

# The Gospel of Jesus Christ: A Burden for Young People

by Paul Washer

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*Paul Washer's sermon passionately calls young people to recognize the centrality of the Gospel and the necessity of a true relationship with Christ for salvation.*

**Duration:** 1:17:37

**Scripture:** Genesis 6:5, Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:19, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

**Topics:** "Young People"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the gospel of Jesus Christ as the foundation and constant motivation for believers. He highlights the need for constant proclamation of the gospel and a greater understanding of Jesus Christ and what God has done for us. The preacher also addresses the current state of churches in America, acknowledging both positive and negative aspects. He emphasizes that the gospel is the only message with the power to bring about salvation and transformation in a person's life.

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## Transcript

1 Corinthians chapter 15, beginning in verse 1. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and therein ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. That He was buried, and that He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, I come before You in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. I know that apart from Him, I would have no part with You.

And Father, Thou art late, and we've heard a good word. Father, I pray that You would grant us mercy, that You would grant us grace upon grace. I pray, Father, that we would see Christ.

And I pray that those who have never seen Him would see Him. Father, we need You very, very much to do something here for us, for Your own glory. Father, I have a special burden.

I suppose You gave it to me for the young people who are here tonight. Dear God, please grant me the grace, in spite of who You know me to be, grant me grace to deliver unto them somewhat of a picture of

Christ. Father, I know that's asking a lot.

But I pray that You would, in Jesus' name, amen. I want to talk to you tonight about the gospel of Jesus Christ. And I know that that sounds like I'm probably preaching to the choir, but I'm not.

We're going to take a look at this text, and we're going to take a look at what God has done for us in Christ. And my cry, my burden, my greatest desire is that God would open up your eyes, and that you would see the preciousness of Christ, the value of Christ, the worth of Christ. I pray that God would open up your eyes so that you could appreciate the person of Jesus Christ and the salvation that's found in Him.

And if you're a Christian, I pray that God would open up your eyes in greater and greater degree so that you could see Christ. Because any other motivation for the Christian life is idolatry. It's Christ and Christ alone.

Now look at our text. He says, Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel. Now, this is fascinating because Paul had preached the gospel to them.

They had heard the gospel. And now here he is declaring the gospel to them again. I find that very fascinating.

It tells me something very important, that the gospel is not only the first step in Christianity. It's the second and the third and the fourth and the last. It's the foundation upon which we stand.

It is the constant motivation. It is the magnificent obsession. What God has done for us in Jesus Christ is the thing that propels us to follow Him and to know Him.

And we have a constant need to have the gospel proclaimed to us. We have a constant need to hear the gospel and to see Christ, Christ, Christ. I'm young in years, but I've been through much.

In 20 years of preaching, I know that the only thing sufficient to keep a heart burning is a greater and greater picture of Jesus Christ and what God the Father has done for us in His most precious Son. And so he says, Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preach to you. There's something very good going on in America today in churches, but there's also some things going on that are very, very bad.

When men come before me in a pulpit and they tell me they want to share with me from their heart, the only thing I want to do is walk out the door. I'm so tired of hearing from men's hearts and hearing from their minds and hearing from their opinions. What I want is for someone to stand back and preach to me about Jesus Christ.

Someone to tell me, Thus saith the Lord, and not apologize, and preach with the authority of God about the subject they've taken. If you're here tonight and you're a young person, you might wonder about why all the rapture in speaking, why all the passion, why the big to do about preaching? Because it is through the foolishness of preaching that the wind of the Holy Spirit, we don't know from where he comes, but he comes and he moves upon men's hearts and he transforms them and changes them. And what you need more than anything else is something I can't give you and your parents can't give you and you can't give you.

Only God can give you. You ought to get down right now on your hands and knees and cry out that the wind would blow through these doors and touch your heart and give you life so that you can come forth

and take those grave clothes off and walk with God. He says I preach.

Now what is it about preaching? There's something you need to understand. In preaching, I'm going to tell you things you need to do. I'm going to tell you things you need to stop doing.

