

Only Glory in the Cross (Cd Quality)

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the cross of Christ in Paul's life and ministry, and encourages believers to surrender to God and count their achievements as dung.

Duration: 30:33

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-7, Galatians 6:14, Galatians 6:17, Ephesians 2:1-2

Topics: "Cross of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the state of humanity and their longing for something more. He observes that people from all walks of life, whether intellectual or materialistic, seem to be content with superficial things. However, he feels a deep sense of urgency to save and offer his life for their salvation. The preacher also mentions the importance of being detached from worldly distractions and focusing on the bright and morning star, which represents Jesus Christ. He draws inspiration from the apostle Paul, who found joy and purpose even in the midst of imprisonment and persecution.

Transcript

And verse 14, But God forbid, this is the King James Version of course, But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. And verse 17, From henceforth, he's kissing everybody goodbye here, from henceforth let no man trouble me. Demons don't trouble him, because he conquered them all.

Let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. I heard years ago that a critic said of the Apostle Paul, his mind was so steeped in dogma, that it was a mere machine for grinding out metaphysics. Now if you don't know what metaphysics are, see Barbara or any of the staff of Brother David, and they'll explain it in a couple of hours to you.

Anyhow, I don't believe that at all. I don't believe his mind was so steeped in dogma that it was a machine for grinding out metaphysics. Paul was essentially, in my judgment, a preacher.

He was also a poet, because he wrote the greatest piece of poetry ever in 1 Corinthians 13, that amazing unsurpassable poem of love. He was also a pragmatist, he had his feet on the ground. I guess David gets hundreds or thousands of letters about the books he's written.

I get some, some very flattering and some very flattening. You know, the preacher's at a disadvantage in one sense. It doesn't matter how successful we are in the eyes of the world, or in our own eyes, the Lord says we're unprofitable servants.

And Paul said he was a debtor. I'm not a debtor, I don't owe anybody a penny I know of. But he says I'm a debtor to the whole world.

One of my critics wrote to me and said, why did you write in one of your books that the King James Version is written in sleepy Elizabethan English? I said, because it is. I'm not very fond of translations as you know. But there are times when you sharpen some of the words in the King James Version.

Moffat, and to a third of the modern writers, turned this text round, that God forbid that I should glory, said in the cross of the Lord Jesus, in this way, what I think is essentially sharp, no boasting for me, none. Said in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. This is a day of boasting, boasting as you said David, about the size of the buildings we put up, the circulation of our magazines, how many miles I've traveled.

Heard a preacher on TV, radio, I don't use a TV anymore anyhow, but on radio he was saying, I have preached in 130 countries. Well what he preached on TV, I won't let him preach in Camden Fair. Why in the world spread your weakness all over the world? He thought it was a weakness, I thought it was a weakness.

I have preached there, I have preached there, I know so. He starts name dropping. It's a day of boasting.

Remember the psalmist said that he would not boast, except in the Lord Jesus Christ, except in God. And Paul says, no boasting for me, and he could have boasted more than any man on earth. Except in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul fascinates me as a preacher. I think the greatest poem ever written, outside of the Bible actually, is written by F. W. H. Myers. And the whole book is on the apostle Paul.

I want to read you just a part of what he says about his preaching. Oft when the world is on me to deliver, lifts the illusion and the truth lies bare. The desert, the throng, the city or the river, melts in the lucid paradise of air.

Only like souls I see the folk there under, bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings. Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder, sadly contented with a show of things. Then with a rush the intolerable craving.

As he sees men and women of all classes, all stations of life, intellectual, philosophical, material, intellectual. He says then, with a rush the intolerable craving shivers throughout me like a trumpet call. All to save these, to perish for their saving, to die for their life, to be offered for them all.

Therefore O Lord I will not fail or falter, nay but I ask, nay but I desire. Lay on my lips the fire of thine altar, seal with the sting and furnish with the fire. Give me a voice of crying or complaining, O let my sound be still in their ears.

Throat that would shout but cannot stay for straining, eyes that would weep but cannot stay for tears. Quick in a moment, infinite forever. Send an arousal better than I pray.

Give me a grace upon my faint endeavor, souls for my horror and Pentecost today. Then with a rush the intolerable craving. I said a moment or two ago there, that Paul recognized he was a devil to all men.

He says there is neither Jew nor Greek, which is race distinction, bum nor free, class distinction, male or female, sex distinction. He's a devil to all people, everywhere. To me he is the most remarkable man in history, after Jesus Christ himself.

