

The Cross at the Center - Part 2

by Derek Prince

The cross is the sole basis of Satan's total defeat, and faith is the key to being righteous and overcoming Satan.

Duration: 28:22

Scripture: Luke 11:21-22, Romans 4:22 - 5:1, Ephesians 2:14, Colossians 2:13-15, Revelation 12:10

Topics: "The Cross", "Faith Alone"

Description

This sermon by Derek Prince Ministries emphasizes the significance of the cross at the center of Christianity, highlighting how the cross is the sole basis for the total defeat of Satan. Through the cross, Jesus administered a permanent defeat to Satan, disarming principalities and powers. The sermon delves into the importance of faith as the key to righteousness, explaining how faith alone, not works or the law, is the basis for being counted righteous before God. It also addresses the issue of guilt and how believers can overcome Satan's accusations through the blood of Jesus and their personal testimony.

Transcript

Derek Prince Ministries, proclaiming the inspired Word of God around the world. Derek Prince is an internationally recognized Bible teacher and author. Through books, audios, videos, and radio broadcasts, Derek seeks to reach the unreached and teach the untaught.

In over 50 years of ministry, Derek has reached over 100 nations in more than 50 languages. And now, Derek Prince. Now I want to give you three more reasons why we need the cross at the center.

And my third reason is divided into two parts. So if you add the first three and the second three, that makes six. And if the sixth one is divided into two, that makes seven.

And I'm always satisfied when I've arrived at seven. I feel that's it. I don't need to look for any more.

So the next reason, and this is extremely important, and one which our enemy would wish that we never discovered, and he'll do everything in his power to prevent us apprehending it or understanding it or applying it. This reason is that the cross is the sole basis of the total defeat of Satan. Through the cross Christ administered to Satan a total, permanent, irrevocable defeat.

Satan cannot change that. He realized it just too late. Because when he procured the death of Jesus on the cross, he procured his own defeat.

But ever since that, he's been doing everything he can to obscure that fact and to keep it from the eyes of the church. And if you go against Satan in your own life or in any situation, on any other basis but the fact that Jesus defeated him through the cross, you'll be defeated. Because he is much stronger and much cleverer than we are in our own wisdom and strength.

In the ministry of deliverance from evil spirits, which the Lord led me into nearly thirty years ago now, I soon discovered that demons are not impressed by our theology, they're not impressed by our denomination. You can tell them I'm Pentecostal or I'm a Baptist or I'm a Presbyterian. They could care less.

But when you deal with them on the basis of what Jesus accomplished on the cross, then it really is true that demons believe and tremble. And I've seen demons trembling many times when confronted with the reality of the defeat that Satan suffered through the cross. I want to turn to a Scripture in Colossians chapter 2, verses 13 through 15.

And I have to say this is a somewhat complicated statement. And I'm not going to be able to take time to elaborate it at length. But I trust that the Holy Spirit will make it clear to you.

Colossians 2, verses 13 through 15. And you being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He, that is God the Father, has made alive together with Him Jesus Christ the Son. Having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting requirements that was against us which was contrary to us, and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross, having disarmed principalities and powers.

He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Now I'd like you, if you have your finger in the Bible, keep it in that passage. Because we'll go back there.

But turn for a moment to Luke chapter 11, verse 21 and 22, which is a parable. Which I believe unfolds the truth that's stated doctrinally in Colossians chapter 2. Jesus says when a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.

The picture there is of a man, a tyrant, an oppressor, who has a very strong castle of which he's total master. And in that castle he's amassed a great deal of ill-gotten spoil and booty from people he's oppressed. He also has under his control a multitude of slaves whom he forces to do his will.

And he's sitting there, fully armed, as he thinks undefeatable. But another man who is stronger than he comes against him, defeats him, and notice this, takes from him all his weapons and then releases his captives and plunders his goods. Now, who is the first strong man? Satan, that's right.

And the second strong man is Jesus. So that's a little parable about what Jesus did. Satan had everything under his control.

He had enslaved humanity, robbed us of all the wealth and the blessings that God our Father intended us to have, and he was sitting there undefeatable. And then, praise God, along came Jesus. And without any military weapons, through the cross, Jesus administered a total, permanent, irrevocable defeat to Satan.