And I'm going to tell you about God. And where do I come off having such authority to do something like that? Well, some preachers would tell you they have that authority because they've been called of God. God called donkeys.

God calls ducks. Calling has nothing to do with it. You can be called and you can be wrong.

You can be called and not have authority in the pulpit. So it's not my calling that gives me authority to tell you about God. TV preachers would tell you that they have the authority because they've received some special anointing from God that gives them the ability to speak the words of God.

First John tells me everyone has that anointing who believes in Jesus Christ. So where do I get the authority to tell you about God, to tell you about heaven, to tell you about hell, to tell you about repentance and faith and what you must do to save your life? Where do I get that authority? I have that authority only to the degree that I correctly interpret and clearly proclaim the word of God. So it's not about my opinion.

It's not even about my passion. It's about God's word and it being transmitted to you clearly. But that is not enough.

Not only do you need to hear, you need to see. And even if you saw it, it wouldn't do you any good. You need life to come forth from the grave.

And so in preaching tonight, I'm like a clown or a puppet. There's absolutely nothing that I can do to save you. And there is absolutely nothing these words can do to save you.

Unless God himself has mercy on your soul. And if that troubles you, then cry out at this very moment, before we even begin, God, have mercy on my soul. God, open up my eyes, open up my heart, open up my ears.

It says, moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached to you, which also ye have received. I want you to think about that. Today in America, after even good gospel preaching, we have preachers messing it all up by saying, now, you need to receive Jesus Christ by opening up your heart, by praying a prayer.

That's not what this means. Not at all. I have served so many years in a Catholic country where people are actually told that if they are baptized into the Catholic Church, they will be saved.

I find no different doctrine among most Baptists who say, if you will simply pray this prayer, you will be saved. That is not true. It is not true at all.

What does he mean by receiving? Do you remember when he said, unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood? To receive Christ doesn't mean to pray some little prayer or nod to some confession of faith or even to memorize scripture. To receive Christ is to take Him in as your sustenance, your very life. He is not just some accessory that you wear like a pair of shoes or a belt or a purse that matches your outfit.

To take in Christ is not to take Him in as an accessory or even a ticket of salvation. To take Him in is to take Him in whole, as Christ, as the Son of God, as the Lord of glory, as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. To take Him in to your life, to receive, to embrace the fact that you are not your own, you belong to God and He is your Lord and your life.

You draw everything you have and everything you are from Him. I hear people say all the time, Jesus is all you need. No, Jesus is the only thing you have.

Apart from Him, there is nothing. There is no life, there is no light, there is no meaning. Apart from Jesus Christ, there is nothing.

To receive Him is to take Him in. And he says here, he says, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand. It's an idea here of conviction.

An idea that I stand upon Christ and Christ alone. That He is my only hope of salvation and apart from Him, I have no part with God. Young person, I know what it's like to suffer for Christ.

I know what it's like to burn up with fever in the jungle. I know what it's like to freeze to death on top of the Andes mountains. Five times I've been robbed.

Three times I've had a gun to my head. I've been chased through the jungle for six days by terrorists for preaching the gospel. I know what it's like to almost die with fear.

And if I died right now, I'd go to heaven. And not because of any of that. If I died right now, I'd go to heaven because 2,000 years ago, the Son of God died for this man.

And He is my only hope. And I expect to grab that thread and swing out into eternity with the greatest of confidence. Because He's able.

He's all. It says in verse 2, by which also ye are saved. I hate much preaching today.

I hate much offering of Christ today that I hear in pulpits. Because they talk about Jesus and then they offer many other things to embellish Christ and make Him attractive. When did we come to decide that salvation just wasn't enough to motivate us? When did we come to decide that Christ was not precious enough to draw men and so we have to embellish the gospel with other things? He says, by Christ you are saved, by faith in Him you are saved.

