

The Depth of the Gospel - Part 2

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer's sermon explores the profound implications of the gospel, focusing on God's justice, Christ's sacrificial love, and the transformative power of regeneration in believers' lives.

Duration: 35:10

Scripture: Genesis 22:14, Proverbs 17:15, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Romans 3:26, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses an illustration to emphasize the importance of justice in understanding the gospel. He starts by describing a hypothetical scenario where a person's family is brutally murdered and the killer is caught and brought to trial. The preacher then transitions to the story of Abraham and Isaac, highlighting how God's justice was displayed in sparing Isaac's life. However, the story doesn't end there, as the preacher brings attention to the ultimate act of justice on the cross, where Jesus, the Son of God, bore the sins of humanity. The sermon emphasizes the need to understand and appreciate God's justice in order to fully grasp the gospel message.

Transcript

I just want to say how much I appreciate the worship and the way that it has been directed, especially today, the Psalms 23. I don't know if you have a CD or anything, but if you could get me one, I would greatly appreciate it. It brought back so many memories as you walk with Christ, so many years at your own weakness, faithlessness, and Christ's great strength, his power.

A student asked me yesterday about meditation. I talked about meditating upon the Word of God. Just think about this for a moment.

The Lord is my shepherd. That's a lifetime. The.

The. Definite article, not an indefinite article. The Lord is my shepherd.

The. Not a Lord, not one among many, the only Lord. And Lord, I can assure you, young believer, when you say, Lord, you have very little idea what you're talking about.

But if you truly belong to him. Over the years, you will begin to understand as he breaks you and he makes you his own. Right now, you are such a wild calf kicking in a field, running wild.

Someone ought to lock you up just to protect you from yourself. But gradually submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ will grow and grow and grow. I hope I know it will, if you've truly been regenerate.

One of the greatest evidences of conversion is greater and greater submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Well, I want to finish up from something that I was saying when I was here with you two days ago. We were talking about the cross of Christ.

And there's no way for me to emphasize too much this truth that the gospel is the mystery of godliness. And the more that you understand what God has done for you in Christ, the more you will give yourself over. If you have truly been regenerate, you see the marvelous doctrine of regeneration means that God has taken out your heart of stone that cannot respond to divine stimuli, and he has put in its place a heart of flesh that is supple and will respond to his call.

If you have been changed in your nature, you will have new affections and those new affections will be toward Christ so that the more you know about Jesus Christ, the greater your affection will be turned toward him. And the greater your will will be inclined to his what you need more than anything else is a vision, a biblical vision of what God has done for you in Christ. Several years ago, I began to understand.

Don't take an offense at this. But several years ago, I began to understand just how dull a people that we are. A few years ago, well, several years ago, a friend of mine from British Columbia sent me a book.

And it was entitled Logic, and I read the first chapter about three times, and I said, this is about the this is about the highest. Expression of logic I've ever read, it was very difficult, more difficult than anything I had received at the university, and after I put the book down, I noticed that on the front of it, it had something of an inkblot drawing their sketching on the front of the book. And I looked at it.

And to my surprise, the picture contained this several what looked to be like eight and nine year old children standing in front of a schoolmaster and being questioned. And I realized this book of logic written by an old Puritan was actually the primer for grade school children. One of the things that I want to encourage you to do is this in your reading of scripture and in your seeking to know more about Christ.

Don't dabble so much in contemporary literature, but go back, go back into history and discover some of the great gems, the great things written, everything from Spurgeon to Jonathan Edwards to one of my absolute favorites, John Flavel. And I want to read to you something from John Flavel this morning that will give you something of of an insight into the insight of our of our fathers in the faith. I want to share with this.

I want to share this with you so that you will begin hopefully to draw yourself away from all the noise and all the busyness and all the play and all the foolishness. Of your age. Especially those of you who.

Believe you've been called into some sort of a preaching ministry that you will separate yourself. To be men. Who think great thoughts about God.

Flavel wrote in his first volume, the meditorial glories of Christ. He wrote what I affectionately term the father's bargain. And I just want to read to you a conversation.

In which the father and the son prior to eternity, prior to the cross, are speaking to one another. I just want you to listen. Flavel writes this here.

You may suppose the father to say when driving his bargain with Christ for you. The father and the son speaking to one another and the father driving his bargain home with his son for you. It says this, the father, my son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls.

