

# Delivered Through the Cross

by Derek Prince

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*Derek Prince's sermon highlights the centrality of the cross in Christian faith and warns against its displacement in the church.*

**Duration:** 1:17:17

**Scripture:** Psalm 19:12-14, Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:20, Romans 4:5, Galatians 2:19, Ephesians 2:8-9, Philippians 2:3-4

**Topics:** "Cross"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the mindset of focusing on temporal things and how it hinders believers from realizing their deliverance from the present evil age. He points out that television, being a medium of instant gratification, has influenced the church to adopt this mindset. The preacher emphasizes the need for believers to be delivered from this evil age, as it is controlled by the enemy who blinds people's minds to the gospel. He concludes by highlighting the importance of faith in God's righteousness rather than relying on a set of rules for righteousness.

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## Transcript

Now, Ruth and I are going to make our proclamation. I think I'm going to switch this on so we'll make it every way. This is the last two verses of Psalm 19.

It's a prayer. I think it's a prayer that we all need to pray. If I look back on the things that we spoke about, Bob Mumford and I, yesterday evening, it just motivates me to pray this prayer.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins. Let them not have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

About two or three years ago, I was with a brother, the brother who's responsible for our Chinese outreach. A dear, precious, dedicated servant of the Lord from the same university background as mine, Cambridge University. We were in Singapore, and we were looking in some shop window, and he said to me casually, the church has put so many items in its shop window that people have lost sight of the cross.

And that casual remark started something in me, and I began to think about it. And I could picture the shop window of the church with so many exciting items, healing, deliverance, prosperity, spiritual gifts, all sorts

of things, prophecy, and somewhere just amongst them, the cross. But that's a completely wrong perspective.

The cross is absolutely unique, because everything else in the window is only there because of the cross. The cross is unique and central. And as I've considered the various problems through which the church has been passing in this past decade, I've come to the conclusion there are two basic errors.

I'm going to deal with one this afternoon, and God helping me and strengthening my voice, I'm going to deal with the other tomorrow morning. The first error which I want to speak about this afternoon is that the cross has been displaced from the center of the church. The second is that Jesus has been displaced from headship over the church.

So this afternoon I want to deal briefly with the first theme, the displacement of the cross. And this has arisen in a sense out of my own experiences. I relate it very briefly, and I don't want to go over things that are past unnecessarily.

My own experience in being associated with something that was birthed by the Holy Spirit and ceased to be in the Spirit and became extremely carnal. And in meditating on this and trying to learn the lessons, I was directed to Galatians chapter 3. But there's more to it than that. In 1979, Ruth and I were in a conference in the state of Missouri.

It was a family conference, but in the middle of it a young man gave a very powerful prophecy, which really didn't have anything to do with the agenda of the conference. It was like God inserted his own item on the agenda. The essence of the prophecy was this.

God was speaking, and he says, All that I have been doing against witchcraft in the past has merely been preliminary skirmishes. But from now on I'm declaring open war on witchcraft. All out war.

And then he said, The reason is because witchcraft has millions of men bound whom I need in my end time army. He also said somewhere in the prophecy, You will encounter people who are under curses that have come down from their family through many generations. But you do not need to be afraid because you will be able to release them through the sacrifice of my son.

Well at that time, really the word curse was just something abstract to me. I knew it was in the Bible. That didn't have any real significance.

But God began to put me through, I think, a post graduate course on the subject of curses. And every word that was in that prophecy has been fulfilled in our ministry since then hundreds of times over. So because that element of prediction was accurately fulfilled, I believe the whole prophecy can be trusted.

And so Ruth and I find ourselves in the front line of a war against witchcraft. And God put us there. We remind God of that from time to time when the fighting really gets tense.

We say, God, we didn't choose this. You put us here. And God has opened my eyes in a large measure to the nature of witchcraft.

You see, if you go to Galatians chapter three and read verse one, Paul puts his finger on the problem troubling the Galatian churches. O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified? Now that's a startling statement if you take it in its context.

Because if you read the following verses it's very clear that these were real charismatic Christians.

They had been saved. They had received the Holy Spirit. They witnessed God working miracles among them.

And yet, Paul told them, your problem is you're bewitched. Now I've checked the Greek word used there. It is the standard word for to bewitch.

It's not a metaphor. Interestingly enough, some years ago a Greek Orthodox priest came to me for help, for ministry. And he said, somebody's put the evil eye on me.

And the word he used, *vascania*, it's the same word that Paul uses here, who has bewitched you, who has smitten you with their eye. So, let me put it bluntly. The fact that you're saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit and live in the midst of working of miracles does not guarantee you freedom from the power of witchcraft.

And if you think it does, you're probably going to be caught. Now, I was looking at the place where my material is exposed here in the bookstore and I read some of my own words taken from a tape. This is what they call a flyer advertising new material that's come out.