What else do you need? And if you're waiting for a greater offer to come along, well, they'll come along, but they're given by men who have something to sell. Not by God. You sit here and you hear gospel preaching, but your heart's not moved.

Do you know what that means? If your heart's not moved and you hear gospel preaching and it doesn't draw you to Christ, it means that the Holy Spirit's not moving on your heart. And if you continue in that condition, if God does not grant you mercy, you'll go to hell. And you need to fall down before God and you need to cry out, God have mercy on me.

Blow on my heart. Open my eyes. I'm a young person and I've been in this church and I've been under this type of preaching.

But my heart has never been moved. Could it be, Lord, that I'm to be shut out forever? Oh, a good dose of fear would do you good. This is by which also you're saved if, if you keep memory what I preached unto you, if you hold on to what I preached to you.

Now, there is no way. There is no way I can compromise this text. Let me finish before you throw a stone, but there's no way I can compromise this text.

He says here quite clearly, you are saved if you hold on, if you continue. That's what he's saying. And what does that mean in that conditional clause? The negative of that is this.

If you do not continue, you are not saved. Now, what is this? A proof text for falling from grace to say that a true believer can lose their salvation? Not at all. What this is, is a warning about evidence that if you have truly been converted by the power of God, since salvation is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

If you've truly been converted, you will continue until the end. But if you find yourself in the younger part of your life bearing fruit, and you turn away from that, you apostatize, you walk away from Christ. Christ is not rich for you anymore.

The love of Christ does not burn in your heart. You can care less about the things of God than tremble with fear, because it means that God's never worked on your heart. You've never been converted.

And you need to fall down and cry out to him for his mercy. It says, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received.

For I delivered unto you first of all. I delivered unto you as of first importance. A while back, when I was in Peru, we were hit with several heresies of one shape, form, or fashion and another.

But one of the greatest was this. That the gospel of Jesus Christ, and we hear this today. The gospel of Jesus Christ is milk for babes.

You will not find any doctrine, any truth, more profound and unsearchable, than the gospel of Jesus Christ. And to say it is for babes and you are to grasp it and then move on to other things, is to blaspheme the blood of Christ. And the gospel is not something that tags on to something else.

It is of first importance. There is nothing of greater importance. There is nothing I could do for you tonight any greater than what I am doing, and that is preaching to you about Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

You will hear no greater thing. It might be said in a better way by a greater preacher, but you will hear no better thing. This is it.

This is the message. This is the only message with the power of God to bring about salvation in the heart of a man. There is no other.

I go to these missions conferences all the time, and they are always talking about mission methods, and mission ways, and new theories, and new ways of winning men. We have three weapons. The preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, intercessory prayer, and sacrificial love.

If you want another weapon, then get another job, because you are just looking for an easy way out. And for you here that do not know Christ, you need to understand something. There is not something else that is going to come along that is going to bring you to God.

Even if God were to bring men out of hell to testify to you, it would not do you a bit of good. This is the only message that will ever save you. This is the only message that will ever transform you.

And you would do well to listen. Strain your ears to listen. I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received.

Paul talking about his apostolic authority here. This message is not for men. Men would never think up such a message of salvation being brought to men through the death of the Son of God under the wrath of God.

It is absolutely preposterous. It is foolishness to men. This is not something that you learn in a seminary.

This is not something that you learn when you pass some class. This is the very message of God. And it is to be preached as the message of God.

If I could reach out right now and grab ahold of your heart and pull it to me, if I could scream into your ears, I would do it. If I could beg you long enough to be converted. Be converted tonight.

Trust in Christ tonight. Repent of your sins tonight. Run to God tonight.

Please, young people, please, don't delay. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins. The hardness of our heart is tested whenever we read that text and do not weep.

Christ died for my sins. Why does that not touch us? Could it be that we do not understand sin? Could it be that we do not understand how he died? What I want to do right now is I want us to take our leave from this text. And I want us to go and search through Scripture for a moment.