He was born in the ancient capital of the world, Tarsus. He ended up in the military capital of the world, Rome. In between he went to the intellectual capital of the world, Athens.

He went to the religious capital of the world, Jerusalem. He went to the corrupt capital of the world, Corinth. One of the old German commentators, Meier, not F.B. Meier, Meier, says blessed and sublime miracle of God, that in the very seat of corruption, the headquarters of hell on earth, which was Corinth at that time, it was a super sodom, that the apostle could go there and plant the imperishable truth of the word of God.

He writes two stupendous epistles to it. I say he is the most fascinating preacher. He was known to kings, they trembled before him.

According to tradition he was only five feet one in height. I think he had a colossal intellect. He had an amazing pedigree.

I was reading again in Philips, he is talking about surrendering everything to God as I read to you earlier. He says of his contemporaries, are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? Are not. Have a claim to this title.

Look at this silly game of boasting. I've worked harder than any of them. I have served more prison sentences.

I've been beaten more times. I've faced death again and again. I've been given the regulation stripes with the whip, you know, that had the thongs of copper at the end.

He says I've been beaten with regulation stripes 39 times, 39 times on five occasions. Which is what? 195 stripes. I've been beaten with robes three times.

I've been stoned once. I've been shipwrecked three times. I've been four and twenty hours hanging onto a piece of wood in the Mediterranean.

In my travels I've been in constant dangers from rivers, from bandits, from my known countrymen, from pagans. In the city streets, in danger in the desert, in danger on high seas, in dangers amongst false Christians. I've known exhaustion, pain, long vigils, hunger, thirst, doing without meals, cold, and lack of clothing.

Apart from all these external things, it's the inward thing that crushes me, that David was stoned about. The care of all the churches. If he took his shirt off, his back was like jelly.

It was all lacerated with the licked as lash. I guess he limped, he must have done. He couldn't be stoned the way he was stoned and still have a fancy look on his face.

This man is a danger to men. He is known to kings, he's known to jailers, he's got the greatest thing in the world that any man ever had that ever lived. He was known in hell.

Preacher if you're not known in hell, I won't give a hell of beans for you. I don't care about your eloquence, I don't care about your bible knowledge, I don't care how far you've travelled. If you're not known in hell, to me you're a zero, plus zero, plus zero.

But the day he's known in hell, I'm sure of that. After this book, he will be anyhow twice over. My wife and I have read it, I go to bed at nine at night now, but we've stayed up till ten, and even as late as eleven, reading that book.

Now he's revised it, I don't know whether I want to read it, or I will yet. But you see that old rugged cross, we didn't sing about the old rugged cross this morning. So despised by the world.

Do you know what the Apostle Paul says about it? He says, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know what? He loved that cross so much, he says to one of his students, I want to tell you, and he says, I tell you a weeping, that lots of these preachers are enemies of the cross of Christ. There are more enemies to the cross of Christ today than ever.

The Jehovah's Witnesses use the name of Jesus, the kingdom of Jesus, but they hate the cross, they hate the blood. Every modern cult hates the blood of Jesus. Christian science denies the blood.

The Mormon, Latter-day Saints, forget it, of Jesus Christ, forget it, they hate the blood. The greatest offender of all is the Roman Catholic Church. They make capital out of it, they make money out of it.

I was going to ask Winky, but he's gone back to New Zealand now. He was in a cathedral down in South America, where they had one of these huge hanging crosses. Jesus on one side, and the Virgin Mary crucified on the other side.

Now if they don't preach that, they declare that she's co-redemptrix, denying the blood. They say that when they pray over the blood, over the wine, which the priest does at six, seven, eight, nine, and ten. You know the Catholic Church has five institutions across America for the drying out of alcoholic priests, why? Because they drink wine, every hour on the hour, from six to twelve.

Now look, they give themselves away for this reason. They say immediately they pray over that wine, it becomes the blood of Jesus. I don't know, tell me the blood of Jesus intoxicates men? They cancel out on theology.

The Apostle Paul lived in the light, in the glory of the cross. He says there's the cross of Jesus, by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. No boasting for me except in the cross.

From henceforth let no man trouble me, because I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. I read some of those marks to you. His battered body, his colossal intellect is dedicated to Jesus Christ solely.

