

The Cross of Christ - Part 2

by Paul Washer

The sermon emphasizes the profound implications of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, addressing themes of sin, justice, and the necessity of discipline in the Christian life.

Duration: 1:13:20

Scripture: Luke 2:40, Luke 2:52

Topics: "Cross of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Abraham and Isaac from the Bible. He highlights the moment when Abraham is about to sacrifice his son, but God intervenes and provides a ram as a substitute. The preacher emphasizes that this is not the end of the story, but rather an intermission. He then goes on to talk about the concept of suffering and uses examples of a prominent athlete in a coma and a friend losing his hair to illustrate the idea of misery. The sermon concludes with a discussion on the major theme of redemption in Scripture, focusing on the problem of how God can be just and yet justify wicked men.

Transcript

As we were singing about Christ, and of course, I've been studying to preach about Christ, I'm absolutely astounded at how prone my heart and my mind are to wander. So for just a second, let me let me address that subject. All true devotion must spring forth from a heart rendered unto God, a new heart.

But I want especially the new believers to understand something. That while while we dwell in this body of flesh, there will be a battle. There will always be a battle and not much is said today about discipline.

By and large, we're not a disciplined culture. We know very little about disciplining our minds, our bodies, our hearts. But it is required, it is taught in the New Testament, and it is required that we be a disciplined people.

If you do not realize that, you'll spend your entire Christian life wondering whether or not you even love God. Because in the moments when much is being said about Christ, your mind will wander. That is not necessarily a reflection of lovelessness toward Christ.

It is a reflection of the power of the flesh. And the real battle that exists in the Christian life. So one of the ways in which this is most clearly brought out is when when the pastor reads a chapter from the Bible.

Most here, those of you who have been born again, you would die before you would deny the scriptures. And yet while he's reading one of the most important passages in the Bible, you find it hard to even concentrate on what he's saying. Discipline.

But a discipline born out of faith. Because we believe, we seek to hold tenaciously, to hear tenaciously, because we believe that there will be fruit from it. So I just wanted to address that issue.

We have been talking about the cross of Christ, and I want to make a slight review of last week and then go on. Let's go to Second Corinthians. Chapter five, verse twenty one.

Second Corinthians, chapter five, verse twenty one. Where we see that he made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. The fact that God made the Christ or the Messiah to be sin on our behalf.

Now, in order to understand this, as I said last week, you must understand the character or attributes of God. One of the reasons why people today cannot understand the gospel is because so rarely do you hear sermons on who God is. So we went through the Old Testament.

We looked at, I think, four passages last week in which we explained a great theme that runs throughout the entire course of the scriptures. Which is how can God be just and yet at the same time pardon wicked men to some most evangelicals today? That doesn't even seem to be a problem, but it is a tremendous problem. If God is just, he cannot pardon the wicked.

If God is just, he cannot cover or hide their sins. That type of language is only used for corrupt officials and rulers and judges. We hear about it in the newspapers around the world.

A certain judge received a bribe and covered up the sin of a criminal. So the great problem that runs through all the scripture is how can God be just and yet justify wicked men? This is not a minor theme. This is a major theme in scripture.

It is the major theme of redemption or at least the foundation for redemption. It is what the gospel of Jesus Christ is all about. And so few people understand this, that God cannot sacrifice one attribute in order to exercise another.

He cannot sacrifice his justice in order to be merciful. He can't put away his holiness out of a desire for fellowship. And so the great problem throughout all of scripture is this, how can God? How can God satisfy his justice that cries out for our condemnation and in satisfying justice, put away or appease wrath and make it possible for a holy and just God to forgive wicked men and still be holy and just? And the answer is found.

The reconciliation of what seemed to be two opposing points is the person of Jesus Christ. When we use the word reconciliation, we need to understand that it is tremendously large. We think of it in terms of us.

Of course, we think of everything in terms of us, don't we? We have been reconciled. No, everything is reconciled in the person of Jesus Christ and scripture is very limited on what exactly that means. But we do know that it's beyond humanity.

It's cosmic. It includes not only earth, but heaven, everything is reconciled, all these contradictory opinions that scoffers scoff about on a daily basis. They're all reconciled in the person of Christ, even as we see the

manifestation or revelation of God is reconciled in the person of Christ.

That's what we've been saying. How can he be this way and yet be this way? How can he forgive all types and kinds of sin? And yet, by no means let the guilty go unpunished. How can you do that? Christ is the answer.

Christ, in fact, is the answer for every question anyone's ever had about God. He is the revelation of God, and let me share something with you again, it's important to understand Jesus is John Gill used to say he's not an upstart. He's not something new that just appears on the scene 2000 years ago.

The son of God is not a New Testament idea. What you need to understand is everything God has ever done, he's done through his son. God created the world through his son.

God reveals himself to the world through his son. God reconciles the world to himself through his son. God will judge the world one day through his son.

As Anthony pointed out a few weeks ago, the one that Isaiah saw. When he saw that magnificent vision in Isaiah six, the one he saw was the son. The son.