And I want Scripture, and I pray the Holy Spirit would show you, if you are a Christian, what you were. And if you are not a Christian, what you are. And I am going to be as rough and offensive as I can possibly be.

I am not going to speak to you with words like smooth stones. I am going to come against you like a rasp. I hope it tears away at your flesh and I hope it burns in your heart.

I would rather have it infuriate you and you stone me than just to sit there calmly. But this is what God says about men. This is what God says about the most innocent looking child here.

Let's go to the book of Genesis. The book of Genesis, chapter 6, verse 4. For the length of time, let's go to verse 5. Genesis chapter 6, verse 5. And God saw the wickedness of man that was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. I had a reporter come to me one time after preaching at a university, and he was furious, absolutely furious, because I taunted on the depravity of man.

He was beside himself with anger. He said, I am not that way. What that passage says in Genesis 6, 5, I am not that way.

Maybe you're sitting here tonight and you're thinking, I am not that way. I have never been that way. It's not that my thoughts are so wicked.

It's not that every intention of the thought of my heart is wicked continually. That's not about me. Well then, let's take a test.

If I could, now bear with me, follow my words. If I could pull out your heart at this very moment, and I could take every thought you have ever had since the moment you were conscious, until this very moment. If I could take every thought you have ever had, and I could put it up here on a screen.

I could put it on a film strip and show it tonight to all the people in this church. You would run out of this building and you would never show your face here again. And you know what I'm saying is true.

You have thought things so vile, so perverted, so wicked, that you cannot even begin to share them with your closest friend. And you know that I'm reading your heart correctly. Now I have not even mentioned your works.

I'm talking about your heart. I'm afraid for you. Look man, look inside.

Look what's going to be exposed on the day of judgment. Is that what you really desire? That your heart be filleted like a fish, and opened up and every intent, every thought of your heart to be judged under the righteousness of God. Is that what you desire? Look in your heart.

You know what's there. Darkness so deep it cannot be calculated. Perversion so strong that if anyone even got a whiff of what was brewing in your heart, you would run a thousand miles to escape their notice of you.

You know that's true. You know that's true. And if you know that you would be ashamed before sinful men with a heart like that, how much more would you be ashamed before a holy and righteous God? Go to Genesis chapter 8 verse 21.

And the Lord smelled a sweet Savor, and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground anymore for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Scripture is quite clear. Men are born with a corrupt Adamic nature.

The tiniest child in this room, dressed in white, ribbons in their hair, possess a corrupt Adamic nature. Apart from the grace of God, has the potential to make Adolf Hitler look like a choir boy. Let me give you an example.

Say I'm holding a child in my arms, or the child you hold in your arms, 12 months, 18 months. The child sees your watch shining, grabs at your watch. You say, no.

Grabs at your watch again. You say, no. Grabs at your watch again.

I want you to know something. And correct theology backs me up on this. If that child, that 18 month old baby, had the strength at that moment of an 18 year old man, that baby would slaughter you where you stand, rip that watch off your arm, walk over your dead body, leaving bloody tracks on the floor, and walk out the door without an ounce of remorse in their heart.

You say, I have never heard of such a thing. Well, you should have. Because that is what we mean when we say that men are born with corrupt Adamic natures.

I have received the greatest news for me, that my wife is pregnant. When it's absolutely medically impossible, she's now pregnant. And I'm so happy.

But that boy that is going to be born to me, apart from the grace of God, could be the greatest monster the world has ever known. Just to throw something in, the other day I was preaching and I said, I pray with all my heart, it is my greatest desire, my greatest hope, that my son would glorify God. And it's like at that moment, God stopped me.

Do you realize something? My son will glorify God. And you will glorify God. And this is an awesome statement for a father to say.

But my son will either glorify God in heaven as a demonstration of the mercy of God, or my son will glorify God in the deepest bowels of hell as a demonstration of God's justice. But my son will glorify God. And so will you.

Don't think you're going to rob God of glory. He'll get glory out of you. He got it out of Pharaoh.

