

# The Word of the Cross

by Phil Beach Jr.

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of discerning God's heart, the power of the cross, and the danger of relying on the wisdom of words instead of Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:11:14

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 1:17

**Topics:** "Cross of Christ", "Identity in Christ", "The Power of the Cross"

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## Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the profound significance of the cross in the life of a believer, arguing that true Christianity is not merely about forgiveness but about being crucified with Christ. He warns against relying on human wisdom, which can empty the power of the cross, and instead calls for a deep, personal revelation of Christ's work in our lives. The sermon highlights that the essence of the Gospel is a transformative relationship with Jesus, where believers recognize their old selves as dead and embrace their new identity in Him. Ultimately, Beach Jr. encourages the congregation to seek a deeper understanding of the cross, which is the source of true power and wisdom in the Christian life.

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## Transcript

Read a few passages of scripture tonight. The first one is in 1 Corinthians, chapter 1, beginning in verse number 17. It's good to see Kevin here.

Bless you, brother. Praise the Lord. It's a very wonderful thing, beloved, when we are able to discern the cry of the Lord's heart.

We're able to discern the Lord's thoughts and His burden. There's many voices, you know, that are crying out in the world. Many thoughts that people have, many passions that people have.

All kinds of different things. But what a joy to be able to plug into and be enabled by God's grace to know and sense and feel His heart. And in the book of Revelation, there's seven times it's mentioned this particular phrase.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. And that's said seven different times. And how important it is for God to give us ears to hear that we might hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the church.

Not what a man is saying, or men are saying, or not what even we ourselves are saying. But what is the Holy Spirit saying? And may God give us ears to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying. What a joy to be able to hear the Holy Spirit.

What a joy to be able to sense His heart. And that ought to be, beloved, one of the greatest desires of our heart. We ought to long with all of our heart to know the heart of the Lord.

To know the Lord's thoughts. And of course, there's a great war going on regarding this. There's a great war going on regarding our thoughts.

And regarding what it is that we are intimately involved with. And the Lord wants us to be intimately involved with Him. Be passionately in love with Him.

1 Corinthians chapter 1, beginning in verse number 17. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. Not with wisdom of words.

Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. Now, the scripture here says that Paul was sent to preach the gospel. Not with wisdom of words.

Lest the cross of Christ. Listen to how it says here in the King James. And then I'll read to you the literal translation.

It says, Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. Now, that statement, made of none effect. Literally means to empty of power.

To be emptied of power. So what Paul is saying here is the very gospel of Christ. Is emptied of its power.

Made of no effect. Rendered useless. When the gospel is attempted to be understood or preached.

With the wisdom of words. So automatically this should very much stir our hearts. In that we would not become prey to the wisdom of words.

Lest the cross of Christ and its power be made of no effect. Or emptied of its power in our own life. You see, because the power of the cross is not only realized, beloved.

In our initial salvation. In which we come to the cross and we receive forgiveness of sin. Of course that's a great part of it.

But the power of the cross is a continuous, non-stopping process. That God wants to occur in our life. That not only brings us to that initial crisis where we recognize we're sinners.

And we cry out to God for mercy. And we sing the song of forgiven. Praise God forgiven.

But the power of the cross is also God's means. Not only to make a believer forgiven. But to bring a believer to another aspect of the meaning of the cross.

And that other aspect of the meaning of the cross. Is not only are we forgiven believers. But we are crucified believers.

And being crucified believers. When the Holy Spirit enables us to catch a glimpse of that revelation. We realize we're not only forgiven sinners.

But we are crucified. In that God at the cross has brought in his eyes. In his perspective.  
From his vantage point. Perhaps not experientially in us at the present time. But from God's point of view.  
We are not only forgiven sinners. We are crucified sinners. In that the totality of what we are.  
In all of our goodness. In all of our old life. In all of our flesh.  
Has been brought to the cross. And nailed there. And God has said.  
This is what the cross means. God has said. You have come to an end.  
There's nothing. Absolutely nothing. That God can use.  
For his eternal glory. Or for the building up or edifying. Of the church.  
That originates out of us. Nothing he can use. Nothing he wants to use.  
He has found. The totality of his pleasure. And he has gathered it up.  
All in his son. The Lord Jesus Christ. God has said concerning his son.  
And no other man. And no other woman. This is my beloved son.  
In whom I am well pleased. And if God ever pronounces. That blessing upon any human being.  
It's only because God is beholding. That which came from his son. And has been placed in our life.  
That's how come God can say to you or I. If in fact he's pleased with us. I'm pleased with you. He's saying  
it because he is seeing.  
Bone of his bone. Flesh of his flesh in us. He's seeing something of himself in us.  
That's what pleases him. All that the Holy Spirit. Would be able to get our eyes.  
Off of our self. Off of our own thoughts. Off of our own strivings.  
Off of our own efforts. Off of all of the attempts. That we muster up to try.  
And please God. And try and do what God wants us to do. And come to the place.  
Where we see. That God has gathered up. All of his pleasure.  
All of his rest. All of his satisfaction. In his son the Lord Jesus Christ.  
And now the whole calling of the church. The whole calling of the Holy Spirit. Upon your life and my life.  
Is to behold the son. And by the power of the spirit. Be transformed and changed.  
Into his image. The way to please God. Is to get so close to Jesus.  
So near to Jesus. So that what he is. Rubs off on you.  
And you get changed. So that on the inside. You become more and more.