So the son is the reconciling point for all things. He is the one who exegetes or interprets God. Even with regard, I know we're getting into revelation here, but even with regard to the second coming, do you realize the first coming of Jesus? The first coming of Christ was not plain to the Old Testament saints until the great exegeter, the great interpreter, appeared and he exegeted the Old Testament.

He explained the Old Testament to the apostles. Do you realize that everything about the second coming will not be resolved until he actually comes and then the great interpreter will once again explain it all? So everything is so dependent upon him. And the person whose heart has been renewed, they like it that way, they like it that way.

Now, we also went on and we spoke about that God made him to be sin who knew no sin. We talked about the magnificent aspect of Christ, that as a man, he did not sin, that there's never been one moment in your life that you love the Lord, your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Never one moment have you obeyed that command.

There was never one moment in the life of Christ that he disobeyed that command. So what all combined humanity could not do, even for one fraction of a second, Christ did it continuously throughout the full course of his life. Now, that's not magnificent and not just tempted in all ways, but tempted far greater than any of us have ever been tempted.

And yet he prevailed, but he was made to be sin. What does that mean? Does that mean that somehow his nature was corrupted upon the tree, that the spotless land become full of spots? What happened? How can it be said in the New Testament that he who knew no sin was made sin? The answer is found, of course, in the second half of the text so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, which simply means this. The moment a person believes in Jesus Christ and is justified, they do not become righteous as a being.

They still sin. Every one of us still sins. We are not righteous beings.

So what does it mean? It means the moment that a person believes in Jesus Christ, they are forensically or legally declared right with God, by God, and they are treated that way. Don't ever talk to me about justification unless you're also going to use the word treated. Not only does he declare us legally right with him, he treats us, his children, as though we were legally right with him.

He treats us that way. And now we can understand the cross. On the cross, what happened? Well, this very thing.

God legally declared his son to be guilty. And treated him that way, what way? A way beyond any description of poet, of scholar, of angel. No one can describe the terror and the wrath of God that fell upon the son of God because our sin was imputed to him and he was labeled guilty.

I always tell people something that actually Charles Leiter told me many years ago, you want to know how much God hates sin? Look at Calvary. When his own son bore our sin, God crushed him. Now, as a word of warning, what do you think he'll do to you? Those who are bold enough to stand outside of Christ and say they do not need him.

Are those bold enough to with one hand cling to their own works and with another hand extend it to Christ as though Christ were not enough? Their works must also add to it. If you are found on that day with one shred of self-righteousness, with one glimmer of hope in self, you will know nothing but the judgment of God. All your hope must be placed upon Christ and Christ alone.

That's one of the things that I've been so amazed about throughout the years, when you talk to a genuine believer, a genuine believer has many doubts. But I find there's one area where they don't have any doubt whatsoever. They are totally and absolutely convinced that they add not one thing to their righteous standing before God.

They are totally and absolutely convinced that if they are judged for even their finest labor of their finest moment of their finest day, they're going to hell. Every true believer I've ever met was convinced of that and did not doubt it. Nothing in my hands I bring, but only to the cross do I cling.

Now, I want us to go on now and we're going to look, we have looked at Christ becoming sin last week. Now we're going to look at something that is a twin to that. All sin brings divine curse.

All sin brings divine curse. And since Christ bore our sin, he also bore the curse of God on our behalf. Now, in the book of Galatians, chapter three, verse 10.

It says, Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law to perform them. Now, my dear friend, if you have ears at all, even ears that are not illuminated by the Holy Spirit, mere natural logic ought to lead you to some dramatic conclusions about the Christian faith. Mere logic, look at what it says, Cursed is everyone who does not abide, obey all the things, all of them.

All the things written in the book of the law, all the things, all the time, go back to Moses, do this and live the logical counter, don't do this and die. Every word, not just some of the words, some of the times, all the words, all the time, you do not do that and you're under a curse. Also, he puts in there, not only does he say abide by all the things written in the book of the law, but he says to perform them.

Why? Because we always have a tendency of looking at Scripture and sometimes somehow believing that in our heart of hearts we did obey, even though we didn't obey. That God looks upon the heart, even

though we're failing. No, he does not.

He looks upon the heart and he looks upon the duty performed. This is not wishful thinking. This is not just about some romantic piety.

He's saying, if you have not performed everything written in the book of the law all the time, you're under a curse outside of Christ. We only have to go back to our parents. Look at the severity of a works righteousness.

I mean, think about it. They ate a fruit, they ate a fruit, and not only were they condemned, the entire universe, the entire universe was given over to corruption. One sin, not murder.

One sin, because at the heart of every sin is the same poison. Rebellion against the one who is worthy of absolute perfect devotion. The reason one of the reasons you need to understand something very important here, why is sin such a horrid thing? If you were to separate sin and study it only by itself, then you could come to degrees of ideas about sin.

But when you look at all sin as disobedience to God, you see all sin is horrid in nature because of the greatness of the one against whom it is committed. Why is sin so horrid? Because God is so good. And ultimately, know this, all sin is sin against God.

Never forget David. He had committed adultery. He had set up the murder of an innocent man and he lied to his own people, Israel.

