

The Cross & Deception

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the significance of the cross and living by the truth of the cross to avoid deception and maintain a victorious Christian life.

Duration: 36:52

Scripture: Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20

Topics: "Cross of Christ", "Deception", "The Cross"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the significance of staying at the cross, explaining that it represents both an end and a new beginning in our relationship with God. He clarifies that the cross signifies the end of sin, flesh, and Satan's power, urging believers to understand their identity as new creations in Christ. Beach warns against deception, highlighting the importance of aligning our experiences with the truth of God's Word rather than allowing our feelings to dictate our understanding. He encourages believers to maintain a posture of prayer and dependence on God, as deception often arises from a lack of discernment and prayerlessness. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to live by the truth of Scripture to combat deception and grow in faith.

Transcript

Tom had mentioned that and it was correct that he needed to stay at the cross. What does that mean to stay at the cross? It's a lovely thought, isn't it? What does it mean? What is the cross an instrument of? Okay, death, agony, alright. So when we say we stay at the cross, what does that mean? What does it mean to stay at the cross? What does the cross mean to God and what does the cross mean to the church? What does the cross mean to God and what does the cross mean to the church? That's the question we need to ask.

Because see, when we hear something like we need to stay at the cross, this is all absolutely true. We have to make sure we understand the significance of what that statement means, lest it just become a Christian cliché. Hallelujah, I'm abiding at the cross today.

Oh, I am too brother. Yes, praise God. But what if somebody came into the church who had absolutely no understanding at all and looked at you and said, what in the world are you talking about abiding at the cross? What would you be able to communicate to them? How would you be able to articulate that kind of a testimony in order to help someone understand what that means? Apart from just a cliché, I'm abiding at the cross.

Now this is not what we want to talk about for a few moments this morning. This is something different, but I did feel like I needed to just make this very, very clear to abide at the cross. The cross to God is the end of something and the beginning of something new.

The cross to the church is exactly the same. You see, the church basically is called to agree with what God has said. We're simple.

We are called as children of God to agree with what God has already done, what God has done through his son. So the cross to God is the end of something and the beginning of something totally new. The cross to God is the end of sin.

It is the end of flesh. That is the sinful motions that are in the flesh. To God the cross is my end and your end.

It is the end of sin. It is the end of flesh. To God the cross is the end to Satan's power.

It's the end to sin. It's the end to flesh. And the cross in God's perception is the end to the world and the power thereof.

As in 1st John chapter 2, all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. So therefore, when we say to one another in agreement with God's Word, because the scripture says in Galatians 2:20, I am crucified with Christ. The scriptures tell us in Romans chapter 6 that I have been buried together with Christ.

If I have shared in the death of Christ, then that means something more than just a testimony, more than just a Christian cliché. When the scripture says that I have shared in the death of Christ, it actually means. Now we were sharing this a little bit last night with some of the brothers and sisters at the beautiful dinner that Eddie prepared.

In order to understand and get the full significance of the Word of God, we have to go to the Word of God, and we can't focus on our experience. Now this does not mean that we minimize our experience, but in order to get the full power of the Word of God working in our life, we have to get to the place where we agree with what God's Word says, and we don't let our experience overthrow us. Because as soon as you read the Word of God, and the Word of God says that I am crucified with Christ, the believer will consider that, and either the enemy will come, or the believer in his lack of faith, or in his immature apprehension of the Word of God will say, well hallelujah, I'm not crucified with Christ.

The Bible says in Romans chapter 6 that we are dead to sin and alive unto God. Well as soon as the believer reads that, within minutes the believer says, well I'm not dead to sin, and they base that on their experience, because they remember that maybe yesterday they did something that they knew was not pleasing to God, or maybe a few minutes before reading that verse they did something. So they get frustrated, and they don't understand how can that be true.

How can the Bible be true? It is true when we recognize that it is a finished fact, not based on our experience at the moment. It's based on the fact of what has happened through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every single sinner who genuinely becomes converted, is translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every genuine child of God has become a new creation in Christ. Every child of God has become a new creation in Christ. Thank you Karen.