Like what he is in glory. That's God's satisfaction. Now beloved.

That is the gospel message. The gospel message. Is the gospel of salvation.

Not just the gospel of deliverance. Or forgiveness. We're not just forgiven.

Through the blood of Jesus Christ. Because see. Many believers.

Understand that they're forgiven. And that's a glorious truth. Many believers understand they're forgiven.

Romans chapter 5 says. That through the blood of Jesus Christ. We have been forgiven.

We have been pardoned. But many believers. Are glorying in the fact.

That they are forgiven. Sinners. And they're living.

A good sum of their life. If not the totality of it. By the power and strength of their own might.

Hoping. That somehow. They are going to change themselves.

They are going to somehow please God. Now see this whole concept. For sure.

Of the salvation. That the Lord is wanting to give. Just like forgiveness of sin.

Is not something that we can muster up. You cannot forgive yourself. Only coming to a realization.

Of the significance of the blood of Jesus Christ. And the cross of Christ. Where Christ there bore our sin.

He bore our iniquity. He paid the price. He became the propitiation.

The atoning sacrifice for our sins. So it's as our heart is awakened. To this glorious revelation.

And we behold the Lamb of God. That taketh away the sins of the world. But it's got to be personalized.

We behold the Lamb of God. That takes away our sins. Oh what joy and what bliss comes to us.

Now how do we come to that place? Do we come to it by the works of the law? Or do we come to it by the hearing of faith? Do we come to it by God. God quickening his word by the Holy Spirit to us. And enabling us to awake to a realization.

That Christ paid it all. And I am forgiven. Not because of anything that I have done.

Not because of anything that I have merited. But because Christ has become the atoning sacrifice for sin.

We come to that not by effort.

Not by trying to clean ourself up. Not by trying to cover our sins. But we come to it by simple faith.

Faith that God imparts into us. And faith that we yield to and say. Oh my God.

Christ has forgiven my sins. Then we come to an awakening. And we feel that release of our sins.

And we come to him and we say. Hallelujah my sins are forgiven. But beloved.

The same faith. The same working of the power of the Holy Spirit. That brings us to that awakening.

That brings us to that quickening. That enables us to see. Christ has forgiven my sins.  
Is the same faith. The same revelation. The same working of the Holy Spirit.  
That God wants to bring to us. That enables us to also see. That I am crucified with Christ.  
And that now that I am a forgiven sinner. I realize that I am a crucified sinner. And as a crucified sinner.  
God has brought to death. From his vantage point. And wants to experientially.  
Make it real in our life everyday. God has brought to death. All that I am.  
In myself. All that I am. In my natural wisdom.  
In my natural understanding. In my reasonings toward God. None of that has any place.  
And as this dawns upon us. We are enabled. By the power of the Holy Spirit.  
To focus our eyes. So much more. On the Lord Jesus Christ.  
And realize. That Christ. Is now.  
My life. And that the unclean thing. That I must stay away from.  
Is me. You know the Bible says. Cursed.  
Is everyone that hangs upon the cross. Right? And oh so often. We are so quick.  
And this is true. The Bible does teach us. In the book of Galatians.  
That Christ became a curse. For us. Because he hung upon the cross.  
But then when we go to Galatians chapter 2. And we see. My God. I am crucified with Christ.  
We realize. Not only did Christ become a curse for us. But.  
We realize that we ourselves. Are under the same curse. Because we.  
Are crucified with Christ. Now the Bible teaches. That we are not to touch the unclean thing.  
2nd Corinthians. Touch not the unclean thing. So when the believer dawns on this revelation.  
That the unclean thing. That we are to stay away from. Is in fact.  
All those pernicious evil deeds. That are latent within the flesh. Now only the Holy Spirit can give life.  
But this is not a depressing revelation. This is an emancipating revelation. This is a liberating revelation.  
This is a freeing revelation. This brings the soul into focus. Upon the Son of God.  
There's nothing like it. There's nothing like it. What a blissful joyful day.  
It is. When a soul. In communion with God.

Comes to the awakening. And sees. The finality of the cross.

And what it means. In that not only am I a forgiven sinner. But I am a crucified sinner.

And there's no good thing. That dwells in my flesh. Paul said in Romans chapter 7. And that therefore.

I am no longer going to look. Within the resources of my own self. My own strength.

My own promises. Originating out of my own self confidence. I'm no longer going to look.

