

# The preaching of the cross (Quality: Very good)

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     The word which the Lord has laid on my heart to bring before you this morning, you will find in the chapter that we read together, the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, the first chapter and the eighteenth verse.
- For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
- First epistle to the Corinthians chapter one and the eighteenth verse. As I read this word and have endeavoured to meditate upon it as the Lord should help me, it came to me that this is a word which is as true in this day of ours in which we live as maybe as it has ever me.
- Should I say this, that the word has ever been true, but it is more applicable to the day in which we live than I believe it has ever been since it was written.
- Because there are many in the world who are denying everything concerning the word of God and the preaching of the cross.
- [ 1 : 40 ]     There are those in the professing church who are doing likewise. and there are those who are in the professing church who would call themselves evangelical, who also are among those to whom the preaching of the cross is foolishness.
- And I don't think there has ever been such a day in the church's history when the word of God has been torn to shreds in the way in which it is in our present day.
- And therefore I believe that this word will be beneficial to us as we see to consider some of the things which it contains.
- Now the word, as you know, is addressed to the Corinthian church. And it is encouraging to me to notice that Paul in his writing to the Corinthian church had one aim.
- You know that the church was divided. We read that in the chapter. How there were those that sought to go after one man and some after another man.
- [ 3 : 07 ]     And they were not unanimous. There was not that unity of the spirit which there should have been. And Paul in writing to them makes one thing very clear.
- That he is not concerned with who this man may be or who that man may be. He was not concerned with the eloquence and the oratory of Apollos.
- No, he was concerned with one thing and one alone. And that was the burden of his word. The preaching of the cross. You know that in this second chapter he says to them, For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.
- And my friends, in these days when the church of Christ seems to be split in so many directions, there is a great need, I do believe, for us to realise again that that burden of Paul's message, the preaching of the cross of Christ, Christ and him crucified.
- For there is no hope for any of us apart from that. Now, in this verse which I have read by way of a text, I see that there are two characters.

[ 4 : 43 ] I want first of all to consider, as the Lord shall help me for a few moments, those two characters. And then secondly to notice of what the preaching of the cross is and the effect which it has upon those characters.

Now, the characters referred to are, first of all, them that perish. And then secondly, us which are safe.

Us which are safe. Now this, the first character, sets something before us which to many people in these days is most distasteful.

Oh, you know that it is the general conception in the professing church that none will ever perish. That everyone born into this world will be saved by some means or another.

Only just a few days I was speaking to a minister of the Church of England and he was asking me various things concerning our faith.

[ 6 : 09 ] And he said to me, well, surely even those that believe in Mahomedism and Buddhism, they have a faith in an object, surely they will be saved.

They have some sort of a faith. You see, people are not ready to acknowledge and to realize in these days that the Word of God is true and the Word of God says that there are some who will perish.

all these people, they may have faith. They may have faith in an object and that faith may be remarkably strong.

but there is only one object upon which our faith can be fixed that will ever be of a saving nature and that is Christ and Him crucified.

So then I say that this first character which the Word of God plainly sets before us is something which is distasteful to the world at large.

[ 7 : 29 ] If you tell the worldling that he will perish if he does not come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, then often he will laugh at you and he'll have nothing to do with it.

But the Word of God is verily true. that the preaching of the cross is to them which perish foolishness. And then you know that there are those this character that are saved.

Us which are saved. Blessed character or the happiness of those that are contained within this world.

Us which are saved. those who have been made to differ from the world. Those who have been taught what they are by nature.

Those that have seen in themselves nothing but uncleanness and filthiness. Those that have been made to realize that there is nothing in them that can ever merit salvation.

[ 8 : 42 ] That it is all of God's grace. That it is only through Christ and him crucified. Oh favored people and those that are contained within this character.

Oh how thankful they should be. How they should seek to live more under him. and their lives should be a continual doxology for the grace of God which has been made manifest to them.

Now to revert just a moment to those which perish I want to consider what this means. What does it mean those that perish?

