

Jesus Christ Is All

by Joseph Carroll

The sermon emphasizes the importance of accepting Jesus Christ as all, recognizing that He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and that we have nothing to offer Him.

Duration: 28:33

Scripture: Matthew 5:3, John 15:5, Romans 6:6, 1 Corinthians 1:17-30, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 3:8-9, Colossians 2:3, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6-7

Topics: "Jesus", "Dependence On God", "The Cross and Self-Denial"

Description

Joseph Carroll emphasizes that true faith in Jesus Christ begins with being 'poor in spirit,' which means renouncing all personal resources and self-reliance to fully depend on God. He explains that the cross symbolizes a painful death to self, and only through this crucifixion can one truly embrace the new life offered by Christ. Carroll challenges listeners to examine whether they have truly accepted the death of their former selves and to recognize that Jesus Christ is the source of all wisdom and power. He illustrates that worldly wisdom and strength are rejected by God, who chooses the weak and despised to confound the wise. Ultimately, Carroll asserts that Jesus Christ is all we need for righteousness, wisdom, and sanctification.

Transcript

We've been considering in recent weeks the first few verses of the Sermon on the Mount. And we've seen that the first beatitude, I believe, is the key to all else. Blessed are the poor in spirit.

That's where our Lord begins, that's where He always begins. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. And our Lord here is speaking of that person who by choice, by choice, has chosen utter destitution and utter renunciation of all personal resources in order that he might have God for his every need.

That's what our Lord's speaking about here. How can you live a life of faith in Him if you already have some faith in yourself? What is He speaking about? He is speaking about what He's always speaking about, He's speaking about death. He is speaking about somebody coming to the end of himself.

That's the beginning. And we have said earlier in our exposition of this tremendous passage of Scripture that this is a description of a true Christian. How can you receive Christ's salvation if there's something left in you? How can you take what He has to offer? You say, oh yes, Mr. Carroll, well I know that nothing in

my hands I bring and simply to His cross I cling.

The two aspects of the cross or just one? What is the cross? The cross is an instrument of death. The cross slays and it slays utterly. And it's a painful death.

It's painful. It's never comfortable. But the cross, when it does its work, makes possible newness of life.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Why is it that the poor in spirit have the kingdom of heaven? Because they've renounced the kingdom of earth. Do you remember the words of the Apostle Paul? God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ by which I am crucified unto the world.

Are you crucified unto the world? If so, has the cross of Christ done its work in your life? If not, are you saved? Are you saved? The cross means crucifixion. Crucifixion unto what? Unto the world. Its pleasures, its possessions and its position.

Are you crucified unto them? If not, the cross hasn't done its work. Are you saved? Are you crucified unto the world? They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affection and lust. Have you crucified the flesh with the affections and lust? If not, are you Christ's? You are not.

You are not. They that are Christ's, they that belong to Christ's, have crucified the flesh, the self-life, with its affections and lust. This is something that has taken place.

And if it hasn't taken place, you are not Christ's. And you do not even begin to become poor in spirit. How can you? How can there be this life unless the death of the former life takes place? One who is absolutely destitute.

He is the blessed man in the sight of God. Now, there is no rule by consensus when it comes to serving the Lord, and being what the Lord wants us to be. In other words, Lord, let's reach a consensus.

I'm willing to go 90% of the way, and it's quite a way to go, Lord. After all, I am improving. God doesn't expect you to improve.

He demands that you die. Well, I'm coming to it. Coming to what? Coming to crucifixion, coming to death.

A 90 or a 99% surrender is no surrender. Why? Because there's still just a little bit of life left. The death hasn't taken place.

And that is why the ways of the man in the world are totally different from God's way. He does not want to be destitute. Not quite.

He does not want to find his security solely in Jesus Christ. Almost, but not quite. He has never accepted the sentence of death upon himself.

And so he builds up his security, reputation, assets, material goods. And the more he builds up, the more he robs himself of what God has sent. It's the way of the world.

It's not the way of the cross. An illustration that seemed to mean much to those youngsters at Ben Lippin was that of an ocean liner. When it comes into port, it comes into the berth and it ties up to the berth.

And there are perhaps 20 very strong steel horses that are passed from the ship to the shore to tie that mighty ocean giant safely to the shore. And then when the time comes for the ship to set out to sea, they let go of the horses. One, two, three, splash into the water.

And then all except one splashes into the water. But not until that last one lets go can the ship put out to sea. Whilst one horse is still connected to the shore, it doesn't sail.

Whilst you are still depending upon one thing apart from Jesus Christ, you don't set sail. Death must take place. The last line must be severed of self-centeredness.

