

The Greatest Treasure - Part 3

by Paul Washer

The greatest treasure is Jesus Christ, who is the atonement for sin and the revelation of God's love and power.

Duration: 2:50:55

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 3:10

Topics: "Greatest Treasure"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the downward plight of man as explained in the Book of Romans, Chapter 1. He emphasizes that although all men know God, they do not honor Him or give thanks. As a result, society as a whole is turned over to itself. The preacher warns that one of the most terrible things God can do is to give people what they ask for. He urges the audience not to leave without accepting Christ and offers to counsel them in the things of God. The sermon concludes with a story about Abraham and the promise of a son, highlighting the sacrificial love of Christ and the importance of the gospel in building the church.

Transcript

Well, it is a great privilege for me to be here again with you this evening. If you were here the first night, you understand that we looked at the Book of Romans, chapter 1. We saw God's explanation for the downward plight of man. That although all men know God, they do not honor Him as God or give thanks.

And because of that one great trespass against God, our society as a whole is turned over to itself. You know, one of the most terrible things that God can do to a man and to a people is to give them what they ask for. I'll give you an example.

Jesus said that the Pharisees desired the glory of men rather than the glory of God, and they received their reward in full. God gave them what they desired, but what they desired led to eternal death. Society as a whole, although there are moments throughout history where mankind seems to turn to God through Christ, society as a whole is marked by not wanting God, by the neglect of God.

And here's the thing, God turns man over to his own desires. God gives man what he wants. And to man at first, that seems like a wonderful thing, leading to great freedom of will.

But in the end, it leads straight into bondage and finally to death. You see, nations like the United States and Canada are the nations found in Europe. They're not lasting things.

I mean, look at the Roman Empire, for example, or go back even further to Babylon or to Persia, to Greece. Just go on and on. Nations and leaders that at the time were powerful and invincible, it seemed.

But where are they now? We go to Europe on vacation to visit their monuments. There are nothing but ruins. Most of them did not fall necessarily by enemies.

They fell from within because of their own sin and their own corruption. Apart from some magnificent act of God's grace, the same thing will happen to the United States and to Canada. And to all the nations that we now know.

The same thing will happen in a microcosm to you. You desire to run your own life. You live in neglect of God.

You consider his laws to be oppressive. His demands to be beyond you. You hear of Christ, but you do not make much of it.

All of this humanistic neglect leads to death. Leads to death. So that's what we discussed the first night.

Last night, we discussed what is known as the great divine dilemma. Possibly the greatest. No, not possibly.

It is the greatest dilemma or problem, theological and philosophical problem in the entire Bible. And what is that? Here it is. If God is just, he cannot forgive you.

Paul's entire argument in Romans chapter three is this question. How can God be just and yet pardon wicked men? If you find it difficult to understand that question, we can just put it in the human realm. What would you think of a judge in Canada or Edmonton who pardoned every criminal? Who pardoned every murderer? Who set free every vile offender of the law and let them run in the streets? What would you say about that kind of judge? You would say that he was not just.

You would say that he was just as vile, just as wicked as the criminals he set free. Well, therein lies the problem. If God is the judge of the universe, then how can he simply pardon sin and still be just? Well, the answer is found in the person of Jesus Christ.

God's son became a man. God became a man. He walked on this earth for 30 years and he lived an absolutely perfect life before God and under the law.

And then according to God's appointed time, this son went to the cross. And on the cross, he carried the sin of God's people. He carried the sin of sinful men.

And then on that cross, all the just and holy hatred of God against evil. All the fierce anger of God against wickedness and sin and wicked men. All the righteous judgment of God that should have fallen upon you and me fell upon God's son.

As it says in Isaiah 53, it pleased the Lord. The word there is Yahweh. It pleased the Lord to crush him.

That God Almighty crushed his only begotten son on that cross because at that moment he carried our sin. And when Christ died, as you've often heard, he paid the penalty. But what that actually means is when Christ died, he satisfied the demands of God's justice against us.

And so now God can pardon the sinner and still be just because God has satisfied his own justice. Christ paid for it all. Now, in an event like this, I know that there are people here who do not know the Lord.

But primarily in an event like this, you get maybe on the Internet or you hear on the radio, Christian radio, that a speaker is coming to town. And for the most part, those who come know the Lord and have a great desire for him. So I have two things going on here tonight.

I know some people who do not know the Lord. There are some of you who would sit there and say, yes, I do not know the Lord. There are others of you who think you know the Lord and you do not.

That's quite common. Quite common. Many who call upon the name of the Lord are not saved.

Because salvation does not come through praying a prayer. It comes through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the evidence that you are saved is not that one time in your life you prayed a prayer.

The evidence that you are saved is that you keep repenting and keep believing and keep growing in Christ. That's why Jesus said, you will know them by their fruit. So since we have so many different groups here tonight, what can I do to best advance the kingdom of Christ? To best help the believer so that when the believer leaves here, he can be more greatly encouraged, but also can be a more useful tool in the spreading of the gospel.

What can I do here tonight in order that those who do not know the Lord might understand? Well, it's to pick up where I left off last night. We considered the cross. Now we're going to consider it more deeply.

Now, you are going to have to pray. And you are going to have to think. And the Spirit of God is going to have to help us illumine our minds to see these truths.