And yet, he says in the Psalms, against you and you alone, God, have I sinned. So with sin comes a curse. Now, it's just almost impossible in every age, but especially in our age where men think so much of themselves to understand exactly what this means.

The idea not only promotes condemnation, judgment and justice, but it communicates something about the vileness of the man who has sinned. Just absolute vileness, and one of the best ways I can explain that is just by saying this, that the sinner outside of Christ who has rejected Christ and rejected Christ, maybe a very religious person, the last thing that sinner will hear when they take their first step into hell is all of creation standing to its feet and applauding God because God has rid the earth of them. My dear friend, one of our greatest problems is that we really do not understand.

I don't want to be cruel. I don't want to use harsh words, but we really do not understand. That sin is so vile, even calling it sin, like if I say that men are sinners, you will nod your head.

That's become commonplace. But even if I turn up the heat just a little more and say men are evil. You have a problem with that.

Do you see how much humanism has come in and grabbed a hold of us? You see why the gospel is not appreciated. Well, because we're really not that bad. We're really not.

And so the gospel is really not that amazing. But when you see that not only the counsel of God, but any being that is without corruption. Whatever there is in heaven, these things that God has made thinking conscious creatures that he has made that have remained in heaven called the elect angels in the New Testament.

What we need to understand is that on the Day of Judgment, if you are condemned, it will not be God condemning you with the rest of the universe trying to beg for your pardon. No, they will be applauding because they know something of holiness. And can see the radical nature of your depravity, my dear friend, you would not want me to look into your heart, even though you know, I'm just like you.

How much less a holy God, what would he see there by his standard, by his light? Now, it says in the scriptures. Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law to perform them. Now, what does it mean? Well, if you're familiar with the New Testament, especially the Gospels and the teachings of Jesus, you're familiar with what we call the Beatitudes.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are those who mourn.

So on and so forth. But what I've done is I've taken the Beatitudes and turned them around. And I just want you to listen, the blessed are granted the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The blessed are granted the kingdom of heaven. The cursed are refused entrance.

The blessed are recipients of divine comfort. They shall be comforted. The cursed are objects of divine wrath.

The cursed are satisfied ought to be a heart totally and completely satisfied. What joy the blessed are satisfied. The cursed remain miserable and wretched.

The blessed receive mercy. The cursed are condemned without pity. The blessed shall see God.

The cursed are cut off from his presence. The blessed are sons and daughters of God. The cursed are disowned in disgrace.

Now, here's what I want you to see. The Bible says cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law to perform them. And then it goes on to say in verse 13 of Galatians 3, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.

And how did he do that? Having become a curse for us. Now, I have a dear friend, Dr. Nathan Berry, and I love him dearly and he's very biblical. And every time I call him on the phone, I say, Dr. Berry, how are you? I'm blessed.

He means it. He understands that term, but so often we talk about I'm blessed. How are you doing? I'm blessed.

Oh, I feel so blessed. I want you to understand something. The only theological.

Philosophical way. That you can say something like that. And be consistent is to realize that you are only that way because someone else was cursed.

You should not be blessed. As I said last week about the love of God for a lost and fallen world, it's proof right here. There should be nothing green outside.

There should be no berries on that tree that you're looking at there. There should be no joy in birth. There should be no happiness in marriage.

The whole world should be like sort of Beckett's waiting for Cadeau. Just a gray, horrid place with a dead tree and one leaf falling. There should be nothing here but wrath.

There should be nothing but judgment. How can you be blessed when the law demands your cursing and don't separate the law from God? God's law is an expression of his justice. God's justice is calling out for your death.

How can you be blessed? Only if a substitute comes. The Puritans, some would say that there were certain words that when you spoke them, there should be something of a trembling of the lip. A moment of silence because they're deep words.

Say I'm blessed. You should be able to say that with joy. But you need to think.

Why? One reason. Christ carried my curse. Christ bore my curse.

That's the only reason. His life for mine. My salvation, his condemnation on that tree.

My freedom from the curse. Because it was poured forth on him. Now, we look at the nation of Israel and it's coming out of Egypt.

God does an amazing thing in the book of Deuteronomy. There are two mountains, Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. He divides up the troops of Israel.

He divides up the people into two groups. One group went up on Mount Ebal. And what they did was they were to proclaim all the curses that would fall down upon the head of the covenant breaker, the one who disobeyed God.

And then on Mount Gerizim, another group of people were sent and they were to cry forth the blessings that were to fall upon the covenant keeper. Now you see the severity of the law. Do this and live.

Now, your mountain is Ebal. That's the only mountain fit for you. You have rebelled against God.

You have broken every covenant. You have no shred of righteousness whatsoever. Mount Ebal is your mountain.

But in order to save you from the curse, Christ took those curses proclaimed on that mount. He bore them on the cross of Calvary so that they would no longer be yours. So now here's what I want to do.

I've taken all these curses in systematic order. And I'm going to read them out to you and apply them to Christ as he was hanging on the tree. Christ is on Calvary and he cries out.

