

# We preach Christ crucified (Quality: Very Good)

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] As the Lord should be pleased to further help us this afternoon, we turn again to the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 1, and verses 23 and 24.
- First epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, first chapter, verses 23 and 24. Shhh, Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.
- But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. We were saying this morning how that in this church at Corinth there were those who were making too much of the Lord's servants, and as it were putting them in the place of Christ.
- For he says, now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.
- But you see, friends, we must put Christ first in everything. And we sometimes pray that prayer, don't we, in the hymn, May Christ be first, and Christ be last, and Christ be all in all.
- [ 1 : 3 2 ] But one other thing, when we're enabled to put that into practice, you know, it's been brought before me recently, friends, there are many hymns we sing, but do we really put the language into practice?
- Do we really live it out? Do we put Christ first in everything? Is he first in our gathering? Is he the one that we desire to lift up?
- Well, it was the Apostle Paul's desire to lift him up. As we were reminded in our first hymn this afternoon, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, Jesus himself said, Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.
- And we know he meant, first of all, that he must be lifted up on the cross. But there is another sense, friends, in which he must be lifted up, and that is he must be lifted up in the preaching.
- He must be lifted up in the gospel ministry. If we do not lift him up, friends, there's not much in the ministry. Oh, that he might be lifted up again this afternoon, as we seek again to meditate on these words.
- [ 2 : 4 7 ] But we preach Christ crucified. We notice the connection between what we have in the previous verse this morning. The Jews require a sign.
- We said how many times when the Lord was here, they asked a sign. They wanted to see something. But Jesus said, There shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonah.
- And Jonah was a type of Christ. As Jonah was in the whale's belly, so the Lord Jesus went into the heart of the earth. And so that was the only sign that he gave to them, but they didn't understand it.
- You know, they never understood that. In our text, to the Jews, this preaching is a stumbling block. They just cannot understand it. Not all Jews, of course, because some Jews have been brought to believe.

But there are those Jews still today, friends, to whom this preaching is a stumbling block. They just cannot accept it.

[ 3 : 54 ] They stumble at it. So they didn't understand that sign of the prophet Jonah, nor did they understand the other word that he spoke when he said, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.

Because they thought that he meant the literal temple. Do you remember when they accused him? They brought that as one of the things against him. And this fellow said he would destroy the temple and build it again in three days.

Well, it showed, friends. They didn't understand what he meant. They didn't see the spirituality of it. They didn't see that it was the temple of his body that he was speaking about.

The Jews require a sign. And the Greeks seek after wisdom. And, as we said this morning, these Greeks were noted for their worldly wisdom.

And today, friends, we were reminded by our friend this morning how much worldly wisdom there is about. But how little of the real wisdom from on high.

[ 4 : 59 ] How little of the real wisdom that God gives. And I've observed this, you know, friends. The more many have that worldly wisdom given to them, the more it seems to blind them to these spiritual things.

Oh, it's often to them a stumbling block is wisdom. The Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified.

Now, we would desire to continue this afternoon from where we left off this morning. We were looking into the Acts and seeing how that the Apostle was there because Paul says here, as we noticed again, he doesn't say, I preach Christ crucified.

He says, we preach Christ crucified. He was linking with himself other apostles. No doubt these that he'd mentioned, Apollos and Cephas and others too.

Peter. Peter is there in the name Cephas. He is there. And so we saw this morning how Peter preached Christ crucified on the day of Pentecost.

[ 6 : 12 ] And what effect it had. But you know, friends, Stephen preached Christ crucified, didn't he? That's why we read that chapter this afternoon.

Because Stephen preached the same preaching. He had been enabled to go right through the history of God's people, the Israelites. And then he comes to this same preaching when he says, Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?

And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the just one. And then see how Stephen, with Peter, brings this home to these people in Jerusalem.

Of whom, with Peter, of whom, with Peter, of whom, with Peter, of whom, with Peter, of whom, with Peter, and the people, they had persecuted. They had slain some of those prophets. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?