We're going to talk about the cross, possibly in a way in which you have never heard the cross spoken of. Now, if I teach you something that you've never heard before, you might say to yourself, well, and rightly so, I've never heard this before in my life. How do I know it's true? Well, first of all, we're going to look at the Scriptures.

But then again, you could say, well, that's just your interpretation. Yes, that's true. That's a good one.

You should hold on to that. But here is a principle of hermeneutics that I want to teach you. Now, hermeneutics is a big word that Bible teachers use in order to impress people.

But what hermeneutics basically is, is the study of how to study the Scriptures. There are principles. For example, the Bible is a book.

It was written by the Holy Spirit, but he used grammar. And so whatever our interpretation is, it's going to be in agreement with grammar, with what the Holy Spirit actually said. But here's another very important principle of hermeneutics, and it's this.

We always do our theology or our Bible interpretation in context of the church. Now, what does that mean? If I teach you something tonight that no one throughout 2,000 years of Christian history has never taught, you can pretty much count on it. I'm wrong.

The only thing new in Christianity is heresy. So if someone comes around with a new teaching that no one's thought of in 2,000 years, I can assure you, you should not listen. But now, herein lies the problem.

In the evangelicalism of America and Canada in this contemporary time, there's a lot of things that are being taught that no one ever taught. That should raise a red flag for us, shouldn't it? There's a lot of ways of treating the gospel today and planting churches that no one ever did, using marketing strategies and principles and methodologies and all sorts of things. But also with our gospel, we can see the same malady.

We've taken the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ and we've reduced it down to a few little questions. Four spiritual laws, five things God wants you to know. And if someone is in agreement with it, we get them to pray a prayer.

And if they pray the prayer, we pronounce them saved. That's not scriptural. Men are saved by repentance and faith.

They are saved by understanding the gospel. And so we're going to look at the gospel tonight. Now, this gospel I'm going to preach, if you've ever read Charles Spurgeon, you would hear the same gospel.

If you ever read the great expositor Martin Lloyd-Jones, you would hear the same gospel. If you've ever studied the Puritans, you would hear the same gospel. If you've ever studied the Reformers, you would hear the same gospel.

If you ever studied the early Baptists and early Presbyterians and even the early Methodists, you would understand the gospel I'm preaching is the gospel they preach, but it's not the gospel being preached today commonly in our countries. So our desire is not to find something new. Our desire is to go back and rediscover the old.

And we need to look at the cross. Because the cross is the most important event in human history. The creation of the world is not as important as the cross.

The second coming of Jesus Christ is not as important as the cross. As a matter of fact, without the cross, the second coming of Jesus Christ would just mean the condemnation of the world. The judgment of the world.

The cross is everything. Also, what you need to understand, the death of the Son of God on the cross is the greatest revelation of God. If you want to know who God is, you look to the cross.

Let me give you an example. If you want to know how holy God is, look to the cross. God hates sin so much that when His own Son bore our sin, God crushed Him.

You want to know how evil sin is? It requires the cross to remove it. You see, you can learn everything you need to learn by looking at the cross. But so many people today think the cross is, well, Jesus was beaten up by a group of Romans and nailed to a tree and somehow that pays for our sins.

No. Now, Jesus was beaten beyond recognition and he was nailed to a cross and a spear was thrown into his side. But if that had been all that had happened, our sins would not have been atoned for.

Our sins are atoned for because when he was on that tree, he bore our sin and the punishment, divine punishment of God that should have fallen on you and me fell on him. It isn't so much what the Romans

did to Jesus as it is what God did to Jesus. And we're going to look at that.

I want us to go to 2nd Corinthians chapter 5. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5, verse 21. Now, some of you who have been to evangelistic meetings before maybe might think, well, you know. This guy isn't doing a lot of dramatic things up here.

No. I'm going to teach you the truth. I'm going to ask you to evaluate what Scripture says.

I'm not going to tug at your emotions. I'm not going to manipulate you. I'm going to tell you what Christianity is, what the cross is all about.

And to you, I must warn. I must warn you. It would be better that some of you leave right now than hear this message.

Because if you reject it, this message that was preached to you will add to your judgment. For God will say to you, you heard the truth and you rejected it. You see, those of us who preach the gospel, the Apostle Paul made it clear.

We are a fragrance of life to some. And we are a fragrance of death to others. So in one point, I am a bringer of life.

If you accept Christ, if you repent of your sins and believe. But if you do not, I am an angel, a messenger of death. Well, you were warned.

Second Corinthians, chapter five, verse 21. He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. He, that is God, made him, that is Jesus, him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Now, the first thing that we need to realize is Jesus Christ is the eternal son of God who set aside his glory. He did not set aside his deity. Even while he walked on earth, he was God in the flesh.

But he was a true man, a real man. And as a man, the Bible says, he walked on this earth unblemished. He was obedient to every aspect of the law of God.

And for always and forever, every day of his life, he heard this. You are my son in whom I am well pleased. Lived in perfect submission to the law.

He was without sin. This is one of the most spectacular things that can be known about Jesus. Let me give you an example to just show you how spectacular it is.

There has never been one moment, not even one moment, not even a fraction of a moment in your life, never once that you loved the Lord, your God, as he deserves to be loved. Someone asked me one time, what is the greatest what is the greatest sin you can commit? And I said, well, I don't know, but I suppose that it might be breaking the greatest commandment. The greatest commandment is that we love the Lord, our God, with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

You've never done that for one second. Neither have I. Yet there was never one second when Jesus did not do that. Every second of his life, he loved the Lord, his God, with all his heart, soul, mind and strength.

