

The Power of the Cross - (Part 2)

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the cross as a symbol of Jesus' victory over sin and Satan, and the power of God for those who are being saved.

Duration: 1:20:37

Scripture: Numbers 32:23, Psalm 51:2, Proverbs 28:13, Isaiah 1:18, John 3:16, Romans 6:23, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Sin And Redemption", "The Cross"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the seriousness of sin to God, drawing attention to the crucifixion of Jesus as evidence of God's seriousness towards sin. The preacher also urges the audience to reflect on their own lifestyles and choices, comparing it to the story of two brothers, one living a righteous life and the other indulging in sinful behaviors. The sermon includes a story about a man who commits murder and seeks help from his righteous brother, ultimately finding refuge in a stream of water where his pursuers cannot find him. The preacher uses this story to illustrate the concept of finding safety and redemption in God.

Transcript

We are speaking about the message of the cross. 1 Corinthians 1 verse 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. We spoke yesterday morning a little about the cross.

We said the cross was erected because of sin. It was on the cross that Jesus wrestled with Satan and with those evil forces. Satan and death and the world.

And he made an open public spectacle of them, conquering over them. And he poured disgrace and contempt upon them. And to some it's difficult to understand that.

The English Bible says he made an open show of them. I'm just telling them to close the doors, cold wind is coming in there. I hope if it's possible in the future we'll put some warm air here.

Then you needn't freeze because of the cold. An open show. Now in those days Caesar ruled the world.

He ruled over the whole known world at that time. Just as America, the USA is a superpower today. Many don't like the United States.

Especially the Muslims. But I love them. And I love Bush as well, for he's a Christian, somebody who's given his life to the Lord.

When I say that overseas, in Europe, they get furious. Why is that? Because they want homosexuality. They want abortion.

They want to be able to do those things. And that's why they hate him. And if you still hate him then you need to repent.

You still need to turn to God and confess your sin. Because you hate your brother in Christ. If the strongest man in this world is washed in the blood of Jesus, not ashamed of my Lord, then I should have something against it.

You're not a real Christian. You're not a spiritual Christian if you are like that. You're a tool in the devil's hand.

But if you're a Muslim, I can understand that you are against him. But I thank God that the Muslim world that wanted to swallow up the world, that God used Bush just to give them a kick on the head. I'm not a politician.

But I'm not ashamed of somebody who is not ashamed of my Lord. And that he confesses and testifies in front of the whole world that he is saved, that he believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now some say that he fought against Iraq just because he wanted to put missionaries into Iraq.

Now would that be a crime if he would do something like that? If you still think like that, it's terrible. Some people don't have their brains up here but down there. And they sit on it.

Here is the cross where Jesus Christ conquered over Satan and his hordes and his power. He destroyed sin. Your sin.

So when he conquered sin on the cross, he conquered over your sin as well. The message of the cross cannot be fathomed. It's too high and it's too deep and too wide to be fathomed.

We can take the brains of the most brilliant people, the most brilliant minds and put them all together. But even through that we won't be able to fathom the depth of the cross. It goes further than that.

It was on the cross that Jesus dealt with where he dealt with your and my sin. Yesterday for the sake of those of you that weren't here, I said that we shouldn't take sin lightly. Sin is evil, it's terrible, it's gruesome.

We shouldn't take it lightly. And we might take it lightly and say, oh well, what is it to have a girlfriend or a boyfriend? There's nothing much bad, much wrong with that. But with God, it's serious.

And we say, oh well, worldly clothing, what does that matter? It doesn't matter much. And some Christians say it's no matter. It doesn't matter how you dress.

God doesn't look at the outside. He just looks at the inside. It's true.

But I can't understand you silly person. Why don't you go naked? Because he doesn't look at the outside. He just looks at the inside.

But God says, if you love the world, you become an enemy of God. You become an enemy to God if you love the world. Did you hear what Nonto said about her niece? That when she got converted, just what happened, even in the car, she got into the car.

We are still going to stand before God when we have to give an account of our lives. And I don't know how you women are going to stand before God, before Him, with a worldly appearance and a worldly hairstyle. The blacks, they like to take Indian hair and wear that.