And the death of the cross upon yourself, you, me, must be accepted. And for the first time we become destitute. Hallelujah.

And for the first time we know what it's all about. I tell you, I looked at that boy's face in the darkness and it glowed with a light from another world. I said to him, your face has changed.

When did your face change? When did it change? Some of you dear people I know you well, I want to tell you tonight your face never has changed because your heart has never been broken. You've let a few of the lines go but quite a few are still there. You will not accept the sentence of death upon you.

And death is absolute. You won't accept it. You'll go down to hell in your sins.

The big issue is not the sins you have committed. The big issue is that thing in you and that thing in me that makes the sin a fact. That's what God has to deal with.

That old man, that sinful nature in every one of us, God has to deal with it. And the only way he will deal with it is by the cross. There's no other way you can deal with it.

Pour in spirit. There is the kingdom of heaven. Shall we turn to Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians? Chapter 1, reading from verse 17.

For Christ sent me not to baptise but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. Why did Paul not use wisdom of words? That's the world's way. What does the world glory in? Man's wisdom.

So because that's the world's way, God rejects it. Everything that is the way of the world, God rejects it. He'll have nothing to do with it.

Because that world lies in the lap of the wicked one. And that's the way of the wicked one. He's not preached with wisdom of words.

Why? Because he would annul the effectiveness of the cross. The cross is foolishness to the world. Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect, for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.

But unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God.

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. 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. I want you to underline that. Christ is the power of God, and Christ is the wisdom of God.

If you want the power of God, and if you want the wisdom of God, it's going to have to come from Christ. Nowhere else. If you want God's power and God's wisdom.

Therefore, any school that is not centered in Jesus Christ cannot in any wise impart to its students the power and the wisdom of God. It can't be done. It's impossible.

Jesus Christ is the power of God. Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God. And if you are to have the power of God and the wisdom of God, you've got to renounce the powers of this world and the wisdom of this world.

You've got to renounce it. Why? Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Verse 26.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men are to the flesh, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are. What a tremendous passage.

Why does not God choose worldly greatness? Why does he reject it? Because all the strong things in the world are hostile to God. We live on hostile territory. That's why he rejects it.

Why is it hostile to God? Because it's under control of the devil. I will remember some years speaking at Ben Lippin at their graduation ceremonies, and Dr. Fortosis was then headmaster, and he did what to some people would be an unusual thing. None of the faculty, not even one of them, had any of their graduation robes on, you see.

Usually it's a great day for a great pomp and great ceremony, and everybody comes out with the robes, you see, and of course Dr. Fortosis has quite a number. I think he has at least five degrees, perhaps six. He said, no, we'll just sit in our business suits.

Hallelujah. No pomp, just let's give the Lord the glory. Hallelujah.

Now why does God choose? He chooses that which in the sight of the world is regarded as nothing. Now I want you to observe this. The things that are rated as nil, all right, first in verse 27, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world.

Now, the world regards foolish things as having no true wisdom. How can a foolish thing have true wisdom in it? It doesn't exist in the foolish thing. So God chooses the foolish thing as against the wise thing of the world.

He rejects that which the world calls wisdom and chooses that which the world calls foolish. Then he chooses the weak things of the world. What does the world think of the weak thing? Well, there's no strength in it.

It's nothing. So as against the world's concept of strength, God chooses that which is weak. In other words, nothing in the sight of the world.

Then he chooses the base born, or the base things of the world, which from the world's viewpoint have no worthwhile origin in them. So the world has its family trees, and the world has its kings and queens and dukes and duchesses, and way down the line, and when you get right to the bottom of the line, that's where God makes his choice. That's the wisdom of God.

That which the world considers to be nothing. Do you remember what they said of Peter and John when they preached with such tremendous power? And the power of God was manifest in the performing of a miracle through them. And when they stood before the Sanhedrin, before they should have cowed and apologized, they faced them with the fact that they'd murdered the Lord of glory.

And what did these men do when they beheld Peter and John? They perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, that they were face to face with the power of God, and they couldn't do a thing about it. We are not willing to die to everything that is of the world. That's why we don't see the power of God.

And yet there it is writ large in the Acts of the Apostles. There it is, for all of us to see. God comes right to the bottom, and he chooses out of the bottom the base things of the world, which are in the sight of the world nothing.

And things which are despised hath God chosen. The things that are despised, the things that are accounted as nothing, despised, God chooses that. Now why does he choose that? Verse 29, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

That's why. No flesh can glory in the presence of God. And so we build our fleshly organizations and puff up fleshly preachers and say we're worshipping God.