And two of the series have these titles. The first one, *Witchcraft, Exposed and Defeated*. The second one, *Who Has Bewitched You?* Which is really on these verses in Galatians.

But I was interested to read my own description of witchcraft. So, I'm going to read it to you. And if you want one of these flyers, you just can take one free in the bookstore.

Witchcraft is the religion of fallen man whose root is in rebellion. It is sensual, cruel and defiling. Witchcraft rejects God's authority while it offers illegitimate authority and supports rebellion against the true authority.

Where you find rebellion, you often find witchcraft. Its root is rebellion. Witchcraft's product is power and is attained by spells and curses.

Divination and sorcery are types of witchcraft and are defined as follows. Divination is the desire for knowledge and is represented by fortune-telling. Sorcery operates through objects, potions, good luck charms, music and drugs.

Within the church, witchcraft obscures the crucifixion of Christ and the work of the cross. This is what Paul is saying here. Who has bewitched you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as Christ.

Those churches had lost the vision of the cross and once they did that, they were exposed to the power of witchcraft. And then I say about the cross the following. It's the only basis for God's provision, the means of Satan's total defeat and the only source of power for Christian living.

Witchcraft replaces the atoning work of the cross with fleshly efforts and a legalistic system with a set of rules and organizations. Last night I spoke about the cross as the only basis of God's provision. You remember I reminded you if you come to God don't come on any other basis but the cross.

Don't tell him about all your prayers, your Bible study, the years you've spent in the church. They are irrelevant when you're seeking the grace of God. Because the grace of God comes only through the cross and it's received only by faith and not by works.

In Colossians chapter 2, Paul speaking about the cross says that through it Christ stripped Satan's principalities and powers of their power and authority against us. We're not going to deal with that but let me point this out to you. Satan's grave weapon against humanity is guilt.

That's why he is the accuser of the brethren. Why does he accuse us? What's his purpose in accusing us? What does he want to prove us? Tell me. Guilty, that's right.

Because once we're guilty we're powerless against Satan. And so it says in that passage where it speaks about him as the accuser of the brethren. They the brethren overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

By pleading what Christ had done for them on their behalf through his shed blood they overcame him. There is no other basis on which we can deal with Satan's attacks against us. The cross is the only basis for our victory.

You should not get involved in spiritual warfare until you've understood what was accomplished through the cross. It's very dangerous. But this afternoon I want to speak briefly on the third aspect of the cross that I've mentioned there.

The only source of power for Christian living. And once that source is obscured the power leaks out. And we still have the forms and the language.

We still use the same hymns. But there's no real power there. Paul wonders in the last days men will fall away in a terrible degenerate moral and ethical condition.

And he lists in 1st Timothy chapter 3 18 specific moral blemishes. Beginning with lovers of self, going on with lovers of money and ending up with lovers of pleasure. And then he says of those people having a form of godliness but denying its power.

He's not talking about unbelievers. He's not talking about people with some other religion because he would never use the word godliness of anything that didn't relate to the true God. But here are people with a form of Christianity who have all the language, the expressions, the claims but they don't have the power.

And it's manifest in one thing. See the root problem of humanity at the close of this age can be summed up in one word Selfishness. And you'll notice in that list in 1st Timothy it's lovers of self, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure.

The root is lovers of self. And anything that does not deal with love of self is a form of religion that does not have the power of God. The mere fact that you don't take drugs or smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol doesn't prove that you're godly.

It simply proves you've got a little more sense than the people that are destroying themselves with those things. The only proof of godliness is a life that denies self. And this is very little taught today.

If you read on in Galatians 3 you'll see the results of the obscuring of the cross. And I want to tell you, brothers and sisters, I've been through this all the way. This is not a theory.

It's something I've experienced. The 2nd verse says this only I want to learn from you. Did you receive the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? In one word, what's the problem? Legalism.

Substituting the works of the law for the hearing of faith. Trying to get right with God by keeping a set of rules. I think it was in this very auditorium I was preaching a few years ago and I said quite casually I mean I wasn't contemplating the impact of what I said I said of course Christianity is not a set of rules.

And I looked at the faces of the people and I said to myself if I told them there was no God they would have been less shocked. Do you know that? Christianity is not a set of rules. Israel had had a perfect set of rules for 14 centuries.

God wasn't going to give them another one. And it hadn't done them any good. That's legalism.

I'll define legalism. It's good to define it because it's one of those words that Christians use to abuse other Christians with, you know. The Baptists are legalistic.

Pentecostals are legalistic. Anybody that's not in my church is legalistic. I'll give you a definition.

Two definitions. Legalism is the attempt to achieve righteousness with God by keeping a set of rules. And God has eliminated that.

He said if you can do it by a set of rules there was no need for Christ to die. The other definition, they come virtually to the same thing is legalism is imposing as a requirement for righteousness anything more than God himself has required. And God's requirements are remarkably simple.