What is what does it mean ultimately to those that perish? well they live and they die without any knowledge of Christ without any desire to have any knowledge of Christ and the word of God says this that that the wicked shall be turned into hell and all nations which forget God.

Oh my friends there are those that say there may be some here this Sabbath morning that say ah but that's just a myth that's an old fashioned line of thing that's something that's long out of date that there's such a place called hell my dear friends this is not so according to the word of God and the word of God must ever be our rule book and our guide book the word of God must ever be our source of information concerning spiritual and eternal things if you dispense with the word of God where are you what have you as a foundation and if you take one part of the word of God and say well we don't believe that we'll believe this then my friends I say reverently why believe any of it it is all the inspired word of God and it says it is written for our learning and my friends we need to mark it well only during this past week

[ 11 : 15 ] I was speaking to a colleague in the office and he put forward a theory which is very popular in the present day that we are now separated from God living in this world and this is hell in which we're living now and that there is a time coming when that union which should be known with God as we are immortal beings will be reestablished and that will be heaven but my friends it is a myth because the word of God says that when we come down to die we are going to one of two places either heaven or hell and you know it is impossible that we could be living in hell as it is made known in the word of God while we're on this earth and I would say so just from one viewpoint alone to illustrate it while we are living here upon this earth each one of us are the subjects in a sense of the general grace of God and by that I mean this those benefits and favours which we experience day by day the warmth of the sun our clothes our food our friends our health these are all the blessings of almighty

God and it is within his power to withhold them from us and so my friends even the worldling that is in the world is a subject of that general grace of God now it is only those upon whom God has set his love from all eternity who can ever partake of the special grace of God which is that grace which will save them from their sins that special that peculiar grace which is made manifest to those alone whom he has loved with an everlasting love but my friends I say each one of us every day of our lives are the subjects of God's goodness in grace what does grace mean it means God's free unmerited favour all the favour that he bestows upon us every day of our lives and we're not worthy of it and my friend even if you do not acknowledge the word of God and God in his power and in his dominion you must admit that there is bountiful goodness showered upon you every day of your life and I say it is of the grace of

God well now in that place called hell that grace of God will no longer be known when those that are wicked and all nations which forget him are turned into hell they will no longer be the subjects of that free unmerited favour they will be cast there and they will be exposed to the devil and his angels and all the taunts and temptations and terrible suffering which can be made known from his kingdom hell itself you know the parable in the word of God of the rich man and Lazarus how that when Lazarus died he went into the bosom of Abraham and the rich man when he died he went down into hell and he sought that Abraham might come with a drop of water and put it upon his tongue to quench his thirst or my friends it is but an illustration of the terrible nature of hell itself well no that is ultimately what it means to be among those that perish!

and we need to mark it well or that God might in his mercy preserve each one of us from ever being found in that place which burneth with fire and with brimstone and where the worm dieth not but my dear friends conversely what does it mean ultimately to us as the apostle says which are saved oh the blessedness oh the heaped up happiness of those that are in Christ to them when they come down to die the dying grace is given oh the dying bed is made to be soft as it were and they are given a sight of that heavenly canyon of that place which

Christ has gone to prepare and oh although they may feel like Christian often time afraid as they come up to the brink of the river yet that they will find that they shall go across well nigh a dry shod oh that is what is given to them that dying grace whereas those that perish die on their own and go over into that terrible place and then my friends you consider what is their lot in what God has prepared for them what does he say I have not seen nor hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him all fruits new and old laid up in store to feast and sing forever more or to be with

[ 18 : 08 ] Christ which is far better to be in that place where there is no need of the Son for Christ himself is the light thereof to be in that place where it is all joy and gladness where there is one object of our affection and that is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world this is what it means ultimately to us which are saved and you know although this life may be a trouble and a trial to you what does the hymn writer say the trials of the road will seem nothing when we get to the end of the way oh my friends sometimes we get just a little foretaste of what heaven will be just a little sight but you know we haven't really conceived we never can on this earth what is really prepared for them that love

