

Knowing the Cross of Christ

by Alan Martin

Alan Martin's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of understanding and being united with the cross of Christ, leading to freedom from sin and a new life in Him.

Topics: "Cross of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, Alan Martin explores the profound significance of the Cross of Christ, delving into the depths of its meaning and implications for the believer's life. As he often does in his ministry, Martin likely examines the Scriptures to uncover the rich theology surrounding the Cross, revealing its power to transform and redeem. Through this message, listeners can expect to gain a deeper understanding of the Cross as the central theme of the gospel, and how it shapes their relationship with God and informs their daily walk with Him. By focusing on the Cross, Martin invites his audience to experience the profound love and grace of Christ, and to live in the light of its enduring significance.

Transcript

Philippians chapter 3. Start with me in verse 4. Though I also might have confidence in the flesh, if anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I have more. Circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, concerning the law of Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gained to me, these I have counted lost for Christ.

Yet indeed I also count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having of my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God, by faith, and that I may know Him, the tip of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. Present passive participle. Presently being conformed to His death.

Presently. Now, Paul didn't say he had been, he's presently being conformed to the death of Christ. And that's what I want to talk about.

You know, it's interesting, I didn't talk to Susan beforehand, but she preached the power, the preaching of the cross is power. It is. But we don't preach the cross correctly in many circles.

The cross is more than that place where the blood of Jesus Christ sits on top of your sins so that God does not see them. I want to say that again. The cross of Christ is more than just the place where the blood of Jesus Christ sits on top of your sins so that God cannot see them.

It's more than that. The devil would be happy for you to just think that and take it straight to hell with you the whole time. That you get the blood of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross so that you can be a lousy sinner and be forgiven anyway.

God forbid that God ever intended for that to be the whole story of the cross. That's not power. That's not the power of the cross.

That's a half-truth. It did take the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from sin. But there is more to the cross than forgiveness.

Let's look at, let's really look at the cross. We need to know the cross of Christ. It is this week on this coming Friday.

It is the time of the year when we know that He was crucifying. But I want you to think of the cross in a new way in its fullest sense. I want you to know the cross of Christ and the death of Christ in its real way.

Now turn with me to Romans chapter 6 and let's do a little biblical exegesis from the scripture. Romans chapter 6 and before I start here we're going to talk about knowing the cross of Christ in a way. It's one thing to know about it.

It's one thing to know He died there. It's another thing to have your faith in the fact that because He shed His blood there your sins are forgiven. But if that's all you know of the cross of Christ, you don't know it yet.

Not fully. Let's see how Paul wants us to know it. I was asked just recently by a young man, he was asking a question of me because someone else had asked him a question.

He said, does your preacher or does Brother Allen preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Well that took me back. Maybe I need to preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Well as I began to contemplate that, I thought well before I preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit I want to teach the baptism of Christ's death first.

And that's what this passage does. Let's look in Romans chapter 6 verse 1. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? And before I go too much further in the passage I want to point out something about the word sin here. It's a noun.

Every single time it's used in this passage it is a noun. Except for one place in verse 15 it's a subjunctive verb. It's a noun.

What's a noun? A person, place, or thing. It's not a verb. We're not talking about a verb.

We're talking about noun sin. The thing sin. The person sin.

The it sin. And it's important you see that, follow that. We're going to talk about sin, the person.

King sin. Lord sin. Master sin.

You have to understand it this way to really know what God wants us to hear this morning. Alright, verse 1 again. What shall we say? Shall we continue in sin? Singular.

Every time it's also used in this passage it's singular. Very important you know that. Singular.

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not. How shall we who died to sin? Singular. Master sin.

Lord sin. Slave holder sin. Kingpin sin.

How shall we who died to Him live in sin any longer? Or do you not know? And this is something that is a real question in today's year. Do you not know this? Are you not aware of this that as many of us, in other words every one of us who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death. Do you not know that? You were, if you were baptized into Christ you were baptized into His death.

And it goes on to say, as many of us were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. Therefore consequently we were buried with Him through baptism into death so that in order that for the purpose that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. The scripture says He was declared to be the Son of God with glory by the resurrection of the dead.

Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father even so in the same way is what even so means in the Greek. In the same way He was raised from the dead by God's glory you and I are supposed to walk in newness of life. Don't you know this? It's not about blood covering your sin, being a rotten sinner.