Having defeated him, listen, he took from him all his weapons and then he said to the captives, Now you can go free. And he said, While you're going, help yourself to some of the spoils. That's Jesus' own picture

of what he accomplished by his death on the cross.

Now go back to Colossians chapter 2, verses 13 through 15, and you find how he did it. Jesus spoiled, if you look at verse 15, he disarmed principalities and powers. Whose principalities and powers were those? Satan's.

Satan's. All right. The same principalities and powers spoken of in Ephesians 6.12 where it says, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies.

So Jesus defeated them and stripped them of their weapons. And he made an open show of them. And then, what we need to understand is, on what basis he did that.

Because until we understand the basis, we can believe it in theory but we cannot apply it in practice. What is Satan's great weapon against humanity? Now you could give me many answers, but I'm only going to accept one. No, no, I think I heard somebody say it timidly.

Guilt. That's right. Guilt.

See, I'll give you a little picture which is just out of my imagination of something that could have happened way, way back in who knows how many ages ago. We do know that Satan, at least in the time of Job, had access to the presence of God. Because when the angels came to present themselves and give an explanation of what they'd been doing, Satan joined the throng.

It's typical of him because his attitude was, well God, I know I made a mistake, but here I am, I'm still coming to your presence. And according to my understanding, the only person who spotted Satan was the Lord. Because Paul says he can be changed into an angel of light.

Anyhow, then you remember that God and Satan had a discussion about Job. Are you perhaps rather glad that you weren't the person they had the discussion about? Anyhow, I picture Satan is impudent, he's defiant, he's a braggart, he's got a big mouth. I picture sometime Satan saying to God, listen God, I know you're a righteous and a just and a holy God.

I know that well enough. I know I'm a rebel, and you see that lake of fire and brimstone that isn't in heaven and isn't in earth up there in outer darkness. I know that's where I'm headed God.

I know I deserve to go there. I'm not arguing. But listen, I just want to tell you one thing God.

You see those human beings that you made in your image and likeness that you love so much? I've made them rebels just like me. You know that. And so God, remember this, when you send me to that lake of fire, your justice demands that you send them too.

Just keep that in mind before you dispatch me and my angels there. I picture God just keeping quiet. Sometimes the best way to deal with the devil is not to argue with him.

That really hurts his feelings. If you ignore him, that really upsets him. God didn't say, but he had a plan.

You know what his plan was? His plan was Jesus. So along comes Jesus. He's the last Adam.

He's totally identified with the Adamic race. And Satan goes after him and procures his death. But as he dies on the cross, he's the representative of the total Adamic race.

And all our guilt is laid upon him. He pays the total penalty. And when he dies and is buried, our guilt is banished, if we will believe.

We have to accept it by faith. So you understand what God has done? He's made a way for humanity to be reprieved from the lake of fire. And yet in his justice he can forgive us and punish Satan.

And there's never a suggestion anywhere in the Bible that Satan has any other destiny but the lake of fire. Jesus did not take upon him the nature of angels. He's not a substitute for angels.

He's the last Adam. He's a substitute for the whole Adamic race, but only for the Adamic race. And one of the things that I think eternity will be too short to discover is why God cared so much about the Adamic race.

It's I think the most amazing fact in the Bible. And there's a lot of amazing facts in the Bible. If you read your Bible and never get astonished, I don't think you've understood it.

It is an astonishing book. And so, on the basis of what Jesus did, you understand, God can now justly punish Satan when it suits him and justly acquit those who accept the sacrifice of Jesus on their behalf. We're not acquitted unless we avail ourselves of the sacrifice.

Now God did two things with the death of Jesus to deliver us from guilt. Number one, He made provision for the past. And so it says in verse 13 at the end, He forgave us all our trespasses.

All our acts of disobedience were punished in Jesus and so God, without compromising His justice, can forgive us. So the past is clear. And if you are really a believer in Jesus and you've accepted His provision, there's nothing against you from the past in the records of heaven.

Every evil deed you ever did has been blotted out, God has cast them into the sea of His forgetfulness and He has said He will remember them no more. And you may remember what Corrie ten Boom used to say, he's put up a sign that says there's no fishing. That's what God has done with our past.