I can summarize his life, at least for myself, in many wonderful simple ways. This one thing, his life was an explicit life, he only had one thing to do, in season and out of season, in weariness, in fastings, in painfulness, in trouble, in distress, in hunger, in poverty, whether he's abounding or abiding, he says Jesus Christ is my all in all. I have no interest, he is the sum total of my thinking.

I eat Christ, I drink Christ, I sleep Christ, I talk Christ, I sacrifice, I breathe Christ. That's what he says isn't it? He says Christ liveth in me. I'm not going to ask you if you have the gift of tongues, does Christ live in you this morning? You may have an expanded theology, I'm not interested.

Does Christ live in you? Is Christ your heart? Is Christ your affections? Is Christ your love? Do you treat this world as a manure heap? That's what Paul says, every asset I have I count them but dung, filth. All my scholastic achievements, all my pedigree, are they Hebrew, so am I. I'm an Israelite, I'm a descendant of Abraham. Are they ministers of Christ? I am even more.

But he says the Lord Jesus Christ, when Isaac Watts wrote that hymn, he lived before Wesley, and when he wrote that hymn, when I surveyed the wondrous cross, on which the prince of glory died, he wrote, when I surveyed the wondrous cross, where the young prince of glory died. You cannot find a hymn book today that has the fifth verse of when I surveyed the wondrous cross, except a little thing that Keith Green and I put together, just the words. The last verse of when I surveyed the wondrous cross says this, his dying crimson like a robe spread all his body on the tree, then am I dead to all the globe, and all the globe is dead to me.

Dr. Chaucer said to me more than once, you know then, Christians don't tell lies, they just go to church and sing them. Isn't that true? Beneath the cross of Jesus, I fain would take my stand, but not as long as I should. I mean, it doesn't interest me too much, I mean, there's a sports program on TV, or the newspaper or something.

The last verse, his dying crimson like a robe spread all his body on the tree, then am I dead to all the globe, and all the globe is dead to me. Or beneath the cross of Jesus, the last stanza says, beneath the cross of Jesus, but on the further side, the darkness of an awful grave that gapes both deep and wide, the gates of hell. But there between us stands the cross, between me and that eternal death.

This is what kept him motivated. I used to think that Paul had summarized his life in his second letter to the Corinthians, where he begins by saying that we have a home eternal in the heavens, by saying we must all stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and then the thirteenth, fourteenth verse, I thought was the very essence of his life. What motivated him? The love of Christ constrains me.

I don't, I don't believe that that's the main motivation. I believe the main motivation is in chapter 1 of Philippians, verse 20, where he says that Christ may be magnified by my body. That when people look through my life, Jesus Christ is clearer to them.

Come on you parents, is Jesus Christ clearer to your children because they see through your life all his love, all his devotion? That Christ may be magnified in my body. He, every preacher, should be the best example of his own theology. And Paul, in my judgment, was just that.

I say he was known to kings. Isn't it amazing that this little man who had no money and no home, no backing, no army, no associates at one time. He's a eunuch in the world.

You know, somewhere in 1570, an Englishman made a big mistake, because they've made lots of them since then too. But it was John Donne, I think, who said in 1570, every man is an island. No man is an island.

But I tell you, every man is an island. I'm an entity. There is only one David Wilson in the world for which the devil rejoices.

We couldn't put up with two of them anyhow. Gwen couldn't. You couldn't put up with two husbands and she shakes her head.

Now, don't talk to me after meeting Gwen. Okay, dear. You know what I mean? He is an entity.

God has put something in him, and it's working out of him. That book he's writing is going to chase a thousand men out of the pulpit. It's going to terrify me.

Sure I'll weep. In God's name I According to science, we're going to have the greatest barbecue in world history before Allah. Whole cities can be barbecued in a minute.

And if you don't want to take what science says, take what the Bible says. The Bible says Armageddon is coming. Do you think I'm going to be a normal man facing that damnable thing that's coming? You think I'm ashamed of my tears? I'll tell you, all of this quality of preaching is going to, not mine, but the Apostle Paul's, is going to save our generation.

I believe denominations are done with. I think it's what the old lady said. I go, what church do you go to? She said, well I go to a different abomination.

And though she was right, she was right, she was wrong, she was right. They've had their day. There's some boy working on a plow this morning.

There's some boy driving a bus in Alabama, blackface maybe. He's going to be one of the anointed men that God's going to raise up. Your sons and your daughters are going to prophesy.

He's done with organized religion. He's done with the multi-million dollar investment societies of the church. I believe those three things you mentioned, David, are going to expire, they're going to die.