It's about being baptized into the death of Christ. Being united with Him in His burial raised up with Him through God's glory so that you and I can live an entirely new and unique kind of life on the earth. On the earth.

Follow me for verse 5. For if. Now this is an interesting first class conditional sentence in the Greek. What does that mean? It means it's assuming this is true.

Assuming this is true. Follow me. Let me read it that way.

Assuming it is true that we have been united together in the likeness of His death. A wonderful phrase in the Greek. The Greek language is more expressive than our English.

Let me try to communicate this in the original language. Assuming that it's true that we have gone through the process and come to a culmination to where we are now currently steadfastly united in Christ's death. It's a perfect tense in the Greek meaning it's a process.

We've gone through the process of becoming fully united in the death of Christ. It's not an automatic. Assuming that this is true.

Assuming we have come through this process and that we are now in a constant state of being united with Him in the likeness of His death. Certainly we also shall be future tense in the likeness of His resurrection. Now that Paul just said that.

Paul said this. We just read in Philippians where we started off. I want to know Him and being conformed to the likeness of His death so that somehow I will attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Attaining unto the resurrection of the dead is a future tense completely predicated upon the fact that you and I have come through the process and come to a culminating state where you are abiding regularly, presently, constantly in the death of Christ. And if you are constantly having come into this process where you are now resolutely abiding in the death of Christ, you have a future resurrection to look forward to. Verse 6. Knowing this.

We presently know this. What do we know? Someone tell me. What do we know from verse 6? Our old man was crucified so that the body of sin might be done away with.

Do you know that your old man's been crucified? How strong is an old man crucified taken down from a cross? How much do you have to fight an old man that's just died on the cross? Might be kind of cumbersome to carry around but I doubt it's going to put up very much of a fight if he's just been crucified. You've just taken him down from a cross. What old man are we talking about? Is that the old man you keep claiming to be plagued by? Is that the old man you keep blaming for losing your temper? Is that the old man that you keep claiming gets the best of you that you would be a better Christian if it weren't for your old crucified man? You're supposed to know this.

We're supposed to know this. Knowing this old man. Who is this old man? Who is this body of sin? It's mentioned two other times.

Look in Ephesians chapter 4. You'll see. It's mentioned in Ephesians chapter 4. If you want to turn there. Ephesians 4 verse 22.

Actually I'll have to start verse 20 because it's a mid sentence that verse is. But you have not so learned Christ if indeed you have heard him and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus that you put off concerning your former conduct the old man. Now what's tied together with the old man here in this verse? The old man with what? With it's deceitful lust.

That old man with it's deceitful lust has been crucified with Christ on the cross. That old man with it's deceitful lust has been put to death through the body of Jesus Christ on the cross. He does not live.

He's dead. It says the same thing in Colossians chapter 3 verse 9. Colossians 3 verse 9. I'll just read it for you. It's very similar.

Here it says do not lie to one another. Since ye have put off the old man with his deeds. And deeds there in the original language comes from the Greek.

The Greek word practices. We get our English words practices straight from the Greek language here. So the old man with it's deceitful lust.

The old man with it's practices. Did you know he died? Did you know that? He's dead. You know that? You're supposed to be knowing this.

That is if you come through the process of being fully united in the death of Christ. He is. Ok.

Back to Romans 6. Back to Romans 6. Ok. Let's go back to verse 6 again. Actually let's go back to verse 5 and 6 together.

Romans 6 verses 5 and 6 together. For if assuming to be true that we have come to the full process of being united together in the likeness of his death. Certainly also we will be in the future in the likeness of

his resurrection.

Knowing this that our old self with it's deceitful lust and it's practices was crucified with him. So that the body of sin might be done away with. Done away with.

What does that mean? Done away with. Might be done away with. Let's see that.

Keep your finger right there in chapter 6 and flip over to chapter 3 verse 3. And someone read Romans 3 verse 3 nice and loud for me please. Romans 3 verse 3. Ok. Without effect.

Someone read it from a different translation nice and loud please. Nullify. To make of none effect.

So what's the body of sin? What's been done to it? According to this passage by the death of Jesus Christ it's been made of none effect. It's been made null and void. It's been cancelled.

It's broken. Same chapter. Someone read verse 31.

Romans 3 verse 31. Nice and loud. Drew would you read verse 31 for us please.

Same word here. Nullify. Same word.

So that the body of sin might be rendered power. So that the body of sin might be nullified. And the same word is used in Galatians about those people who have left their faith in Christ to go back and try to be perfected by the law.