They're stated in Romans chapter 4. The last few verses. Romans 4, just verses 24 and 25. It shall be imputed to us for righteousness who believe in him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Who was delivered up because of our offenses and was raised because of our justification. What is needed to be accepted as righteous by God? One thing. To believe in the one who delivered Jesus to death for our sins and raised him up again for our justification.

That's all God requires of you or me to achieve righteousness. And it is illegitimate to add anything to that requirement. That's legalism.

So that's the first result of the obscuring of the cross. The second is in the next verse. Verse 3. Are you so foolish? Having begun in the spirit are you now being made perfect or complete by the flesh? When you get to the word flesh you know the second problem.

Carnality. So those are the two immediate results when the cross is obscured in the church. The first is legalism.

The second is carnality. And let me tell you legalism is not spiritual. It's carnal.

It shuts you up in your own fleshly ability. You go on to verse 11. You get the conclusion.

I beg your pardon, verse 10. For as many as are of the works of the law as many as are trying to achieve righteousness by God with keeping a set of rules are under the curse. For it is written, curse it is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

If you're going to be made righteous by keeping the law you have to keep the whole law all the time. Otherwise as a means of achieving righteousness it's useless. And if you start to keep it and don't keep it you come under a curse.

So that's the descending order of results of the cross obscured. Legalism, carnality and a curse. And I've been through that.

This is no theory with me. And one day I awoke to the fact that I was under a curse. The curse of God.

I was shocked but in a sense I was happy to discover the diagnosis. Today I want to tell you I am not under the curse of God. I'm under the blessing of God.

I'm under the blessing of God because of what Jesus did for me on the cross and no other reason. Because he was made a curse that I might be redeemed from the curse and enter into the blessing of Abraham whom God blessed in how many things? All things. I didn't hear you.

Good. Alright. Now if you wanted to be happy you could be happy about that.

Now the marvelous thing about Galatians and such a wonderful example of the inspiration of Scripture because Paul didn't write this as a theological treatise. He wrote this as a letter to friends of his and he was deeply concerned about the condition they were in. It's incidentally very interesting if you compare the epistles of Paul in almost every epistle he began by thanking God for the people that he was writing to.

Even when he wrote to the Corinthians and he told them later there was drunkenness at the Lord's table there was immorality, there was incest there was a man living with his father's wife but he spent about four verses at the beginning thanking God for the grace of God in that church. With only one exception. When he got to Galatians he was so hot under the collar he said I marvel that you are so soon turned away from the grace of God.

He didn't thank God for them. What was their problem? It was not drunkenness, it was not immorality. What was it? Legalism.

And that's a much worse problem. Much more deadly. But what I was going to say is Galatians not only diagnoses the problem it gives us the remedy.

The remedy is in the cross. And Galatians reveals five successive deliverances that are possible through the cross. And this afternoon I want to take you very quickly through them.

The first in a sense is the most important and the least understood. And I think in many cases you'll be shocked when I tell you what it is. It's in Galatians 1, 3 and 4. Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, for our sins on the cross.

Listen, that he might deliver us from this present evil age according to the will of God. So the cross has made it possible for us to be delivered from this present evil age. Did you realize that? You don't belong in this age.

You have no place in this age in your thinking, in your ambitions. Rule this age out, it's not for you. There are two words used in Greek and they're easily confused.

The old King James confuses them. Even the modern translations don't always keep them separate. One word is ion from which we get the English word eon.

The other is cosmos from which we get all sorts of words like cosmonaut and so on. Let's not bother with them. The first word, ion or eon is a time word.

It's a period of time. The Bible speaks about ages and generations. That's the word used here in chapter 1. God has delivered us from this present evil period of time.

We don't belong here. Right at the end, the fifth deliverance is from the cosmos. From the world.

Don't confuse them. I personally believe that this first deliverance is basic. The other four deliverances I'll speak about are simply the outworking of this first deliverance.

Now my impression is 90% of contemporary Christians in the United States have no concept whatever that we have been delivered from this present evil age. Generally speaking most Christians today view all the benefits and provisions and blessings of the gospel as being here in this age and in this world. If you find the way they think healing, prosperity, success, a good marriage, all those are good.

And upon certain conditions they're available through the gospel. But when you're thinking like that when your focus is on the things of time you haven't realized that you've been delivered from this present evil age. I think one of the reasons is television.

Because television is the medium of the instant. It's here, you get it now switch on the news, listen and if anything continues as a crisis in the world above one week it loses its appeal. Because people just aren't interested in anything a week old.

It's got to be the now thing. And let's say frankly the church has largely been taken over by that attitude. And most of you spend too much time in front of the television set.

I make no charge for telling you that. And if you listen it'll do you a lot of good. I'm not anti-television.

Although I don't even know how to turn on the television set but that's by the way. I'm not joking. I mean somebody phoned us in London about three years ago and said there's a program on Israel you need to watch.