And it's amazing because here they put it in Aramaic and they translate it for us into Greek. It's showing the significance of this statement. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Now we know the answer because our sins have been imputed to him and he is now bearing our curse.

So the scenario would look something like this. Christ cries out from the cross, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And the Lord answers back, God, your God damns you. Now, I want you to think about that.

If you think I'm kind of arbitrary or radical in that statement, I first heard this from actually R.C. Sproul in a lecture he gave. So Christ cries forth from the cross, the only son of God, the perfect son of God, the only

covenant keeper, the one who obeyed God in absolutely everything and in every realm of duty and heart and mind. He cries out from the cross, why have you forsaken me? And the answer from heaven is God damns you.

I hear these preachers today. They say the father turned away from the son because he couldn't bear to see him suffering. What, God lacked the moral fortitude? Are they kidding me? Have we gotten that far from the cross, from the true gospel, that we don't understand the transaction that's going on there, that Christ is taking the place? You should hear that.

I should hear that on the final day of judgment, as you stand before God in all your prompt and all your high mindedness. And he looks at you and says, God, your God damns you in order to save you from that. Christ took your sin.

Christ suffered your curse. The Lord sends upon you. These all come from Deuteronomy.

I want you to think about Christ hanging on the cross. And it's so the father looks down at him and says, the Lord sends upon you curses, confusion and rebuke until you are destroyed, until you perish quickly. The Lord smites you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart.

And you will grope at noon as the blind man gropes in darkness with none to save you. Christ was God in the flesh. But I want you to know that he hung there as a man and he groped in darkness and bewilderment.

As the wrath of God is poured out on him, the Lord delights over you to make you perish and to destroy you. And you will be torn from the land. Curse shall you be in the city and curse shall you be in the field.

Curse shall you be when you come in and curse shall you be when you go out. The heavens which is over you over your head shall be bronze and the earth which is under you shall be iron. You'll receive no comfort from heaven or from man.

You shall be a horror and a proverb and a taunt among all the people. Why did the gospel writers speak about people taunting Christ and wagging their head as they walked by? Why did they talk about the night growing dark? It wasn't to shade God's view from his son because he couldn't bear his suffering. It was the judgment and wrath of God as the only covenant keeper whoever walked this planet is now cut off from him.

Let all these curses come upon you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed because you would not obey the Lord your God by keeping his commandments and his statutes which he commanded you. Now think about this. All these Easter sermons that talk about whips and nails, lances in his heart.

Yet they never told you this. How can we be so far removed from the gospel? Do you think that just because some Romans beat up Jesus that would pay for our sins? This from this comes all ethic. Do you understand? If it doesn't come from this, it's idolatry.

Why do we continue walking with him, though we do not see him? Why do we go on serving him when everything in our flesh screams out quit? Why do we seek to live righteously in the midst of a depraved nation? Why the ethic comes from here? He gave his own life for my soul. He died this horrible death for me. I've written here a paragraph that I would like to read to you.

As Christ bore our sin on Calvary, and again, this comes from Deuteronomy. He was cursed as a man who makes an idol and sets it up in secret. He was cursed as one who dishonors his father and mother, who moves his neighbor's boundary mark or misleads a blind person on the road.

He was cursed as one who distorts the justice due an alien orphan and widow. He was cursed as one who is guilty of every manner of immorality and perversion, who wounds his neighbor in secret or accepts a bribe to strike down the innocent. He was cursed as one who does not confirm all the words of the law by doing them.

There's an interesting passage in the book of Proverbs that says, like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, so a curse without cause does not alight. How did a curse alight upon Christ? He was perfect in every way, keeper of the covenant in every aspect. How did a curse fall upon him? Because our sins were imputed to him.

All the mass of sin of God's people was thrown upon Christ. I want to read. David cried out, How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. Remember, we were dealing with that last week theologically. How can God just cover up sin? On the cross, the sin imputed to Christ was exposed before God, not covered.

And not only before God, but the host of heaven. He was placarded, as Martin Lloyd-Jones used to say, before men and made a spectacle to angels and devils alike. The transgressions he bore were not forgiven him.

The sins he carried were not covered. If a man is counted blessed because iniquity is not imputed to him, then Christ was cursed above measure because the iniquity of us all was cast upon him. There's an interesting passage also in the book of Deuteronomy.

It has to do with the renewal of the covenant in Moab. And there's an interesting statement there that just says so much that it makes me think about Christ. As a matter of fact, I think if you read the Bible correctly, every word of it will make you think about Christ.

And it says this, talking about God's judgment against the covenant breaker. It says the anger of the Lord and his jealousy will burn against that man, the man who has broken God's covenant, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him. You see, there's no exaggeration in what I was reading.

I read to you the curses of this book, and he says every curse written in this book will rest upon him. And the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven. He will die.

Now, listen to this language. Then the Lord will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant which are written in this book of the law. He was singled out from Israel.

I believe one of the reasons why Christ was baptized is that he united himself with the people, even though he knew no sin. And then as part of us, he is singled out, our elder brother, the only one noble, the only one of royal birth, the only one worthy, the only one obedient. He was singled out on behalf of his brothers and sisters in order to die the death they deserved.