And you're no Pharaoh. People talking so much about Satan today and how dangerous he is. Satan's not dangerous.

He's not the one you should fear. God's the one you should fear. He's the dangerous one walking around in this congregation this evening.

So many people... I heard someone today talking about... I heard a preacher talking about a child. The parent said, but my child, ever since my child has been born, my child has loved God. That oh, my child just loves God and loves God.

She just loves to go to church and she loves to sing and she loves to do all this. She hasn't been converted. She hasn't been regenerated as you suppose.

But she loves God. Let me explain to you something. She hates God.

Then what is she loving? She's loving the image of a God she has made with her own mind. That is what she is loving. And that is what she is worshiping.

And for this very reason, Sunday morning in America is the greatest hour of idolatry in the week. Because so many people who are loving God are not loving God of Scripture. They're not loving Yahweh.

The person they are loving is a God they've made out of their own sinful mind. They've projected Him out there in space and they adore Him. But if the real God showed up or the real God was preached, they would walk out that door as I've seen them so many times saying, my God's not that one.

Make no mistake. They hate God. Hate God.

Hate God. Can you imagine? Here's God. He tells constellations, put yourself in order.

He tells stars thousands of times larger than the sun, you go there and stay put. He tells entire planets, stand up and dance. And then He looks at you and says, come, and you say no.

That's terrifying. And you should be afraid. A reporter also asked me one time, why are you always telling people to be afraid? And I said, because they should be afraid.

They should. It goes on. Let's go to Isaiah 64.

Verse 6. But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. Have you ever seen a leper? I have. Worked among the lepers of San Pablo.

Leprosy is a horrible thing. If there was a leper standing here with me right now, you would have smelled him before you came through the doors. Let's imagine that we have a leper standing here for a moment.

Naked. His flesh rotting off his own body. Body fluid and pus flowing down his legs onto the floor.

A sight that you can't even bear with. You must turn away for fear that your stomach is going to betray you. There he is.

So we all get together and decide as fine people that we are that we're going to do something for this leper. So we go to Austin, or we go to San Antonio, or we go to Dallas, and we buy the finest, widest silk we can possibly find, and then we come back all happy with ourselves, and we wrap the leper up in silk. And we sit down and applaud ourselves.

Why? Because we've made him presentable. We've made him decent. We've covered his filth.

Yes, we have. For a few minutes. And then what happens? The cloth placed upon the man becomes as vile and corrupt as the man himself.

And for this very reason, no good work can save a man. Because even your highest morality is nothing but filth because it has been touched by the corruption of your nature. Corruption gives birth to corruption.

Your nature is morally corrupt, and therefore all your deeds are abominable to God. They are unacceptable to a holy God. They are unacceptable to a righteous God.

There is nothing you can do. You can wash yourself with soap, but can an Ethiopian change the color of his skin? Can a leper change his spots? No. Can we bring forth something good from that which is evil? No.

It's just the way we are. Let's go to Romans 3. Verse 10. There is none righteous, no, not one.

The idea of the word righteous is simply straight. It came to mean a standard or a norm. If this is a straight standard and a norm, and then in order for this arm to be righteous, it must parallel and perfectly conform my standard.

If my arm goes this way or this way or twists in a certain way, it no longer conforms to this standard and it is not righteous. The great standard in the universe is God's nature and will. And in order to be considered righteous, you and I must perfectly conform to that standard in nature and will.

And we do not. We do not. The synonym for crooked is what? Perverted.

Twisted. Those are words that are best used in describing men. Perverted.

Twisted. Corrupt. Wrong.

Out of place. Out of joint. Being used for wrong purposes.

That's you. I'm not preaching this as an angry man. I'm not preaching this as a fanatic.

Or maybe I am. But how would you preach about something so important? How would you cry out to men and say, repent and believe the Gospel because in your own nature you're corrupt and there is no good deed you can offer to God. You cannot be granted immunity because of your sin.

