, when the voice from heaven said; *“This is my Son, (listen to Him), hear Him.”*

Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ; they were talking with Him. Moses was representing the Law, Elijah was representing the prophets and there was the Messiah in the middle. Here is a “Summit Meeting.” It would do well to study what they talked about wouldn't it? Wouldn't it be interesting to find out what they talked about?

Did they talk about the Lord Jesus, the King of Glory, the Redeemer, when He was transfigured and the glory of God shone about Him? What did they talk about when Moses made his only visit back to this earth and Elijah made his only visit back to this earth? What did they talk about? The Bible tells you; they spoke of His decease, His crucifixion in Jerusalem.

Now brother, when I stand in the pulpit of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church or on this television program; I want to talk about what Moses, Elijah and the Son of God were interested in, that is *“Christ and Him crucified.”*

Paul wrote, *“That rock was Christ.”* I'm talking about that Old Testament rock that Moses smote and water came out. That Rock is Christ.

The Passover, which they slew in Egypt and put the blood on the door; what is that all about? *“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”* That is a picture, a type, a promise and a pattern.

That Tabernacle in the wilderness which looked like any old tent from the outside, it had an inside where the very Shechinah glory of God dwelt. Give me a type; give me a fulfillment. What is that the type of? It is just one thing and that is Christ; Christ tabernacled among us. The tabernacle is where God met men and men met God. This is where the glory of God was revealed.

Where is the glory of God revealed? It is revealed nowhere but in Christ. You won't meet God anywhere but in Christ. That is what the tabernacle is all about, *“The brazen serpent lifted up;”* that is Christ Jesus.

Proverbs talks about the “*wisdom of God*,” that is Christ. The seed of woman is Christ. Abraham’s seed is not the folks over there fighting the Lebanese and everybody else. That is not Abraham’s seed. Abraham’s seed is Christ.

Everybody who is in Christ is the seed of Abraham? Did you know that? “*He is not a Jew which is one outwardly but one which is a Jew inwardly. They are not all Israel which are of Israel.*” Did you know that the Bible says that? I am a seed of Abraham in Christ; I am a Gentile, (Scotch and Irish), by nature, but in Christ, I am a Jew. I am a son of Abraham, a child of Abraham.

Everyone listening to me who loves and believes on Jesus Christ is Israel, true Israel. “*We are the true circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.*”

America is not going to be judged for their treatment of renegade Jews over in Israel. America is going to be judged for their attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ; that is Abraham’s seed. You get acquainted with the Word of God and you will find that to be true.

All that are of faith are children of Abraham. Anyone who does not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is not a son of Abraham. He doesn’t even know Abraham. Christ said, “*If you were Abraham’s seed, you would believe (love) me.*”

This entire Bible is a book of redemption. This Bible is a book of total, complete, redemption in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. My friends; listen to me; from Genesis to Revelation, it is all about Christ.

This is where this religious world is missing the message of the Bible. The whole religious world and most of the preachers are missing the message of the Bible; they fail to see Christ. They are not preaching Christ.

They might mention His name once in awhile, but they are preaching everything but Christ. They read the Bible as a book of laws, rules, and regulations. They go as far as calling it the “Good Book.”

They read the Bible as a book of doctrine and religious forms and traditions. They argue and divide, and debate over what this, that and the other says.

They read the Bible as a history book or a book of prophecy. They are always talking about Armageddon and the second coming. They talk about the 3 ½ years and the

tribulation period. They talk about what part the church will play in it and all of these things. They get bogged down and taken up with all of these things.

The Bible is His story; it is Christ. The Bible is a H-I-M, Him Book. Listen to me; it begins in Genesis 3 with the promise of the seed of woman and it goes for 66 books and closes with *“Even so come, Lord Jesus.”* That is what this Bible is all about, it is about Christ.

I will tell you this and I say this to you with all the affection of my heart; “You can’t be satisfied with all that is going on in the name of religion today.” I’m talking about the entertainment, the foolishness, the gaudiness, the feminism and this Hollywood-type presentation with these people who are all painted up. It is the degradation of our God. There is the humanizing of our God.

You can’t be satisfied with what you are seeing and hearing in the name of religion. You can’t be satisfied with all of the promotions, telethons, money, organizations and false promises. If only the Spirit of the living God would penetrate your mind and heart with this one great, grand and glorious truth that Jesus Christ is the Bible.

