

Determined not to know anything but Christ.

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- [0 : 00] We trust for the help of God as we turn to his word in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 2, verses 1 and 2.
- The second epistle, the first epistle to the Corinthians, the second chapter, verses 1 and 2.
- And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.
- For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.
- What a wonderful blessing it is to have this same determination that the Apostle Paul had.
- [1 : 21] For lack of this determination, we are all at a loss as to spiritual things.
- Without it, we shall have our faith standing not in the power of God, but in the wisdom of men.
- It may be that one or two of our younger friends know what the word determined means.
- Sometimes you may find yourself making up your minds to do something which you know to be wrong.
- That means you are determined to do it. You're going to do it. Whatever the result might be, you are determined.
- [2 : 19] And because of sin, all our determinations are sinful, except God take that determination away and give us another one, a better one, determined.
- If left to ourselves, young friends, we are determined to destroy ourselves. But if God is our God, he is more determined than that.
- But we shall not destroy ourselves because he's determined to save sinners. The poet said something like this, I think.
- When Satan's blind slave, I sported with death.
- And apart from the goodness and mercy of God, we are determined to sport with death. I know in these days we don't have the open fires in our homes that we used to have.
- [3 : 35] And we had to be told not to play with fire. Sometimes I think we three boys were so sinful that we would play with fire.
- We were told not to. Very dangerous. And if we are determined to sin, we are playing with hellfire. Playing with hellfire.
- There's no fire worse than that. Many wicked people who hated God and would not believe in him anyway when they came to die.
- And some of these were young ones. They cried out, fire! Hellfire! Hellfire! And then they died. Oh, how solemn a thing when you think of that.

How different when a young person or an old person goes to heaven and cries out like one we read of in the Acts of the Apostles.

[4 : 40] I wonder if you can tell me his name sometime. His name begins with the letter S. He was stoned to death. And when he was dying, he looked up into heaven and told those who were stoning him and all the people looking on, I see the heavens opened.

And the Son of the Son of the Son of God. And the Son of Man standing by the throne of God, or to that effect. Nor how he prayed, this man did.

How did he pray just before he died? Into thy hands I commit my spirit. And something else. He said, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

What a good man he was. He had the same determination that Paul had. The Apostle.

He was determined not to know anything amongst these Corinthian people, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

[5 : 45] Well, may the Lord bless you, young friends, with a spiritual determination. Or a spiritual persuasion.

What does that mean, to be persuaded of a thing? To be sure of it. You are sure you're in this chapel at the present time, aren't you? You know you are.

Well, you are persuaded that you are then. You're sure of it. Another word I would bring before you, in connection with being determined about something, or persuaded about something, that is, esteemed.

In Hebrews we read about Moses, that when he came to Yers, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Now, apart from God determining to save him and bless him, and to make him the one to bring Israel out of Egypt.

But for that, it seems that Moses would have become the king of Egypt. But he esteemed the reproach, the shame, that would attach to him, as a believer in Jesus Christ, he knew how the world would treat him.

[7 : 04] But he esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. And so, instead of having one word to think of this evening, we've got three.

So we find, as we go along, determined, persuaded, and esteemed. What does esteemed mean? I'm sure you have a love and respect for your parents.

You have, haven't you? You love them. You would do what they tell you to do, and what they say you shouldn't do, well, you know you shouldn't do it, you esteem them.

That's what it means, you esteem them. You hold them in high regard. You look up to them. You honour them. And I think these three words are connected with each other.

Indeed. Such was the estimation that the Apostle had of Jesus Christ. Such was the love he had for him.

[8 : 14] He was persuaded that his whole salvation depended on this crucified one. So was he determined not to come to these Corinthian people with excellency of speech or of wisdom.

Not to come like that. Because if he did, the end result would be this. The faith of his hearers would be found to stand not in the power of God but in the wisdom of men.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom. I didn't come with that manner of speech that would be thought to be wonderful but clever and learn it.

I came in sweet simplicity. Not with persuasable words of men's wisdom. Not that.