Every second of his life, he loved God as God ought to be loved, as God deserves to be loved. That's an amazing statement. He just didn't keep the rules.

His heart toward God was absolutely perfect. Someone asked me one time, what do I got to do to go to heaven? I said, oh, that's easy. Just be perfect from the moment you're born to the moment you die.

What do I got to do to go to heaven? Oh, you just got to be like Jesus. Impeccable. What does impeccable mean? Without sin.

Not one blemish. Not one infraction of the law of God. Not one deviant thought.

Perfect submission to God. The person said, well, that's absolutely impossible. And I said, well, I'm glad we're in agreement.

Now let's talk. But Christ lived perfect life. You know, there's never been one deed in your life that you did entirely for the glory of God.

Everything you and I have done is tainted with self-centeredness. Inappropriate motives. Do you know that everything Christ ever did, he did unto the glory of God? He was without sin.

And as I said, it is for this reason he always heard. You are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. But now on the cross, look what it says.

He that is God made him that is Christ who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf. Now, what does this mean? Does it mean that when Christ was on the cross that his nature somehow devolved, that his nature became sinful and corrupt and depraved? Absolutely not. Even when Christ was on that cross, he was always the spotless lamb of God.

Well, then what does it mean? Well, we find our answer in the second part of the text. It says he made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. Now, when a person believes in Jesus Christ, the Bible says he is declared righteous before God.

Now, what does that mean? Does that mean that the moment a person believes in Jesus Christ, they are transformed into a perfectly righteous being who never sins again? No, not at all. Christians still sin. Well, then what does it mean? Listen very carefully because you must get this in order to understand the cross.

The moment a person believes in Christ, God forensically or legally declares them to be right with him. Do you see that? It's a legal declaration. Now, but here's the second part and you need to understand this.

The moment a person believes in Jesus Christ, God from the throne declares that person to be legally right with him and he treats that person as right with him. Do you understand that? Now, that last word, treat, is very important. The moment a person believes in Jesus, God declares them to be right.

Legally, they're right with God and God treats them as right with him. But on the cross, our sins were imputed to Christ. The Latin word, imputare, which means to think or to consider.

Our sins, it's as though they were lifted up off of us. Our sin and our guilt and they were transferred to Christ. So on the cross, while Christ was there, God imputed our sin to him and then legally declared Christ, even though he was the spotless Lamb of God, God legally declared him to be guilty of all our trespasses.

And then God treated him as guilty. Do you see that? This is amazing. This is terrifying.

It is a terrifying thing, the Bible tells us, for a sinner to stand before a holy God. It is a terrifying thing. It is a shameful thing.

How much more for Christ to hang before men and to hang before His Father and to be treated by men as the offscouring of the world, but to be treated by His beloved Father as the guilty one, as the sinner, for the Father to turn away from Him because He cannot look upon evil and for the Father to throw down upon His Son all the justice and the wrath of God that you deserve and I deserve. You see, you need to understand something about the relationship between the Father and the Son. You know, sometimes parents will mistakenly say this to their children.

Children will ask, well, why did God make me? And the parents will say, well, God made you because He was lonely. That's blasphemy. Just so you know, God did not make mankind because of some need in God.

God made mankind because of the superabundance of His person, the overflow of His joy and His satisfaction. You see, throughout all eternity, there was this blessed, almost indescribable, incomprehensible relationship between the Father and the Son. They needed no world.

They needed no angels. They needed no inhabitants of a planet. They needed no one else in that relationship to satisfy them.

The Father and the Son delighted in one another throughout eternity and loved one another with a blessedness that you and I could never even begin to comprehend. But out of their overflow, they created. And out of their graciousness, they created in order to reveal their beauty, their power and their love to creation.

So the Father and the Son have always dwelt in this blessedness. But on the cross, that blessedness was severed as the Father turned away. You see, you and I were born separated from God.

We were born in our sin. We were born shut up to condemnation and shut away from God's presence. Also, we are a fallen race.

We are a sinful people. As we find written in the book of Job, we are a people who drink down iniquity like it was water. We can no more tell how filthy sin is than a fish can tell he's wet because it's all we've ever lived in.

But Christ was impeccable. He knew no sin. He experienced no sin.

He experienced no guilt. He experienced no isolation from his father. But on that tree, he bore our guilt in its fullness.

Even though it was imputed sin and imputed guilt, it was real sin and real guilt and real abandonment from his father and the real pain of judgment. The judgment of God fell upon him. I use an illustration and I almost don't want to use it because it's so pathetic.

You can't even begin to describe. But imagine that one of you, dear ladies, that from the moment of your birth, your father protected you as he should. He guarded your innocence.

You were later married to a man who was a godly man. You've grown up in Christ. You have always been nurtured in the things of God.

You've never been exposed to the things of the world. But one day you decide that you want to go out and witness to the prostitutes in Edmonton or Chicago. And you go out and you're witnessing and all of a sudden the police come and they do a raid and they gather up all the prostitutes and they gather you with them.

Now the prostitutes are there in the paddy wagon and later on they're there in the jail. They're cell phoning their lawyers. They're telling jokes.

They're filing their nails. They're laughing. They've done this a thousand times.

This means nothing to them. They're not ashamed. But you, this is totally foreign to you.

You're terrified. The shame is unbearable. You feel as though your heart is going to break apart, as though you can no longer even breathe.