If only the Spirit of the living God would penetrate your mind and heart to know that Jesus Christ is the Word of God, that Jesus Christ is *“the truth, the way and the life.”* If only the Spirit would have you know that Jesus Christ is the key of knowledge, that Jesus Christ is our Wisdom and our Righteousness and our Redemption.

If you only knew that Jesus Christ has all preeminence. If the Spirit of God would just penetrate your heart so as to love that truth and have your mind receive it and understand it. John said this, *“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”*

*“We know that the Son of God has come.”* He came according to the Scriptures. He died according to the Scriptures. He obeyed the Law as a man, according to the Scriptures. He fulfilled all that was required for His people according to the Scriptures.

*“The Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, even Jesus Christ who He has sent. And this is the true God and this is eternal life.”* If the Spirit of God revealed Him, (a person), it will open the Bible to you like a key opens a door. He is the key of knowledge. Our Lord rebuked those religious Pharisees because they kept back from the people the key of knowledge.

Why is it that no one understands anything about salvation or eternal life except a bunch of preachers? You ask someone what he believes and he says, "I'm not a preacher." I've asked them, "What do you believe the Bible teaches?" Their answer is that they are not a theologian.

Do you mean to tell me that you have to go to college and seminary to know God? I will tell you our problem. The problem is that our preachers are not preaching Christ, the simplicity of Christ.

I have people write to me and say, "I can understand what you are saying." Well, what is so unusual about that? You are supposed to understand what I am saying. I can't make men believe it but I can make them understand it.

I will tell you this, "*I preach Christ and Him crucified;*" in doing that I preach "*All the council of God. I do not shun to declare to any man the whole council of God.*" I'm talking about all the council of God. "*I keep back nothing profitable unto you.*"

Let me show you that; if we preach Christ and Him crucified; we go all the way back into eternity, into the council of eternity. When God purposed in a Covenant of Mercy to redeem a people it was His councils and His covenant that gave birth to the cross. "*Christ was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.*"

When I preach Christ and Him crucified, I reach all the way back before the world was made. I reach back before the morning stars sang together, back before the sons of God shouted for joy, back in the eternal councils of God. I talk about His grand and glorious purposes, plans, covenants and councils.

"*We were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. He was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.*" The blood is the blood of the Everlasting Covenant. Do you see what I am saying?

When Paul says, "*I preach Christ and Him crucified,*" he didn't mean that he just stood up and said, "Christ died, Christ died, Christ died." There is a reason why Christ died. God purposed it and planned it from all eternity.

I will tell you something else, if we preach Christ crucified, we preach the love of God. I ask you, Where is the love for sinners most evident? Where can you take me and show me the love of God as it is seen no where else?

Take me to Calvary; *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”* If you are going to preach the love of God you have to take men to Calvary. If you are going to see the love of God or experience the love of God you have to go to the cross. That is just so!

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach the character of God, the Righteousness of God and the Holiness of God which demanded a cross and required a cross. The only way that God can be *“Just and justify sinners”* is by His Son bearing their sins on the cross.

You see; *“God is love”* but God also is wrath against sin. *“God is angry with the wicked. The wrath of God abideth on the ungodly.”* Isn't that what the bible says? For where can His love and His wrath both be preached? Where can they be seen? Where can they meet together in some kind of reconciliation? They can only meet at the cross.

God is mercy; *“He is plenteous in mercy.”* But, God is truth. You tell me where truth and mercy will meet together. They won't meet down at the front of your church, not in your pool of water, not in that processional dressed in funny looking outfits and funny looking hats carrying crosses. That is not where the mercy and justice of God meet. It is met at Calvary.

God is gracious, but God is Just. Do you know the character of God? You will meet the character of God at Calvary. You don't need me to take you there. I will tell you this, don't you catch United Airlines or TWA and go there either. That land is no more holy than this land that I am standing on right here. Christ doesn't dwell over there anymore than He dwells here. If you want to meet God you will meet God in your heart by faith.

People who make these journeys to so-called holy lands and shrines, hills, and holes in the ground are idolaters. They are worshipping shrines and not worshipping the living God. I am telling you the truth and you know I am telling you the truth. God is a Spirit and *“They that worship Him, worship Him in Spirit and Truth.”* You don't worship God at man-made, money-making, shrines.