And we couldn't even find out how to turn the set on. I'm not suggesting you should be like that. But I'll tell you basically holiness does not come sitting in front of a television set.

Now why do we need to be delivered from this present evil age? Because it's evil. Why is it evil? I'll tell you why. One very clear convincing reason.

2nd Corinthians chapter 4 verse 4. Speaking about those who do not believe the gospel. It says whose minds the God of this age has blinded. So the God of this age blinds the minds of people so that they cannot believe the gospel.

Who is the God of this age? Is he good or is he evil? So why is this age evil? Because it has an evil God. And God is not changing that. As long as this age continues Satan will be its God.

But God is planning to terminate this age and with it Satan will lose his place as God. That's why Satan fights with all his might and cunning to prevent this age from coming to its close. And that's why he hates the church.

Because the church is the body that can bring the age to the close. What do we have to do to bring the age to the close? Matthew 24 verse 14. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end shall come.

That's very clear. What will bring the age to a close? The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in all the world to all nations. Whose business is it to do that? Ours, the church's, that's right.

So Satan does everything he can to prevent the church from fulfilling that task because when it's fulfilled the age will close and he will no longer be a God. But meanwhile this God, this age has an evil God. We don't need to worry provided we understand that.

If you turn to Hebrews chapter 6 speaking to charismatics like you and me it says speaks about those who were once enlightened in verse 4 have tasted the heavenly gift have become partakers of the Holy Spirit have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come. So when we receive the Bible in faith and when we receive the Holy Spirit when the gifts of the Spirit are having their way in our lives we are tasting the powers of the coming age. And God's purpose amongst other things at least is to give us such a taste for that that we'll lose our appetite for the powers of this present age.

In Romans chapter 12 verse 1 and 2 Paul warns us not to be conformed to this age in our thinking. Now you'll find in the old King James, the new King James and some of the others it says world but it's age. We are not to think like the people of this age.

And in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 verse 10 you get one of the saddest statements in all of the New Testament. Paul is riding from prison just near the end of his life about one of his closest co-workers. And he says Demas, that's the name of the man has forsaken me having loved this present age.

Some translations say world but that's not right, it's age. So Demas went a long way with Paul. He was one of his trusted co-workers.

He'd heard the whole message of the gospel over and over again. And Paul considered him good enough to be a co-worker. And he didn't make it through to the end.

Why? What was his problem? He loved, what? This present age. Let me ask you frankly, do you love this present age? Don't answer glibly. You can say no and your whole life can belie that statement.

If all you think about is the things of the body and the things of time you love this present age. And I personally see in scripture it is impossible to love this present age and be faithful to the Lord. Let's go on to the second deliverance.

Going back to Galatians chapter 2 verse 19. This is the one when I come to it I really need to preach about three hours. Because contemporary Christians do not understand this.

All right, verse 19 of chapter 2. I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. What's the deliverance from? The law, that's right. Did you know that you needed to be delivered from the law? Did you realize it's not your friend? It's not your helper.

It's Satan's tool to keep you in slavery. Even though God gave the law. Paul said in first Corinthians 15.

The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. The strength of sin is the law. Nothing wrong with the law.

It's perfect. But it won't make us perfect. Do you know the kindest thing the law does to us? It puts us to death.

Because once we've been put to death we're no longer under the law. The last thing the law can do to you is execute you. And through the law we have been executed.

The message of mercy is the execution took place 19 centuries ago. When Jesus died on the cross we were executed. God has no other solution.

God's solution is execution. I'd like you to say that, it's easy. God's solution is execution.

Say it again. God's solution is execution. I've been executed.

Thank God. I'm no longer under the law. It put an end to me.

All right. Let's look at just a few scriptures. I know enough, I've preached on this long enough, to know that it takes about a week to get this message through.

The ordinary natural thinking man has got one idea of righteousness. It's keeping a set of rules. When I got saved in the army, and I remained another four and a half years in the British army, I used to talk to my fellow soldiers about salvation.

And their reaction was almost invariably the same. Each one would give me a list of the rules he kept. That was his righteousness.

And each one had a specially tailored list of rules that just suited his life. It missed out the things that he did, you see. That's how natural man thinks.

But it's not God's way of righteousness. God's way is faith. It's believing.

Let me just read a few passages. I enjoy teaching on this. I'd love to teach on it for about three weeks.

But, maybe in the millennium. Romans 6 verse 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.

Notice, not but. Not under the law, but under grace. The implication is clear.

You can't be under both. You have to choose. If you're under grace, you're not under law.

If you're under law, you're not under grace. Which are you under? I hope it's true. And then Paul says, sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under the law.

What's the implication of that? If we were under the law, sin would have dominion over us. Is that true? Have you ever thought about that? It agrees exactly with the statement. The strength of sin is the law.

And listen, I want to be very clear. The law of Moses is perfect. Nothing wrong with the law.

