

We preach Christ crucified (Quality: Very Good)

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Date: 10 April 1983

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- [0 : 0 0] Thank you Lord, to be pleased to help me this morning. We would direct your prayerful attention to the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 1 and verses 23 and 24.
- First epistle to the Corinthians, the first chapter, verses 23 and 24. But we preach 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. It appears that in the church at Corinth there were those who were making far too much of the Lord's servants.
- The apostle in this first chapter is showing to these Corinthians that Christ is the supreme object.
- And should be, as the hymn writer says in one of our hymns, object of my first desire. When we put the Lord's servants in the place of Christ, we cannot expect to have the Lord's blessing.
- [1 : 3 6] And so these people, they were doing that. They were saying, as he says in verse 12, every of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.
- And then he makes this division to be seen as something that is robbing the Lord's people of the blessing.
- He says, is Christ divided? Is there any division there? No. Was Paul crucified for you?
- No. It was Christ crucified. Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? No. They were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
- And so, friends, it's Jesus Christ that should be the first object of our desire. And the first object in our worship. But how true are those words in the 18th verse where he says, The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.
- [2 : 4 6] Why is that? Because, friends, of what we read later in chapter 2, verse 14, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
- You see, those that perish, they have no faith, and therefore they cannot discern these things. These things are foolishness to them.
- They just cannot understand the preaching of the cross. It is to them that perish foolishness. But how wonderful in regard to each one of us here this morning, it is different to that.
- Unto us are we included in the little word us there. Unto us which are saved. It is the power of God. Have we ever felt the power of God in this preaching of Christ crucified?
- Have we felt the power of God in the word as we have read it? Oh, it is wonderful when we do, friends. When we know what the apostle meant in the Hebrews when he said, The word of God is quick, that is, living and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart.

[4 : 14] Now then, if we know something of the power of the word, friends, we shall love the preaching of Christ and of him crucified. And when we don't have it, you know, when it's lacking, we shall feel that we've missed something.

If Christ is not in the service or in the sermon, friends, there's something missing. All to preach Christ as the apostle did in his day.

For he says in the next chapter, verse 2, I determine not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. But coming nearer to the text, verse 21, After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God.

We shall never understand these things by natural wisdom, friends. We shall never understand the things of God with that wisdom of this world.

That's what he means there, surely. After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. And natural wisdom. It's impossible. But it pleased God.

[5 : 26] And there we are thankful for this, that it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching. And those that are the Lord's servants, they realise how true this is, friends. It is by the foolishness of preaching.

Sometimes when we sit down, you know, having preached, we feel sometimes how foolish we have been. But it is by the foolishness of preaching, God is designed to save them that believe.

We were looking into a word in another chapter in this epistle last Sunday. In the 15th chapter, where of course the apostle speaks of the resurrection.

But we were looking at those words there in the 15th chapter. Where he says, therefore, whether it were I or they, speaking of himself or the other apostles.

He says, so we preach, and so we believe. You see, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. God has designed the preaching.

[6 : 32] And when the Holy Spirit blesses that and applies it to the heart, faith is given to those that hear. So we preach, and so we believe.

Ah, what a mercy, friends, when faith is given. When, through the preaching of the gospel, that faith is bestowed, and God saves them that believe.

And then, verse 22, he says, the Jews require a sign. How often they did. When Jesus was here on earth. They wanted to see something. A sign.

They said, show us a sign from heaven. And hey, the natural, carnal mind of man wants that, doesn't he? He wants to see something with his eyes.

He wants some sign. But Jesus, when they asked for a sign, you know, he said, there shall no sign be given it but the sign of the prophet Jonas. Now what did he mean?

[7 : 36] He meant that Jonas was a type of himself. That as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so the Lord would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

So, the Jews require a sign. And how our text shows us, friends, that still, even to our day, to many of the Jews, this preaching of Christ crucified is a stumbling block.

They just stumble at it. They cannot accept it. They say, do they not, many of them, that the Messiah has not yet come. They stumble at it.

The Jews require a sign, he says, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. Now this city of Corinth, you see, it was in Greece and it was noted for its worldly wisdom.