It's the place where it says Christ has become to you of none effect. So according to the real meaning of this word the body of sin has no effect on the believer who's really united with the death of Christ. Do you see that? Do you know this? That the body of sin has no effect on those who have fully come to being united with Christ.

And we're supposed to know this. And I hear people talking about my old man. My old nature.

My old man. What old man? Which one? Which one? The none effect one? The null and void one? The one who's dead one? That one? That one's controlling you? Why did it say in verse 6? Someone finish it for me. Why? Why has the old man, that body of sin, been rendered of none effect? Nullified.

Cancelled. Why? See sin the noun. King sin.

Slave holder sin. Lord sin. We are not to serve Lord sin.

We are not to serve slave holder sin. It's not plural. It doesn't say you are not to commit a sin.

It says you are not to be sin's servant. You're not a slave to sin anymore. Sin was rendered powerless through the cross of Christ.

Verse 7. For he who has died has been freed from sin. It didn't say he who has died stopped sinning. It doesn't say he who has died never commits a sin.

It says he who has died has been freed from the one who held him a slave. Lord sin. He's freed from Lord sin.

He's freed from master sin. Sin is no longer his master anymore. He's been set free by Christ.

By being united in the death of Christ. Verse 8. Now if. Here's that first class conditional sentence again.

Now it's interesting that Paul would go back and say now if. Assuming to be true. What is he assuming to be true? Well, see, he knows something.

The Holy Spirit is very aware. Just because you have a familiarity with the gospel doesn't really mean you've been united in the death of Christ. You see the difference? Just because you can sing the old rugged cross doesn't mean you've ever been baptized into the death of Christ.

Assuming you have really and fully been united into the death of Christ. Assuming that to be true in verse 8. Now assuming we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. Knowing.

Here again. Knowing. And here is another perfect tense in the Greek.

Having come to the process where we now fully recognize. It's not done overnight. You don't just get this on day one as a Christian.

This is a process of growth. And if you've come through this process to where you fully know that your old man has been crucified. Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead.

Sin. Slave master sin. Lord sin.

King sin. No longer lords it over Him is the actual translation. Sin no longer lords it over Him.

Now, you've been raised with Him. Assuming you've been united with Him in His death. Assuming if that's true that you've really come into a complete union in Him in His death.

Sin no longer lords it over you. It's not your master anymore. You're not a slave to sin anymore.

You don't have to sin. You can stop sinning. It doesn't tell you what to do anymore.

You're free. He freed you. Assuming you've been united with Him in His death.

The death He dies. Death no longer has lordship over Him. Verse 10.

For the death He died. He died once and for all to what? To sin. He died to Lord sin.

He is no longer Lord sin's slave any longer. But the life He lives. He lives to God.

What's the most beautiful word in this passage to me? Verse 11 starts off with likewise. In the same way. Exactly as sin has no more dominion over Him.

You get that? In the same way that sin has no more dominion over Him. In that same way you reckon yourselves. That's the same word for where it says of God.

Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him as righteousness. It's an accounting term. I don't know if we have any accountants here.

But in an accounting term you write down this in the ledger and this in the ledger and this in the ledger and this in the ledger. And because this adds to this and this adds to this. The conclusion derives from.

So it's saying in the same way that sin no longer has any mastery over Christ. That's how you are to reckon yourselves completely free from the mastery of sin. Christian, if you've been united with Christ in His death, you can stop sinning.

You're free. Just as free as Adam was in the beginning. Did Adam have some kind of evil sin nature to make him sin? Was he capable of sinning? Sure he was.

He did. Because he was tempted. Will you sin? That's up to you.

That's up to you. You don't have to. Sin is not your master anymore.

Not if you've been united with Christ in His death. Because the death He died, He died to sin. The life He lives, He lives to God.

And in that very same way, you are to consider yourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God. Now let's look at verse 11 very carefully. Because here's where I want to head to in this passage.

I want to nail this particular point. Thus you also. Reckon it, consider it, count it this way.

Yourselves also to be dead to sin, but alive unto God. How? Wait, wait. Alive unto God.

How? In Christ Jesus. Okay? That's interesting. Because I didn't go back.

Let's go back and look at something. Look, look, look. Back in this passage, I want us to back up real quick.

And I'll tell you why this is so critical here. Verse 6. Go back to verse 6 with me. Okay? Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin.