I say, how will you stand before God? With an Indian hair and having a flat nose. Now, God created us as we are, and we shouldn't find fault with them, and I don't want to find fault with them, even though sometimes I do wish I had hair like the blacks, because they don't have any problem. If the wind blows, the hair just stays as it is, but with the whites, it goes all over the show.

Sin is a serious matter to God, and God treats it seriously. Just look at the cross, and you saw last night, when we saw Jesus dying on the cross, how serious God takes sin. God struck Jesus on the cross, and the Bible says God made him sin.

I cannot speak about it all, the sun will set. That's why I'm just touching on it here and there. Go home, and if you've got a TV set, switch it off, or rather even get rid of it.

If you've got a pit toilet, throw it inside. Your children will be all the more blessed because of it. A young girl who had fallen into sin, I said, young girl, I know your father, I know your mother, did they teach you to sin like that? So who taught you? So I said, who taught you then, to go with a man? You don't know where he comes from, where he's going to, where he's been, just a man of the road, and you are found sitting on his lap, kissing him, who taught you such dirt? And this were purebred Europeans.

There was an Indian here, and he spoke to me about the Europeans, was a European, but he spoke about Europeans. I said, who taught you that a boy can sit on your lap, and that you can kiss each other? You know what she told me? She says, my father has got a TV set, but he's hidden it from us upstairs on the attic. He doesn't know that we know, but as soon as mum and dad are gone, we switch it on.

And that's where we look at the things of hell. And that's where I was taught. You hear, father? If your daughter goes to hell, you want to go to heaven.

You'll go to where your daughter is, before you've paid the guilt of her blood. And you, mother, you allow such a thing? And the man who was not so far from us here, was not. In addition, like our neighbor, he said, how do you know, brother? I bought a television, not for me, but for my children.

Because I don't want my children to go to the neighbors and watch it there, rather than in my own house. I said to him, now I can better understand Luther, that he says, hell will be plagued with heads of dominions and kings. You can hate me for telling you the truth, because I know many people don't like the truth.

But in heaven or before God, you will thank me for that. And you will say, well, thank you for telling me the truth. I knew it.

And even if I go to hell, I know that you're innocent of my blood. On Judgment Day, and maybe that day isn't far away, if there was ever time when you had to repent and was it nice to you to see the Lord Jesus' body broken on the cross, him being crucified, suffering, whilst innocent, doing so for your sin? And that which we are shown, which we can see with our eyes, is only a tiny fraction of that which he really had to

thinks of a multitude of words and terms, that he doesn't know how to express himself, to describe and to portray the depth and the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Sometimes it is referred to as redemption, as a ransom. He talks about it as the need to be justified. He talks about it as being reconciled with God, being made one with God.

Where God uses various terms to try and express the message of the cross. Let me speak for a moment about the need of a ransom. There is a song that says redeemed, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Now what does that redemption or that ransom mean? It's the same word in Zulu. To be ransomed means liberating a prisoner with money or some other great payment. Jesus paid the ransom for us on the cross.

Let me illustrate to you what that ransom means. There were two brothers. One was a believer and one not.

One would take his Bible to the service on a Sunday. And the other one would go and play soccer, go and talk to the girls, go with his pals to go and smoke and do other things. In the evening, the one brother would take his Bible and read it.

And then his brother would come back late at night, 9, 10, 11, sometimes later, sometimes he would even sleep outside. And he would plead with him and say, brother, dear brother, what does God say about your lifestyle? What does God say about your smoking and drinking and using drugs? And he would say, brother, this is my life, just as the women also say that it's their body, they can choose to have an abortion or not. And it went from bad to worse.

Eventually he lived like a wild animal. Today he would sleep with one girl, tomorrow with another woman, and every day somebody different. Eventually he joined up with a gang.

He had a knife, a dagger, and then at one place he stabbed somebody. But this happened not in these days where there's no longer any capital punishment, but with the previous government, where those governments still said, we honor that which God's word says. When somebody kills, then his blood should be shed.