Every beat of your heart screams out a pain to you. Your mind, your body, everything is violated. While the others just file their nails.

As I said, it's a pitiful illustration. There hangs the Christ who always lived in perfect fellowship with His Father and that fellowship is broken because our sin was imputed to Him and He was treated as you ought to be treated. As I ought to be treated.

Now, let's go on. I want us to go to the book of Galatians 3. It's right after 2 Corinthians. Galatians 3, verse 10.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse, for it is written, cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law how to perform them. This is you and me. You and me.

Neither of us have done everything written in the book of the law so as to perform it. None of us. And because of that, outside of Christ, we are under a curse.

Outside of Christ. Now, it is a very difficult thing to describe to you how horrifying this idea is. I mean, a minister, a preacher, has to dig deep to find out how can I illustrate how horrible this is because obviously, most do not understand it.

If you understood it, you would be trembling. What does it mean to be a curse before God because of our sin? Well, let me put it this way. A man's sin is so vile and so horrid, so evil, not only before God, but before all the holy creatures of heaven.

Now listen, that the last thing that man will hear, that sinful man, the last thing he will hear when he takes his first step through the gates of hell and looks back, the last thing he will hear and the last thing he will see is all of creation standing to its feet and applauding God because God has rid the earth of him under a curse. You see, we live among a people, your people, my people. We have no idea.

We laugh at sin. We tell jokes about sin. Do you realize that one sin of a man by the name of Adam cast the entire universe into judgment and condemnation? That's how much God hates sin.

And you say, well, you know, here you go preaching that Puritan God that hates sin. What's such a big deal about my sin? What's such a big deal about your sin? Look at your society. Look at mine.

Between us, how many thousands of babies are aborted every day because no one wants them? Look at the wars. You say, yeah, that's dope. No, look at the divorce.

Look at the fights in your own relationships. Look at the selfishness in your own friendships. Look at all the things among us.

Go in for a moment. If you're brave enough, pull back the veil and look at some of your thoughts. This whole world is a twisted, seething cauldron of self-centered people striving against one another unto death.

The immorality... As I said before, people say, well, why is immorality such a big deal? I mean, we ought to have liberty to freedom of sex and all this kind of thing. Why? Because it's the very opposite of love. When you lust for a person, you kill them because you turn them from a human being made by God into an object for your own use, and then you brag about it later.

All the things of sin, it is so vile, so horrid, we can't see that. And every generation becomes worse. Every generation goes deeper into sin.

That is why even in the 49 years I have lived, the things that were unspeakable when I was a boy, that no one would even talk about in public, are now portrayed over the airwaves 24 hours a day and boasted about. And guess what, young people? When you push the limit and you say all your parents are just all puritanical and don't know how to live, guess what, young people? When you get to be 50 years old and you see the things your children do, you will be aghast. You will be terrified.

Every year. Every generation. On and on.

And with it, more destruction, more violence, more weeping, more moaning, more groaning, until finally society grinds to a halt. Sin is an abomination. And those who practice sin are under a curse.

And when God declares the curse upon them, all the holy beings of creation applaud. It is right. They should be put away.

But now look at this. Look at Galatians 3.13 Christ redeemed us, purchased us from the curse of the law. How did He do it? By becoming a curse for us.

Think about this. The holy Son of Heaven, the triagion, the thrice holy Christ. Holy, holy, holy.

The seraphim said about Him when He sat on His throne in Isaiah 6. And John tells us in chapter 12 that Isaiah and the seraphim were beholding the Son of God. He becomes a man and on that tree He bears our sin. He takes our guilt and He is treated as we ought to be treated a cursed of God.

Because it says, cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree. Now, most of you are probably familiar with the Beatitudes, aren't you? Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted, and so on and so forth.

It's called the Beatitudes because it's describing God's blessing. But here's what I want you to understand. The only way that you can be blessed is because He was cursed.

You see, God can't bless you because He's holy and you're not. He should not bless you. He should condemn you, curse you.

But in order to bless you, His Son took your guilt and was cursed in your place. You know, sometimes I'll ask Christians, I say, how are you doing, brother? And they say, blessed? Isn't it amazing? Every time you say that you are blessed, you should acknowledge that you are blessed only because He was cursed. Let me just take the Beatitudes and apply them to the cross.

The blessed are granted the kingdom of Heaven, according to the Beatitudes, but the cursed are refused entrance. Remember when Christ cried out, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? He was refused the presence of God. The blessed are recipients of divine comfort.

The cursed are objects of divine wrath. Christ tasted the wrath of God in our place. The blessed are satisfied.

The cursed are miserable and wretched. Christ became miserable, made a misery in our place. The blessed receive mercy, but the cursed are condemned without pity.

So Christ was condemned in our place. The blessed shall see God and the cursed are cut off from His presence, and so was Christ on Calvary. The blessed are sons and daughters of God, but the cursed are disowned in disgrace.

Now, let's further this idea of what it means for Christ to be a cursed of God and to die in our place. In the book of Deuteronomy, in the 27th and 28th chapters, we have a very important event. It is not the renewal of the covenant.

It is a declaration of the blessings and curses of the covenant. Okay? So what happens? God divides up the people of Israel, and on one mountain, Mount Gerizim, there are people placed. And they are to cry out all the blessings of God that are to fall upon the head of the covenant keeper, of the one who obeys God's law.