And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the just one. And then see how Stephen, with Peter, brings this home to these people in Jerusalem.

[ 7 : 25 ] Of whom ye have now been the betrayers and murderers. He brought home this dreadful wickedness because it was a wicked thing to do.

Although we saw this morning that God had designed it and it was all according to his design and plan and yet it didn't say that these people were not sinners.

They had done it by wicked hands. And these servants of God were bringing it home to them. But how we have noticed this afternoon, friends, what a difference there was here.

When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart. Now then, let us examine ourselves, friends. How does the preaching affect us? What is the attitude of our hearts when we hear the gospel preached?

It's either one or the other, you know. We can't be in between. Either we're pricked in the heart and convinced by the Spirit and fall under it. Or else we are cut to the heart like these people here and fall out with it.

[ 8 : 40 ] You can't be in between, you see. There will be this pricking in the heart and the Spirit is with the ministry and with the Word.

We shall know conviction. And as we said this morning, we still can say it this afternoon, friends, that's one thing that's lacking in our day. True conviction of sin by the Holy Ghost.

Or to see more people really convinced that they're sinners. Brought to say with those people on the day of Pentecost, what shall we do?

Men and brethren, what shall we do? Repent. Oh, there must be repentance as we saw this morning. There must be faith in Christ.

So, Stephen preached Christ crucified. He preached this glorious person. But you know, in a previous chapter, we find that when they came together for prayer, it was not only in the preaching, but it was found in the hearts of those that were praying.

[ 9 : 50 ] This same theme. Do you remember when they came together for that prayer meeting that is recorded in the fourth chapter?

Being let go, they went to their own company. You know what that is sometimes. When you're let go, you go to your own company. Oh, I believe that as many of the Lord's people have known what that is when they've been engaged in other things and other occupations.

And when they've been able to leave those occupations, they've been only too glad to leave and go to their own company. Go to the company of the Lord's people. Do you know what it is, friends, to be in good company?

It is indeed a wonderful thing when we feel that when we're in the company of the Lord's people, we can say, this is my company. My soul shall pray for Zion still while life and breath remains.

They are my best friends. My kindred dwell. Their God, my Saviour reigns. Well, these people were let go and they went to their own company and they went to prayer.

[ 11 : 04 ] Having to deal with these who persecuted them, they went to prayer and they prayed. And they quoted from the psalm. Why did the heathen rage?

And the people imagined vain things. That kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. I believe that's the second psalm, friends, where we read that.

How wonderful that these things were all recorded in the Old Testament. The things that should be done to our Lord and Saviour. And then they go on like this, for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together and then notice what they say, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Oh yes, this was all determined. This was all planned. This was God's way of salvation. And we are thankful that the Lord did plan this.

But nevertheless, they by wicked hands had crucified and had slain him. So we preach Christ crucified and it will be a desire in the hearts of all the Lord's people and it will be a desire in the hearts of all the Lord's people to dwell on this.

[ 12 : 36 ] They will want to be continually meditating upon it because this is where our salvation is. This is where our life is. Oh, we would thank thee for the faithfulness of Peter and we would thank thee for the faithfulness of Stephen in speaking and preaching Christ crucified.

But we preach Christ crucified. But we've mentioned Peter. We've mentioned Stephen. But what about Philip, the Lord's servant?

Did he preach anything different? He preached Christ crucified when he went down to Samaria. We read in the 8th chapter that he went down to Samaria and preached Christ unto them.

That was the essence of his preaching. He preached Christ to those people in Samaria. And because he preached Christ there was great joy in that city.

I believe when Christ is preached, friends, and we really feel the sweetness of the gospel there will be joy. Great joy. And especially when the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that Jesus was crucified for us.

[ 14 : 02 ] That he laid down his life for you and for me. that your sins were laid upon him. Oh, we've felt that recently, friends, as we've been thinking about these things.