And one evening while he was still reading his Bible peacefully in the house, all of a sudden the doors were flung open and somebody ran inside and it was his brother. And he said, brother, please help me, help me. And he was full of blood.

And he said, I've murdered somebody, I've killed somebody, and the police are on my heels. Please do something for me, help me. You see how it is when you're in trouble, then you remember the minister, then you remember those who serve the Lord.

Even the man whom you hate, maybe it could be me, but one day you'll love me and you'll come to me for help. Even if they should write badly in the newspapers, what can you expect of a newspaper? Or in the internet? Jesus says, if they hate me, they'll hate you, and if they don't hate you, you belong to the devil. Woe to you if all men speak well of you.

And then he said, brother, take off your clothing, quickly. And he took off his own clothing and said, get dressed in this. And he got dressed in the clothing of his brother and he said, now you run, you flee, go as quick and as far as you can.

And so the believing brother had put on the clothing, the bloodstained clothing of his brother, the bloodstained shirt and trousers, and even caused his shirt to hang outside, as his brother would normally do. Leaving the buttons, the top buttons of the shirt open to breastfeed the cats. And then the police arrived and they kicked open the doors and they came inside and they said, oh, here he is, we got him so easily.

He said, oh, he's got a Bible even with him, so today's criminals go around with a Bible. Well, what else do we need? We've got all the evidence. Yeah, there were the handcuffs.

And they put him in the back of the police van. And so he was imprisoned. But how? As it were, may the Lord be praised, we so quickly got hold of this criminal.

And the case was heard. And he didn't deny his guilt. He took his brother's guilt upon himself.

And the judge gave his verdict. He said, do you deny your guilt? He said, no. So he was given the death sentence.

And he was hung. And he died. His brother had run away to a different country.

After many years, his brother came back. And the matter had long been forgotten. When he got home, where's my brother? After all, your brother died.

Don't you remember that there was that case where somebody was murdered, and he was accused of that murder? How? How did they put him into jail? Yes. Did they try the case? They said yes, and he didn't deny his guilt. And then he held his head, he took hold of his head, and he wailed with a loud voice, crying, oh, I should have died, but my brother died in my stead.

And then he went to the police. He said, you executed someone who was innocent. I am guilty of the death of that man.

And so they were at a loss as to what to do with this case. They went to the chief magistrate, to the judges, and they said, here is somebody now admitting to his guilt. Saying that his brother who was executed was innocent.

He said, take me, I am guilty. Put me into jail. Execute me.

The judge said, no, you have been ransomed. And the chief judge said, no, you have been ransomed. Your brother took your guilt upon him, and he died.

We cannot execute a second person for the same crime. And this real guilty one went free. And he went home, and there he took off his clothing, put on his brother's clothing.

He said, it's the end of the world. I will no longer wear the clothing of the world. He found his brother's Bible, and he took it, and he said, from now on, I'll make this book to be mine.

And live accordingly. His brother had paid the ransom for him. You had to be crucified.

But Jesus carried your sin. Silently, he didn't open his mouth, but he carried my sin. And God Himself speaks about that ransom.

The sins are gone. The dogs won't get hold of you. The dogs of hell, all the demons, nobody will be able to get hold of you.

God will save you. God will save you. Now they've heard it twice, you can say it once in English.

And if you come to that stream that flowed from the cross, from the side of the Lord Jesus, of the riven side, that blood and that water, you'll be washed and cleansed and your sin wiped out. Have you dipped your feet into that? Have you come to the cross, called a spade a spade? Call your sin by name. Don't justify yourself.

Rather say, God, I'm guilty. And He says, no, you are not guilty. Then say, it's not too bad, and you'll be guilty before Him.

Oh, for a thousand tongues to proclaim the mystery of the cross. There are no tongues of men or angels that can fathom the depths, the height, the breadth of that secret, what happened on the cross. But may you, with the little that you understood and heard, be a new man from now on, and imprint your name into the book of heaven.

Come Holy Spirit, and make your people understand what the Father and Jesus did for them on the cross. Amen.

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