In that cesspool of an abyss. Of what I thought. Was what God could use.

That's me. That's my strength. I'm no longer going to look there anymore.

I am crucified with Christ. I have come to an end. That big old I. That place of pride.

That place of arrogance. That place of self-sufficiency. That place where religious energy operates.

Where we want to be religious before God. It's us. We're offering something of our self to God.

Hoping that God will bless it. God won't bless anything that comes from us. God only blesses what comes from Christ.

The blessing is upon Christ. The anointing is upon Christ. God's satisfaction rests upon Christ.

There needs to come in our hearts, beloved, a light from heaven so bright that it brings us down. We need to see the finality of Christ and how it is only in Christ and the life of Christ being reproduced in us and being expressed by the power of the Holy Spirit that pleases God. Christianity is Christ being expressed in redeemed human beings.

Christianity is not men and women offering the best of themselves to God hoping that it will go through Jesus and then once it goes through Jesus it's accepted to God. And isn't that basically the concept that we have so many times? I'm going to try the best I can and God will bless it because Jesus is interceding for me. Let me tell you, beloved, Jesus doesn't make our works acceptable to God.

Jesus does not live in the heavens interceding for us, making our works acceptable to God. Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us that it might dawn on us that our works are forever rejected of God and that the only works that we can be engaged in that can please God are those works that are directly springing out of the very Christ himself working in us, flowing through us, expressing the features and qualities of his character and nature. Oh, how liberating, how emancipating, how freeing when the soul dawns on this truth.

Now, remember the scripture that we read? For Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. Beloved, here is a loving warning from the heart of God, a loving warning from the heart of God. The cross of Christ can be emptied of its power when our Christianity becomes focused upon the wisdom of words and not the finality of God's pronouncement on the cross and what it means to God and what it means to us.

The wisdom of words, how dangerous words are if they're not the words that are taught to us by the Holy Spirit and originating out of the intention of God that is from Genesis to Revelation. The wisdom of man says, Ah, I'm not that bad. There is something in me that is good.

There is something in me that can please God. That kind of idea is the wisdom of man. That idea, if it gets in us deep enough and begins to affect the way we really believe, will cause the cross of Christ to be emptied of its power in our life.

If we are not fully persuaded of what God has already said, Romans chapter 6, what God has already said, if we're not fully persuaded of it, you can be sure that the devil is going to send you a lying spirit. And this lying spirit is going to feed you the wisdom of man. And if you believe this wisdom that does not come from God, but comes from the devil and corresponds to what is in the heart of man, this wisdom, listen beloved, will empty the power of the cross in your life.

That is when winning the prize becomes at risk. Because, see, the prize can only be obtained through those who come to a complete 100% settlement in their heart regarding what God has said, and they completely cast themselves upon what God has said in Christ, the significance of the cross, the meaning of the cross. They pour contempt upon everything and anything that does not originate out from Christ himself in their life.

They pour contempt upon it. They place no confidence in it. They disown it.

They deny it. They consider it to be dead, crucified, and buried with Christ. It's unclean, and they want nothing to do with it.

Such a hard attitude is, as Collette read, such a hard attitude is the kind of attitude that all who are mature have. Nothing matters, Paul said. Everything I count but dung.

Everything is lost. It's Christ and Christ alone that I am after, and it's not only Christ objectively, but it's Christ subjectively expressing himself through me. See, it is what he is objectively getting in us and expressing himself individually, but then corporately.

That's the passion of the Holy Spirit. That's the passion of the Son of God. That's the passion of the Father.

God's eternal thought for the church was redeemed men not reforming their ways, not putting on religious garments and trying to act holy and trying to please God in their own strength. No. But God's eternal thought for the church was men through the Holy Spirit would come to the cross and see they've been brought to an end and they have to be born again.

You have to die to be born again. You have to die. God's thought is not to take the old man and put garments of religion on him, teach him how to talk Bible talk, teach him how to praise charismatic praise, teach him how to talk in tongues, teach him how to work the gifts of the Spirit, dress him all up, put makeup on him, and make him look like he's holy.

That's not God's thought. God's thought is I have brought you to a complete end. I totally reject what you are in nature as far as it relates to any eternal good in glorifying me or building up the church and I'm going to give you a new birth.

A new birth, a new nature, a partaker of the Holy Spirit and in this new birth you will plug into a whole new source of life. You will derive your righteousness, your holiness, your wisdom. You will derive your everything from a whole new source.

That is the Son of God. He is the source from which the church is beautified. He is the source from which the church derives her righteousness.

He is the source from which the church derives her holiness. He is the source from which the church derives her wisdom. The cross is the means through which God does this.

The cross is the means by the power of the Holy Spirit, not a doctrine like David said, can't be just some doctrine we get a hold of and say, well, praise God, I've got the doctrine of the cross, now I've got everything. No way. The Holy Spirit is saying, no way, it's not a doctrine, but it's an effectual working of the meaning and significance of that cross in our lives on a daily basis.