And even though he dies, he holds no animosity toward them because he died for them, because he loved them. And thus it's written, he is not ashamed to call us brothers. This is magnificent.

This is magnificent. The book of Deuteronomy. I mean, the book of Numbers.

I want us to go there for just a second. Numbers chapter six, verse. Twenty four.

Aaron's benediction, beautiful benediction. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you.

The Lord be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance on you and give you peace. He's speaking this, my dear brothers and sisters.

Think he is speaking this to a idolatrous nation. That in many ways has committed more pagan sin than the pagans themselves. How can such a blessing be placed upon such a people? Again, because of Christ, because of Christ.

This is what if we take this text, we flip it on its head and turn it around and apply it to Christ on Calvary. The Lord curse you and give you over to destruction. The Lord take the light of his presence from you and condemn you.

The Lord turn his face from you and fill you with misery. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? I've written here, the psalmist describes the blessedness of those who are made joyful with gladness in God's presence, who know the joyful sound of the festal shout and who walk in the light of his countenance. But for our sakes, Christ was made sorrowful with the absence of his father's presence.

He came to know the terrifying sound of judgment's trumpet and he hung in the darkness of God's unbearable frowning countenance because of Adam's fateful choice. The entire creation groaned under the curse and was enslaved to corruption and futility. To liberate creation, the last Adam took upon himself the sins of his people and groaned under their dreadful yoke.

I've often said, and I say it many, many times, religion doesn't have much of a draw for me. I have so many interests, so many interests. I wish I could live a thousand lives to carry all them out.

And I know what you're thinking, spiritual things. No, I have all kinds of interests. I wish I could hunt.

I wish I could climb mountains. I would even love to get in the ring and fight. There's so many things.

That's why I look at some people that are just so mediocre about their time in life and I can't understand them. I want to slap them. I hate that I've only got this many years when there's so many.

You could look under a rock for 20 years and find enough to delight you. And I would run to every one of those passions. I would, except for this.

This one thing. That's it. Nothing else really has strong enough appeal for me.

This one thing. This death he died. It's the only thing that keeps me and is strong enough to keep me.

This is why it's called the power of God. This, love ethics. Wish I had time to write a book on ethics.

But ethics, I just need Christ. This thing controls a man, imprisons him. In every way that is right.

In every way that is right, because the further you go down into this prison, the freer you become. The freer you become. Christ bore our curse, but then also Christ suffers the wrath of God, which is one.

The curse is one aspect of it. But this thing is so great. It's so hard to put it in categories.

But let's talk for a moment just about the wrath of God. So many people have so much trouble with the wrath of God. And what makes sometimes I just want to call men out.

You, you, you tiny little bug. You dare complain about the wrath of God. The very thing you have determined is your right as an individual.

You'll deny God who created the world. What do I mean? You read something horrid that's been happened to some victim, whether a corrupt regime in Africa is starving a people to death or some pervert has kidnapped a child and tortured them for 15 years. When you read that, you burn with indignation.

Even you drink down iniquity like it was water. There are some things you hear about and you literally burn because there is something left of the image of God in you that cannot set your approval on evil. Well, then how much more the one who is holy, holy, holy.

He is wrathful because he is good. If I were to talk to you at length about Hitler and you were to yawn and say, you know, this whole thing about Nazi Germany, I'm just rather apathetic toward it and I don't think it was that big a deal, then we would automatically put you just about on par with Hitler. If you felt no indignation with regard to six million Jews and one point five million gypsies who were killed in the concentration camps, I would say there's something terribly wrong with you morally.

How much more God being good and loving. Loving all that is beautiful, all that is excellent, all that is perfect, all that is virtue. And then to see men trample it.

Despise it. Throw it out the door. Leave it barren.

If God's just, of course, there must be the wrath of God and the wrath of God is yours. It should be upon your head. It should be upon my head.

Sometimes when I'm having moments of piety and devotion, God is kind enough through the Holy Spirit to put before me, it only usually takes about a second, just a small slide show of my past before I knew him. Just maybe one thing I did or one thing I said before I knew him and it silences me totally. I understand I to be nothing but an object of divine wrath.

If God had not interposed and if the son had not been willing to come, he bore God's wrath. Now, we have, of course, the scene in the garden that brings this about so clearly. Well, Christ prays three times.

Let this cup pass for me. Let this cup pass for me. Let it pass for me.

I've heard so many preachers say the cup that Christ in his omniscience, he looked forward and saw the cruel whip coming down on his back and the nails being driven into his hands and the thorn being thrust into his side, the lance being thrust into his side. All that, yes, is horrid. And that was a part of the death of the Messiah.

It had to be a bloody sacrifice to save us. But if that's where you stop, you've missed the point because that's dealing with at least in part the wrath of man, ungodly men crucifying the only godly man. For God

so loved the world, he gave his only begotten son and men so hated God, they killed him in the most cruel fashion possible.