Every single child of God has become a new creation in Christ. So therefore, the fact of the matter, apart from my experience, apart from my experience, not that we will ignore or deny our experience, but in order to understand how abiding at the cross is the end, the destruction of Satan's power, of sin's power, of the power of flesh, and the power of the world. In order for us to understand that, we have to look not to our experience, but look to the Word of God and understand what has happened in us through the power of regeneration.

Through the power of regeneration, God has given to me a new heart. He said I'll take the heart of stone out and I'll give you a heart of flesh. He's given to you a new heart.

He has given to you a renewed spirit. A spirit that was at one time dead in sins and trespasses, but now is made alive in Jesus Christ. The spirit of the believer, after having received the Holy Spirit, is literally, actually, in reality, united to the heavenly, victorious, ascended Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, based on the fact that you are united to Jesus Christ in spirit, and you have been delivered out of the kingdom of darkness, by virtue of your relationship, your union with Christ, by virtue of that union, all of these things are true in spite of your experience. You are, by virtue of being united to Christ, dead to sin. You are dead to sin because through the new birth, God divorced you and translated you out of flesh and put you in his Son.

You are dead to sin. Sin is not dead in you, that is in your flesh, but you are dead to sin. You are no longer related to sin in the way that you were before Jesus Christ came into your life.

Before Jesus came into your life, you were intimately united to sin. The power of sin had dominion over you because you were dead in sin. You had no out, but through the power, the transforming power of the new birth, God raised you from the dead, raised you from the tyranny of the power and dominion of sin, divorced you from the law, and united you to his Son, the sinless one.

And so the power that the believer has is the all-surpassing power that dwells in the endless life of the Son of God. I am united to Jesus Christ. So when Tom said that he has to dwell at the cross, dwelling at the cross is that testimony that we maintain that states the facts of what God has done through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The fact is, as a born-again, blood-washed, spirit-filled believer, I am united to Christ. To stay at the cross means I maintain the testimony and confession of what God's Word says is true. Truth.

I live by truth. I meditate upon truth. Truth becomes that which I trust in, that which I depend upon.

Truth becomes the testimony of my mouth. Literally, thy word is truth, John 17, 17. Truth becomes that which sustains me.

So to live at the cross is to agree that in Christ I am dead to sin. For I am now united and married to another, even Christ. And therefore, if it is Christ that I am united to, then I will yield myself to him.

And therefore, rather than the motions of sin that are in my flesh and have them manifest in my body, I will yield myself to Christ and therefore bring forth the fruit of righteousness, the fruit of holiness, the fruit of longsuffering and gentleness and patience. For Christ is now my life. So to live at the cross is to agree with God's Word.

I am a new creation in Christ Jesus. I will not walk after the flesh because the flesh and all of those desires therein I have renounced. Jesus said, if a man follows me, he must what? Take up the cross and deny himself.

We've preached on this a number of times. To deny oneself is simply to say, I don't know the man. I don't know the man.

At the cross, Jesus took the old man and buried it, crucified it and buried it. I am now united to him. Romans chapter 14, put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and take no forethought how you might fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Why shouldn't you take a forethought as to how to fulfill the lusts of the flesh? Why? It's not worth it. But even so, why? What does God's Word say about the lusts of the flesh as they relate to the believer? Their death. That's where the law of sin and death reigns, in my members.

But I am free from the law of sin and death through the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. I am not united to the law of sin and death anymore. I am united to the Eternal One, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is my life now. Hallelujah! What victory! The grace Jesus Christ has on a believer, if the believer is following the Word of God properly, is it liberates you from being able to say yes to God and no to the devil. It liberates the mind.

It liberates the will. It frees me. Why? Because it is God working in me now.

It is God energizing me. And as God puts the desire for Himself in me, He also frees me to choose Him. So to dwell at the cross means I agree with God that through Jesus Christ, and by my having been united to Him, and by my having been joined to Him, I am free from Satan's power.