It's not a professing of a doctrine, but it's being overcome and conquered by the meaning of the doctrine. So it's the cross that is the means through which the Holy Spirit effectually works in us. God's thought of a brand new creation.

If any man be in Christ Jesus, He is a new creation. All things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.

Now so many believers read that and say, oh my, I just can't understand that because not everything is new in my life. How can the Bible say that all things have passed away? Boy, I still have a lot of old things in my life. Well see, the reason why we stumble there is because we're looking at that Scripture and interpreting it based on our experience instead of understanding it from God's perspective.

You see, we have to start out as Christians from God's perspective. We can't start out from our experience. We can never get our eyes on our experience or we're going to get messed up.

In God's eyes, when you became a Christian, all things passed away because in God's eyes, when you became a Christian, you received the life of Jesus and now that's the only life that God recognizes in you and the totality of the old life and all of His pernicious evil deeds in God's eyes is no longer there. He doesn't reckon it anymore. He's buried it with Christ.

It's crucified with Christ. It's buried with Christ. God says, I don't know you after the flesh anymore.

Paul said that we're not to know one another after the flesh and he also said we're not even to know Christ after the flesh. That's the meaning of that. It's that when God puts His Spirit in us and we become new creations in Christ, from God's vantage point, He only sees Jesus now in us.

He only sees the righteousness that comes from His Son. He doesn't recognize all the attempts of the old man to try and be righteous in God's eyes. He doesn't recognize all those religious works.

He says those things are as filthy rags to me and I don't want any of it at my altar. I don't want any of it being offered up to me. See, so from God's vantage point, it's true.

All things have passed away and all things have become new. Now, you say, well how can all things become new? Because I still struggle with things that are of the old. So how can all things become new? In your experience they might not be, but from God's point of view, beloved, all things are new.

Because now, in God's eyes, you're a newborn babe and you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and all the life now that the new man derives its strength from is the life that comes from the living, glorified, blessed and holy Lord Jesus Christ. All things have become new from God's perspective. You are a new creation now.

Now, the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Word of God is purposed by God to make effectually real and experientially in our life the reality of what God has already settled is done in heaven. That's what the Lord wants to do. He wants to settle it once and for all.

It's settled once and for all and now He wants to work that in our life so deeply. Romans chapter 6, beginning in verse number 1. How the Holy Spirit wants this to be something other than just a mental consent of a Bible doctrine. This has to become an inward revelation, an inward knowledge that so gets a hold of us, beloved, that it brings us down on our knees.

And I can't emphasize enough the fact that these things have to be made real to us by the Holy Spirit. And then once they're made real to us, we have to stay so close to the Lord that the freshness and reality of them can be maintained on a daily basis. Lest we find the wisdom of men, the wisdom of the words of men affecting us.

And you know, as soon as we get under the hearing of the wisdom of men, that was just one illustration. There's something in me that's good. There's something in me that doesn't have to die.

I mean, this idea of coming to complete death, that's a little extreme. Watch out. Watch out.

Watch out, beloved. That's a little extreme. I can't tell you how many times over the years beloved saints have been seduced from the message and the preaching of the cross through this little devil that comes on the left-hand side and starts whispering in the air.

This message of the cross is extreme. This message of the cross is a little bit too extreme. I'm tired of hearing about death, death, death.

Christianity is life. It's abundant life. Watch out, beloved.

You go to the Word of God and you'll see that God has spoken and God is final. And when you start entertaining in your mind and in your heart the words and wisdom of men, when you start entertaining that, you are heading down a path where the cross is going to lose its power in your life. And you know what happens when the cross loses its power in your life? Guess who gains the power? Well, you think you do, but you really don't because the devil's territory is the old man.

Thank you, Michael. The devil's territory is the flesh. The devil's territory is the wisdom of our own mind, the reasoning of our own mind, the powers of our soul life and, oh, how deeply our soul powers are in us and how all of that has to come to an awakening, to God's sentence of death upon it.

So when we heed the voice that turns us from the preaching of the Gospel, which is the preaching of the cross of Jesus Christ and the full meaning of that, we are automatically in doing so, beloved, we're saying, God, I'm not going to believe the finality of what you have done on the cross. I'm going to come up with my own Christianity. And I tell you, beloved, that will lead us down a road where we're going to get in deep trouble with the Lord.

We'll get in deep trouble. Romans chapter 6. What shall we say then? Paul is referring to the things he just said, how one man's death, by one man's sin, death reigned, but now through the obedience of one man, Jesus Christ, grace and the gift of righteousness reigns by one. And that we are now, through Jesus Christ, offered the gift of righteousness.

We stand justified before God. That's what Paul's saying. But here's his next thought.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Now watch what he says here. God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Now listen to this.

Know ye not, don't you know, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Now when Jesus died, beloved, He took us with Him. Did you know that? When Jesus was crucified, He took us with Him. He took us with Him.