These Greeks, they had much worldly wisdom but they didn't have the wisdom from on high. But what a mercy there were some of them who were brought to believe through the preaching of Paul the Apostle.

[8 : 49] During the past week, I've been tracing out a little of the journeys he took. Miles he must have travelled by sea and land and didn't have the means that we have today of travelling.

All the many miles he travelled and followed his master for Jesus went about doing good. And Paul went to all these places Philippi and Athens and Corinth.

And so he writes to this church at Corinth and he speaks of these things to them. The Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

The Greeks, that's what they did. They were always seeking after more worldly wisdom. But you know, friends, how true it is as we've been reading in the chapter.

Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. Often God passes by those with natural wisdom and bestows this heavenly wisdom upon babes.

[10 : 03] Didn't the Lord Jesus say, as we said in prayer, he looked up to his father one day and he said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto them.

Now the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom. But, the text says, but, we preach Christ crucified.

On that background that we've been referring to, he says, we preach Christ crucified. And this is what we should still be preaching.

We have been thinking of his crucifixion of late and of his death and burial in the sepulcher and his resurrection. And we would desire still to preach this because this is where our salvation is, friends.

This is where our salvation is. Our dear friend, you just know in the home, he was telling me how that word was blessed to him and is still a blessing to him, I believe, that we find in the epistle of Jude where he says, toward the end of that chapter, one chapter of Jude, unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

[11 : 36] Now, how shall we ever be presented faultless, friends, before the presence of God? Only in one way. Only as we're found in this precious Christ.

Only as Christ was crucified for us. Now, that's what we want to know, isn't it, today. We don't want to just preach Christ crucified. We want to know that he was crucified for me.

Crucified for you. But we preach Christ crucified. Now, the apostle, notice here, friend, he doesn't say, but I preach Christ crucified.

He could have said that, because he did. But he links with himself all these other servants of God. He's been speaking of Apollos, Cephas, another name for Peter.

And others of the apostles he's thinking of when he says, we, we preach. And what a mercy, friends, if we can also link up with this and say in our day, we preach Christ crucified.

[12 : 44] Now, I've been looking through the Acts of the apostles and have noticed how this again and again recurs.

That the apostles, after the day of Pentecost, this was their one theme. We preach Christ crucified. Let us just look through the Acts a little while and see how this is borne out.

They constantly came back to this one theme. We preach Christ crucified. In the first chapter of Acts, Luke, who is the writer of that, Acts of the apostles, he says, unto the day that he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen, to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs.

And so he did. He showed them his hands and his feet. He showed them his side. He said to Doubting Thomas, didn't he, reach hither your finger and put it into the print of the nails.

Reach hither your hand and thrust it into my side. Be not faithless but believing. He gave them proof, friends, that he was risen. But he was also seen of them 40 days and spoke to them pertaining to the kingdom of God.

[14 : 15] Yes, after his passion, this passion speaks of his crucifixion, of his death on Calvary's cross.

And then we have his resurrection. But when the day of Pentecost had come and these apostles had been blessed with the Spirit, the Spirit had been poured out upon them, we hear Peter preaching.

And he is preaching Christ crucified. We preach Christ crucified. Now listen for a moment, friends, to the preaching of Peter.

What a different man he was. Before he'd been afraid of a maid. He'd said to that maid in the judgment hall, I know not the man.

He'd been so weak, friends, although he said he boasted before, although all men deny thee, yet will not I, but when it came to it. And have we any stones to throw at Peter?

[15 : 22] Oh, friends, if left to ourselves, we should deny him every day. But how wonderful it was to see the change in Peter after he was restored, after the Lord had sent that special message to him, go and tell my disciples and Peter that I am risen from the dead.

And after he had been filled with the Holy Ghost on this day of Pentecost, he could preach with such boldness. And let us remember, friends, he was in the same city where these high priests and others had said concerning Jesus, away with him, crucify him.

He was still in the same city preaching to these same people. And what does he say to them? He says this, Ye men of Israel, hear my words.

Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you. You've seen this man, this Jesus of Nazareth. You've seen his miracles.

You've seen his wonders. You've seen his signs. God did these things by him in the midst of you. As ye yourselves also know.

[16 : 39] Now he brings home to them, friends, their great sin of crucifying this Lord of glory. How does he speak of it?

Him being delivered by the determinate counsel. I love that word, you know, that Peter mentions here. It was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

This was in God's mind from all eternity. In God's plan of salvation, he planned it, he determined it, that Christ should be crucified.

But you know, that didn't say that these people were not sinners. that they did not do this by wicked hands. This is how Peter brings it home to them in that city of Jerusalem.

You, he says, you have taken him. You just think of the boldness he needed, you know, friends, to do this, to say to those same people, you have taken him.

[17 : 43] You people, here in Jerusalem, you've taken him. And by wicked hands you have crucified and you have slain him. Oh, how these people, friends, had it brought home to them with such plainness by Peter.

How bold he was when he was under the influence of the Spirit. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

But not only does he preach Christ crucified, he preached Christ risen, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Now, friend, what was the effect of this preaching? This bold preaching of Peter? As the Spirit conveyed it home to these people, these very people that had crucified him, these people that had shouted out a little while ago, away with him, crucify him.

What happened when Peter preached Christ crucified to them? We read this, that when they had heard this, they were pricked in their heart.

[19 : 04] These people in Jerusalem, they were pricked. They had conviction of sin by the Holy Ghost. And that's what we need, isn't it? I feel that's something that's lacking, friends, in our day.

Real conviction of sin by the Holy Ghost. We don't hear much about sin, do we? And that we're sinners. But we are.

Great sinners. And we need to be convinced of sin. We sometimes pray that prayer, don't we, in the hymn, convince them of their sin. And how necessary that is in the first place to really be convinced that we're sinners.

To feel the sin in ourselves. Now these people in Jerusalem had that great blessing. They were convinced by the Holy Ghost. They were pricked in their heart.

Have you ever been pricked in your heart? Have I ever been pricked in my heart? It's a wonderful thing, you know, to be pricked in the heart under the preaching.

[20 : 10] You know, I've often compared this to when Stephen spoke, and we read that when Stephen spoke with such faithfulness, they were cut to the heart.

Now that was quite different. It didn't go into their heart. They weren't pricked in the heart. They were cut to the heart and they gnashed on him with their teeth. They didn't know that conviction, you see, by the Holy Spirit.

That's so necessary to be convinced of sin. To be pricked in the heart. And what did they say to Peter and to the rest of the apostles?

Men and brethren, what should we do? What should we do? They were like the Philippian jailer, you know, when he said, what must I do to be saved?

Now if you couple the two together, you know, the answer to the Philippian jailer and the answer here given by Peter, you have the necessary things in the way of our salvation.

[21 : 13] In the 16th of Acts, the answer is believe. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. And here we do need that faith, friends, the faith of God's elect.

To believe on Jesus Christ. To have that wonderful faith given. Faith is the gift of God.

Deep in the heart it lies. It lives and labours under load, though damped it never dies. But coupled with that faith, there must be what we have here.

Peter said unto them, repent. If there's no repentance, friends, it shows there's no real faith. See, repentance springs from faith.

We've been given faith, the faith of God's elect. We shall know repentance. We shall be brought where Peter himself was. And he knew this repentance himself because he went out and wept bitterly after he denied his Lord.

[22 : 18] He knew it whereas Judas didn't know it. Do we know it? Do we know repentance really and truly? Have we come alongside the poor publican sometimes and have we been able to say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner?

Oh, we do need it, friends. We need it every day. One feels to need it more and more. Yes, doesn't him say to us, daily I'd repent of sin, daily wash in Jesus' blood.

They were pricked in their heart and they said, men and brethren, what shall we do? Repent. But that wasn't the end of it. He adds something to it, doesn't he?

Repent and be baptized. Repent and be baptized. You see, if we've been brought to repentance, friends, I believe we shall have a desire to follow Christ.