And he goes on. Verse 12, he says, they've all gone out of the way and they've all together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

So many people, even so many young people in good churches believe that somehow God has a scale of morality and if you've done more good things than bad things, somehow you can get in. But let's say that's true. But you don't have any good thing.

You've never placed one good thing on the scale. You're destitute of goodness of heart and you're destitute of goodness of works. You get people all the time theologically getting into this argument about free will.

I have no problem with free will. I'll grant you your free will. The problem is you don't have good will.

Your free will is governed by a corrupt heart. You always do that which is corrupt. And you have no good.

But let's say you had a million deeds of good and one wrong deed of bad. How many times did Adam and Eve sin before they were cast out of the presence of God? Once. How many times have you sinned? You can't even begin to count it on a calculator.

Can you? Doesn't that make you afraid? Take each sin like a marble on a string and push it to one side. Count all your sins tonight. Oh, that God would place your sins before you.

That He would make your sins so ripe like fruit before you. That you would have to count every one and be drawn into such a condemnation and such a trial that you'd repent and believe the Gospel. Because that's exactly what Paul is doing here.

Look at verse 19. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it says to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. It's like they asked the old preacher, how many did you get saved tonight? He said, I didn't try to save anybody.

I tried to condemn everybody. If I can get them condemned, God will get them saved. And that's exactly what Paul is doing here.

He is weaving a net. And he is drawing it close. He has spent a great deal of time in these first three chapters of Romans.

He has been plotting and planning and writing and scheming to show you one thing, your sin and to corral you, to trap you and to leave you in the dark, in the dirt, corralled, captured with your hand over your mouth because you have no excuse and the only thing for you is to wait for condemnation and death. That's exactly what Paul is trying to do. And I'll show you why.

Does anyone have any keys? Do you have keys? I don't have any. Listen to this. Does that make you happy? Does that bring you joy? If it does, you probably need counseling.

But listen to this. Do you know why it doesn't bring you joy? Because you are not in a dark dungeon waiting to be executed. You put a man in a dark dungeon waiting to be executed.

He hears keys. First the ear. Then the heart.

Then the mouth cries out hallelujah. Do you know why the Gospel is so impotent the way we preach it? You haven't got anybody in jail yet. They can't appreciate the key.

They can't appreciate the freedom. Do you know why when so many times some of you young people you have sat under the Gospel and sat under the Gospel and your mind has wandered and wandered and wandered about so many things? And do you know why? Because you do not see the sinfulness of sin. You do not see the danger you're in.

You don't see you're condemned. You don't see it. But you are, you are, you are.

And the moment you do see that, Christ will become precious to you. He will become precious. Now, this is what you are.

And God is holy. Now, what does that mean? God is holy. You know, when I said God is holy, the majority of you thought about one thing.

Moral purity. Well, that's a small part of holiness. You see, you could be morally pure and still be completely out of the will of God.

What do I mean? Now, the word holy means separated. When it's attributed to God, it means that He's distinct from all other beings. He's not greater than us.

He is a totally different thing. There's a greater difference between God and a cherub as there is between God and a microbe. He's completely different.

He's off the charts. He's not like us in any shape, form, or fashion. But for us to be holy means for us to be separated unto God.

You see, you could look at all of God's rules and you could keep them with all your might and you still would not be holy because holiness is not just rule keeping. It is a heart that is passionately in love with God, that is passionately separated unto God, that has left everything else not out of duty, not out of moral requirement, but out of passion for God. And so you could come to church and do your little holy thing and still be so displeasing to God because there is no love for the divine.

Young person, let me ask you a question. Does your heart ever beat for God? Do you ever desire His presence? Then it's not well with you. It's not well with you.

Even moral makeovers are not all the evidence you need to confirm your salvation. Is there a passion in your heart for God? Is there a desire for God? Is there a longing for God like the deer, like the heart that panteth at the water brook? Does your heart pant that way? We all know times of deadness. We all know times of not wanting God.