As I continue to maintain that confession, as I continue to hide the Word in my heart, as I continue to look to Him for the energy and the power and the grace that comes, as I learn to be on guard, as I learn to be watchful, I maintain that testimony. I write these things unto you that you sin not, but, or if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One. So always remember, beloved, this vital truth here is essential if we are to grow into the warriors that God is calling us to be.

Because unless a believer fully apprehends the message of the cross of Jesus Christ, and it becomes the foundation upon which they live their Christian life in their home, with their wives, with their children, with people in the world, unless this truth of Romans 6 and Galatians 2.20 and Colossians chapter 3, unless this truth becomes the basis upon which we live our whole Christian life, we cannot enter into the war of Ephesians 6 and be successful. Because the enemy, upon entering into a life of prayer and seeking to believe God for things that he has committed himself to, the enemy will search and see that we are not even living on the basis of the truth that we are alive to God and dead to self. He'll come in and he'll deceive us, and that's what we're going to talk about for a few moments, and he'll get something in us that corresponds to himself and therefore defile the testimony.

And that's how he does it. So let's remember that as Tom shared about dwelling at the cross. This is what it means to be a Christian.

Now, okay, listen, beloved, I want to talk a little bit this morning, as God gives utterance, on deception. All right? Deception. First of all, the word deception, the very meaning of the word deception implies what? What does it imply? Excellent.

Thank you, Norman. The very word deception implies that you think one thing when, in fact, something else is the truth. You are deceived.

Put it this way, when someone's deceived, they're not aware of it, or else, as Gary said, it would not be deception. So therefore, beloved, as we discuss this topic of deception, we must be vitally aware of the fact that if we are deceived, we're not going to be aware of it. So therefore, when we approach the subject of deception, we must first come before the Lord with the understanding that it is possible to become deceived, and therefore teachable before him.

It says, the meek shall he instruct. We must pray the Lord give us meekness, and humility, and teachableness, so that if, in fact, we are deceived, the Holy Spirit, the Word of Truth, the Spirit of Christ, can reveal the deception to us, show us where we are deceived, but then enable us, through the power of truth, to become undeceived, and to resist the deception. Not only resist the deception, but to begin to say, I don't want to be deceived anymore.

You know, most of the time, not all the time, but most of the time, people are deceived because they choose to be deceived. They accept the deception because we become mindless. We don't think.

We don't judge things. We don't discern things. We don't compare things with what the Word of God says.

We willingly accept things, which oftentimes results in our deception. Now, I'd like to, if I may please, invite you to turn to Exodus, and I want to show you a story in the book of Exodus, which I believe has contained in it. Okay, here we are.

Exodus chapter 17, I'm sorry, verse 8. Exodus 17, verse 8. This is the first battle that Israel came up against while in the wilderness, right after they were enabled to cross over the Red Sea. This is the first battle, and I believe that oftentimes in the Bible, when there is the mentioning of something for the first time that contained within it are vital truths that hold true throughout the entire Bible regarding that same subject that was mentioned. There's vital truths found in the first time that something is mentioned.

There are some vital truths found in Exodus 17, verse 8 through 16. We're going to look at these vital truths and then discover how deception creeps in. Let's begin reading in verse number 8, verse 17, chapter 17 in the book of Exodus.

Then came Amalek and fought with Israel on Rephidim. Now, Amalek were descendants of Esau, and according to some of the commentaries that I've read, they were very, very warlike, warlike descendants of Esau. They just were bloodthirsty individuals, and they made war with Israel.

And Moses said to Joshua, choose us out men and go out. Fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.

Take note of the rod of God in his hand, and also take note that this is the first battle. We are seeing the action that is required when we engage in a battle. Now, of course, the battles we are in today are spiritual battles.

This was a physical battle. So as we engage in spiritual battle, and beloved, I'll tell you, spiritual battle begins the moment we become a believer in Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter what degree you are in your relationship with the Lord.

You know, spiritual war doesn't occur 17 years after you become saved. The moment you are in the kingdom of God, and you are yet in this world, you're in a battle. You're in a battle, a spiritual battle.

Now, notice what Moses did. He took the rod of God in his hand. In verse number 10, so Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek.

And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed. And when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

It's very, very important there, beloved. Very important. When Moses' hands were up, Israel prevailed.