The problem is in us. And then in Romans 8 verse 14. For as many as are regularly led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God.

Grown up children of God. What's the requirement for being a child of God? Being what? Regularly led by the Spirit. That's the only way you can achieve it.

Now, turn to Galatians 5 verse 18. And set side by side with that. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Okay? So in order to be a son of God, you have to be led by the Spirit. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. So you cannot have it both ways.

Let me say this. The primary reference to law in the New Testament is nearly always to the law of Moses. But in most of the places, including Galatians, where the translation says the law, the Greek says law.

The the is put in. In other words, the law of Moses is the pattern of all law. It's the perfect law.

If that couldn't do it, no other law has any hope of doing it. You see, so many evangelical Christians say we're not under the law but under grace. And they live by their own silly little set of rules.

The Baptists have one, the Pentecostals have another, the Catholics have another. And really most of them think they are achieving righteousness by keeping that set of rules. And that's one of the things that divides the church.

Let's say I'm a Baptist, which I'm not. But anyhow, let's say I am. So I keep my set of rules and you Pentecostals, you keep a different set of rules.

Well if I'm made righteous by keeping my set of rules then you're not righteous. Because you're not keeping my set of rules. You see what I'm saying? It's one major source of division in the church.

Let's look at, what shall we say, let's look at Romans 10.4. If you preach this in Israel today you will create a revolution. I know because I created one. However, I live to tell the story.

Romans 10.4 For Christ, the Messiah, is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Greek, Jew, American, Russian, British, it doesn't make any difference. Catholic or Protestant, it makes no difference.

For everyone who believes, Christ the Messiah is the end of the law. Praise God it doesn't stop there, for righteousness. As a means of achieving righteousness with God, the death of Christ on the cross put an end to the law.

Didn't put an end to the law as part of the Word of God, as part of the history of Israel, or as God's diagnostic for sin, or as a theme for endless meditation. It still remains. But as a means of achieving righteousness with God, the death of Christ on the cross put an end to the law.

Paul says in Galatians, If righteousness comes by the law, then Christ died in vain. So which is which? See if you are trying to make yourself righteous by keeping a set of rules. What you're telling Jesus is, you didn't need to die.

That's a serious offense. All right, we have to go on. The third deliverance is in Galatians 2.20 Very simple, it's the next one.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. Stopping there.

From what have I been delivered there? One very simple short word. I, that's right. I have been delivered from self.

Personally I believe that you cannot be delivered from self until you've been delivered from the law. Because as long as you're trying to keep the law you're doing something in your own strength and effort.

But if you have been delivered from the law you better be delivered from self too.

Otherwise you're going to end up in trouble. See in my personal opinion, self is the main source of problems in the Christian ministry. The ego.

Personal ambition. Me, my church, my ministry. I used to talk about my church when I was a pastor years ago.

One day I felt the Lord spoke to me gently. He said, would you mind telling me whose church is it? Well I said rather uncertainly, I hope it's yours. I've ceased using that.

I'm not a pastor anyhow. But if I were a pastor of twenty thousand I still wouldn't say my church. It's the Lord's church.

Let me give you a Scripture from Philippians. I think most of us need to spend a lot more time in Philippians than we do. You know why we don't like Philippians? Because it's the epistle of suffering.

And we'd rather pass that over. Philippians chapter two, just verses three and four. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit or pride.

But in loneliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. That's not easy, is it? But I believe personally that's. If you really trace the problems in the ministry.

And my dear brother Jay Fessman is here. And he's helping people with problems in the ministry. He tells me they are more than the hairs on his head.

You wouldn't believe the problems in the ministry today. Any kind of awful sin you want to name it's in the ministry. I'm talking about incest, adultery.

What's the root cause? Self. Me. I'm important.

I want my way. I want to impose my will. I want good people following me.

I want my name in the headlines. What's the problem? I've never been crucified. Paul says I have been crucified.

I'm not alive any longer. And you notice with Paul it didn't matter what people said to him. Or did to him.

It didn't worry him. You can't aggravate a dead man. What's the first requirement for following Jesus? Matthew 16, 24.

Who can tell me without turning to the Scripture? That's right. I'll read it but you're quite right. Go to the top of the class.

Matthew 16, 24. Then Jesus said to his disciples. Notice he's not talking to the crowd.

If anyone desires to come after me let him deny himself. Take up his cross and follow me. So that's absolute unvarying condition.

What's the first step in following Jesus? Deny myself. What does deny mean? It means say no. So deny yourself means say no to yourself.

All right. Self says I want. You say uh-uh that's not what God wants.

Self says I think. Say no, no that's not what God says. Self says I feel.

You say feelings are not important. It's faith that matters. So we have to say no.

To the thing in us that says I want, I think, I feel. We are not ruled by those. So, if you are an unstable Christian.