Because he loved them. Because he loved them and was anxious for their soul's salvation. He was determined to set aside such things as the wisdom of men and the wisdom of the princes of the world which we have read all come to naught.

[9 : 43] He didn't want to preach in such a way that all his preaching would come to naught. And that their soul should come to naught.

And their faith add up to naught. What's naught? It means nothing, doesn't it? Nothing. Nothing. Nought. That's what that means.

And so, setting aside this wonderful eloquence, this wonderful way of speaking, such as the Greeks delighted in, they sought after wisdom.

But they didn't get it. They didn't get that kind of wisdom. The wisdom spoken of here in their reading. Which things were hidden from the princes of this world because if it had not been hidden from them, so we read, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory.

Now you just think what that means. Very, very clever, worldly men with a lot of knowledge and understanding and worldly wisdom.

[10 : 56] And God keeps something back from them purposely. Because if he didn't, they would not have crucified Christ.

So God withholds wisdom, this excellency of speech and worldly wisdom. He keeps it back. He holds it back purposely.

He holds back things which, if he had given them to men, they would not have fulfilled the counsel of God from all eternity in crucifying the Lord of Glory.

You see, there's the wisdom which is from beneath, from Satan, the world, and that which is from above, heavenly wisdom, called here in verse 7, hidden wisdom.

Which God, though, ordained before the world unto a glory which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

[12 : 05] When you think of Jesus Christ, dear friends, dear young friends, I'm sure you do sometimes, how can you not when you hear him mentioned in the house of God?

When you think of him being crucified at the cross, do you feel sorry? Do you wish he hadn't been put to death like that? But no, he had to be.

Oh, why? Why, do you ask yourself, why was he put to death upon the cross at Calvary? To save poor sinners like you and like me?

That's the way of salvation as we have been singing in our two hymns so far this evening. Jesus is the way to God. Jesus crucified for sinners.

So when the apostle came to Corinth to preach, he did not come with wonderful words of man's wisdom, that which would appeal unto and be attractive to those who listen to him.

[13 : 18] No, he wouldn't come like that. He came like this, with a determination not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Now, from verses one and two, we can see that this preaching of Christ crucified is the testimony of God. For the same testimony was the apostle John banished into exile on Patmos for the testimony of God.

Like his, the one named after him or with the same name as him, John, John the Baptist. He preached Christ crucified.

Behold, said he, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. These two Johns suffered in different ways because of the testimony of God.

They would have nothing to do with the testimony of men or with the wisdom of men. They preached Christ and Christ crucified.

[14 : 39] We need this determination far more than we have it if we have it at all already. Is it your determination to know nothing amongst ourselves but Jesus Christ and him crucified?

It's true that other things have to be thought of and decided and worked out, but underlying all those things we have to do indeed like Paul who had the care of the churches upon him all the while he had those churches to care for but underlying all that there was this Christ the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God made flesh the Word made flesh on purpose to dwell amongst us and on purpose when the fullness of the time should come to be taken by wicked hands and slain to be condemned to death no one could possibly stop Jesus Christ from being crucified if no one could prevent Christ being crucified may no one prevent us from preaching

Christ crucified such was the determination of God the Father that he would give his dear son to be crucified and to lay down his life a ransom for us may we likewise be determined to know nothing amongst ourselves but Jesus Christ and him crucified clearly then this is the one thing needful it's not Jesus Christ without Jesus Christ and him crucified do you believe that this is the foundation you need for your soul's salvation is this the benefit of which you hope by grace to partake in scripture do we not read of those who are partakers of the benefits what sort of benefits some social security grant or help no something for the soul certainly a grant a free grant certainly a gift and certainly a gift flowing from the everlasting love of

God to sinners like you and like me so it's not just Jesus Christ Jesus Christ except he be crucified and put to death on their behalf well what good would he do us suppose he had never been put to death suppose he had never come in the flesh to have a body like our own suppose he had never come where we are what then he hardly dares thinking about and all such considerations and with them all earthly carnal fleeting considerations did the apostle Paul in a determinate manner fully persuaded and by reason of what he spiritually esteemed he put all that aside for his one central doctrine of the