That's you. They have utterly undone themselves. That's you.

We are a dislocated people. We are undone and broken. He goes on and says, and they now lie open to my justice.

Justice demands satisfaction for them or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them. What shall be done for these souls? Now I want to talk to you for just a moment about justice. This is extremely important because we are not a people that are very instructed in justice.

We find it hard to understand justice, to apply justice, but justice is an attribute of God. And it's extremely, extremely important. You can't understand the gospel apart from understanding justice.

Let me put it before you in a statement. The greatest problem in all the scripture, greatest philosophical theological problem in all the scripture, you could even say it's what all the scripture is about. That problem is this.

If God is just, he can not forgive you. Do you understand that? See, one time I was speaking to a university and I knew that the cards were stacked against me and I stood up there and I knew they thought I was a Puritan from 200 years back, a social dinosaur who had nothing to say that I was going to get up there and rail about sin. But I stood up there and I said this, all of you have a tremendous, a terrifying problem.

And their response, well, what is it? Prepare yourself. God is good. And this, so what's the problem with that? Why should we tremble at the fact that God is good? Well, here's the reason you're not good.

You're not. You see, if God is just, what is he to do with you? Is he to be nonchalant or apathetic with regard to sin and just turn his faces, his face away? Is that what he's supposed to do? Is he supposed to do like so many evangelists will tell us instead of being just with us, God is loving, which if you've studied logic, you realize that what's being said is God's love is unjust. Is there a principle, as some believe, wrongly believe this principle of justice in the universe, and even God has to submit to it? Absolutely not.

Then what are we talking about? God himself is just. One of his attributes is justice, perfect justice, and he cannot shun one attribute for the sake of another. He cannot give love at the expense of his holiness and his justice.

I'm sure you're all familiar with the passage in Proverbs 17, 15, where it says this. That anyone he who justifies the wicked is an abomination before God. And yet the Bible says that God has justified the wicked.

So what are we to do with that? Paul in Romans chapter three, that's his problem. How can God be just and the justifier of the wicked? How can God be good and forgive the likes of you? An illustration that I use all the time is this. If you were to go home and find out, find your entire family slaughtered on the floor.

And the man, the assassin standing over them with blood on his hands and in a fit of rage, you ran across the room, you threw him to the ground. But before you slaughtered him, practiced revenge, your mind took

control and you backed off and you you just simply tied up the man and called the police. So the police come gather all the evidence.

The man has killed your family and he's taken to the prison. He waits his time in trial. A few months later, he stands before the judge and the judge says this.

I'm a very compassionate and loving and merciful judge. So go free, I pardon you. What would you do at that moment? Would you say that justice had been done? No, you would write the Congress, the Senate, the governor, the president, you'd call the media, you'd alert the newspapers.

You would say that there is a judge on the bench far more vile than the criminals he sets free. See, here's what you need to understand. If God is just, how can he forgive you? You have broken every law he has ever written.

Every standard of righteousness from that you have deviated. And all of creation calls for your condemnation. How can the claim of the law be met? How can divine justice be satisfied and the wrath of God appeased? We go on, the son responds to the father.

Oh, my father, such is my love to and pity for them. That rather than they shall perish eternal eternally, I will be responsible for them as their guarantee. Now, here's something I want you to understand.

In the last several years, we have heard a lot about God doing everything for his own glory. That is true. You cannot say that enough.

I bless God every time I hear the name of of John Piper and his constant promotion of the glory of God. But don't misunderstand. God does everything for his own glory.

That is true. But that does not annul love. His love is real.

It's not a half to thing. It's not something he does with a secondary cause. No, my dear friend, listen to me.

God loves Christ went to that cross because he loves he loves the center. He loves you. I love to tell Christians this.

The most difficult thing you're ever going to have to do as a believer, the most terrible, the most terribly difficult, almost impossible task that's laid before you as a believer is this. You're going to have to spend the rest of your life fighting and studying and struggling to come to the point where you can believe that God loves you as much as he says he does. It almost just drains the strength out of you.

You see, it is the love of God that brings us to repentance. It is the kindness of God that causes us to be broken by our sin. It is God's constant, unconditional, his mercy toward us that causes us to want to be holy.

To want to serve him. Now, listen to what Christ says. I will be responsible for them as their guarantee.