When Jesus died, He took us with Him. Now listen carefully. When He was buried, He took us with Him.

And when He rose again, He took us with Him. But He did not take with Him that which He died for. When He rose up again, He didn't take with Him that which He died for.

He left it in the grave. So that when He rose up again, He took a new man, a forgiven man, with a new nature, impregnated with His righteousness and His life. That is what the church is.

The church is a new man after the image of the heavenly man. Now this is the message of the cross. It's not just forgiven, but crucified.

Listen to how Paul says it. Verse 4. Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in the newness of life. If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be in the likeness of His resurrection also.

Now to be planted together literally means to be planted with the intention to grow. If we have been planted with Christ in death, then God's intention is we should grow in the likeness of Christ. Oh, how wonderful to see these things.

Verse number 6. Knowing that our old man is or was, both is correct, crucified with Him. Listen to this. That the body of sin, the body of sin in this particular Scripture refers inclusively, comprehensively, it encompasses everything that is in us, individually and in the church, corporately, that is not from the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's not from the new birth. Everything that is not acceptable to God. Everything that Christ on the cross buried with Him.

That old man is crucified that the body of sin might be destroyed. That word destroyed means rendered inoperative. Rendered inoperative.

Unable to be effectively used. Do you see that through our union with Christ in glory, the whole body of sin and the old man potentially is destroyed as we abide in Christ, as we are plugged into Him, as we derive our life from Him, then we express the glories of His person and the body of sin and the old man is rendered inoperative. It's destroyed.

It loses its power. We're not bound any longer to sin, to self, to the works of the devil, to the world. In Christ we're free.

But oh, it's not a doctrine. It's a living communion with Him as we draw our very life from Him. The reality of these scriptures begin to occur in our life and they're not just dead doctrines that we scratch our head

over and say, boy, I sure can't understand how that can be true.

No, it becomes true when we plug into the true One and commune with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe also that we shall live with Him.

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died to sin once.

But in that He lives, He lives unto God. Let me ask you a question, beloved. Do you think Christ ever lives unto Himself? Or do you think Christ ever lives unto sin? Do you think Christ ever serves something other than His Father? No.

But do you realize that now in the new creation, Christ is your life? You see, the Bible says in verse number 9, Christ being raised from the dead dies no more. Death has no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once.

Christ died unto sin once. But in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Christ is ever living unto God.

And do you know that as believers united to Him in Christ, we can ever live unto God by the power of the Holy Spirit? That through the power of the Holy Spirit we can know, if we really desire with all our heart, we can know deliverance from sin. We can know deliverance from the power of sin, from the dominion of sin, from the tyranny of sin. God's people do not have to be bound to sin.

They are free in Christ. That's what the message of the Gospel is. Just because the presence of sin abides in the flesh, that does not mean that it has to have dominion over us.

The presence of sin is in the flesh, but the Bible says that we are a new creation in Christ. We are no longer in the flesh. We're in Christ.

And if we are deriving our life from Christ, if we are drawing our righteousness from Him, if we are plugged into Him, being energized by Him, the presence of sin in the flesh will not have dominion over us, but rather, we will be expressing the righteousness and beauty and holiness of our blessed Savior. That's what God wants to do. Give us the strength, give us the grace, give us the eyes to see this glorious truth of what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about.

Verse number 11. Likewise. Now, that word likewise connects us to verse number 10.

Now, I know this is a hard thing, but right here it is, beloved. Likewise is a word used in order to compare that statement with the above statement. In other words, just like the above statement is true, likewise, the truth of that statement ought to be true in us.

Now, what is the statement that Paul is saying? He died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. So get that clear in your mind. Christ died to sin once.

He was crucified, buried, He went down to the grave, He died not for His own sin, praise God He was without sin. All that was a picture of God putting on Him our judgment, putting on Him the penalty of our sin, crucifying Him, putting Him down in the grave, having to suffer death. He did that all because of us.

But how many times is He doing it? He did it once. He'll never do it again. Likewise.

Verse number 11. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. What an emancipating revelation here.

Beloved, we have to stop seeing ourselves as those people that we used to be when God was not with us, when we lived after the flesh, when we followed the prince of the air who now works in the children of disobedience. We have to stop seeing ourselves as that person we used to be. And we must pray that God will open up the eyes of our heart and enable us to see that our true life now is Christ.

And the Bible says as Christ is, so are we in this world. What an emancipation comes when the believer finally realizes that by the cross and by the gospel of Jesus Christ we are called not only to rejoice in that we are forgiven, but we are called to rejoice in that we have been crucified and that by our being united to the heavenly man in Christ Jesus, He has become our life, He has become our righteousness, He has become the source from which we now live our Christian life and we can actually deny and disown our own self. That is, we can deny and disown all that is in us that is at enmity to God, all that is in us that is not pleasing to God, all those motions and impulses of sin and self-glory and love for money and greed and covetousness, those things that are in the flesh, we can actually disown them.