But the other group of Israelites are put on Mount Ebal, and there they are to proclaim all the curses that are supposed to fall, that will fall upon the head of the covenant breaker, of the one who breaks God's law. Now, I don't need to tell you which mountain is calling out to you and to me. It is not Mount Gerizim because we have not kept the law of God.

We have broken every law God has ever made. We are covenant breakers. And so it is Mount Ebal that speaks to us.

And in Deuteronomy, there is a long, long list of all the curses that should fall upon a disobedient people. Every one of those curses is yours. It belongs to you from the throne of God, because you are guilty.

And so am I. But on the cross, our sin was placed upon Christ. And all those curses that should be declared against us were declared against the Son of God. Let me put it this way.

And this will be hard for some of you, but let me put it this way. When Christ cried out from Calvary, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? It is as though the Father answered back, The Lord, the Lord your God damns you. And then listen to the curses.

The Lord sends upon you curses, confusion and rebuke until you are destroyed and 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 a blind man gropes in darkness with none to save you. The Lord delights over you to make you perish and 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 heaven which is over your head shall be bronze and the earth which is under you, iron.

You shall be a horror. You shall be a proverb and a taunt among the people. 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.

These are the curses that should have fallen upon your head, but they fell upon the head of Christ. It goes on. As Christ bore our sin upon Calvary.

Now I'm taking this from Deuteronomy now. He was cursed as the man who makes an idol and sets it up in secret. He was cursed as one who dishonors his father or 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 to an alien, orphan, and a 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 bride to strike down the innocent. He was cursed as one who does not confirm all the words of the law by doing them.

You see, when these evangelists just tell you, you know, Jesus died for you, they're not telling you what really happened on that tree. Some of you have never even heard things like this. And it's why the cross cannot be precious to you because no one has ever told you.

Do you honestly think that the pain of the cross was simply that Jesus got beat up and nailed to a tree? It is because He became a curse. In the book of Proverbs, it says, like a sparrow in its splitting, like a swallow in its flying, so a curse without cause does not alight. How could a curse ever fall upon the head of Christ? There was no reason.

He was without sin. Yet, on the cross, your sin, your horrid, wicked sin was placed upon Him and the curse that should alight upon you landed upon Him. The psalmist David said this, How blessed is he whose transgressions 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. Now, just look at that. That's the Christian.

Your transgression is forgiven. Your sin is covered. But how can a just God just cover your sin? How can He do that? That's not right.

He can do it only because Christ carried your sin. And the penalty was paid for. I have written here, on the cross, the sin imputed to Christ was exposed before God and the host of heaven.

He was placarded before men and made a spectacle to angels and devils alike. The transgressions He bore were not forgiven Him. And the sins He carried were not covered.

If a man is accounted blessed because iniquity is not imputed to him, then Christ was cursed beyond measure because the iniquity of us all was imputed to Him. Sometimes people will ask me, Brother Paul, where does the fire come from? I mean, this zeal. I know you're not going to believe it, but it's theology.

Doctrine. What Christ did. I mean, what other motivation do you need? That's why I hate the preaching of these TV evangelists that try to motivate people by saying God will give you a car or heal you.

What do I need that for? To motivate me? God will bless me financially? What do I care? If I rot in a prison in total impoverishment and die of starvation, what do I care? I've still got all the motivation I need to follow God. Look what He did for me in Christ. Any other motivation is idolatry.

It's Christ. Everything is Christ. There was a renewal of the covenant in Moab.

And there is a specific statement made when the covenant was renewed. It's an amazing statement and it causes me to think that there was something more in the words I'm going to read you than just what is there. It seems like it's looking forward to something else.

This is what it says will happen to those who break the covenant. This is what it says will happen to those who disobey God. The anger of the Lord and His jealousy will burn against that man.

That's you. The anger of the Lord and His jealousy will burn against that man and every curse which is written in this book will rest on Him. That should be you.

And the Lord will blot out His name from under heaven. That should be you. Then the Lord will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel.

I was raised on a cattle ranch. We were always singling out cattle, especially the ones that were going to slaughter. We singled them out.

God is saying, I will find that sinner and I will call him from the herd and I will pour out My adversity, My justice upon him for all his crimes. You know, people sometimes ask me, they say, Brother Paul, I have a theological question. Well, actually, it's a philosophical problem.

Why do bad things happen to good people? And I say, that's not the question. The question is, why does anything good happen at all? Because we are all wicked people. Do you realize, my dear friend, there should be no leaves on trees.

There should be no weddings. There should be no births. There should be no beautiful sky as you have here in Alberta.

Everything should be acid rain and death. Our entire planet should be like Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, his play. Everything should just be gray and dead and sorrow and misery.

We are a people who have broken every law of God and lived in entire neglect of Him. And how foolish, how arrogant it is to ask, why do bad things happen to good people? Bad things ought to happen all the time to everyone. The fact that there's any good in this world, any beauty, is just the grace of God given to undeserving sinners.

I know you don't like this language, but this is Christianity. This is not some watered down thing to get you to come halfway. This is what Christianity is about.

The realities of what this world is because of what we are and what God had to do to reconcile us to Himself. He said, I will single this man out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel according to all the curses of the covenant which are written in the book of the law. And yet, instead of singling you out and me out, the Messiah, the Christ, the only covenant keeper, the only true servant of Jehovah, He was singled out in our place and all our sin was imputed to Him and the curse fell upon Him and He was crushed under the wrath of God to pay for your sins.