Bring in all thy bills that I may see what they owe thee. Lord, bring them all in. Sometimes young men will come into my office and they'll tell me how they are in love and I'm glad for it.

Oh, they're in love. They're so in love. I mean, they would fight an army for this girl.

They would swim the oceans. They climb Mount, they do anything for her and they marry her because they love her so much. And then they come back in my office about six weeks later and they're going, what have I done? If I had any idea what I was getting into, that means that basically their love was just romanticism.

But here's what I want you to see. Flaval is pointing out something in Christ's omniscience. He knew what he was getting into.

Father, bring in all thy bills, bring them all in. When he went to that tree, he was not surprised at what happened there is some liberal theologians would try to make us believe he was not surprised. He knew everything he was going to suffer in your place.

And yet it did not daunt him. It did not stop him. It did not cause him to second guess why his love for you.

And if God would give his son for you while you were yet a sinner, how much is the love of God of what kind of stuff is that love of God made? And if Christ would go to that tree knowing full well what he was going to suffer and yet do it anyway, how great is his love for you? How great is his love for you? Now, listen to what Flaval says here. Lord, bring them all in that there may be. This is one of my favorite parts.

Bring them all in that there may be no after reckonings with them. You don't understand what I just read, because if you did, my, you would probably start running around here and screaming out for joy. He said, bring in every one of the bills.

That there be no after reckonings with them. Now, what does that mean? Something that if you will grasp, it will literally set you free that when Christ died on that tree, he was telling the truth when he said it is finished. There are no more bills to pay.

He died for past sins. He put them away. He died for present sins.

He put them away. He died for future sin. He put them away.

There is no after reckoning. Let me give you an example. So many people think that they are going to go to heaven based on a work's righteousness, that they've done the best they they could and that they've done rather well.

They will admit failings and sin in one part or another, but basically they're good enough to go to heaven. Yet Adam and Eve sinned one time and the entire creation was cast into condemnation. You see, you're standing before God, if you are, if you truly have a right standing before God, it can never be just ninety nine percent perfect.

There cannot be one blemish upon you. If you are to be a child of God, if you are to belong to him or if you are to be his servant, if you are to dwell with him and know him and be in heaven, you have to be absolutely perfect. And thus you are made by the death of Christ on your behalf so that you always stand before him as righteous, always every sin paid for.

Now, oftentimes, as Paul the apostle was addressed, people will say, well, if that's the case, then what are you saying? Let us sin that grace may abound. Only unconverted church members talk like that. If you see grace as a license to practice carnal freedoms, you are unconverted.

This kind of grace humbles you, fills you with joy and makes you want to be more. It makes you want to be more. At my hand shall thou require it, father.

I will rather choose to suffer their wrath, the wrath that belongs to them than that they should suffer it upon me, my father, upon me be all their debt. The father. But my son, if thou undertake for them, thou must reckon to pay the last might, expect no abatement, abatement, a diminishing of a thing.

I can remember many times going down the Amazon River or the Marañon River in Peru in an open 22 foot, 18 foot launch and seeing the rain clouds coming down the river, knowing that they can swamp the boat in a matter before you can even get to shore because the Amazon's rather wide. That deluge comes, it can swamp your boat right there, fill it up with water before you can make it to the ground. And you'd say you'd pray for an abatement.

You'd look at that cloud approaching and you'd hope that somehow it would split, that it would move to the north, the south, but it would it would come away from you, a diminishing of the storm. What the father is saying is if you undertake for them, expect no abatement. You must pay the very last might.

I am not going to withdraw my hand from you just because you're my son. Now, here's a part that sends glory and chills down my spine. The father says, Thou must reckon to pay the last might.

Expect no abatements. If I spare them, I will not spare you. How can you be anything other than a slave of Christ? Did you just hear what I said? If I spare Paul Washer, I will not spare you.

That ends my life. Do you see that? That ends my life. My life is now over.

Let him who lives live for him. A beloved shackle is this truth that binds you to Christ. I am spared.

I wish that some of you truly knew God. That you knew prayer is being on your knees three feet away from an F5 tornado. I wish you could catch a glimpse of the holiness of God and the radical depravity of your own heart.

How that would set you astir. You want to be strong. You want to be passionate.

Neither strength or passion is an act of human will. It is because of a vision, a biblical vision of what we are, of what the law demands, and the fact that he spared us because he didn't spare him, that you would be shackled to Christ. Like the hymn writer said, all the vain things that charmed me most, I sacrifice them.