It's interesting. Did you notice how your Bibles put this? That the body of sin. How does it say? What does it say? That the body of sin might be.

Why might? Might. Should be. Could be.

See, in the Greek tense here, it's not like the other tense is. Christ died. Christ was raised.

Aorist tense indicative. It actually happened. But it only says here.

He actually died. He was actually raised. So that the body of sin might be.

See, the subjunctive tense in the Greek indicates potential. Not actual. Why is it potential and not actual? Because it depends upon whether you're in Him.

See, if you're not abiding in Him, it's not yours. All of this grace is in Him. It's His death.

It's His life. It's His freedom. And if you're not in Him, it's not yours.

If you're not in Him, you're under king sin. You're either in sin or in Him. You're either in dominion or free.

You're not in split personality in two worlds. You're either united fully with Christ. Living in Him.

Free in Him. Reigning in Him. Powerful in Him.

Or you're in sin. Sin the person. King sin.

Lord sin. Dominion sin. You are not in both.

You cannot live in both. Paul said in Romans chapter 5 verse 7, For when we were in the flesh. See, in is the Greek word means for living in the sphere of.

What sphere do you live in? Do you live in Christ? Is the life of Christ in you? Liberating and powerful. Producing righteousness and godliness and peace. Or is sin living in you? And you in sin.

Are you in a situation where the good that you would, you don't do. But the very thing you don't want to do, you keep on doing. Because you don't have a choice.

You're a slave. I find Paul said in Romans 7, Another principle. Something dwelling in me.

Making me what? A prisoner. A slave. See, that's what his life looked like.

With all his religious consciousness of right and wrong. While he was living in sin. Under sin's power as sin's slave.

But a person having fully come to the place where they are united with Christ in the likeness of His death. Living in Christ. Are free.

They're no longer slaves to sin. Now, verse 12 of chapter 6. Romans 6, 12. Okay? Stay right there at verse 12.

I have to give you the therefore. What does therefore mean? It means consequently. Because of all this.

In the light of all this. In the light of the fact that Christ actually died. And if you have really been baptized into Christ.

Assuming that's true. You were baptized in His death. And if, assuming it's true.

You were baptized into His death. You were buried with Him. And assuming you were buried with Him.

You were raised with Him. Through the glory of God the Father. And assuming you were raised with Him.

And united in His death. The old man has been crucified. Rendered powerless.

You're no longer a slave to sin anymore. Because you're living in Him. Assuming that to be true.

Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body. So that you obey its desires. Don't let sin reign.

You see, that's why it says that the body of sin might be done away with. You see, it's just like the land of promise. That God gave Israel.

He called them out of the land of Egypt. And He said, I'm taking you to the land of milk and honey. The promised land.

And then what did He add to that? Now go take possession of it. Go possess it. The cross of Christ.

The death of Christ. Has bought you and given you in the grace of Christ. Complete and total liberty from sin.

Go get it. Lay hold of it. Embrace it.

It's there. It's by grace through faith. See, it's all because of His grace that it's even possible.

But if He had not given it, we couldn't even believe for it. But His grace does not force us to believe. We must choose by faith to abide in Him.

Jesus said, if you abide in Me and My words abide in you. You will ask what you will. And it shall be given to you.

Jesus said, no branch can bear fruit of itself. No, it only can bear fruit if it should abide. Again, by choice.

Abiding in Christ and experiencing this life is a choice. Verse 13 of Romans 6. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin. You can't present the members of your body to some verb.

Are you all following me? You see how sin is represented here? Sin is a dominion principle here. Sin is king sin, lord sin. Stop giving the members of your body to Him.

Stop it. You were set free from Him. He is not to be your master anymore.

You are now to offer the members of your body to Christ. That's why it says, therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you should obey it in its lust. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin.

But present yourself to God as being alive from the dead. How can you present yourself to God as those being alive from the dead? How can you do that? Only by living in Christ. Only by abiding in Christ.

Christ says, I am He who am alive and who was dead. Behold I am He. I was dead and I live forevermore.

And when we by faith are abiding in Christ, we are presenting ourselves unto God as those who have been set free from death, set free from sin, made alive unto God in Christ Jesus. And in that life that comes from us through His grace, we present our members as instruments of righteousness to God. And verse 14 says, for sin shall not have dominion over you.