You want to know about humanism and the so-called universal love of man for God? There it is. When God came to earth, men collectively decided for his slaughter. But what is the cup? I mean, why is he praying this way? I want to read two passages for you.

The first one is Psalm 75, 8. For the cup is in the hand of the Lord and the wine foams. It is well mixed and poured out of this. He pours out of this.

Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink down its dregs. And then from Jeremiah 25, 15 through 16. For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel says to me, take this cup of wine of wrath from my hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it.

They will drink, stagger and go mad because of the sword I will send among them. What was in the cup? The wrath of Almighty God was in the cup. His hatred for sin.

His violent opposition. His aggression and declaration of war against the sinner. In order for you to be saved from that.

Someone had to take your place. Now, I want us just to look at something that is just really quickly, because I believe that it brings something out, brings something beautiful to the table with regard to Christ. If you'll just look in Luke for a moment.

Chapter one and then also go to Hebrews chapter five, first in Luke chapter one, verse 40. The child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom and the grace of God was upon him. This is referring to Jesus, verse 52, and Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature.

That's Luke one. I'm sorry, Luke chapter two. I'm sorry, Luke chapter two, verse 40.

The child continued to grow and become strong. Verse 52, and Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature now. Because of the deity of Christ and the many attacks that have fallen upon that doctrine.

We, as Bible believing Christians, we are constantly defending his deity and speaking much of his deity, and that, of course, is proper in every way. But we lose sight of his humanity. He really was God.

Now, please understand, he really was man and he really grew in wisdom. He was born a baby. And as a man, he began to grow.

Not only in stature, not only in favor with God and men, but he began to understand more and more of what it meant for him to be the Messiah. And I believe that we see the pinnacle of that revelation on the night of Gethsemane. What do I mean? If you look in Hebrews chapter five.

It says, verse eight, although he was a son, he learned obedience from the things which he suffered. I believe just to give you an example of the glory and the pain of Gethsemane. I believe there was a sense in Christ's youth, although God.

It's growing in wisdom and knowledge as a man. And he came to understand something of what it would cost him to redeem his people. And let's say that it hit him in the chest like a like a ton of bricks.

The demands of it is revealed to him and he says, not my will, but yours. And then as he continues to grow in greater depth, there's a greater revelation of what it was going to mean for him to redeem a people. And every time he stood his ground and said, not my will, but yours.

And I think in the night of Gethsemane for the first time, the fullness of everything it would mean for him to redeem a people was clearly set before him in the most horrible and complete and telling fashion. And it hit him like a truck. And he said, not my will, but yours.

And he rose up to take the task upon himself. Remember what I said last week when we talk about him being tempted in all ways as we've been tempted? We're talking about in kind, not necessarily degree. And I use the illustration that if I had a bar of weight on me and a superpower lifter had a bar of weight on him, both bars weighing forty five pounds, you put two plates on me and I'm still standing.

Put two plates on him. He's still standing. Put two more plates on me.

I'm still standing as long as I don't have to squat it. Put two more plates on his bar. He's still standing.

Put three more plates. I'm still standing. Put put three plates now on each side on his.

He's not even breaking a sweat. Put four plates. I think we got four or five on there now.

My knees are trembling. And even though I don't have to squat it, all of a sudden I get tired. One knee buckles forward and I go down that power that they're still standing there.

He's not sweating. Put another plate on. He's not sweating.

Put another plate on. He's not sweating. You see, I've fallen a long time ago.

He's still standing. Multiply it infinitely. Throw the whole world upon the shoulders of Christ.

He does not fall and he stood and he goes to the tree on our behalf. Now, there's a passage in Zachariah and I just want to read it to you. Says this, God is speaking awake sword.

This is a terrifying thing whenever this kind of language is used. We see it in the book of Psalms and other places, Yahweh and his sword. The sword is almost as we even see in many of Tolkien's writings, where a sword almost gains for itself a personality and a will of its own.

Here we see that Yahweh's sword is almost like a person. And he says awake sword against my shepherd, against the man, my associate, strike the shepherd. Think about that.

So Christ is on the tree and he experiences the wrath of God. Now, I'm just going to give you one illustration here. I want you to imagine that you live in a small village about an eighth of a mile from a dam and you live right at the foot of the dam, actually.

And the dam is a thousand miles high and a thousand miles wide. It's filled to the brim with water. And one morning you go to your door of your little hut, you open it up and you look towards the dam and all of a sudden there is an explosive crack.

And before you can even gasp for a breath, the wall has crumbled out of the way and that torrent is racing for you. Doesn't matter how fast you are afoot. Doesn't matter how strong a swimmer you are.

Nothing matters. You are going to die. Not only are you going to die, you are going to be pulverized.

Nothing will be found of you ever. And as that wall of water is crushing down upon you, the ground opens up its mouth and swallows the whole thing down before you so that not one drop of water splashes against your foot. That is what Jesus Christ did on Calvary.

A wall of God's wrath brought about because of His justice and your lack thereof. All of it creaming down on your head. But before it reaches you, Christ interposes and He takes the wrath of God.