When Moses' hands went down, Amalek prevailed. Verse 12, But Moses' hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him. And he sat there on.

And Aaron and Hur stayed up on his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side. And his hands were steady, that is, firm, until the going down of the sun. And Joshua disconfitted Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua. For I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-Nissi.

Now, what does Jehovah-Nissi mean? The Lord is my banner. And he said, Because the Lord has sworn that the Lord will have war upon Amalek from generation to generation. Now, I want to bring out a few points here.

There's two elements that were essential in this war. Remember, it's a war going on. Two elements.

Number one, there was the element of the rod of God. Moses had the rod of God. The second element was that Moses' arms needed to be lifted up, which in the New Testament would indicate prayer.

In the New Testament would indicate a posture of prayer, a posture of dependence upon God. So therefore, the rod of God and prayer were essential elements in this war. The rod of God could represent all that God stands for, all that he is.

And the hands lifted up represents prayer. Now, I know that's very general, but believe it or not, beloved, listen carefully, deception creeps in when we are somehow led to believe in something less than what God is and who he stands for and become prayerless. All deception, all deception has its roots in exchanging the truth of God for a lie.

All deception has its roots in exchanging the truth of God as he reveals himself in the scriptures for a lie. Now, I realize that it's 1236, 1237. We only have a few minutes, but I just want you to taste something in

Ephesians chapter 6, and then we're going to close.

Oh, well thank you. Ephesians chapter 6. Listen closely, beloved, just so you can get a taste of how powerful this truth is. Remember, beloved, deception means I don't know I'm deceived, or I don't believe I'm deceived.

Here's how you can tell if you're deceived. Just begin in verse number 14. The armor of God is indicative of all that God stands for in Christ.

Each piece is a feature, is an aspect of Christ himself. So therefore, anything that contradicts the character of Christ is deception. It is a lie.

Now watch this. Verse 14. Stand therefore having your loins girded about with what? Truth.

Now stop for a minute. Don't be mindless. Don't be mindless.

Think. What in your life have you succumbed to that is not truth? What lie are you currently living? Deception. When it comes to verse 14, anything that's not truth in your life, you are deceived.

See, the battle couldn't be won unless the rod of God was held up. The battle can't be won if truth is not something we seek for. Now watch this.

Breastplate of righteousness. What would be deception regarding righteousness? Anything that is unrighteous. What is unrighteous in your life? What is unrighteous? Do you see the power of this? Unless we are prepared to let the Spirit of God work in our lives in such a way where we are willing to acknowledge any form of deception that contradicts what God is and pray and pray and confess it and believe God to deliver us from it, then we will be deceived.

Anything that contradicts God's word, God's character, is a form of deception. And as we are enabled and acquainted with the Holy Spirit and the word of truth, God wants to take his word in such a way, not just to appease us, not just to fulfill our intellectual interests, but to so take his word so as to deliver us from all forms of deception. So that we can be children of light in all areas of our life.

So I'm going to close with this because the children have something that they want to do. Now I want to close with this. Ask yourself this question.

Am I deceived in some area of my life? And the second thing you say is, Lord, show me by thy word. Show me by thy word. Let God's word bring light.

Renounce deception and God will flood your heart with peace and truth by his power. But admit it's possible to be deceived. Okay, children, come on down, Pam.

Our children are going to be participating in an activity that has to do with scriptures. So we want to give them a place so that they can share God's word with us. Okay, so let's listen closely to them.

Perhaps one of the scriptures that the children themselves will share will have the power to reveal a deception in our life. So let's let them do it. Okay, Pam, whatever you want to do.

All right, listen up, children. Listen up. Everybody listen up.

You did very, very well. We're very pleased with how you share all the scriptures with us. And we thank the Lord.

Amen. Now, listen, I don't want you running off the stage. I want you to walk following Sarah very slowly down the stairs.

Okay, no running. Walk. Go ahead, Sarah.

No pushing. Nice and slow. Thank you very much.

You did a good job. Okay, now, if we could get as much help as possible from everyone, we could be out by one.

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