Be baptized. He that believeth and is baptized, it's joined together there too in Mark. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

[23 : 34] He that believeth not shall be damned. I'm not saying that baptism is essential to salvation, but I'm saying it's essential to obedience. And it's something that follows.

If we really repent, friends, we shall have a real desire to follow Christ. Yes, repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ.

See, when we're baptized, we're baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, not in the name of Paul, not in the name of Apollos, not in the name of Cephas. It's Christ who is the supreme object, the one who we desire.

Peter preached this glorious theme then on the day of Pentecost. We preach Christ crucified. But it didn't stop there, did it?

Because in the next chapter when these same apostles and especially Peter and John, they'd gone into the temple and they'd seen that lame man sitting by the gate of the temple.

[24 : 46] And this man had been sitting there for many years and then he says to Peter he expects to receive something of Peter.

He gave heed to them expecting to receive something of them. Peter says, silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I thee in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk.

And this man who had been sitting there all those years he could now rise up and walk and run into the house of God walking and leaping and praising God.

Now when they were in the temple there Peter had another opportunity to preach to preach this same preaching he preached it in the street in chapter 2 you see outside now he can preach it in the temple doesn't matter where he preaches he has the same theme and what does he say then inside the temple the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob the God of our fathers hath glorified his son Jesus he's now glorified Peter says he's gone home to glory we saw him ascend as it's recorded in chapter 1 we saw him being taken up in the clouds there they were gazing up into heaven he's been glorified but he reminds them again inside of the temple whom ye delivered up whom you delivered up you people you delivered him and you denied him in the presence of

Pilate when he was determined to let him go you know friends I thought recently what a dreadful position Pilate was in he just couldn't find any thought in Jesus Christ not one thought and you know how in the end he took some water and washed his hands he must have felt to be in a dreadful position to have to say to these people well you take him and crucify him I don't find any fault in him dreadful position to be in friends he was determined Peter says here to let him go but no you said away with him crucify him he was determined to let him go but ye denied the holy one have you ever felt friends that this glorious person is the holy one the more we see you know that he was the holy one the more we shall be seeking after this holiness we shall be wanting to be identified with him be ye holy writes

[27 : 51] Peter in his epistle be holy for I am holy says God the holy one you denied the holy one and the just he was just that he was the justifier of those that believe in him he was in the sinner's place friend behold a scene of matchless grace it is Jesus in the sinner's place if you ever felt you know that Jesus was in your place when he was suffering that agony and that pain it will break you down it will melt you to tears to feel that Jesus was in your place that you because of your sin you deserve what Jesus bore it will break your day there is nothing like that to break a poor sinner day to feel that Jesus was standing in his place when he suffered you denied him in the presence of

Pilate when he was determined to let him go but he denied the holy one and the just and desired a murderer to be granted unto you Barabbas you desired a murderer and then he brings it home further he says you killed the prince of life you killed the prince of life what a statement that is isn't it when you come to think about it and weigh it up you killed the prince of life Jesus was the prince of life he's the one from which all life has proceeded when God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul Jesus was the creator Jesus was the prince of life all life proceeded from him what a mystery it is then that he was killed you killed the prince of life whom

God hath raised from the dead whereof we are witnesses and friends there you see in the temple Peter was still preaching the same theme we preach Christ crucified in the temple yes and he shows to these people that it was through his name through faith in that name of Jesus that made this man strong nothing in us says Peter don't look at us it's through Christ this man was made whole and it's through Christ friends that any of us will be made whole spiritually if that prayer in our opening hymn is answered friends it's through Christ alone that we're healed heal us Emmanuel here we are waiting to feel thy touch there's no other way to be healed only as we look to this crucified one you know those words over the top of the second hymn they've often been a blessed word to me where

Paul wrote in one of the epistles and said God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world we don't like being crucified to the world do we but if we're following Christ friends we must know it we must be crucified to this world and this world must be crucified to us crucifixion you see is a slow death and how slow we are to learn and how slow we are to be crucified to this world ah how we need that crucifixion to the world by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world well now the apostle Peter he goes on there with the same that we saw in chapter 2 repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out what is the only way friends we can have our sins blotted out as they were laid upon him the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all that's the only way they can be blotted out isn't it as he bore them for us in his own body on the tree yes we preach