Now listen very carefully. And not one drop sprinkles you because one drop of the wrath of God melts mountains and turns them to wax and dries up rivers. Not one bit of anger left.

He has extinguished it entirely. God's wrath against you because He has perfectly satisfied God's demands against you. Now, I want to read you something from John Flavel.

And he's one of my favorite writers of all times. If you want to get something that's worth a lot, then get his works. And especially the first volume when he speaks about the meditorial glories of Christ.

He has what I have called the father's bargain. And it's a conversation that he imagined goes on before eternity or in eternity past between the father and the son. And the father speaks first and says this.

My son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves and now lie open to my justice. Now, first of all, just think about this miserable. Miserable.

We don't like that word. We don't want it applied to us. Take the most beautiful woman.

Have every man in the world vote. Lay all the women before us and allow us to vote. Take the most splendid, the most refined, the most beautiful.

Miserable. Take the strongest, most intelligent man. Miserable.

I was watching the story of a man, very prominent athlete. And they were talking about him. It kind of came up on my computer and they were talking about him.

But it seemed that some were talking about him in present tense and some were talking about him in future tense. And apparently he was a tremendous athlete, but he was in a car accident and now he's in a coma and not awake. I don't want to take anything away from that man.

Matter of fact, I admire the things that I heard about him. I mean, he was the best of the best and I love it. Driven, hated mediocrity.

This man hated it with a passion, driven. And now he's in a coma. His mind doesn't even work.

Miserable. Miserable. A dear friend of mine was losing his hair.

He was about 35 years old and he was losing his hair. And I'll never forget. I've known him for a long time.

Some college kids came in and weren't showing him respect. They said, hey, you're kind of losing your hair there a little bit, aren't you there? Oh, man, I turned around and looked at college student. I said, boys, you need to understand something.

He's losing his hair at 35. When he was your age, he was twice the man of all of you put together and had more hair than all of you have now. So what are you going to look like when you're his age? The point is we're miserable.

There's nothing. There is nothing, nothing but Christ. But Christ, he says, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves and now lie open to my justice.

You see, you don't hear preachers talking that way anymore, but they used to talk this way all the time, lies open to my justice, has exposed himself to my justice and my wrath. We conveniently can take certain attributes of God and delete them. Or hide them in another folder.

But in the scriptures, no, God's justice must be dealt with. He says, my son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves and now lie open to my justice. Justice demands satisfaction for them or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them.

There's the two options. Either justice will be satisfied by some other means or justice will be satisfied by the eternal ruin of the sinner. And he says, what shall be done for these souls? And Christ speaks, oh, my father, such is my love to and pity for them.

Men do not want pity, do they? They need it. They need it. Without God's pity, there would be no hope.

Oh, my father, such is my love to and pity for them that rather than they shall perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their guarantee. Now, listen, because this is one of those beautiful things I think has ever been written outside the scriptures. Bring in all thy bills, father, that I may see what they owe thee.

Bring them all in. You know, I see young men who get married and they're so excited about their bride and everything else. They come back to me after six months and they go, what have I done? If only I knew it was going to be this hard, this difficult.

What have I done? They jumped into something they didn't know what they were getting into. Now, I don't want to scare you young men half to death. It is a marvelous thing to be married.

But these things do happen. Christ did not go into this affair unaware. He said, bring them in.

And when he found out what it would really cost, he still went. He still went. But listen to this.

Bring in all thy bills that I may see what they owe thee. Bring them all in. Now, listen, this is my favorite, favorite group of words outside the Bible.

Bring in all their bills that I may see what they owe thee. Bring them all in that there may be no after reckonings with them. You understand what I'm saying? Bring in every one of their bills so that when I pay it, there's nothing left.

Nothing left to charge to Paul Washer's account. I want to know Bill's past, present and future. I want to know them all, because when I go to that tree, I'm paying for everyone that he will never, never be called to account again.

Do you realize what that means? Do you see the freedom? Now, a lost religious person will see that and go, wow, that's great. Let us sin that grace may abound. Well, if it's like this, Christian life is great.

But the person who's been truly born again, here's that and go. If things are this way, oh, that my heart would be more devoted to him. Oh, that I would be more obedient to him, that I would love him more.

All my bills are paid. And not only that, we don't have time to get into the fact. Not only are your bills paid, but your account, your account has been made full.

You see, the one who died for you is better, greater than Joseph. He had a coat of many colors that he would not share with his brothers. Christ is not ashamed to call you brothers.

And so he takes his perfect life that he lived and he dresses you in it. Not only are you pardoned of all your sins by virtue of his death, but then he takes his perfect life that he lived as a man on your behalf. And he closes, he clothes you in it so that now when the father sees you, he's able to say, this is my beloved son and whom I am well pleased.

This is my beloved daughter and whom I am well pleased. I mean, he's done it all. He's done it all.

And he says, at my hand, father, shall thou require it? I would rather choose to suffer the wrath due them than that they should suffer it. Upon me, my father, upon me be all their debts. And then the father answers back, but my son, if thou undertake for them, if you take their place, son, you must reckon to pay the last night.