Up one day and down the next. Sometimes in victory and sometimes in defeat. You may be absolutely sure that you are being ruled by your own ego.

And it's a very bad master. Paul I think gives us a perfect pattern of the ministry. In 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 5. It's just after the verse where he says that Satan is the god of this age.

And then he says for we do not preach ourselves. But Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. So when we come to a message the first part is negative.

Not ourselves, not me. But Christ Jesus the Lord. You cannot make Christ the Lord if you haven't denied yourself.

You haven't taken up your cross. You can use the language. But Jesus is not really Lord in your life.

There has to be a setting aside of self. Before there can be an exaltation of Jesus. Not myself but Jesus Christ the Lord.

And then Paul comes out with one of the most amazing statements. When you consider the background. He says ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

But the word servant in Greek is slave. Ourselves your slaves for Jesus' sake. Now you consider Paul's background.

He's told us it all. He was a Pharisee, legalistic, proud, self-righteous. Absolutely convinced that he and his fellows were better than anybody else on earth.

The sole inheritors of God's righteousness. And here he is speaking to people who have an awful background. You read his list of the sins of the Corinthian church.

It was everything. Adultery, fornication, incest, drunkenness, perversion, homosexuality, extortion. And you think of this proud Pharisee, this Jew.

Saying to these Gentiles, goyim. We are your slaves for Jesus' sake. What made that possible? The cross.

Nothing else. Now I want to give a little personal illustration. Which is very far from what Paul says.

But I experienced this challenge. When I was principal of a teacher training college in Kenya in East Africa. For African teachers.

All our students were Africans. Now I happen to have a privileged background. This is an objective fact.

I was educated as a scholar of Eton College. I was a scholar of King's College Cambridge. I was elected to a fellowship in King's College Cambridge at the age of 24.

I come from the upper crust of British society. All my male relatives that I've ever known have been officers in the British Army. And here am I trying to teach these dear African students.

When they came to our college most of them had never handled a fork. They were certainly not sophisticated. And God challenged me and said can you say to those people.

I'm your slave for Jesus' sake. And I really believe I came to the place where I did. And Ruth will bear me witness.

We went back to that college 20 years later. And I'd have no contact with them. It was an unforgettable moment.

They rolled up the red carpet. They said this is the man that founded our college. They took me to every class.

If I'd been the president of Kenya they couldn't have done more for me. I didn't think of that at all in that context. But I realized it works.

It works. I want to show you one thing. There are a lot of black people here.

For me in Kenya black was beautiful. I used to think those white faces. Why are they blotting the landscape.

I have a black daughter. Adopted when she was six months old and she's 31 now. She's lived with us all those years.

We love her. She's a precious spirit-filled Christian. You want to know how we got her.

This is not part of the message. My first wife was much older than I was. Lydia, some of you remember her.

If you met her you'll never forget her. We were in educational work running this college. It was very hard work.

I would get up at six in the morning and never finish till ten o'clock at night. We were achieving results. The education department of Kenya was congratulating us.

We had success. One night about 5 p.m. We were sitting in our living room. I don't know what we were doing.

A strange group arrived. A white lady accompanied by a black couple. And in those days, that's in the late 1950s.

There wasn't too much close relationship between black and white in Kenya. And this white lady carried in her arms. In a rather dirty towel.

A little black baby girl. And they said we represent the child welfare association. Which had just been formed.

And this little baby's mother died. And she was left unconscious on the floor of an African hut. And our representative found her.

Put her in hospital. And she's been there six months. But the hospital say we're not a children's home.

We can't keep her. So we've been going around this area for two days. Looking for any family.

Black, white or Asian. That would take this little girl. And they said, somebody told us that the princes take children.

Well, I mean, long way back we had a children's home. And we ended up with eight adopted daughters. But that was all past history.

So we said no, this is a misunderstanding. We took children a long while ago but we don't do that today. We're in educational work.

So they said, well we're so tired. Would you mind if we sat down. So they sat down and we talked for about half an hour.

And they got up to go. And this white lady carried this little black baby past me. And as she did.

The little girl just put out her hand. Like that. As if to say, what are you going to do? And I looked at my wife.

And she said, give me a week. To get a crib and some baby clothes and you can bring her back. So that's how we ended up with.

Let's give the Lord the clap. But that's just a little illustration, in a sense, of not ourselves. But Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your slaves.

And we had to get up every night for several months. Because she was a very sickly little baby. And if she'd, you know, gone coughing too long she would have choked.

So we had something on our hands. Anyhow, I'm proud of her. I'm glad we took her.

There's a couple here that have got two adopted little girls. Because I once said, why don't you try adopting children. And I feel God wants me to say this here.

I'm the father of nine adopted girls. The African is the youngest. Why don't you do something for them? At least begin to pray about it.

There are a lot of unwanted little children in this country today. Most of them are mixed race, probably. Well, just consider it.

