

The Cross at the Center - Part 3

by Derek Prince

Derek Prince emphasizes the centrality of the cross in understanding God's love and our spiritual journey towards His hidden wisdom.

Duration: 28:25

Scripture: John 15:13

Topics: "The Cross", "Gods Love"

Description

This sermon by Derek Prince Ministries emphasizes the significance of the cross as the doorway to God's secret hidden wisdom, accessible through Christ's sacrifice. It delves into the profound love of God demonstrated through Christ's death for sinners, highlighting the value and worth each individual holds in God's eyes, symbolized by the priceless pearl in the parable. The message encourages believers to understand their true value through the lens of the cross and God's sacrificial love.

Transcript

Derek Prince Ministries. Proclaiming the inspired word of God around the world. Derek Prince is an internationally recognized Bible teacher and author.

Through books, audios, videos, and radio broadcasts, Derek seeks to reach the unreached and teach the untaught. In over 50 years of ministry, Derek has reached over 100 nations in more than 50 languages. And now, Derek Prince.

Now, for us the blood of Jesus has already been shed. Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed. The blood is available.

How do we apply it where we need it? What is our hyssop? The answer is there in that verse. Our testimony, that's right. All right, we have to go on.

The next reason why we need the cross in the center, is because it's the door to God's secret hidden wisdom. We'll go back to 1 Corinthians chapter 2. Paul has said we don't deal in the wisdom of this world. But in verse 6 he begins to talk about a different sort of wisdom.

And it's the New English Bible in its translation that uses the phrase, a secret hidden wisdom of God. And because of my background in philosophy, that's exactly what I was looking for. A secret hidden wisdom.

I didn't find it in Christianity as I knew it. I didn't find it in philosophy. I looked for it in yoga.

I looked for it in all sorts of improbable places and didn't find it. And then I discovered there's a door. And the door is shaped like a cross.

And if you go through the cross, on the other side is the secret hidden wisdom of God. If you have the kind of nature I have, you'll thrill at that statement. To me it's exciting to have access to God's secret hidden wisdom.

Let's read here in 1 Corinthians 2, 6 and following. However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages for our glory.

If that doesn't excite you, you've never understood it. God has prepared a secret hidden wisdom and the reason for that wisdom is to bring us to glory. Is that exciting? God had from eternity a plan to get us to glory.

The plan is contained in His secret hidden wisdom. The doorway is the cross. If you go through the cross, you'll start into the secret hidden wisdom of God.

Paul goes on, which none of the rulers of this age knew, for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. You see, the cross is the way. But as it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.

So we do not discover this with the senses, we do not discover this with the reason, we do not discover this with the imagination. How do we discover it? Paul tells us. But God has revealed them to us through the Spirit.

For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. So when we come through the door of the cross, the Holy Spirit begins to reveal to us what we can never find out by reasoning, by imagination, by speculation, only by revelation. And you remember what I said before, the only thing the Holy Spirit honors is the cross.

You can come on any other basis and He's not interested. But when you make the cross central, He says now that's a person I'm interested in. You know one of the things I like to do is attract the Holy Spirit.

I find when the Holy Spirit is there, things go well. And I've discovered to attract the Holy Spirit we need to exalt Jesus and preach Christ crucified. And when we do that and the Holy Spirit says, I like those people, I feel at home with them, I'll go and share that meeting.

Because that's what makes me happy, is when Jesus crucified is exalted. I would like to dwell more on that but I think I must move on. Let's look in Philippians chapter 3 on this theme for a moment.

Philippians chapter 3, verse 7 and following. This is Paul's own testimony. But what things were gained to me, those I have counted loss for Christ.

And he's talking about all his background in Judaism and all his inheritance as a religious Jew. But indeed I also count all things loss 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. He says nothing is of any

interest to me except Christ.

And be found in Him, notice this, not having my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ. Do you remember what we said? There's only one basis for righteousness which is faith in Christ. The righteousness which is from God by faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Paul's supreme ambition was to know Christ. Now he didn't write as somebody who didn't know Him, but his aim was to know Him better. This was after many years of fruitful Christian service.

And he said, I want to know the power of His resurrection. But with that goes the fellowship of His sufferings. No cross, no crown.

The cross is the way to the secret hidden wisdom of God by which we share His glory. There's a passage too in Ephesians, a very brief passage. Ephesians chapter 2, verses 4 through 6. But God who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved. And raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Where do we end up? In the heavenly places.

What are we doing? On what? Sitting on what? That's right. The New English Bible says God has enthroned us together with Christ. You see, when we come to the cross, in a certain sense it's like entering an elevator.

When you get inside the elevator, you get to whatever lift, you get to whatever floor you press the button for. Because it's the lift that takes you up. So once we're in Christ through the death and the crucifixion of Jesus, we're made alive with Him.

That's wonderful. We're resurrected with Him. That's tremendous.

But that's not the end. Where does the lift stop? At the throne. We're enthroned with Him.