Christ crucified how Peter preached it in that chapter and he preached it in the next chapter the fourth of Acts here were those rulers you know they were gathered together and they were bringing Peter and John before these rulers and they asked them by what power or by what name have you done this and Peter filled with the Holy Ghost he says ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel if we be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man by what means he is made whole be it known unto you all and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ whom ye crucified see how he continually presses it home friends and he presses it home here to the rulers not just to the ordinary people now he's been preaching to the ordinary people out in the streets of Jerusalem and in the temple but now he's pressing it home to the rulers to those high priests that they were gathered before be it known unto you all and to all the people of

[33 : 55] Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ whom ye crucified whom God raised from the dead even by him doth this man stand here before you all and then he says this this is the stone which was set at naught of you builders this is the stone that's spoken of in the psalm set at naught of the builders and you're the builders you high priests you that wanted him to be crucified you're the builders but he was set at naught by you but he's become the head of the corner and then he gives us a wonderful statement he says neither is there salvation in any other there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved we preach Christ crucified you see Cephas which is another name for Peter is mentioned in this chapter in

Corinthians and he was linking himself with Peter when he said we preach Christ crucified and you can see that in those things we've been looking at Peter was determined to preach this glorious person he couldn't do anything else what did they say when they were questioned about it when they called them and commanded them not to speak at all or teach in the name of Jesus what did they answer whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard see they've been witnesses to these things they've been with the Lord after he'd called them from their fishing and they'd seen all these things they couldn't help speak of it friends and if we feel the blessedness of these things we shall not be able to refrain from preaching Christ and him crucified it'll be our delight we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard so Peter was among the we in our text we preach

Christ crucified he was indeed but just before we come to the end let's just look briefly at the other part of the text and go more fully into it this afternoon we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block the Jews were those who crucified him it was the Jews friends who were shouting out away with him crucify him and to this day this preaching has been to the Jews a stumbling block they've stumbled at it what is a stumbling block something that we stumble over something in the road that we fall over and this preaching of Christ crucified because of their unbelief friends it's been a stumbling block to them all these years that the Jews are stumbling block many of them just cannot see it just cannot believe it if you read in the 11th chapter of this epistle you'll see how that through their unbelief those natural branches have been taken off they've fallen through their unbelief but we have this you know in that chapter

God is able to graft them in again and how we pray for the Jews that they might have their eyes opened that this preaching might not be a stumbling block to them anymore that the Lord will remove these stumbling blocks out of the way but to the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness when Paul preached in these cities you know where there was much worldly wisdom these things were looked upon as absolute foolishness how can one they would be saying how can one that was crucified save how can one that died save that's the natural reasoning of man friends how can one that died save me well it was through this blessed death and crucifixion of Christ that we're saved this is God's wisdom friends to do it in this way through his crucifixion through his death that we know salvation but the natural mind of man can't see it to the

Greeks friends and to the outsider today friends it's the same it's foolishness to them they just can't see it unto the Greeks it's foolishness but and there's another but in our text but unto them which are called now have we been called by his grace have we been called out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light if we've been called friends whether we're Jews or Greeks or in other words Jews or Gentiles it makes no difference if we've been called by his grace this preaching will be everything to us because it'll be this Christ the power of God power to save mighty to save we read of him Christ the power of God what did he say after his resurrection all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth he has power friends to save to the uttermost them that call unto him and call upon him

[39 : 42] Christ the power of God Christ the wisdom of God God he is our wisdom as it says later on Christ is made unto us wisdom wisdom is in him he is full of wisdom because we read in one place in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge all the wisdom we can see friends in this plan of salvation all the wisdom of God it's wonderful to see it Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God well we must leave the subject for this morning the Lord lead us further into it this afternoon Amen them.

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Seniistol Armyd flinch Kwik Africa ■ am helpless sao Christ Kum ■ Thank you.