Pray about it. We have dear friends in Washington, D.C. The Burghers. Not the Burghers, what's the name? Burgle, that's right.

They have, what, seven of their own and three adopted, I think now. Eight of their own and two adopted. It's a wonderful family.

I mean, you know, if you're beyond a certain age. I mean, if you're over fifty, think twice about it. I mean, if you find life a little dull.

And you wonder, what can I do next? Where should I take my next vacation? You know what you're doing? You're thinking in a very self-centered way. I mean, there's nothing wrong with taking vacations. But I was preaching in our church in the dedication of the new building last Sunday.

And I said, one thing I can tell you, the sure recipe for unhappiness is to be self-centered. I've never met a self-centered person who was happy. So we must go on.

What's the release from self-centeredness? The cross. There's no other way. I have been crucified with Christ.

This old ego is no longer alive. We must go on quickly. The fourth deliverance.

Galatians 5.24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. What have we delivered from there? I didn't hear you. The flesh, that's right.

Now what is the flesh? It doesn't mean this physical body. I hope you understand that. My definition is the flesh is the nature that we received when we were born with this physical body.

It came with the body. You see, Adam never had any descendants until he was a rebel. And every descendant of Adam from then until now has in him the nature of a rebel.

It's called the flesh or the old man. And God has only got one destiny for the rebel. It's crucifixion.

But the provision has been made by the death of Jesus. Romans 6.6 Our old man was crucified with him. That's a historical fact.

It happened more than 19 centuries ago when Jesus died on the cross. That old rebel in you and me was crucified with him. So there's a way out.

Paul says at the end of Romans 7, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this death? And he said, I thank my God there's a way out through Jesus Christ our Lord. There is a way out from the flesh. But, Paul says, those who are Christ have crucified the flesh.

That's not something God does for us. That's something we have to do for ourselves. God has made it possible.

Jesus has died. But the application is our personal responsibility. It says in 1 Corinthians 15 that when Jesus comes back.

He's coming for those who are Christ's. Is that the Baptists? The Catholics? The Pentecostals? The Presbyterians? No. Thank God there'll be all of those included.

But those who are Christ's are marked by one thing. They have crucified the flesh. So Jesus is coming back for people like that.

Now, crucifixion is painful. And dealing with that fleshly nature is painful. There's no way to escape from the flesh that is not painful.

Let me read you a passage in 1 Peter 4. Verse 1. I pondered over this verse for years. Aren't you glad I can tell you now the correct understanding? Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh. Arm yourselves also with the same mind.

For he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. Okay. He who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

But I couldn't understand that. I thought to myself, well Jesus suffered. We don't have to do that.

He's provided the way out. But there it was. He who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

Well I understand it now. We have to crucify our flesh. God doesn't do that for us.

He's made the provision. We have to do it. And crucifixion is always painful.

There's no painless crucifixion. There's no escape from the dominion of the flesh that is not painful. So Peter says arm yourself with the same mind.

Be prepared to suffer. How many churches is that preached in today? But there's two ways of suffering. There's the foolish way and the wise way.

I'll give you a little illustration which is very simple. A kind of familiar situation could arise anywhere. There's this beautiful Christian young lady.

She's eighteen years old. She really knows and loves the Lord. And the hand of God is on her life.

But there comes into her life a man who's carnal. But flashy. Arrogant.

But kind of impresses females. And, I didn't think that one out. I might have said it differently if I'd thought it before.

This is the moment of truth. Anyhow, he wants to marry her. And he makes all sorts of exciting promises.

About what he'll buy her and where he'll take her. And he goes to church with her. But she has a godly pastor.

She goes to him and he says, Don't marry that man. He's not a committed Christian. He's only coming to church to get you.

Because once he's got you, he'll stop coming to church. Now she's got two options. Each of them is painful.

Let's take the wrong option first. She ignores the pastor. Goes ahead and does what her flesh wants.

Marries him. All right, fifteen years later when they've had three children. He deserts her for another woman.

Does that ever happen? Tell me ladies. Is that painful? That's the result, in her life, not in everybody's life. Of going the way of the flesh.

She learned the hard way. Probably twenty years later she's come back to God. She's truly committed.

And she's making do in a difficult situation. But it's painful. You'll agree with me, it's painful.

What's the right alternative? Pastor, I'll accept your word. You understand better than I do. I really love that man.

But if you say he's wrong, I'll say no. That's painful, isn't it? That's putting the nails in your own hands and feet. That's painful.

But it doesn't last long. Maybe a few months. It's all over.

Two years later along comes the right man. She marries him and they go on the mission field. And live happily ever afterwards.

Like all missionaries. You see what I'm saying? Dealing with the flesh is painful. But there's the right way to do it.

And the wrong way. God is so faithful he'll bring you through in the end. But why put yourself to all that unnecessary extended suffering? Let me tell you one thing.