We don't get there by effort. We get there because we're in the lift. But the doorway to the lift is the cross.

When we enter through the cross, we qualify for the throne. I've always been tremendously interested in the tabernacle of Moses. There are two kinds of people, those who get excited by the tabernacle and those who don't.

I'm one in the former class. I know there are some people who don't get excited. I don't hold that against you, but let me just take a brief example.

If you remember the structure of the tabernacle of Moses, there were three areas. They're distinguished by the light available in each. First of all there's the outer court, where the light is natural light.

The sun, the moon, the stars. Then you go inside the first veil or curtain, and now you're not walking by natural light. Paul says we walk not by sight, but by faith.

Passing through the veil is a step of faith. And you get into the first compartment, which is called the holy place, and the light there is the light of a candlestick, or a candle stand, which is supplied by olive oil that's burning. It's the light of the inspired Word of God illuminated by the Holy Scriptures.

But that's not your destination. See, stepping through the first veil is resurrection. But when you step through the second veil, that's ascension.

And inside the second veil, in the Holy of Holies, you're on the throne. And there are the two supreme ministries of Jesus, the King and the Priest, are exercised from within the second veil. And the light there is not the light of a candle.

In fact, the exciting thing about this is, if you get inside, it's totally dark. There's no source of light. I just wonder how many of you would make that your destination.

Just one little room, a cube, with no light and just one item of furniture. Is that exciting? You see, the further you go in the Christian life, the less there is to distract you. And the only people that will go through the second veil are the people that just want one thing.

What's that? God. That's right. It's really remarkable.

But inside the second veil, if you meet the conditions, there comes a light which is not natural. It's not artificial. It's what they call the Shekinah.

The actual presence of God, supernaturally illuminating the place. That's the secret hidden wisdom of God. You don't have to go through the second veil.

You can stop off anywhere. You can press the button of the lift and just get off at Mezzanine or Floor 2. But there's something in me that wants to get as high as the lift will go. And I really see in the lives of great men of God that there comes a place of, in a sense, loneliness when you're bereft of everything except God.

When you've got God, you've got everything. Really that's the end of Romans chapter 8 if you look at it. We're united with Christ.

Colossians 3 says Christ is all, and in all. So Paul says, what do I care about the law? What do I care about my inheritance in Judaism? What do I care about everything I've lost? It doesn't matter that much to me. Because what I want is to be inside the second veil.

I want the revelation of Jesus Christ. I don't want theology. I don't even want doctrine.

I want revelation. I want a personal, intimate revelation of Jesus. That's the only thing that can fully satisfy the longing of my soul.

That's the way I see it. All right, we come to the third reason in this session, the sixth if we consider the first session, for making the cross central. I hope I've excited you.

If I haven't excited you, I haven't communicated anything. I am so excited at the moment I could be jumping up and down. But I won't.

Paul said if I'm sober, it's for your sakes. All right, now here's a double reason. The cross is the ultimate demonstration of God's love and our value to God.

Okay, I'm going to say that again. The cross is the ultimate demonstration of God's love and of our value to God. Let me deal with the first.

John chapter 15, verses 13 and 14. Jesus is speaking to His disciples and He says, Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. Then He says, You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you.

In other words, I'm going to demonstrate the greatest love. I'm going to lay down My life for you. So that's the supreme demonstration of one person's love for another.

It's the willingness of that person to lay down his life or her life for the other person. And then in Romans chapter 5, Paul amplifies the nature of God's love and the extent of His grace. In Romans 5 beginning at verse 6, and reading through verse 10.

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, having been now justified by His blood, notice justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And if you analyze that passage, Paul says four things about our condition when Christ died for us.

He says first of all in verse 6, we were without strength. We could do absolutely nothing to help us. We were totally dependent on God's mercy.

He also says Christ died for the ungodly. We were ungodly. We had a nature and a way of life and a way of thinking and conducting ourselves which was totally alien to God.

Then he says in verse 8, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. So we were disobedient, rebellious, not in any sense seeking to please God. And finally in verse 10, he says for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God.

So Paul uses four different phrases to describe our condition when Christ died for us. He says we were without strength, totally helpless, unable to do a thing to help ourselves. He says we were ungodly.

And I wonder if you can realize what that means. There was nothing in us that could attract God. Everything about us was alien to God's nature.

Thirdly, we were sinners. We were disobedient. We were rebels.

And fourthly, we were enemies. We were actually in opposition to God. And when we were in that condition, Christ died for us.

And Paul says that is the measure of God's love for us. And it's very important, I think, that we see that. Because I find I'm always dealing with Christians who are not really sure that God loves them.

There are none of them here tonight, I'm sure. Or maybe there are. Well, if you have doubts about God's love for you, those doubts will never be fully resolved until you grasp the fact of the condition you were in when Christ died for you.

And God will not allow you to come to peace on any other grounds. Because that's the only basis. Do you see that? You may be relying on the attitude of some friend or the help of some minister or the assurances of somebody that you're to be loved.