Christian faith the hope of poor sinners are determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified and such were the conditions within this church that I think the apostle Paul had no other course to adopt they needed correction they needed crooked things to be made straight they needed divine instruction and Holy Ghost teaching and this is why he spoke or wrote to them as he did it was Jesus Christ and him crucified which would make the crooked straight Jesus Christ and him crucified which would bring them to their senses and convince them of their folly that they were pursuing there were divisions in this church and so bad were things that they regarded the Lord's supper as a kind of sensual feast they did as to that we know how the apostle said what have he not houses to eat in and to drink in there was much that was wrong in this

[19 : 59] Corinthian church and I believe that the apostle knew how these things would be put straight he knew the remedy and friends if you've got crooked things in your lot troubles upon your mind if you have those fears which have torment here's the answer it's Jesus Christ and him crucified there's no other name as we said this morning as we tried to emphasize this morning no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved where we need this determination except we are blessed with it with no telling what might happen all kinds of sinful thoughts will pass through our minds all kinds of sinful schemes will present themselves to us

Satan will get in and he knows how to get in so as to take us at his will here we have something which Satan will never overthrow no never what said Jesus on one occasion he said to this effect that his church was built upon a certain rock that was himself yes it was Jesus Christ and him crucified moreover said he the gates of hell shall not prevail against it and friends except you and I know something in a saving measure and manner of Jesus Christ and him crucified for us then we shall have a lot that will prevail against us we shall be shaken wounded bruised and Satan will get the better of us or how we need then to be built upon this foundation no other foundation will do either for life or for death either for time or for eternity but

Jesus Christ and him crucified except Christ were crucified then there would be no atonement for our souls no covering for our sins no righteousness or obedience that could be imputed to us would you like to think of death and face and holy God without an atonement for your soul without a propitiation for your sins without a remedy for all your spiritual ills without an answer for Satan without a plea before the throne of their holy God in the judgment day or think of what would be except Jesus

Christ were crucified we read this in scripture that the life is in the blood thereof you know what happens and what can quickly happen to one who has some blood infection or disease by reason of the system within us the arteries and veins and the heart and so on that poison would very quickly spread all over us and bring about an early death I know blood can be replaced blood can be taken away and can be put into one's system and even a natural sense as to a literal body surely that applies the life the life of the body the life of the body is in the blood thereof of that body and when you think of the soul and Jesus

Christ and his precious blood which only came about through his sufferings and death and sacrifice and crucifixion his soul will have no life the life of the soul is in the blood thereof thereof there at Calvary there in the person of Jesus Christ who so freely laid down his life a ransom for us all the Saviour knew the price of redemption no less as this no less than this his own heart's blood how freely did Jesus die one said how willing was Jesus to die think of the shame that surrounded his mock trial and judgment condemnation think of those who pass by hissing and wagging their heads and saying if thou be the son of

[25 : 36] God come down from the cross we will believe come down save us save thyself think of those those Jews who cried out his blood be on us and on our children and that meant condemnation for them the blood of Christ did not speak of good things in that connection by reason of their evil determination their evil Satan inspired esteem or persuasion far from it how different with God's children his blood be on us in Hebrews we read this that things in the tabernacle were sprinkled with blood the book and the various utensils sprinkled with blood and the people blood sprinkled all foreshadowing surely the sacrifice of

Jesus Christ those things were shadows and figures and types of the true and Christ is the substance the great antitype of all those figures shadows and types and here we have a tabernacle not pitched by man as the earthly tabernacle was but one pitched by God and what also of the rending of the veil when Christ died and gave up the ghost after declaring it is finished the way then into the holiest of all was made for us for us sinners what by by the blood of Jesus not by the blood of calves and of goats and heifers sprinkling the unclean but the blood of