But the old rugged cross isn't going to die. I believe Malcolm Mugridge was right in his last book when he said, we're living in the days, this is the end of Christendom, but not the end of Christ. It's time to get this monolith out of the way.

Time to get these men off TV, bleeding people, bleeding. One of them is going to open a new big thing that will rival PTL. You know what PTL means? Pit of the listeners.

Anyhow, it's going to be beyond PTL, he's going to have a bigger attraction for Christians. Isn't that wonderful? I'm convinced again that the more joy we have in the Lord, the less entertainment we need. Look up in the face of God and sing the words of Wesley, thou old Christ art all I want, and more than all in thee I'll find.

I cannot fathom the depth and the height and the length and breadth of his love. I cannot fathom the height, depth, length, and breadth of his mercy. I told Brother Dave Mullins, this year is going to be a year of revelation to him and to me.

We're going into new areas we've never dreamed of. The word of God is going to explode, and for you Brother Green too I hope. Good to see you this morning.

All these formidable preachers in front of me, and I'm not a bit nervous. Isn't it amazing, a little man without money, without army, without any social standing, not wanted in social life, not wanted in the synagogue, and the king trembles before him. Felix trembled.

The other man that's ruling part of the Roman Empire says, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. How can you have this joy? Look at my palace, look at my army, look at my possessions, and I'm terrified. I'm terrified somebody will steal my crown, I'm terrified somebody will steal my kingdom, and you're standing there moneyless, powerless in the eyes of the world, and yet you say rejoice.

I told the kids, I'm not, I don't like kids, people ask me if I have kids, I say no I'm not a goat. I've got children. I told the children on a Friday night, I said you know I could take you out in this lovely sunshine and show you all the stars.

You can't see stars. I can, I'm proving it. I just put you down in a well that's about 80 feet deep, when it shuts off all the other light you can see the stars of heaven in broad daylight.

Do you know why some of you don't see the bright and morning star? Because it took, came up with this world, magnetized with it. Paul saw the bright and morning star in a lousy prison. You know people don't understand, again dear David, taking weeks off and shutting himself up.

Well I'd like to do that sometime, in fact we will do it sometime. Here he is lounging in prison, somebody goes in, what are you doing here scribbling away? I would say six months ago you were scribbling away. Get out there, you can raise the dead, you're the lyrical ministry, heal the sick, and cleanse the lepers, raise the dead.

What are you doing here? He said I'm just getting some, I'm working as a secretary. You're what? I'm working as a secretary, to who? The Holy Ghost. The who? The Holy Ghost.

I'm writing epistles that are going to go on. You see I say he had first of all an explicit life, this one thing I do. He had an exciting life, he wrestled with wild beasts at Ephesus.

He had an expensive life, everything he had, my richest gain I have count but lost. He didn't sing it emotionally, he did it. He buried all his glory, he buried all his assets, he buried all his achievements.

You know when he says forgetting those things which are behind, we think he means all the rotten things, I don't think so. You know every one of us, preachers and others, we're in great danger when we make our achievements the ground of our confidence. Look how many books I've written, look how many mouths I've, no no, once my achievements become the ground of my confidence, I've pushed Christ out of the way.

Paul doesn't do that. He's nothing, he says we're in to boast, saving the cross. Keep writing Paul.

He had an exciting life, he wrestled with wild beasts at Ephesus. He had an explicit life, this one thing I do. He had an expensive life, he laid everything on one side, and he has an expensive life because I borrowed his notes this morning.

You know the old lady had something going for her when they asked her if she liked new versions, she said no I like the King James Version, good enough for the Apostle Paul, she said it's good enough for me. Well she's right, he wrote it, didn't he David? So the Apostle Paul was right, the old lady's right. Isn't it great to have a notebook from heaven? While you poor guys are strutting around with philosophy and all the other junk that preachers try to get these days, you know, fantastic things about an inch deep like Christianity Today.

Somebody asked Kyle Barth, what do you think of Christianity Today? He said it's Christianity Yesterday. You know this is the most up-to-date book in the world. If this won't inspire you and fire your brother, you're finished.

Do you know what Paul does? He splits the human race into two groups, only two, not rich and poor, not black and white, not intellectuals and people who are retarded. He says there are only two classes of people in the world, not rich and poor, not the slaves and free men, just two classes, those who are dead in sin and those who are dead to sin. There's no other territory.