If I understand God's meaning, sooner or later He'll remove that out of your life. Because He doesn't want you to base your understanding of His love on anything except the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. And you may find in times of darkness you'll wonder, what's happening? Why am I suffering? What's going on? And God will only illuminate one thing in the darkness.

That's the cross. And that's all you need to know. And the trouble with many of us is we know too much.

And God wants to bring us to the place where it's sufficient to know that Christ died for us. And speaking of this love, Paul goes on in Romans chapter 8, verse 35 through 39. The trouble about having preached about Romans is you can't get away from it afterwards.

Romans 8, 35 and following. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sore? As it is written, for your sake we are killed all day long. We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

That's God's people speaking. And yet in spite of that, we cannot be separated from the love of Christ. I want you to know that there are lots of Christians in parts of the earth that are experiencing that right now.

And if your salvation can't see you through that, you better check on your spiritual condition. Because there's no guarantee that within one year we might not find ourselves in that category. Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

For I am persuaded, I am convinced, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. That's the climax of the Romans pilgrimage. Inseparable, eternal union with Jesus Christ.

And being in His love forever. Now we've just got time to look at the other aspect of the demonstration that came to us through the cross. The first demonstration is God's love.

The second is our value, our worth. Now somebody said to me, somebody happens to be here, people in this nation have a problem with a low sense of self-worth. I don't know whether that's really true or not, but I'll say that it's a very common problem throughout the body of Christ.

And again, there's only one real basis for knowing your worth, and that's the cross. You see, the value of anything, for instance, if I want to sell a house, I don't know what the values are here. Let's say, I say my house is worth \$120,000.

But nobody will pay more than \$80,000. So my house is worth what people will pay for it, \$80,000. So your value, it's not what you think your value is, your value is what God was willing to pay for you.

What did God pay for you? Tell me. The blood of Jesus. Let's look for a moment.

In Acts chapter 20, verse 28. Acts 20, 28. I like this because of the one word God.

Paul is talking to the elders of the church and he says, Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. It was the blood of God that purchased the church. The blood of God through Jesus.

Then Peter says in 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 18 and 19. Knowing, the problem is a lot of us don't know. Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Without blemish means without original sin. Without spot means without personal sin. The perfectly sinless Lamb of God, Jesus.

Now the Scripture says, Leviticus 17, 11. The life or the soul of the flesh is in the blood. And then God says, I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls.

So when Jesus, and Isaiah 53, 12 says, He poured out His life or His soul unto death. When Jesus poured out His blood on the cross, He gave His life, His soul, as the redemption price for all of humanity. And the Scripture says in the book of Psalms, God has provided redemption in overflow.

The price was more than was needed. Can you see that? One perfect divine life was worth more than all the lives of all humanity of all ages in history. And that life was paid in full to buy us back out of the hand of the devil.

We are redeemed, the Bible says, by the blood of Jesus. Psalm 107, verse 2 speaks about confession. It says, Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed out of the hand of the enemy.

You see, you don't really have your redemption until you say so. It's saying so that makes it real to you. I am redeemed by the blood of Jesus out of the hand of the devil.

Would you like to say that? I am redeemed by the blood of Jesus out of the hand of the devil. Now let me give you one final picture which I love. It's Matthew 13, verses 45 and 46.

It's one of the short parables. Now I know there are lots of ways to interpret this parable. You may have a different way but just bear with me.

This is very real to me and if I can communicate it, it will bless you. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. Now to me that pictures, amongst other things, Jesus, the merchant man, and he knew the value.

He was not a tourist. He knew what pearls were. And he saw one pearl so valuable that he sold all he had to get it.

In my simple way I imagine this merchant, this is on the human plane, coming back to his wife. His wife says, why did you walk home from the office? He says, I sold the car. Sold the car whatever for? And not only that but I've sold the house.

You've sold the house? We'll have to move to the farm. No, I've sold the farm too. I've sold everything I ever had.

You've sold everything whatever for? Because I found something so valuable it was worth everything. What was it? And he opens his palm and says, this pearl is worth everything I paid. What's the pearl? It's you.

One human soul. If nobody else had ever been saved in all history, dear brother and sister, he would have died for you. So I want you as we close this to think of yourself as the pearl in the hand of the Lord.

And I want you to hear the Lord saying, I gave everything I had to purchase you. That's how much you mean to me. Don't ever let me hear you say again that you're not worth much.

Because in my sight you're worth everything. I gave everything I ever had. You are so beautiful, so perfect.

I know the value of things. Everything I sold just didn't add up to what you mean to me, this pearl in my hand. Do you believe that? Can you believe that? It will change your life, many of you, if you really can believe it.

Your value is what God paid for you. Don't let the world tell you what you're worth because they might say it's not much. But you're worth what God paid for you.

Can you say just one thing? Thank you, Lord. For more information, visit www.fema.org

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