I want to go on. I spoke about this just in passing last night, but I want to reiterate, I want to expound upon this. Jesus is in the garden and He cries out, let this cup pass from Me.

Let this cup pass from Me. Let this cup pass from Me. I mean, such anguish that He is bleeding, His sweating drops of blood.

Now, I have heard preachers say that Christ in His omniscience looked at the Roman cross that was coming. He saw the cat of nine tails. He saw the nails and the spear in His side and the crown of thorns on His head and because of that He trembled in the garden.

That is just wrong. Let me share something with you. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, for about three centuries, tens of thousands of Christians were crucified.

They were. Many of them were crucified upside down. Many of them were covered with braille or pitch and set on fire while they hung there.

And yet, the history of martyrdom tells us this, that many of those Christians went to the Roman cross singing hymns and considering it a joy to suffer for Christ. Now, are you going to tell me that the followers of Jesus Christ went to the cross with all this boldness and joy while the Captain of their salvation hid in a garden so full of anguish that He was sweating drops of blood? Do you honestly think that God's Messiah was afraid of a Roman nail? What was in the cup? The wrath of Almighty God. The furious and holy and righteous hatred of God against evil, against you.

In order for a just God to pardon wicked men, His justice must first be satisfied. Only then can His wrath be appeased. Only then can He pass to the sinner an olive leaf of peace.

Your sins must be atoned for. Justice must be satisfied. Listen to this passage in Psalm 75 verse 8. For a cup is in the hand of the Lord and the wine foams.

It is well mixed and He pours out of this. Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink down its dregs. Let's go on to Jeremiah.

For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, says to me, take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it. They will drink and stagger and go mad. What was in the cup? Well, first of all, for whom was the cup destined? You.

It's basic. If you were to sum up the prophets, it would be something like this. Because of the rebellion of the nations, because of their great iniquity and their trespasses against their God, the cup of My wrath will be handed to them and I will force them to drink it down and they will stagger and they will die.

But on the cross, Christ took the cup of God's wrath and He drank it down and when He cried out, It is finished, He turned the cup over and not one drop fell from it. He paid the price for all our sins. Now, on the

tree, Christ was abandoned of God.

We talked about that last night. Many preachers say that God looked down from heaven and couldn't bear to see His Son suffering, so He turned away. God lacked the moral fortitude to bear the suffering of His Son? No, He turned away because He forsook His Son.

Jesus did not say, My God, My God, why have You turned away? He says, why have You forsaken Me? The word can also mean abandons Me. Why? Because His eyes are too holy to look upon evil. His Son, who knew no sin, became sin, was made sin on our behalf and the Father broke fellowship, closed heaven's door and the wrath of Almighty God was poured out on the Son.

Now, I want you to imagine for a moment a dam 1,000 miles high and 1,000 miles wide. And your little village is an eighth of a mile from that dam holding back a fierce body of water. One morning you wake up to the sound of almost something seeming like the world has cracked in two.

You make it to the door of your home and you look and here comes this 1,000 mile high body of water coming straight for you, straight for the village. You have less than a second to survive. There's no one fleet of foot to escape it.

There's no one strong enough in their stroke to escape. It is going to crush you into oblivion. No one will ever find you or know of your whereabouts.

You are gone. And right before the deluge reaches your feet, the ground opens up and swallows it down. That's what Christ did for you on that tree.

Imagine a grain of wheat, a millstone 10,000 pounds and another one placed on top of it. Both of them spinning counter directions. And that grain is slipped in between those two millstones.

In a fraction of a second, the hull comes under such pressure and then it bursts and the entire thing is disintegrated. So Christ said, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it abides alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.

Suffering the wrath of God in your place. I do not read, I have to confess, very many modern books. Most of the theology and the preachers I read are at least a couple of hundred years old.

One of my favorites is the Puritan John Flavel. If you have a chance, read The Meditorial Glories of Christ, John Flavel, Volume 1. In that, he says many spectacular things about Christ. And I love John Flavel so dearly, I can't wait to get to heaven to see him, meet him.

He says, I write as one who writes by moonlight, not the light of the sun. I cannot see clearly on this side of the veil. But he seems to write so clearly about the glories of Christ.

He was so impassioned with Christ because of what he knew about the cross. He said things like this. He said, O fair sun, but fairer Christ.

O fair moon, but fairer Christ. O fair flowers, but fairer Christ. And then he stops and he says, No, I have wronged Him in speaking this way.

O black moon and stars, but fair Lord Jesus. O twisted and dark flowers, but O fair Lord Jesus, there is nothing fair compared to Thee. And he wrote something about a dialogue between the Father and the

Son.

And I call it The Bargain. The Father's Bargain. I'm going to read to you that dialogue and explain some of it to you.

Now, it's just the writings of a man, but it brings out this point so clearly. He says, Here you may suppose the Father to say when driving His bargain with Christ for you. Now, the Father speaks.

He says, My son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves. That's us. I don't care how much success you think you have.

I don't care the size of your bank account. I don't care how proper your English or how refined your intellect. I don't care how much you think about yourself.

This describes you. You are a poor, miserable soul who has utterly undone himself. And the greater you have made yourself, the more foolish you've become.

The more you dress yourself up, the more haggard you look. Gain the whole world. Go ahead.

I dare you. And then die and see who it goes to. Because God will say to you one day, you fool, your soul is required of you.