Is that so? We have a lot to learn. I always tremble a little bit when people begin to glory in their denomination. Is that so? Why do you glory in it? You can't glory in that and the Lord at the same time.

Because it has great schools. That's probably the trouble with it, the great schools. The Methodists never permitted a Bible institute or a school of any kind for a century.

That was the great century of the Methodists. From then on they began to descend. That was the pinnacle.

Then they became worldly. Why? They lost their power. I'm not saying we should not have schools.

But it should be a certain type of school. And it's very difficult to keep it that certain type of school. Because in comes man with his worldly wisdom.

And out goes God with his heavenly power. That no flesh should glory in his presence. Verse 30, But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

What is the Apostle saying to us? Jesus Christ is all. That's what he's saying. He comes to the end of his tremendous argument when he shatters everything that is of the world and the devil and reveals to us God's way.

Why? Because God is determined that Jesus Christ will be everything and he'll have all the glory. That God is determined on. He has made Jesus Christ righteousness.

None of their own. He's our righteousness. Hallelujah.

We say hallelujah to that. But he's not only our righteousness. He is our wisdom.

We say hallelujah to that. You can't have two sources of wisdom, my friend. Either Jesus Christ is your wisdom or he is not your wisdom.

And if Jesus Christ is your wisdom, you have renounced all other wisdom. What a wonderful thing it is to be able to kneel down before Jesus Christ, bringing nothing to him, no suggestions, no plans, no answers, no nothing. Excuse the phrase.

And just say, Lord, what's your answer to this? And he gives it to you. That's true wisdom. What is your answer to this, Lord? And very often he will give you an answer that nobody would ever have thought of.

Couldn't have thought of it. It's so wonderful. And that's his answer.

And that's what he blesses. That's what he blesses. Not your good ideas, not your plans, not what you want, not the image that you have that God's going to have to fit into with his blessing.

What an abomination that is. Nothing. Destitute.

Poor in spirit, but having everything because you have Christ, as you're all. Many years ago in India, I was speaking at a conference for missionaries, and I met there a girl who had been in school with my wife, Carol Terry. She'd been a secretary for many years of one of the greatest or most famous preachers in America, and a very capable preacher.

Personal secretary. Before she went out to India, and she was now the leader of a very large mission, the Ramabai Bhukti Mission. They had about 30 or 40 Bible women, 1,200 orphans, and related works.

She was the leader. And she introduced herself to me as we made our way toward the meeting one morning, and as we were passing a tea house, I said, well, Miss Terry, we have a little time to spare. Why don't we have a cup of tea together? So we were chatting together, and she was telling me about my wife and the days they spent together, and I was very interested, and then we happened to speak about sanctification, holiness.

And I said, well, Jesus Christ is our sanctification. Isn't it wonderful to know that Jesus Christ is all? She says, yes, I know, Mr. Carol, but you know it is a struggle. I said, no struggle, Carol.

He either is or he isn't. Ah, yes, she said, I know it all, but it is a struggle. So I didn't say any more, but I prayed for her that day, and late that afternoon, we had a special little meeting for this dear woman and her Bible women, many of whom had come with her to the conference and some of the missionaries.

And during that afternoon, I happened to quote that 30th verse. Jesus Christ, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. And the Spirit of God took that word, and he thrust it into her heart, and she saw it.

She saw it. What had she never accepted? She had never accepted the sentence of death upon Carol Terry's abilities, or Carol Terry's efforts. And early the following morning, I had an Indian runner come to my room, and he knocked at the door, and he handed me this note, and on it were just a few words, it's glorious, I feel as if I've been born again, all over again.

Maybe she was. She wouldn't be the first missionary who's been saved on a mission field. Wouldn't it be wonderful if some of you church officers got saved? Wouldn't that be wonderful? Wouldn't it be wonderful if some of you dear women who know so much about doctrine and who don't know the Lord got saved? Wouldn't that be wonderful? That would be wonderful.

Wonderful indeed. I believe she was saved. She went back to the mission, and when she arrived back, the Indian folk went out to meet her, and they stopped and took one look at her, and they said, what has happened to you? What has happened to you? For the first time in her life, she had truly accepted the sentence of death upon Carol Terry for all things and everything.

Have you? I can tell you the answer for some of you, you have not. And until you do, Jesus Christ is not truly yours. Now shall we pray? O Lord, your ways are not our ways.

Your thoughts are not our thoughts. Your way is the way of death, the way man does not want to go. We thank thee that death is the gateway to life.

O Lord, wilt thou not open blinded eyes and unstop deaf ears that the King of glory might come in? In Jesus' name, Amen.

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