Now, guess what the word disown literally means? This is really good. When Jesus says, take up your cross and deny yourself, that word deny is the same word that is used when Peter said about the Lord Jesus Christ, I don't know the man. I don't know the man.

How many believers have come to see that the cross of Christ is so inclusive, it's so comprehensive, that not only does it grant the believer to glory and being forgiven, but it grants the believer to come to the place that by revelation he or she can say, I don't know the man that I used to be. He is dead. You don't talk to dead people.

You know, the priests were not allowed to go near the dead, or they'd become unclean. Why do you think God did that? It's a picture, the whole Bible, the whole Testament is a revelation. It's hidden in types and shadows and in stories, just like that recent message we wrote on Agag.

That's a message in the Bible. That's God's heart showing us the finality of God regarding the cross. Agag and the Amalekites were unclean.

The Israelites were to go in and they were to destroy everything. Man, woman, child, cattle, beast, everything. People with their natural minds, they say, oh, that's so unkind of God.

How come He could do that? But they missed the whole thing. First of all, God has the right to do whatever He wants. But secondly, God has that whole story in the Old Testament as a vivid picture to the spiritual mind of the message of the cross.

What that meant is Agag, Amalek, and all the Amalekites represented the accursed thing. They were those people that were constantly fighting against God, constantly fighting against the Lord's people. They brought such grief to Israel.

They were so unkind to Israel. That's a picture. That which is in us, that is at enmity to God, is completely rejected of God.

That's why Samuel said to Saul, you go to the Amalekites and you kill everything. But what did Saul do? Saul went there and he saved everyone. He did obey the Lord.

He was deceived. You see, deception begins when we no longer accept what God has said, the totality of it. Saul was persuaded that he obeyed the Lord.

Samuel said, listen, you go and you kill everything and don't take anything back alive. Saul comes back and brings back Agag, the king. And he brings back the best of the flock.

And he said to Samuel, I obeyed the Lord. What I did was, I brought back the best of the flock. Why? Oh, how commendable.

How religious the flesh is. I brought it back to offer it to the Lord your God. You see what that is right there? It's a vivid picture of trying to take that which has been rejected, that which has been crucified, buried, set aside in Christ, all that is in us that is corrupt, try to take some of it and offer it to the Lord God.

What did Samuel do? Samuel said, you're all wrong. You've disobeyed the Lord. Vivid picture.

And then he said to Saul, where's Agag? Bring him over to me. And you know what Samuel did with Agag? He took his sword and he hacked him to pieces. And that was a vivid Old Testament picture of the New Testament revelation that in Christ, God will accept nothing of the old, nothing of that which is accursed, nothing that we offer to God that springs out of our own self.

Now many believers catch this revelation and they only consider that which is obviously sinful as being rejected of God. They would never offer up adultery to God or fornication or pornography or stealing or embezzlement or anything obvious. Most believers would say, oh God, I can't offer that to God.

I know that's no good. God, I pray that you will help me pronounce the sentence of death upon all these things. Praise God.

But most believers only go that far. Because see, Saul brought what? The best of the flock. So see, there's not only that which is in us that is corrupt obviously, but there's that which is in us that appears to be so good, so righteous, so holy, so right, so nice, but it's still of the old.

It's still part of the cursed creation and God has just as much contempt upon that as He does those obvious sins. So the Holy Spirit wants to give us an overwhelming, life-changing revelation of the totality of the meaning of the cross. It's God's sentence of death upon all the old creation.

And how good it is when we get to the place where we finally realize, my God, I don't need to search anymore for something good to offer to God. Oh, I could be free from the noose of this burden. How good it is to come to the place where in the dust we say, Lord God, Thou alone art my righteousness.

I pour contempt upon everything that is not of You and me. That includes not only those evil works of the flesh, hatred and lying and stealing, but those good works of the flesh. Those religious tendencies and those tendencies to want to glory in what I do, or those tendencies to want to try and be good and try and give and then glory in my giving.

The whole thing, Lord. I see it as buried, Lord. Lord, I want to see You.

I want to come out from under this dying corpse. Who shall deliver me from this wretched man? Paul said. That wretched man literally means the dying corpse.

It's a dying corpse. Thanks be unto God through Jesus Christ, my Lord. We can be delivered from this dying corpse.

So, verse 11, Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the lust thereof. We don't let sin reign in our body because we realize that we are united to Christ.

He is our life. He is our all and all. And as this revelation dawns on us, beloved, as this revelation becomes more and more and more able to be grasped by the eye of the heart, and the good of this revelation begins to affect our personal lives, our practical lives, we will find a power, not a power, we will find the power, the power of Christ who will suddenly reveal Himself to be the deliverer from that thing which you have struggled with all your life.