How wonderful when we can feel that Jesus was there in the sinner's place when he was suffering. It is Jesus in the sinner's place.

In your place. In my place. Taking upon him our sins. Bearing what we should have had to bear. To all eternity.

Oh, how deep were his sufferings. You know, those lines came again to me on Good Friday. Much we talk of Jesus' blood.

But how little's understood. Of his sufferings so intense. Angels have no perfect sense. And if angels have no perfect sense, we certainly have no sense of it.

[ 15 : 04 ] Oh, the depth of his sufferings. Oh, may the Lord lead us into a little of the depths of those sufferings that he had to endure. But Philip, you know, when he was sent to the desert to preach that one man, it was the same preaching.

For that man in the chariot was reading. I'm reading from Isaiah 53. And reading about this very person. The place where he was reading was this.

He is led as a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb. So he opened not his mouth. No, the man didn't know who it was.

He did not have an understanding of who he was reading about. But the Lord's servant was sent to cause him to understand. It's a wonder of a thing, you know, friends, when we do understand the scriptures.

When the Lord does for us what he did for those we read of in Luke 24. What do we read there? After his resurrection. And he had appeared to those on the Emmaus road.

[ 16 : 17 ] We read this. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures. That's what we need. We need the spirit to open up the word to us.

And we need the Lord to do for us what he did for this eunuch. For the man said to his servant Philip, Of whom speaketh the prophet this?

Of himself or of some other man? Now what do we read? Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus.

Yes, he preached Christ crucified. We preach Christ crucified. And it's wonderful to see, you know, the effect that that had upon this man.

Oh, the wonderful way in which he was brought to obedience. As they went on their way they came to a certain water and the man said, See, here is water.

[ 17 : 22 ] What doth hinder me to be baptized? What was the answer? And if thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. Oh, do we believe, friends, with all the heart?

Have we then walked in this way? If we believed as this man did? He could say, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Wonderful thing, you know, to be given this faith and a wonderful thing to be brought into a place of obedience and to follow the Lord Jesus as this dear man did.

And after that he went on his way rejoicing. Philip preached Christ crucified. We preach Christ crucified. We find, too, that the Apostle Paul, that young man who had been with those who stoned Stephen, we read of him just now, didn't we?

They laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul. And at that time, friends, he was persecuting the children of God, the Church of God, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord.

[ 18 : 43 ] But on that day when he went to Damascus and the Lord opened his eyes and he began to see these things for himself, what did he preach?

And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God. All that heard him were amazed and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem and came hither for that intent that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests.

But Saul increased them more in strength and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. He preached Christ and him crucified.

And as we notice here in this epistle to the Corinthians, this was his determination. Not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

It was the whole essence of his ministry. He loved to preach Christ and wherever he went in those missionary journeys, whether he went to Corinth or Philippi or Galatia or Ephesus, didn't matter where he went, he preached the same preaching.

[ 20 : 02 ] We preach Christ crucified. How wonderful then to see that Paul followed in the same path as Peter and Stephen.

And then we have thought of that wonderful experience that Peter had when he was sent for by Cornelius that we read of in the 10th of Acts.

Cornelius, the centurion, the Roman soldier. He was a devout man as we read there and one that feared God with all his house.

And the Lord told him to send and call for Peter and told him just where to go. And Peter in the meantime had been praying on the housetop and these two praying men they came together.

But what was the essence of Peter's preaching in the house of Cornelius? You listen to the preaching of Peter there friends.

[ 21 : 05 ] It's the same theme again. We preach Christ crucified. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ.

And when Christ crucified is preached friends that's where the peace is to be found. There's no peace anywhere else. You won't find peace in this world.

You won't find it outside of Christ. You'll find it in him. One was saying to us the other evening that we see in this preaching of Christ crucified and the peace we see the atonement.

The atonement. And if you split that word up it means at-one-ment. Sinners reconciled to God. Sinners brought near to God.