Christ sprinkling the unclean and sanctifying not simply to the sanctifying or sanctification of the flesh but the sanctifying and the salvation of the soul who are you not thankful that Christ was put to death by all means let us mourn over him as the word says like one who mourns for his firstborn and when we look upon Christ oh let us look upon him as though we had pierced him and we have pierced him it is true that the soldier pierced his side with a sword it is equally true that wicked men pierced his hands and his feet with great nails driven through his hands and his feet in more ways than one was Christ pierced but surely this should concern us more than anything else that we have pierced him not with nails not with a sword but with their sins look at it like this and as we do so may it greatly humble us and inspire this needful determination in us a determination to hate and loathe sin even our sin and ourselves for our sins but also a determination to love him to love him walk in his footsteps follow him that he might be at all and in all so look at it like this

I say our sins were worse than that sword by which his side was pierced our sins meant more to him through piercing his holy soul and all the burden to his holy heart and mind our sins did more than pierce him through hands and through feet those feet which had been used to bring good tidings to poor sinners to preach the gospel to many many guilty ones to proclaim salvation why if Paul was determined to know nothing save Christ Christ himself was determined to reveal nothing but himself and determined that he should be crucified because this was the will of God concerning him and because their condition and case required nothing less than this so when we think of

Christ crucified let us not think of those who actually affix his holy body to the tree but let us think of their sins their awful sins their dreadful sins that pierced his heart and were the direct the immediate the means of his agony and suffering the cause thereof we caused his death we require that he should die we said with others away with him crucify him well the people succeeded in getting Pilate to condemn him there he goes to the place of execution outside Jerusalem's gate bearing his cross bearing his cross oh friend let us go therefore unto him without the camp bearing his reproach his reproach is connected with his cross do you know when Christ died it can be said then is the offence of the cross ceased that is to say the work is done salvation is proclaimed free full everlasting for guilty sinners who though they were guilty of his death yet their guilt that guilt was pardoned yet though we have crucified him in love and mercy he pardons us for crucifying him he had to be crucified as to the offence of the cross what of this we read of this offence that it was pacified it was cleared up settled and as it were put on one side in these words I mean amongst others

[32 : 52] Christ he despised the shame when he went to the cross he despised the shame if we are ashamed of something that may be done against us some wrong word some wrong attitude or action we don't like to despise this shame do we we might prolong it and foster it and be determined that it will exist this will not be put right oh what a solemn thing when we are determined not to put things right when maybe they can be put right with one kind word one expression of regrets one confession of being mistaken friend I'm sorry I did wrong well we have more crooked things than that and than those to be put right oh what crooked things we are we need them to be put right with this

Jesus Christ and him crucified the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin but now the Lord Jesus knew this when he went to the cross to be crucified but there was a crown the other side of all this a crown beyond it this he refers to or this is referred to by the apostle to the Hebrews like this indeed rather like Moses we quoted just now esteeming the reproach of Christ better riches than the treasures of Egypt Christ had his eye upon the joy that was set before him and that that eye of his upon the crown enabled him to endure the cross he endured the cross despising the shame for the joy that was set before him friends there's no salvation but through but through

Jesus Christ and him crucified as revealed to us by God the Holy Spirit as to our own personal and eternal and saving interest therein and additionally there's no hope of the crown of righteousness and the crown of life which God gives to those who love him but through him who loved them and who gave himself for them an offering and a sacrifice and such and one as was of a sweet smelling savour Jesus then as we have been singing is the way to God but not Jesus apart from Jesus and him crucified friends do we desire to preach Christ crucified no matter to whom it might be a stumbling block or foolishness as it was so with Jew and Greek are we determined that we shall know nothing amongst us save Jesus

Christ it's not this man or that minister or something else it's Jesus Christ and him crucified put to death on our account crucified because he was put to shame for us and made a curse for us he who knew no sin that we who knew no righteousness should be made the righteousness of God in him this is the gospel this is the only way of salvation all other things are of little consequence in comparison with this I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified the Lord add his blessing Amen I do my vegetables dele d in the home house every one farm him and good■■ have him