Christ or there's a house the word says with many mansions and Christ has gone to prepare it and he's one day coming to receive those who are amongst those which are saved and to take them to be with himself the word says thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty well now that is the blessed lot to those which are saved in contrast to those which perish well now I want to consider just for a little while what the preaching of the cross really is and as I look at the various points I do want to lay before you what the modern concept is of many of these things we do well to consider them first of all that we might be ready to combat the terrible nature of

Satan and his attempts to undermine the word of God and also that we might feel the more encouraged and thankful that God has made us to differ well now the preaching of the cross where does it begin I believe that it has its foundation in heaven itself where the world was made God God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Ghost e'er the world was made they planned that the world that the universe should be formed and that in the world being formed that it should be peopled with men that there should be those made in their own likeness who should people this earth but this is where this preaching of the cross first began and

God as he surveyed the scene he knew that Adam would fall he knew that the time would come when Adam would fall in sin and that so total would that fall be that he would be quite it would be quite outside of his power to ever recover himself to his former position he knew that Adam would sin himself out of any hope of procuring his own salvation apart from God's grace and so as he looked upon the scene and as the earth should be people God saw that those that were born in Adam should all be lost in trespasses and sin and that they would be sinners by birth that that which was born in

Adam that in which Adam fell would be born in them and they would inherit that sin which should be the governing factor in their lives now my friends first of all some may say we don't believe that God spake and the worlds were formed we believe that the earth was a piece that flew off the sun or some other such a myth but the word of God says that God spake and the worlds were made he created them he spake and it was done and my friends this is where the preaching of the cross begins and as God surveyed this scene and men that should people the earth and that should be in their lost condition oh he looked upon them and he foreknew!

[ 23 : 44 ] them and in that foreknowledge he loved them he loved those whom he would save unto everlasting salvation oh there were those whom God foreknew from all eternity and in foreknowing them he loved them and he loved them so much may I say that he was determined to save them whatever the cost or this is a wonderful word but it's something which is not accepted generally speaking in the present day or there are those that cannot accept that God foreknew his own and that he loved them but my friends I would say this it's it's the doctrine of mercy and of grace because all were guilty of sin all were worthy of death all were worthy of eternal damnation but

God in his love and in his mercy set his heart upon his own people that he would save them for his own glory oh my dear friends it cannot be that all shall be saved as some would say because how is it possible for those to be saved who deny the preaching of the cross how is it possible for those to be saved who deny the very existence of God those that shall be saved are those upon whom the father set his love from all eternity and whom he determined to save whatever the cost you know this word is wonderfully brought out in the Ephesian epistle you listen to these words blessed foundation for our faith according as he hath chosen us in him chosen us in him when before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love chosen before the foundation of the world and then you know

I said that he determined to save them whatever the cost he foreknew! then he set his love upon them and he so loved them that he determined to save them and you know he determined to save them and the only way in which they could be saved was through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ God the Father in his love and in his mercy although the cost was extreme yet he willingly gave the Son and his love and the Son willingly came oh I love that word which again is in the Ephesian epistle you know it speaks to us of how there is salvation to the Lord's people in whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace or the riches of his grace that he should send the

Lord Jesus Christ that through the shedding of his blood his own people might be saved so then he determined to save his own and although it meant the sacrifice of his only begotten son although it meant all that is contained within it yet the cost yet he loved them so much that he determined to save them irrespective of that immense cost oh the love of God oh the immeasurable love of God that he should so love poor sinners that he should send the Lord Jesus Christ to die for them and then you know the preaching of the cross brings us to this point where the Lord Jesus Christ actually came to this earth and after such a relatively short life two or three years in the public ministry he was taken to that place called

Calvary he was taken without the gate there to suffer and to bleed and to die for his people or the preaching of the cross you see the Lord Jesus Christ he was hung there upon the cross of Calvary and you know the word of God says this that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission for sins the Lord Jesus Christ died and his precious blood was spilt that his people's sins might be forgiven but my friends there was more than this John in his epistle says that he was made to be the propitiation for our sins he died in his people's stead he died to bear the punishment for their sins that punishment which would otherwise have sunk them down into hell he died to bear that punishment