Peace is made between them and God through Jesus Christ. Preaching peace by Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all.

[ 22 : 12 ] And he speaks of how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power. He went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed to the devil.

For God was with him. And then he says we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem whom they slew and hanged on a tree.

Whom they slew and hanged on a tree. He's preaching Christ crucified. But as we said this morning too friends, he's not only preaching Christ crucified, but he's preaching Christ risen.

We preach a risen Christ. We preach one friend who is now living at the Father's right hand. You know when we read about Moses this afternoon I thought what a wonderful type he was of Christ.

In his interceding. You know how he interceded for the Israelites in the wilderness? How he pleaded with God on their behalf? And that's exactly what our Lord is doing now.

[ 23 : 19 ] Pleading on our behalf at the Father's right hand. doesn't the apostle write in the Hebrews that concerning the intercession of Christ we have a great high priest who intercedes on our behalf.

Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is not only our redeemer, the one who has redeemed us, bought us back, paid the price, but he is our intercessor, ever pleading on our behalf.

So we have the preaching of Christ crucified in the house of Cornelius and we have the risen Christ preached.

Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly. And we have the effect of that preaching there. We read that Peter said later on can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we.

Oh, that we might see this same end, friends, as regards the preaching of the gospel and preaching Christ, to see other sinners following him, having a desire to walk in his way, to be obedient to his command.

[ 24 : 47 ] this is the outcome. This is what we want to see more of in the church of God. Yes, Peter preached Christ crucified in the house of Cornelius and later on in the 13th chapter of this same book, the Acts of the Apostles, when Paul went on his journeys, he preached Christ crucified.

We read in the 13th of Acts that they that dwell at Jerusalem and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

Wonderful statement that is, they fulfilled the scriptures in condemning Christ, because the scriptures had prophesied of it. They have fulfilled them in condemning him, and though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead. Same preaching, you see, when Paul went on his journeys, he preached Christ crucified.

And we can see there that those scriptures of old, those prophets, had all been fulfilled. And we see something else there, we see that word fulfilled, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

[ 26 : 32 ] Jesus bore our curse, he bore your curse, my curse, when he suffered there on Calvary's tree. Oh, how wonderful to see that he was there bearing the curse of his people, suffering in their room, place and stead.

We preach Christ crucified and right at the end of the Acts, friends, we find the same preaching by the Apostle Paul.

For in the 26th chapter, we find this recorded there. he says to those people at Ephesus, having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both a small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles.

So there you see, the Apostle was still preaching the same preaching, but we preach Christ crucified.

Christ is the anointed one. He is the one that God had anointed to be a saviour. So he is the one that is preached, Christ crucified.

[ 28 : 02 ] You know, I was thinking today, friends, there is a difference, between the cross and the person who suffered thereon. I often notice that in that word we mentioned this morning, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then he says by whom, not by which, by whom, that is by the person, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

it's Christ himself, friends, that we preach. Many people you know, they go about with these crosses on them, but that's idolatry, really.

It's idolatry, friends, when we can even make too much of the cross, you see, there, we can put the cross before Christ. It's the person that hung upon the cross, friends, that we should be looking at.

It's that one who hung there. You know, I love those words of Bunyan when he writes in the Pilgrim's Progress, bless cross, bless sepulcher, yea, rather be the man that suffered there for me.

That's what we want to feel, isn't it? That Jesus suffered there for me. was it for crimes that I have done? He groaned upon the tree.

[ 29 : 31 ] Amazing pity, grace unknown, and love beyond degree. We preach Christ crucified. And, you know, if you go into the epistles, you can see that this was the theme of all the epistles.

Let's just notice one or two. In the Romans, we find in the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans that the apostle there was preaching the same preaching.

For we find this in chapter five in the Romans. For when we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died to the ungodly.

God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. How wonderful that is, friends, that while we were yet sinners, when we were yet enemies, Christ died for us.