Nothing good comes out of the flesh. In Galatians 5 Paul lists the works of the flesh. Let me just read that and we'll move on.

Galatians 5 verse 19. Now the works of the flesh. The things that the flesh produces.

Are evident. Which are, and there's a slight difference in the translations. But it's not important.

Which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, revelries and the like. There's not one good thing in the list. The key word that describes our fleshly nature is corrupt.

And it can never produce anything that is not corrupt. One of the interesting things about corruption is it's irreversible. Once corruption sets in there's no way to reverse the process.

You can slow it down, you can contain it, but you cannot reverse it. And that's our fleshly nature. So God doesn't mess around with the flesh.

Doesn't send the flesh to church or Sunday school or teach it the golden rule. He says crucifixion. That's the way out.

And then he says now we'll have a new beginning. I'm not going to mess around with that flesh. That's going to be a new nature born in you.

An incorruptible nature. The nature that comes from the seed of the Word of God. The seed is incorruptible, the nature is incorruptible.

There's the opposition. The old man is corrupt, the new man is incorruptible. But only in so far as the old man is executed can the new man come to life.

Let's go on to the final deliverance. Galatians 6.14 These are such beautiful words once you really accept them. God forbid that I should glory or boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the

world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

Paul says I'm not going to boast about anything. I'm not going to boast about my ministry. I'm not going to boast about my background.

I'm not going to boast about my education. I'm not going to boast about the miracles. And this is an amazing statement.

I'm only going to boast about the cross. What is there to boast about in the cross? Of all the ugly, shameful, horrible things. A crucified figure on a cross.

But what Paul says is this. When the world looks at me it sees a corpse on a cross. When I look at the world I see a corpse on a cross.

I am totally separated from the world by that cross. What is the world? I'll give you my answer. The world is a system that embraces society and its essence is this.

It refuses the righteous government of God in the person of Jesus Christ. So that is the line that distinguishes the world from the people of God. The people of God are those who've come under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The world are those who refuse the lordship of Jesus Christ. They may be very moral, good living people. They may be church going people.

But they do not make Jesus Christ Lord. They refuse the only one who is appointed by God to rule. They say in effect we will not have this man to rule over us.

And between the world and the church there's the cross. Listen to what Jesus says about the world in John 15. It's really quite amazing.

He uses the phrase the world five times in one verse. I think he must have had something in mind. John 15 verses 18 and 19.

Talking to his disciples. If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own.

But because you are not of the world, but I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Do you see that? Five times in one verse. Jesus is saying you don't belong to the world.

You have no place in the world system. It has no power over you. You're separated.

And it's not going to like you, because you're different. When you lead a really separated, righteous, Christ-exalting life, you're telling the people of the world you're not as righteous as you think you are. And that's what they hate.

It isn't going to be the harlots and the criminals that hate you. It's going to be the righteous people. People with their own righteousness.

Who've not submitted to the righteousness of God. Which is by faith of Jesus Christ. One thing impresses me and I close with this.

God is not interested in impressing the world. Think about the last public appearance of Jesus. What was it? A horribly mutilated corpse on a cross.

And as far as the world is concerned, that's the end. God has never sought to adjust that picture. The resurrected Christ is only revealed to witnesses chosen before by God.

In other words, if I can put the words in God's mouth. He says, I could care less about what the world thinks. How about you? Are you impressed by the world? By its standards? Its practices? Its applause? Does it matter a lot to you what people think about you? Can you say, the world is crucified to me and I to the world? Let's go through those deliverances and I'm going to close.

I want you to check on your own spiritual condition. Have you been delivered from this present evil age? Where are you living? Are you free from the law as a means of achieving righteousness? Have you personally been crucified with Christ so that your ego is dead? And your life doesn't center around me and I? Have you crucified the flesh? Have you refused to be dominated by that rebel? Have you painfully put the nails through your own hands and feet? And finally, what is your relationship to the world? Are you impressed by it? Are you trying to please it? Do you accept its standards? They're not the standards of God. There's no way I can end this message.

Except by just suggesting that we pray together for a moment. Not a long, drawn out prayer, but just a few moments of prayer. Jim, if you need to come up, would you come up? Father, we just want to come before you as your people.

People on whom you've laid your hand. People to whom you've revealed Jesus. People to whom you've revealed Christ crucified.

And God, if there's anything that's blurred our vision of the cross. If any satanic influence has come into our lives. That makes the cross dim or remote.

And nullifies its power in our lives. Lord, we want to say to this afternoon, we repent. We repent.

If witchcraft has by some means perverted our thinking and blurred our eyes. Lord, we ask you, show us how to be delivered. Show us how to come back to the foot of the cross.

And let it do its work in our lives, we pray. And Lord, we pray this not only for ourselves. But we pray it for the whole church of Jesus Christ in our nation.

That there'll be a fresh revelation of the cross. And it will be restored to its central place. And we pray this trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ.

Amen. Bless you.

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