You'll suddenly see Christ to be the deliverer from those deep, dark areas of self, those areas of natural reasoning, natural understanding, natural tendencies. You'll suddenly see Christ as the conqueror of your very nature, the things that you do by nature. You know, we all have things that we do we don't even think about.

We're just so bound to our nature. We're impatient. We're curt.

We're unkind. We're insensitive. It's not necessarily a sin that we commit.

It's what we are by nature. But you'll suddenly see that those things that you tried so hard, so hard to change and you have had no success, you'll suddenly realize your whole problem was you were trying to change, you were trying to cleanse that which God says can't be cleansed. You see, the old man is not cleansed.

Many Christians think that the journey of a Christian is somehow I'm going to take my old life and make it holy. Oh, that's the biggest lie the devil's burped out of hell, I think there is. God doesn't take the old life and make it holy.

The Holy Spirit doesn't call you to wrestle with the old life and try and make it holy. The Holy Spirit has called you to see that the old life is set aside and now your life is preoccupied with the man in glory and the reproducing of his life in your spirit and the expression of that through the power of the Holy Spirit. What liberation comes when you cease from trying to make what you are by nature conform to God and simply come to the place where you can disown it.

Remember, I don't know the man. Oh, that we would come to where we refuse to commune with what we are by nature, with what we are in our sinful flesh. We get to the place where we don't even recognize it.

I don't know the man. I am a new creation. Christ is my life.

What I see in Christ is God's intention for me. What I was as a sinner, I disown. God calls me not even to reckon it.

My eyes are upon Jesus. What liberation comes. Beloved, I'm telling you by the authority of the written Word of God that such an awakening to our hearts regarding these simple truths in the Word of God is the basis upon which we are liberated from earth, we are liberated from the dominion and power and tyranny of self, sin and all the dregs of self.

We are liberated from the power of all the voluptuous powers in this world and we are emancipated from those things and brought into a union with Christ. Now, there's a new battle there. It's a different kind of battle but it's a beautiful thing because we're emancipated and liberated and we can truly be bondservants and slaves to the Lord Jesus Christ.

All simply by coming to God and simply doing one thing, renouncing the words of wisdom, renouncing the wisdom of men and coming to God and saying, Lord, Thy Word and all of its meaning has been gathered up into a person. The Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ sitting upon the right hand of your throne is a lasting testimony that you are going to honor your Word.

To you, the Lord Jesus Christ means a complete doing away with the old humanity and a brand new humanity in His image and in His likeness. To you, God, the Lord Jesus Christ is the life of the church. God, to you, Jesus Christ is the only satisfaction of your heart.

Now, Lord, I come to you through the merits of Christ. I come to you because of the blood of Christ and I pray that you will change my mind and change my heart to get me to think and know in my heart the way you now see things. That's what we've got to do.

We've got to pray that God will get our minds to where we will see things the way He does. We will reckon what God reckons. We will believe what God has said in Christ and we will not fall under the lie and prey of the devil which is always wanting us to deviate from the finality of Christ and the meaning of the cross into the world of the words of men where the power of the cross loses its effect in our life and then we become prey and captive to our own lusts, our own desires, the powers of this world.

And you know that situation can become a messy situation. So, may the Lord Jesus help us tonight. It's not a doctrine that we learn here.

It's a person. This whole exhortation tonight, what I believe from the Lord's heart, it's not a doctrine. It's all about a person.

It's all about a person. The Bible is about a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Holy Spirit is here for one purpose, to shine, illuminate the eye of our heart and enable us to see this person and what He means to God and what He means to us.

Coming to see this person, the Lord Jesus Christ, in a living new way and on a daily basis, is the answer to every struggle, every problem, every battle that anyone in this room is going through. We need Him. He is the answer.

He's the answer. May the Lord give us hearts that are broken and humble before Him to see this and to really believe it. Now, we started out in 1 Corinthians, didn't we? Now listen to this.

And then we'll close and perhaps spend some time in prayer. Maybe we could pray for one another and beg God to grant to us an ability to see as He sees. An ability to believe what He has done.

And the Holy Spirit can come in great power. Now, we started out in verse 17, alright? And we just communicated for the past hour or so the wisdom of God. Not my wisdom.

I said nothing. Nothing that I concocted in my own mind that I thought of some night under a fig tree. Nothing.

Absolutely not a word. Everything was rooted and grounded in what God has said and in what Christ is. Every word.

Now, listen again. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect or empty of its power. Now, listen to this.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness. But unto us which are saved it is the power of God. Beloved, listen closely.

There is a lot of talk about the power of God today. Isn't there? A lot of Christians are praying, Oh God, I want your power. A lot of Christians are praying for a revival that brings the power of God.

But beloved, by the grace of God, can we see this? The power of God is directly related to the preaching of the cross. And if the preaching of the cross ceases, the power of God ceases. And if people suppose that they are getting the power of God in their life and there is no evidence of the preaching of the cross or the principle of the cross working in their life, beloved, I can assure you most solemnly that the power that they have got is not the power of God.