And every one of you here this evening that is a believer in Jesus, should have a confident assurance that all your past sins are totally forgiven, never to be remembered again. Because if you've committed sins which you haven't confessed, that isn't necessarily true. So the remedy is to confess them.

If we confess our sins, what happens? God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But God still has to make provision for the future because otherwise we'd go back and start sinning all over again. God's provision for the future is more complicated to understand.

He has removed the law of Moses as the requirement for achieving righteousness with God. And the writer says God nailed the law with its commandments and ordinances to the cross. Now there is a hymn that says our sins are nailed to the cross.

I'm not sure about that. But what I do know is that the law was nailed to the cross. And once we come to the cross and go beyond it, we're outside the territory of the law.

We're no longer under the law, we're free from its requirements. We'll be dealing with that later in another session. So what is the requirement now for righteousness? We're not required to observe the law of Moses, thank God, because none of us would observe it in all its details.

It's very complicated, makes a lot of demands. So what in one word? Believing. Yes, I was going to say faith, but that's perfectly right.

That's all that's needed is faith. You understand? Not keeping a set of rules, but faith. Let me turn you to Romans chapter 4, which takes the example of Abraham.

It says in Genesis 15, verse 6, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. What was counted to him for righteousness? His faith. That's right.

And Paul says here at the end of Romans chapter 4, verse 22 and following, And therefore it was accounted to him, Abraham, for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed or counted to him, but also for us it shall be imputed to us who believe in him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered because of our offenses and was raised because of our justification. So we are in the same category with Abraham.

If we believe the record of what Jesus did on the cross, He was delivered to death because of our offenses, He paid the penalty, and He was raised up from the dead for our justification that righteousness might be imputed to us, then righteousness is imputed to us on the basis of our faith, just as it was to Abraham. Abraham didn't earn righteousness by keeping the works of the law. He wasn't even under the law.

And it will not be imputed to us because of what we do, but because of what we believe. Faith is the only basis for righteousness that's accepted by God. And as I understand it, God does not permit us to add anything whatever to that requirement.

It's not faith plus something. Not faith plus the law, faith plus the church, faith plus baptism, faith plus good works. It's faith.

And as they used to say, sola fide. You know what that means? By faith alone. That was really the great recovered truth of the Reformation.

I don't think the Reformation just recovered everything, but it did lay hold of that one fact. It's only by faith that we can be counted righteous with God. Because God has abrogated the law of Moses as the requirement for achieving righteousness.

And He's not substituted any other law, praise God. I know that I've taught this so many times and I've seen Christians with their mouths open gaping at me in astonishment. I've got used to that.

And yet really this is the central truth of the gospel. The amazing thing is how many people say they believe the gospel and don't understand this. Let me give you just one other Scripture in Ephesians chapter 2, beginning at verse 14.

Ephesians 2, 14, speaking again about what Jesus did for us on the cross. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one. Both who? Jew and Gentile.

And has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity. That is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances. And I think we'll leave it there.

He abolished in His flesh, by His death, the law of commandments contained in ordinances. And thereby abolished the enmity. You see the law doesn't bring peace, it brings enmity.

First of all it brings enmity between Jew and non-Jew. It has for something like 4,000 years, or 3,500 years. Because here are the Jews doing this and saying this is what makes us righteous, and here are the rest of us not doing it, and saying well we're just as good as you are, and maybe better.

And then the law also brings enmity between God and man. Because when we come under the law and break it, we become enemies of God. So in order for us to achieve righteousness, God had to set aside the requirements of the law of Moses.

And it says here, the law of commandments contained in ordinances. If you want to look at another translation which is very specific, look at the New International Version. It says it extremely clearly.

You see most of us feel like a drowning man who's holding on to a plank, which is the law. And if we let go of the plank we're going to drown. Well the truth of the matter is we have to drown and come up again, because the plank won't do it.

So what's the key to being righteous, in one word? Faith. Listen, there's a wonderful instance of this in Luke chapter 22 at the Last Supper. Jesus is warning Peter that He's going to deny him three times that night.

And He says this to Peter, in verses 31 and 32. Simon, Simon, indeed Satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you.