My great prayer for you. It's not a mighty intellect, although that can be helpful. My great prayer for you is a vision of Christ.

Of what has been done for you. Because I know once that your mind has been confronted with that. Everything else will fall in place.

Everything else will fall in place. And the son responds, content father, let it be so. So.

Charge it all upon me. I am able to discharge it. I love what Flavel wrote there.

I am able to discharge it. No one angel or man could say that. But the mighty Christ, the captain of our salvation, broad in shoulder is he.

Deep in chest is he. Strong in limb is he. Charge it all upon me, father.

I'm able to discharge it. He is able. He is able.

Not only to cancel sin, beloved Christian, but to break the power of canceled sin. He's not only able to save you from the condemnation of sin, he is able to save you from the power of it. You have two problems.

Our man has two problems. One is the condemnation of sin, and that is overcome to the doctrine of justification, that we have a right standing before God because of the virtue and merit of Christ. But then there's the power of sin, and that is overcome by the doctrine of regeneration.

That we are given new hearts, we become new creatures with new affections. It does not mean that we never sin again. It does not mean that that we do not struggle with sin.

It does not mean that we are incapable of falling. But what it does mean is that we are truly changed creatures with new affections and those new affections are set upon righteousness. And he says, and though it prove a kind of undoing to me, isn't love amazing? That Christ would love to such a degree that he would call the cross a kind of undoing, though it impoverish all my riches, empty all my treasures, yet I am content to undertake it, content to undertake it.

There are so many principles, so many truths in the cross. One of the most amazing to me. Is that the bride he died for was at the moment of his death full of sin, filth and unrighteousness, soiled and marred by every wicked hand of the world.

And yet he gave his life to clean her. To make her his own. I just want to finish this one part by by talking about an Old Testament story is very famous that we all know about.

There was a man by the name of Abraham and God came to him one day and said this. Take now your son, your only son whom you love now. Now, come on.

He didn't have to say it that way. Listen to his language. Genesis 22 to take now your son, your only son whom you love.

Do you think that at this moment God is trying to tell us something? Do you think that what he's saying here possibly is looking forward to a greater event? I assure you that it is. Look at this. Take your son.

Your only son whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Mariah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will tell you. So the old man. Obedient to the voice of God, he takes his son to Mount Moriah.

He lays him there. We have no evidence of a struggle on Isaac's part. And the old man surrenders his will to God, possibly pulls back a flint knife ready to drive it into the heart of his own son.

And God says, stop. He says this, Abraham, Abraham, do not stretch out your hand against the lad and do nothing for him. For now, I know that you fear God since you have not withheld your son, your only son for me.

And Abraham turns around and there's a ram in the thicket caught by its horns. And Abraham calls the place Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide. Whenever you use the term Jehovah Jireh.

Please don't say. I'm praying for that new Mercedes or that new house or this or that Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide what an abomination, what a litmus test of the heart. Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide a sacrifice.

But I can assure you that there are many today in Christianity that would rather have a Mercedes than a sacrifice. Jehovah Jireh, listen to me, my dear friend, I have known the gracious hand of God for 30 years. I want you to know his kindness in all things is beyond measure.

It will break your heart into his goodness. But at the same time, I know this. That he has given me Christ, it is enough.

If I have to wallow in pain for the rest of my life, if everything is struck down that I love, if every tree in my life becomes barren, I should still raise my hands and bless the God who gave his son, his only son, whom he loves for me. You should need no other motivation. No other thing that you look for to carry you through the Christian life.

This one thing he has done, and it should be enough to propel you throughout all your life into greater and greater and greater and greater depths of holiness and devotion to him. So the story about Abraham comes to an end. The son is saved and everyone sighs a bit of relief and the curtains are drawn to a close and you think, whoa, what a beautiful ending to that story.

The only problem is it wasn't the ending to the story. It was merely the intermission. Generation after generation passes and the curtain in the theater opens up once more.

And there it is across a dark, twisted, ugly cross. And there's just enough light to see. That there is a figure hanging there.

It is the son of God. Bearing your sin. And then God lays his hand upon the brow of his son.

His only son. Whom he loves. And he draws back the knife of divine justice.

And he slaughters him there. Slaughters him there. Slaughters him there.

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