It's soulical power, it's fleshly power, it's charisma power, or it's devil power. But it's not God's power. God's power is connected to the cross.

You know, in the book of Revelation, at the very end, Jesus is depicted as the Lamb that was slain. On the throne, the Lamb that was slain. There is no greater power than the throne.

But Christ is seen on the throne as the one who was slain. So there's God saying for all eternity, the power of the throne is connected to the cross and what it meant to God. And no believer is going to share that throne unless they have come through the cross and the totality of its meaning and the cross has become their way of life.

The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Beloved, the wise and the prudent will never accept the thought that the cross of Christ is our end.

The cross of Christ is your end. The cross of Christ is your burial. You know why the cross of Christ was a stumbling block and an offense? And you know why Paul suffered for preaching the cross? Because he wasn't preaching a golden cross like is being preached today.

When Paul preached the message of the cross, he was saying to men and women, God has rejected you. God has set you aside. There is no good thing in you.

You have to see your death sentence. You have to see that you are worthy of death, hell and damnation. And you have to see the blessed Lamb of God who alone is God's approval, who alone is a prince and who alone can offer you forgiveness.

And if He does give you forgiveness, that means you become a new creation, you turn your back on the old, you turn your back on sin, you turn your back on the world, you turn your back on the devil, you pour contempt on what you are by nature, and you see He alone can be your life. What? For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise. The wisdom of the wise man is not, I am nothing, and God's Christ is

everything.

Such a message is an offense to the very root of the pride that is in our heart. That's why the cross is such a stumbling block. It lays the axe to the root.

A lot of Christianity wants to just pick some bad fruit off, but they want the root to stay. I'll just take this sin off, and that sin, and this sin, but I'm still going to live from the root of my old life. I'll just dress it up a little bit, and I'll stop doing this, I'll stop smoking and drinking, and I won't flirt around anymore, but I'm still going to live by my own life.

I'm still going to be the king of my life. But when the cross comes in its power, it takes the axe right to the root. No room.

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. That is, man in all of his wisdom can't find God, because the wisdom of God is the cross. And man in all of his wisdom will never come to the conclusion, ah, the cross is the answer, because the cross is their end.

The cross is the end of my wisdom. And no wisdom is going to conclude that the answer is the end. No wisdom is going to come to that conclusion.

The very nature of our own wisdom is self-preservation, my wisdom. So, the world by wisdom knew not God, and will never know God. And when we try and take Christianity into our own hands, and don't submit to the wisdom of the cross, which is that's my end, and it's got to be Christ, then we are, in fact, coming up to a dead end.

Verse 21, For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. It pleased God, listen, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. It is foolish to preach to the wise man, whoever it is that's not been humbled and pulverized by God, to see that they are nothing.

It's foolish to hear the preaching of the cross, because it makes no sense to the natural man. My nature is self-preserving, self-survival. My nature is I'm going to pull myself up by my bootstraps, and I'm going to make it.

But the wisdom of the cross says, come down. Every mountain shall be lowered. You've got to come down.

You've got to bite the dust. You've got to get down on your nose and say, God, I'm a sinner. Have mercy on me, Lord.

That's the wisdom of God. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block, unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. So Christ, and according to verse number 18, Christ and the preaching of the cross is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Wherever Christ and the preaching of the cross is not found, wherever it's not found, now this does not mean simply in doctrine, wherever it's not found in life principle among a people, you will not find the wisdom of God or the power of God in their midst. The wisdom of God and the power of God are directly connected to Christ and the preaching of the cross. So therefore, whenever people begin to cry out for

power, for anointing, my heart breaks and I mourn because most of the time, if not all the time, I have never seen people cry out for the power of God and equate it to a greater revelation of the meaning of the cross.

Never see it. It's always men putting the cross aside because that will offend their pride. That will offend their hidden motives.

They want power because they want to be something. It's always men wanting the power of God so that they can do something for God. Let me tell you something.

God doesn't need you to do anything for Him. God has done it all in Christ. The only one that can do anything for God is Christ.

And the only way we're going to be of any use to God is if we come to the revelation of what it means to be crucified with Christ so we come to an end and then God may begin to raise up something of Christ in our life. That will minister life. That will bring glory to God.

And that will go into eternity. That will go into eternity. For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, verse 26, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound things that are mighty. And the base things of the world and the things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and the things which are not to bring to naught things that are. Why? That no flesh should glory in His presence.

But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord. So beloved, that's a good place to close. I know we've covered a lot tonight, but may the Lord grant us grace and be able to go beyond the hearing up here of God's Word and now we completely cast ourselves upon the dependency of the Holy Spirit recognizing that unless He makes these truths as David and Colette prayed, an inward reality, they're of no use to us.

So Holy Spirit, we just want to bow our hearts. Come here to me, brother. Give me a hug.

You don't know what you did for me tonight.

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