What did he pray? That he wouldn't deny him? No. That your faith would not fail. Peter, you're going to do a lot of bad things.

But if you keep on believing, I'll see you through, Peter. That's good news, isn't it? If we can just keep believing, God will bring us through. We may have our problems, we may have our defeats, but our faith is continually reckoned with us for righteousness.

If you go back to the story of Abraham, it's very interesting. Abraham did quite a number of wrong things after that. He let his wife be taken into a Gentile harem.

Well, that's not a good thing to do. God didn't approve of that, but all the same, even while he was doing it, his faith was still being accounted to him for righteousness. You see, if you could only grasp this, you'd heave a sigh of relief.

I don't mean that God encourages us to do bad things, but if we're sincerely seeking to do what He wants, even if we do some bad things, our faith is still counted to us for righteousness. Relax. You don't have to hold on.

Just keep believing. That's it. And by that provision, God has enabled us to be free from guilt.

Satan has nothing more that he can accuse us of because of the cross. Look in Romans 5, verse 1. We really don't need to look there, many of you know that. Therefore, being justified by what? Faith.

We have peace with God. And even better, Romans 8, verse 1, which says, There is therefore now no condemnation. How much condemnation? No condemnation.

Is it for those who keep the law? No, but for those who are in Christ Jesus. As I understand Romans, and I've taught on this recently in a video series, there's a pilgrimage from chapter 1 through to chapter 8. I call it the Roman pilgrimage. And chapter 8 is the destination that we should all aim for in the Spirit-controlled life.

And its climax is eternal, inseparable union with Jesus Christ. But chapter 8 is the victory chapter. But there's only one doorway.

It's verse 1. There is therefore now no condemnation. If you're under condemnation, you cannot live in Romans 8. And most Christians come under condemnation again and again and again, and they lose it. They don't stay in the chapter because they haven't learned the basis of being free from condemnation.

Look for a moment in Revelation chapter 12. We get a real good picture of our enemy here. Now, some people believe this has happened.

I personally believe it's still in the future. But I won't argue about that at this point. Anyhow, it describes Satan and his angels being cast out of heaven.

And then it says in verse 10, there was a loud voice saying in heaven now salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ have come. For the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. Now if that's still future, that tells us where Satan is and what he's doing right now.

What is he doing? He's accusing us. Do you realize that? That's why you have such dark, deep, moody feelings. There's an atmosphere being created around you of guilt, and you've got to learn to deal with it.

Why does he accuse us? What's his purpose? He wants to make us prove us what? Guilty. That's right. You say, well why doesn't God stop him? As I understand it, God's answer is because I've given you the power to stop him.

And I'm not going to do for you what you can do for yourself. The next verse tells us how to stop him. Brothers and sisters, I make no charge for this, but if you were to pay me money, there is no money you could pay that would be worth what I'm going to tell you.

Because it's the answer to guilt. What is it? They overcame him. Who? Who's him? You notice there's a direct conflict between God's people and Satan.

They overcame him. Some people like to tell us that Satan doesn't give any problems to Christians. That is not true.

And it's not scriptural. They overcame him. How? By the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

Now I'll tell you what I believe this means. We overcome Satan when we testify personally to what the word of God says, the blood of Jesus does for us. It's our testimony.

You see, under the old covenant, in order to apply the blood of the Passover Lamb which granted them immunity from judgment, they had to sprinkle the blood on the lintel and the doorpost. Do you remember the story? And they could only use one thing to sprinkle the blood, a little bunch of a herb called hyssop. They dipped the herb in the basin, sprinkled the blood and they were safe.

Now, for us the blood of Jesus has already been shed. Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed. The blood is available.

How do we apply it where we need it? What is our hyssop? The answer's there in that verse. Our testimony, that's right. By our testimony we apply the blood where we live, you see.

So we overcome Satan when we testify personally to what the word of God says, the blood of Jesus does for us. Now if time were unlimited I'd take you through a series of confessions. But the Bible says we're redeemed by the blood of Jesus out of the hand of Satan.

The Bible says the blood cleanses us from all sin. The Bible says we are sanctified by the blood. We are redeemed by the blood.

There's four things. Practice saying those.

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