It is required. And all your houses and lands and barns and fame and intellect and boasting will wither and die. The Father says, My son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves.

And now lie open to My justice. God cannot simply turn His back on sin. Justice must be satisfied.

He says justice demands satisfaction for them or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them. Divine justice will be satisfied. For you, it can be satisfied in the atoning work of Christ or it can be satisfied in your eternal ruin in hell.

Now, I know that even among preachers today they don't talk this way. And that's why there's so little power in preaching. Do you realize, regardless of what popular evangelists say, there is a hell.

I hear preachers say, well, we don't want to talk much about that. We just want to talk about the words of Jesus. When a preacher speaks that way, he indicates to us one of two things.

One, he's either ignorant of the words of Jesus or he is a liar. Do you want to know why? Because we would know almost nothing about hell if it were not for the words of Jesus. Jesus spoke more about hell than all the writings in the Old and New Testament put together.

He warned more about hell. He spoke more about hell. He defined hell to a greater degree than all the other writers of the Bible put together.

So here is God's Son who so loved the world. He gave His only... well, who so loved the world that He obeyed the Father and came to die for us. Here is God's beloved Son.

No one can dispute His love. He wasn't a critical, mean-spirited preacher like me. He was the most loving who ever walked this planet, the very revelation of the love of God, and yet He spoke more about hell than all the other prophets and writers put together.

Shouldn't that tell us something? The most loving thing I can do is warn you that there is a judgment coming and you had better prepare to meet your God. And if that is scandalous, so be it. The Gospel is scandalous.

He says, what shall be done for these souls? the Father asked. And then Christ speaks, O 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. The Son says, Father, such is My love for them and My pity.

I will go. Now here's something that you need to understand. Something about God.

I do not want you to think that the Father was declaring your condemnation and wanting judgment against you, desiring your death, and Christ interposed. I want you to know that both the Father and the Son declared your condemnation. And both the Father and the Son determined that you should die.

And both the Father and the Son in their love together found a way to save you. He says, O 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 to this.

Bring in all Thy bills, Father, that I may see what they owe Thee. Now think about this. How many young men have I counseled in marriage? And six months after their marriage, they come back to me and they say, Oh, Brother Paul, if I only knew what I was getting into, I would not have said, I do.

I thought, but I'm not sure now. You see, they jumped into marriage without knowing what they were jumping into. And now they have second thoughts.

Christ wasn't that way. Before eternity, He said, Father, bring in all their bills. Every sin they've ever committed, everything they owe Thee, show it to Me.

He knew exactly what He was getting into, and yet His love for you was so great He willingly took it on. Now, for those of you who are Christian, listen to this. He says, Bring in all Thy bills that I may see what they owe Thee.

Bring them all in that there may be no after reckonings with them. If you could understand that, you would jump up and rejoice. Do you see what He's saying? He says, Bring in all their bills so that I know every one of them, so that when I go to the cross, I pay for every one of them, so that after I die, there is nothing ever left to be done.

They never have to pay a cent. I have paid it all. That is an amazing thing.

Every sin, past, present and future, paid for so that never again will someone come to us with a bill. It has all been paid. Do you know that sometimes when a president or a governor steps down in his last days in office, he will often write out pardons for people who have been thrown in jail? Do you know what's amazing? A lot of those people who are pardoned live their life in misery afterwards.

Some of them even commit suicide. Do you want to know why? Because they were set free, but the crime was never paid for. It's still outstanding.

They still bear the guilt and a guilty conscience because the crime and the bill still remains unpaid. But the Christian, according to the writer of Hebrews, has a clear conscience. Has a clean conscience.

Is not troubled by that any longer. Why? Because the Christian was not just pardoned. All his crimes were actually paid for.

The judgment that should have been measured out was measured out upon the head of another Christ. Now, he says, Father, bring them all in that there may be no after reckonings with them. At my hands shall Thou require it.

I will rather choose to suffer the wrath they deserve than they should suffer it. Upon me, my Father, upon me be all their debt. And then the father replies, But my son, if Thou undertake for them, if you take their place, Thou must reckon to pay the last might.

Expect no abatements. He says, Son, if you take their place, do not think that I will lessen the punishment that is due them. And then he says this, Son, if I spare them, I will not spare you.

That's horrifying. Can you imagine? And then the son replies, I am content, Father. Let it be so.

Charge it all upon me. Now, this next phrase. He says, I am able to discharge it.

What a broad-shouldered, deep-chested Christ we have. No one can say that. Not angels, not men, no one.

This is a declaration of deity. Charge it upon me, Father. I am able to discharge it.

I am able to take it upon myself and put it away. It's amazing. And then he says, and 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.

That's why I despise so much of contemporary Christianity and its church growth and its methodologies and its gimmicks and its relevancy and all the other things about it. If this story and this love is not enough to bring men to Christ, they should not come. If this story, this gospel, is not enough to build a church, the church should not be built.

It is this that drives the heart of a man and a woman of God. It is this that drives the heart of the Christian that Christ shed His own blood for my soul. I want to end by a story you're all familiar with.

There's an old man by the name of Abraham and he has received a son. The promise is given to him. And then God says, now listen to this language, you will see more than what is at first apparent.

Listen. God speaks to Abraham, Abraham, take now your son, your only son, your son whom you love. You think God's trying to tell us something more? Take him and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I tell you.