Doesn't he say to the Ephesians, you hath he quickened, who are dead in trespasses and in sin. We were talking the other day about charmers of Scotland, he preached for 10 years under 10 commandments. They must have given him good time to preach.

Then he suddenly realized he was preaching to the most model crowd of people in the world. They won't even ride their horses to church, they're making them work, so they plow through snow up to their knees in those churches in Scotland, many still do. Then one day he realized he was trying to imply people were bad, but secretly they were lusting and secretly they were eyeing women or secretly they were doing this, that and the other.

And then he said I suddenly realized that they were not bad at all, they were dead. You hath he quickened, know who are dead. Do you know why you didn't get far when you came to, as you thought, to the old rugged cross? Because you said the wrong thing.

I don't know daily, Brother Green, if anybody's preaching the gospel today. We preach forgiveness, come and ask for forgiveness. They do that every Sunday in every Roman Catholic church, does it transform them? I preached two weeks ago, was it, on Sunday, on Isaiah 6 there, where Isaiah comes before the blazing light.

Before thy never blazing throne we have no luster of our own. He sees Christ high and lifted up. He had a vision of deity, he had an inward vision of depravity, he had an outward vision of duty.

And when he bows before the Lord Jesus Christ, he says I cried. I'm not quite, you know, my prayer life's a bit slack. I need a bit of help here.

No, no, no, what does he say? He says things that people will not utter today. I'm undone, I'm unclean. You can't get further than that.

Then the live coal is taken from off the altar. The altar had bars on it. A sacrifice was there.

The fire was underneath. The blood dripped from the sacrifice onto the live coal. And the seraphim takes a live coal, a fire with a spot of blood on it, symbolic of the blood of Christ and the fire of the Holy Ghost, and put it upon his lips.

And said what? You're forgiven. No he didn't. He says thy iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.

We don't preach that. We just preach forgiveness. A man needs more than forgiveness, he needs cleansing, he needs more than cleansing, he needs indwelling.

He needs more than indwelling, he needs anointing. I'm glad the Holy Ghost still says to rich men that want to monopolize the Holy Ghost, your money perish with you. The full gospel businessmen were going

to turn the world upside down.

They've done some good. They got more criticism from the evangelicals than they got from the tavern. Full gospel.

Old Tony Salomo, the old man, says it's a full gospel. He says we're always full before ever we preach. Didn't quite mean that.

The full gospel. I've got news for you. Criticize them as you like.

Do you know what? The Salvation Army preached the full gospel. Their battle song was full salvation, full salvation, lower fountain, deep and wide, flows from it to every land and nation from the Savior's wounded side. None need perish.

Dear old William Booth, he was half Gentile and half Jew. The half Jew shows his love for money, but anyhow, he was half Gentile and half Jew. But do you know what the Salvation Army did? They entered 70 countries, not 70 cities, they entered 70 countries in 90 years.

C.T. Stud burning his life out at 53 after his career in China. Burning his life out there in the center of Africa. Heart of Africa mission he found.

Don't send me a man or a woman he said who isn't baptized with the Holy Ghost. That's the secret to do it today. I'm puzzled.

I ask the theologian here sometimes. Oral Roberts says we have 4,000 students here full of the Holy Ghost, and nobody knows they're in town. In God's name what's wrong with them? It only took 120 to turn the one that rolled upside down, that turned Jerusalem upside down.

Now you've got 1,500 at your school. What are you doing about it? You and your wife had better get together and ask Fried and Lindsay what's happening. They've got 1,500 students full of the Holy Ghost, nobody knows them in town.

At the end of the block there's a string of prostitutes. Around the corner there are kids on dope and all the rest of it. I'm not interested in theological Holy Spirits.

I'm interested in the Holy Ghost who comes and makes a man the habitation of God. Ephesians 2 he says you're dead in trespasses and sin, and Satan has dominion over you. At the end of the chapter he says you're full of the Holy Ghost, which means you're full of life.

They're full of wisdom. It would mean he was a true Holy Ghost. We have a theological Holy Ghost.

But you see the cost is so much. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me. Now you've seen many things, but I know one thing you've never seen.

You've never seen a crucified man. When that man was going to the cross, as dear Tozer said to me so often, he said you know Len, if you saw a man going through the streets of Jerusalem with the cross, you knew one thing about him. He wasn't coming back.

Most of us go to the altar and we go back again the same. We haven't died to self or selfishness. I don't believe you can die to self.

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