[ 30 : 00 ] I love that hymn which one often quotes in the day of his anger the father did lay our sins on the lamb and he bore them away he died to atone for sins not his own the father hath punished for us his dear son the lord jesus christ as he hung there on the cross and in matthew's gospel you'll find that it says that for three hours darkness covered the earth so terrible was the scene and he cried out my god my god why hast thou forsaken me why because god had turned his back upon him why was that because he who knew no sin was made to be sin for us because he who was holy harmless spotless the undefiled son of god our sin if we're in him was laid upon him he was made as if he had committed our sin and he was punished for it that we might go as free men oh my dear friends

I feel to but Paul he set this forth but oh the grace of god that god should make his only begotten son a sinner he should impute our sins to him that he might die and bear the punishment for them that we might go as free men oh this is the this is the preaching of the cross of Christ well you know there are those that perish that will tell you that the preaching of the cross of Christ is foolishness that tell you that it's a myth it is indeed foolishness unto them you see there are those amongst the nonconformist bodies who claim to be evangelical in their outlook that will tell you that the preaching of the cross of

Christ was well it just meant that a man died upon a cross and it meant nothing more than that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to them is a distasteful thing oh I read this terrible blasphemous statement made by a church leader who said this that even a school boy would know that the blood of Christ could never wash us and make us white as snow oh my friends these are terrible things but they're verily true the preaching of the cross is to them which perish foolishness and you know there's another line of thought that people will tell you that the Lord Jesus Christ only went to the cross because he was defeated it was his way out he was got into a corner as it were and it was his way out oh my friends

I wish to be frank that you might understand the terrible nature of this foolishness and it is to them which perish foolishness but unto those which are saved it is the power of God you know this preaching of the cross I want to take it one point further you see this preaching of the cross contains something else in the Roman epistle we read something of it and it says this know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death that 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 also should walk in newness of life therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death the preaching of the cross my friends contains this thought baptism following the

Lord Jesus Christ in his appointed way thus it becometh as he said to John to fulfill all righteousness for you know there are those that will not accept this truth there are those that will not accept this truth but I say it is contained in the preaching of the cross of Christ why because it is a setting forth it is a type of the death and the rising again of the Lord Jesus Christ as we make a profession of his name then we are letting those around us know whose we are and whom we serve as we go down into the baptismal water we are typifying the death of Christ and his being laid in the grave and as we rise again from the water we are typifying his rising again in newness of life the blessed resurrection of the

[ 36 : 11 ] Lord Jesus Christ my dear friends how do you feel about it how do you feel about such a thought as this you know the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost he said this when he was asked men and brethren what shall we do to be saved what did he answer repent and be baptized every one of you I would say this baptism would never do anything will never do anything toward the salvation of a soul it will never merit heaven itself but my friends it is this it is the answer of a good conscience I sometimes wonder my friends how we should feel before the judgment seat of Christ if this blessed truth has been made known to us if this command which it is of the

Lord Jesus Christ has been made known to us and yet we put it out of our minds you see it is in the cross it is the preaching of the cross it is typifying I say his burial and his rising again oh my friend how do you think you will feel in that day if you never by God's grace put on the Lord Jesus Christ as the apostle says if you never follow him in his appointed way oh do you feel that you stand before him feeling that you did you were a witness for him before the world will you stand before him rejoicing in the fact that you did obey his commandments or will you stand there with that feeling that although the way was made plain you were guilty in that you did not follow him

I leave the thought with you but nevertheless this preaching does contain it now as we come to the close I want to direct your mind to one or two characters in the word of God to whom this preaching of the cross was made known you see there were those in the early church of whom we read to whom it was indeed the power of God and to salvation or those who are saved it is not foolishness to them they embrace it they embrace it with their whole heart it is their very life blood the preaching of the cross of Christ is to them a delightful thing because they see in it all their salvation and all their desire the