And so the old man, out of obedience to God, believing that God could even raise his son from the dead, the writer of Hebrews tells us, he goes to Mount Moriah. He binds his son without a fight. And then as the old man draws back the knife to slaughter his own son, his hand stays and he hears this, Abraham, Abraham, do not stretch out your hand against the lad and do nothing to him, for I now know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son from me.

And then Abraham turns around and there is a ram in the thicket caught by its horns. And he slaughters the ram in the place of his son. And he declares, Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord, will provide.

Do not use that phrase, Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide, with regard to some financial thing. It belongs only to one thing, only one context. The Lord will provide a lamb.

What do we care about silver and gold that cannot redeem? Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord, has provided a ram. Now, the curtain closes and you breathe a sigh of relief. Whoa, that was tense.

What a beautiful ending to the story. But here's the problem. That's not the ending to the story.

That was only the intermission. A few thousand years later, the curtain opens up again. And now it is not Isaac bound to an altar.

It is God's Son, His only Son, His Son whom He loves, hanging in the darkness on a tree. And then God stretches forth His hand and lays it upon the brow of His Son, His only Son whom He loves. And He takes the knife from Abraham's hand and He draws back His arm full of strength.

And God slaughters His Son, His only Son, His Son whom He loves. Surely our griefs He Himself bore and our sorrows He carried. Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

But He was pierced through for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. And the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him.

And by His scourging we are healed. For the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief. Offer up the sacrifice.

Creation sends forth the call. Offer up the sacrifice, one life to pay for them all. Offer up the sacrifice.

The innocent one must be slain. Offer up the sacrifice and bring man back to God again. And now those of us who believe, we can say this, God, my God, I know that You love me since You have not withheld Your Son, Your only Son, whom You love for me.

You see, my friends, I can do nothing more for you. The Son died and the curtain closes. Yet it is to be opened again.

For three days later, the Son who was crucified in weakness was raised in power. And that is God's sign to you. According to Romans 1, verse 4, He was declared the Son of God with power.

God declared Him on Resurrection Day, This is my Son. Romans 4, verse 25 tells us that that resurrection was proof that Christ's death satisfied divine justice and men can be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ. That is the proof of His Sonship and of the power of His death.

And if you say, my dear friend, that's not enough proof for me, then hear this word. It's the only proof you're ever going to get. And if it is not enough for you, then you will die in your sin and you will stand before the One who one day hung before men and you will be judged.

For this Christ, whom we crucified, God has declared Him to be both Lord and Christ of the universe, King of kings and Lord of lords. And this Jesus, who ascended up and was taken into the clouds 40 days later, will come back in the same way, not as a lamb, not as a servant, but on His road is written these words by the very finger of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. And He will not be coming back to deal with sin, but to save His people and to deal with the sinner.

Men go to hell because of their neglect of Christ. Christ, I warned you, you shouldn't have come because to turn away from this Christ, in God's opinion, is to trample underfoot the blood of His only begotten Son. It's to treat His sacrifice as unclean and it's to offend the very Spirit of God.

God now commands all men everywhere to repent and to believe the Gospel. Repent. Turn from your neglect of God and run to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

It is not of works, but is a gift of God. You cannot boast. You have no virtue.

You have no hope. You have nothing. But there stands the Christ who is mighty to save.

You can be reconciled to God through faith in His only begotten Son. Oh, do not perish. Reconcile yourself with your enemy on the way before it is too late, the Scriptures say.

It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for He is a consuming fire. You may say in all your pride, I am not afraid to stand before God on the day of judgment. Oh, my dear friend, you will melt before Him like a tiny wax figurine before a blast furnace.

There is only one to save you and that is God. And He has done it through His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, as I have said every night, I'll say it again, there will be no dimming of the lights in this place.

There will be no sad music to play upon your emotions. I will not give 37 altar calls and I will not ask you to come forward and repeat a prayer. That's all a gimmick of modern day evangelicalism.

It's not in the Scriptures and it's not in church history. But I will tell you this, if you desire Christ, if you desire to be saved, then where you're seated right now, call upon the name of the Lord. Seek Him while He may be found.

Those who come to Him, He will not cast out. Those who seek Him will find Him. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

But if after this meeting you are troubled in your heart and you still do not understand and you say, I want to be saved, but I do not understand, then here's what we'll do. After we dismiss this meeting, you just walk back here and I'll talk to you with a few other counselors who will be there. Now, many of you are probably in shock.

You're thinking, well, isn't He supposed to give music and do all this stuff and try to draw the net? No. I've told you the Gospel. I can do nothing else for you.

But if you're troubled in your heart and you want to know more about Christ, I promise you this, I will stay here all night if necessary and counsel you in the things of God until the Spirit of God, not a man, tells you you are saved. Please, do not leave this place without Christ. Let's pray.

Father, I come before You in the name of Your Son and I pray, Lord, that You would bless this people, that the hearing of the Gospel would not be a fragrance unto death for them, but a fragrance unto life, that they will see the beauty of Christ. Father, I know that only Your Spirit can reveal this to people, that the Spirit of God might show the Christian more of the beauty of Christ, that the Christian might love Christ more. And to those who do not know You, that their minds would be illuminated, their hearts would be regenerated, that they might see Christ and be drawn to Him and have the full assurance of salvation, joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And Lord, help us. Give us endurance, that if people are troubled, that we will love them and speak with them and guide them through the Scriptures, that they might know You. In Jesus' name.

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