You see, the apostle says, therefore, scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet per adventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

[ 30 : 52 ] It's a wonderful thought that is, and it shows how great the love of God was. And we were speaking in the interval, friends, of the many souls that have been saved, most unlikely souls.

You think of Manetha, you think of Mary Magdalene, you think of the dying thief, most unlikely souls, and yet they were saved by this glorious person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ah, how wonderful friends to see that the Lord has said in his word that the vilest are not without salvation, because the vilest sinner out of hell who lives to feel his need is welcomed to the Saviour's blood, is welcomed to the throne of grace, the Saviour's blood to plead.

So, the Lord has saved those that are far off, those who are like the dying thief, and in the sixth chapter of Romans, when the apostle comes to speak about those that are baptized, know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death, therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.

Yes, our baptism friends, those of us who have been that way, we have shown this, this death of Christ. When we went down into the water, we showed that Christ went into the sepulcher, into the grave, and when we came up out of the water, we showed his resurrection, we were raised with him, but you know friends, if we've been that way, we've been raised to a new life.

[ 32 : 47 ] Do we live this new life? Do we walk in this newness of life? Do we really show friends to those around us whose we are and whom we serve? Can it be said of us what was said of Peter and John?

Then they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of him. There will be a newness of life if we have been following him in this ordinance.

Yes, for if we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Oh, how wonderful then to see that in the Romans this theme was still there.

Listen to this verse in the eighth chapter. He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all. How shall he not with him also, freely, give us all things?

He spared not his own son, Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Oh, how we would desire then to join with these apostles in our day and age, and have this determination to know nothing among the people save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

[ 34 : 09 ] We preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block. It's sad, that is, when we think of it, friends, to the Jews, this preaching is a stumbling block.

They stumble at it. They cannot understand it. They're blinded to it. We mention that chapter later on in this same epistle where the apostle speaks of those Jews, and how that the natural branches of the olive tree have been cut off because of their unbelief.

Yes, and how true it is, friends, but they will be grafted in again. They will be grafted in again. All that that time may hasten when those Jews will be brought to believe, when they will see in this crucified one.

to the Jews, a stumbling block, to the Greeks, these Greeks in Corinth, to many of them, doubtless, the preaching when Paul preached there, it was absolute foolishness.

They just could not understand it. They, in their worldly wisdom, couldn't see how one who died could save, one who was crucified and buried in the sepulchre.

[ 35 : 29 ] Just couldn't see how this could be, that one who was dying on a tree on the cross at Calvary could save. But this is the only way of salvation.

This is the only one that could save. To the Greeks it is foolishness, but, but, unto them which are called.

Oh, to be among these called ones. Oh, to be among those friends whom he has chosen. And because he has chosen them he has called them out of nature's darkness, out of the world.

Called them as he did the apostle Paul himself. Called by his grace, unto them which are called. Whether they're Jews, and some of the Jews have been called, or Greeks, how different friends, this 24th verse is, because if we've been called, Christ, the power of God, we've felt the power of it, we've felt the sweetness of it, we've felt that the Lord does have all power in heaven and in earth, that Christ is the one who has the power, Christ the power of God.



Oh, that's what we want to feel more of, isn't it, the power, power in the preaching, power in the hearing. Oh, let's pray for the Holy Spirit, friends, to come, that we may feel the power, Christ the power of God, and Christ the wisdom of God.

[ 37 : 04 ] These two things, you see, were required as sinners were to be saved, power, Christ has power to save. We mentioned that word this morning, he's mighty to save, and because he has the power, friends, he can save, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God is seen in salvation, the wisdom in the way he did it, the wisdom that we see in the plan of salvation is wonderful wisdom, not the way that man would have done it, no, man wouldn't do it that way, he wouldn't have caused someone to die, no, but God saw that this was the only way, and so his wisdom shines in it, he is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, but we see the time is gone, the Lord bless the word to us, and help us to go on preaching this glorious theme, but we preach

Christ crucified, Amen. Christ God God God God God God God God God