Lord Jesus Christ is unto them which believe exceedingly precious oh and when others do despite to Christ and to the preaching of the cross then there's something which stirs within them in anger in defiance oh my friends it is the power of God what do I mean well the word of God says this that they overcame him by the power of the blood and by the word of his testimony they overcame him who's him Satan the adversary of our souls the accuser of the brethren they overcame him by the power of the blood and the word of their testimony there is that in the preaching of the cross of the Christ which we love which enables us to live our everyday lives there is that which enables us to wield the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit against the devil it is indeed the power of

God and then my friends when you consider his salvation when you consider going to be with him where he is though a poor guilty sinner oh it is indeed the power of God and my friends what a power it is that it can save such wretches as you and I such wretches as the soul of Tarsus a Mary Magdalene a Manasseh oh it is indeed the power of God and when we see what we are by nature then we verily feel that it is the power of God for note when the apostle Paul was on his way to Rome you know that the Jews had taken him and were holding him captive and first of all we read in the the act how that he appeared before

[ 41 : 49 ] Felix and as he appeared before Felix Felix asked him to speak for himself and the apostle Paul spoke with him and he told him and he preached to him he told him of the preaching of the cross and the rising again of the Lord Jesus Christ and do you know what it says happened to Felix as Paul was preaching to him it says this and as he reasoned of righteousness temperance and note and judgment to come Felix trembled oh so persuasive so powerful will the words of the apostle Paul that Felix trembled and answered go thy way for this time when I have a convenient season

I will call for thee go thy way for this time when I have a convenient season I will call for thee and then you know there was Agrippa before whom Paul spake a little later in the Acts and as he was speaking before Agrippa you know that Festus was there and what did Festus say as Paul expounded these things what did he say he said Paul thou art beside thyself much learning doth make thee mad oh my friends are there any here this sabbath morning that would say a similar thing are there any here this sabbath morning that would say to the preacher you're mad these things are myths they're not true oh my dear friends solemn position to be in because if you live and die like that then there's no hope and you'll remember those words for all eternity you'll hold a picture as I've heard our dear pastor say many times you'll hold a picture of this place in your mind for all eternity and it will add weight to those terrible things which you experience

God forbid that any of us should be left to be in such a state of mind to say that any of God's servants are mad because they declare the preaching of the cross and the judgment to come and then you know there may be those characters here that say as did Felix go thy way for this time when I have a more convenient season I will call for thee and you know it would appear from the word of God that for a space of two years Paul spake before Felix and yet as far as we know from the word of God he never came to the knowledge of the truth my dear friends procrastination in the things of God is a terrible thing whether we be born again believers and God is calling us to any particular thing or whether we be yet in the world without

God and without hope the devil will promote procrastination as often as he can oh my friends are there any here that would say go thy way I'm waiting for a more convenient season I'm young there's plenty of time for me to think about these things I want to live my life I want to have my fill and then when I'm older I'll think about these things my friends the day may never come the day may never come as it came to Felix oh how we need to remember it death is now upon the road oh that we might be found in Christ ere it is too late and then you know there's one last character that I want to speak of I mentioned his name Agrippa and what did Agrippa say oh he said this as

Paul spake with him Paul Paul almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian my friends I'm well aware of this none of us can persuade any to be a Christian it is the work of the Holy Spirit but my friends we must speak these things and teach these things that men might be warned almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian and as far as we know concerning Agrippa he never did come to a knowledge of the truth it was a question of almost as the word says in the gospel thou art not far from the kingdom but my friends there are many as he said who die just outside of the gates of peril you know that there was one in Bunyan's pilgrim progress and he seemed to finish the journey and he crossed over the river and he got just outside of the gates of peril and it said that as he got there they asked him where his certificate was and it says he fumbled in his bosom and he could not find it why couldn't he find it because he hadn't come to the knowledge of the

[ 48 : 00 ] Lord Jesus Christ as his only saviour and what happened to him they cast him down into hell oh my friends have you got your certificate I say have you got your certificate is Jesus Christ thine only thing is he thy great forerunner there what do I mean the very simple word in the word of God says this concerning our salvation we must have two things repentance toward God godly sorrow for our sins and then faith in the Lord Jesus Christ God grant that we may have it Jesus is a door and its sides are two inside outside which side are you amen