Expect no abatements. When you're going down the river in the Amazon and you're in an open boat, you don't you don't have your tarp with you or anything. And you see one of those storms coming down.

You know, if that storm does not abate, it does not abate. It is going to fill up your boat in a matter of minutes. And you're going to go down in the middle of the Amazon.

You pray for an abatement, a lessening of the storm. He says, son, if you take their place, expect no abatements. You will pay to the very last night.

And then he says this. It's one of the most chilling things. Son, if I spare them, I will not spare you.

This Jesus, I mean, there's there's there's nobody like there's this. He's the most marvelous. There's no but I mean, you don't even know what to say anymore.

When you understand what he did, you hate speech because you can't communicate anything. You you get angry in the middle of the night. It's your mind because it can't comprehend.

You hate your heart. That's so dull. This is amazing.

And he would do this. I mean, just makes you want to I don't know, come apart. Love is so powerful that it can disintegrate rock.

This Jesus is one of the things that the pastors here are trying to get through. That if they start bringing in other things and they could. If they started even being a little bit more entertaining and they could.

They did all that, then what would happen? It would take the focus so that you'd be satisfied in something less than this kind of stuff. This is what they want you to see. They want you held here by this.

So they're fighting tenaciously not only against our flesh, but their own flesh to provide something that's a little bit more like a trinket that glitters a little bit more. That'll bring in the masses. But if we will hold this

course and seek to honor only Christ and bring in no entertainment or trinkets or things that glitter.

Sooner or later, God's spirit will fall upon this place and he'll bless what's being done here, says here, the son responds, content father. Let it be so. Let it be so, father.

Charge it all upon me. I love this statement. He goes, father, charge it all upon me.

I am able to discharge it. It's not bragging when it's true. This is a broad shouldered Christ.

And angels can't discharge this. They would melt like a tiny wax figurine before a blast furnace. This is a declaration of deity.

Throw it upon me. I'm able to discharge it. I'll quench it all.

I mean, I think about his beauty. I want to see him. I think about his power.

I'm a little afraid to draw near. I mean, I don't know what to do. He's absolutely marvelous.

Charge it all upon me. I am able to discharge it, and though it prove a kind of undoing to me, if that's not the understatement of the universe. Though it prove a kind of undoing to me, though it impoverish all my riches, empty all my treasures, yet I am content to undertake it.

And if he loved you this way in his eternal, electing, sovereign love before you were even reconciled, how much does he love you now? I'm going to end with a story, you know, about Abraham and God comes to Abraham and he says this. Now take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you. Now listen to this.

Why is it written this way? Take your son, your only son, whom you love. Do you think something else is going on here? So Abraham does. He takes his son, Isaac.

There's no recollection of a fight. It seems that the boy laid down. Don't really know what happened.

There's no sense of bindings. Abraham pulls out possibly the same flint knife he would have used to circumcise the boy as the old man draws his hand back to slaughter his son. God says this, Abraham, Abraham, do not stretch out your hand against the lad and do nothing to him.

For now, I know that you fear God since you have not withheld your son, your only son for me. Abraham turns around and there's a ram in the thicket caught by its horns and we all breathe a sigh of relief. What a wonderful, wonderful ending to this story.

But what you need to realize is it's not the ending. It's only the intermission. Age after age rolls by.

And just when you think the curtain will never open up again. It begins to break. It's drawn back and there on center stage is the son of God hanging from a tree.

And God takes the knife out of Abraham's hand and slaughters his son, Jehovah Jireh. Sometimes I hear preachers, song singers talking about Jehovah Jireh and giving testimony that Jehovah Jireh, he gave me a new car. Jehovah Jireh, he got me a new house.

I hate that kind of language. Jehovah Jireh, he provided. All right, a lamb.

A son unto us, a child is born. Unto us, a son is given and he died. The preaching is a horrible thing because you can't do anything but fail.

No matter how much time you take or how hard you work. But it is through the pitiful nature of preaching that God has chosen to communicate a message that the power will be seen in the gospel and in God himself. Is it well with you? Don't think that just because this is a little group.

That there's nothing flashy about it, that you must be spiritual to be drawn here. Is it well with your soul? Are you Christian? Do you truly know him, the one who died and rose again from the dead? We don't have time to go there. If I started preaching on the resurrection and I started preaching on him being seated at the right hand of God, we'd be here until the banquet started tonight.

But he has risen. He is the only savior. This universe has only one king and only one judge.

And you will stand before him on that day. Is it well with your soul? Do you know Christ? Does Christ know you? Have you repented unto salvation? Have you believed unto salvation? The evidence will be that you are still repenting and still believing and that there is something of sanctification going on in your life that he who began a good work finish it. Are you Christian? Are you saved? Are you born again? If you have confidence, even the most minimum confidence in self, know this, you're still far from the kingdom of heaven.

But if you see yourself as destitute of all righteousness and clinging only to Christ, there's hope. If anyone is troubled about their soul, they can come talk to me or Mark, Brother Anthony, any one of us, any one of the men here. And we'd be glad to talk to you about your soul.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

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