For you are not under law but under grace. And that's the bottom line today. Do you know the cross of Christ? Have you been baptized into the death of Christ? Have you been united with Him in His death and burial? Have you been risen with Christ through your faith? Are you living in this new glorious life, free from sin, free to offer the members of your body as love slaves of righteousness? If that's the case, you are no longer dominated by sin.

Now, is that how you live? Is that how you live? Then how many of us sin because we couldn't help it? How many of us sin because of the old man? No one who is in Christ sins because of the old man. Do you follow that? The old man has been rendered ineffective. You sin because you're tempted.

You're not a slave. Stand up and say, you know the old example, just say no. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

You know, take the shield of faith and you can quench most of the fiery dark. Huh? Every fiery dark. Now, you know, here's what you're saying.

Who's the you out there I'm talking to? I don't know. Okay, you, wherever you are. You unbelieving spirit, you.

I don't know what's in your body. You unbelieving spirit. We don't live this way.

We don't live this way because we don't walk by faith. Faith is this victory. Faith is where we appropriate all the power of Christ.

When we believe this, we'll live this. You can go to your grave believing this is not possible and stand before God. And stand before God and tell him that Paul did not know what he wrote clearly in the original text.

I'm not saying none of us here will go and sin again. What I'm saying is not any person fully united with Christ ever has to go and sin again. You're not a slave.

You've been set free. And the more you begin to understand that freedom, the more overcoming of the world you're going to be. And you want to overcome the world.

All the promises of God are for those that overcome. And this is what we're supposed to be. We're supposed to be simply earthen vessels filled with the power and glory of God.

Filled with His Spirit. Led by His Spirit. Ministers of righteousness.

Sons of obedience. All made possible by Christ crucifying our old man. The old man, brothers and sisters, has been rendered ineffective.

And if you and I really come to the place where we are fully united with Christ in the likeness of His death. Resurrection life begins now. You've crossed over from death into life.

You know what? The wages of sin is... So you serve King Sin, what do you get out of it? What about you serve righteousness? You see? It's there. It's just... Now I encourage you to go back. We cannot explain this whole passage that in depth.

But it is a clear implication of what the Apostle Paul is saying. And you know what's incredible? Is I don't know how long the Roman church had been around. But do you catch it? Don't you know this? You know, I had the feeling that the early Christians had more of an awareness of how free Christ had made them than we do.

If He was telling them, who hadn't even been around that long, that don't you already know this? It's way past time for us to know this. And I just want to take it home with you. Seal this in your heart.

And begin to meditate. You go and read it again and again. And I want to encourage you.

If because it's a complicated passage, if you have lacked understanding in something, do this. Get someone who has understanding and ask them to help you with it. Walk with someone who's having victory.

Now, you know, misery loves company. Now if you're wanting someone to comfort you for your critical condition, be careful. You'll find plenty.

You'll find plenty who will affirm you in your powerlessness. How many people will you find though who will affirm you to lay hold of every single victory Christ has brought for you? Seek them out. Walk with them.

And live as free men. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Okay, we're free.

Live in it. It's not about, there'll be no, well, none of you who are in Christ, none of you who are really united with Christ are going to sin because of your old nature. You may be tempted this week.

But you're not a slave. Stand up. If you get tripped, stand back up on your two feet and walk.

Confess your sin. He's faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. You know, probably even Jacob has fallen this week.

Jacob, did you fall down this week at all while you were running? On his bike. Okay, now, Jacob fell down on his bike. So I can say he doesn't know how to ride a bike or he'd never fall down.

Would I say that? No. No, he's learned how to ride his bike. Even though he might fall occasionally.

We say he's learned to ride a bike. You know what, Christian? Learn to walk in righteousness. You might fall now and then, but learn to walk in righteousness and live there.

And be victorious. Go from glory to glory. You'll get stronger and stronger.

What sister? Amen? Amen. No, man. Fifty years I've been reading this.

Amen. Love, joy, peace. And brothers, that's the freedom you've been given to walk in this.

You have been set free by the cross of Christ to walk in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. And you can walk in all of it you want. Amen.

No restrictions. He is able to make all grace abound to you so that all times and everything you may have all sufficiency. The grace of God that appears from heaven that brings salvation teaches us to denying ungodliness.

What's denying ungodliness? Just say no. And to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age. It's by grace.

His grace has made it possible through faith. See? His grace through faith. Be it done unto you this week, brothers and sisters, according to your faith.

Okay? Alright. Brother Keith, would you close us in a word of prayer?

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