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach justification by faith alone, apart from works. Do you know what God's Word says, it says this; *“If righteousness comes by the Law, then Christ died in vain?”* Would you be guilty of suggesting that, that Christ died in vain?

Can anything be added to His work? If holiness comes by the Law and by works, then He died in vain. I preach that the death of Jesus Christ is sufficient and effectual to save all who believe:

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

You see; to come to Christ, you don't go anywhere. You don't move a hand or a hair or a foot. You don't come to Christ by coming to a preacher or to a place; you come to Christ by faith in your heart. Your heart lays hold on Him. If you can believe with your heart, Christ died for your sin. You see; *“Man believeth with the heart.”*

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach the security and perseverance of all for whom He died. *“If God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?”*

Are you suggesting that God sent Christ down here to bear my sins and die for me? Are you suggesting that He sent His Holy Spirit down here to call me and lead me toward repentance toward Him and faith in Jesus Christ and then He is going to send me to hell anyway?

Somebody asked me one time, “Do you believe a man that is once saved is always saved?” I said, “It depends on who saves him.” If some preacher told him that he was saved, the answer is “no.” If someone can talk you into something another man can talk you out of it.

Can a man save himself? The answer is “no.” I will tell you this, if God saved him, he is saved forever. What God doeth, it is forever. If he has been regenerated and born again and is a child of God, he is eternally saved.

Christ said, *“I am the good Shepherd; I know My sheep. I lay down My life for the sheep. I give them eternal life and they will never perish. My Father which gave them to Me is greater than all. No man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand; I and My Father are one.”*

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach the Priesthood of Christ. I have a High Priest; Christ is my High Priest. He is the only High Priest; there is no other. All the high priests of the Old Testament were pictures and types of Christ.

I am a priest myself. I call no man Father on this earth, spiritually. I call no man Master; *“One is your Father which is in heaven; one is your Master which is Christ. Christ is our High Priest and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us come boldly before the throne of grace to receive mercy and grace to help in time of need.”*

He is our High Priest and we are priests of God. *“He has made us kings and priests unto God.”* I need no one to confess my sins to but Christ; He is my Priest and I am a priest to offer spiritual sacrifices unto the living God. He is the High Priest.

We have access to the presence of God. Let me tell you this, access to the presence of God is reserved for priests; that is what we are in Christ who is our High Priest.

Where did that happen? That happened at the cross. You see; a High Priest has to have somewhat to offer. He has to have atonement, a blood sacrifice to put on the Mercy Seat. Christ has that one atonement.

If we preach Christ and Him crucified; we preach a life of holiness and a walk of righteousness, a walk of faith in Him. We are not our own; *“we are bought with a price.”* You don't take the Law and whip people of God into line. It is the love of Christ that motivates them.

A fellow might make a horse or a donkey run around a sorghum mill. They will put a carrot or something out in front of him trying to make him reach that carrot. That is what these preachers are doing; they are hanging out rewards in front of people.

They are trying to make them give, witness, win souls, and to come to church. They promise them a carrot, a yo-yo, and promise you a crown that is bigger than somebody else's or a mansion that is bigger than somebody else's. This is foolishness! *“Christ is our reward.”* There is nothing better than Christ. There is nothing better than being made like Christ.

How do you get people to give? When they love Christ, they give. How do you get people to come to church? If they love Christ and have an appetite for the Word, they will come. *“The love of Christ constraineth us.”* Our motivation is love for Him.

How do you husbands get your wife to cook dinner, wash your clothes, and clean the house? How do your wives get your husbands to go to work, take care of the family and provide them a home? They do it because they love one another.

That won't work in the spiritual realm. It does work but the other doesn't. That is the reason you have a thousand members on your roll and 100 in the prayer meeting.

If we preach Christ and Him crucified, we preach the glorious resurrection of Christ and our resurrection in Him. If He did not die, He could not be raised. If His work was not accepted by the Heavenly Father, He is not risen.

If He died and rose again and is accepted of the Father; we died in Him, we rose with Him and we are accepted in Him.

If we preach Christ and Him crucified we preach the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He came to reveal Christ and to glorify Christ. If Christ didn't die, the Spirit of God has no message to deliver.

If we preach Christ and Him crucified we preach His second coming. He is coming back. He said, *"I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you; I will come again and receive you unto myself."*

This is a straight-forward message but it is one you needed to hear.