We know the dark night of the soul. But my question is, can you see in your life a heart that beats for God? Because God is holy and He made you for Himself. And the greatest sin you could ever commit is not submit to that one great thing of being made for God and His good pleasure.

But holiness not only means that, it also means that God is morally pure, that God hates sin. God hates many things. Two years ago I was preaching a message and I got to Psalms 5, the first night of a revival, and right after I preached it the next day a few leaders came to where I was staying and they said, the revival has been canceled.

And I said, why? They said, because you said God hates people. I said, yes, I did say that. But that's not all I said.

Psalms 5 is very clear. You've heard the statement over and over, God loves the sinner and hates the sin. You've heard it so many times and it's so beautiful.

God loves the sinner and hates the sin, but it's not true. That's the only problem with that statement. It doesn't say in Psalms 5 that God hates iniquity.

It says He hates the workers of iniquity. God doesn't send sin to hell. He sends men to hell.

Sin is not necessarily the object of God's wrath. Men are the object of God's fierce anger. God hates workers of iniquity.

And someone always comes up to me and says, well, what about John 3.16 for God so loved the world? I said, I believe every word of it. But I also believe Psalms 5. And so what are we talking about here? First of all, people have this idea that God is love and therefore cannot hate. I want to submit to you, God is love and therefore He must hate.

And it goes to something like this. How many of you love children? Raise your hand if you love children. Just raise your hand.

Okay, keep your hand up if you love abortion. You see, if you love children, you must hate abortion. You cannot say you love children and you love abortion.

If you love children, you must hate that which comes against them and destroys them. If your love is true, you cannot be apathetic towards that which does them evil. In the same degree, if God loves all that is excellent, all that is holy, all that is beautiful, He must hate all that is contrary to those things.

He must. And we can say all kinds of things that we can't get into tonight because we need about 10 hours to talk about the holy hatred of God. But know this, God will come with fierce, merciless, violent anger against the men who have broken His law.

So there's two things that I want you to see about God and then we're going to go on. First of all, God is holy and that means that God is separated from sin, will not have fellowship with sin. He loathes sin.

But also, God is just. He is just. And as the just judge of all the earth, He must do that which is right.

And herein lies the greatest problem in all of Scripture. If you want to know what the Bible is really all about, I'm going to tell you. It's about one thing.

There's an obscure text in Proverbs that says something like this. It is an abomination to the Lord to justify the wicked. The greatest problem in all of Scripture, and you must understand this in order to understand everything.

The greatest problem in all of Scripture is how can God forgive you? The great problem in all of biblical history has not been how could God send anyone to hell? The great problem in all of biblical history has been how could God forgive David? How could God have fellowship with Abraham? How can God forgive a prostitute and a murderer and an adult? And it says, to declare, I say, at this time His right... Well, let's read 25. Whom God, speaking of Christ, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness that He might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

Now, what is this saying? I know it sounds very complicated, but actually it's not. Here is the great dilemma. There has never been a time where God has poured out His perfect justice upon mankind.

Let me give you an example. He flooded the world and destroyed all, but one man and his family. That's not justice.

He should have destroyed them. I'll give you another example. We have Abraham who was a liar and sometimes a coward.

God called him a friend. How can a righteous and holy God be friends with someone who has lied and also been a coward? David was an adulterer and a murderer and proud, and he broke many commands in the Old Testament with regard to how a king should behave. How can a holy God take him into confidence? How can a holy God forgive him? How can a just God not forgive him? Let me put the problem in a better light.

Look at it this way. Let's say that tonight you go home to your house. You find your entire family has been murdered.

As you walk in, you hear the back door slam. You run around the house. You see the man who murdered your entire family.

You catch him. You throw him down on the ground. You call for the police.

The police come. They take him to the judge. And the judge looks down at the man and says, I'm a very loving judge.

I forgive you. Go home. What would be the first thing out of your mouth? It would be this, I demand justice! We know inherently, even in our corruption, we know inherently some aspects of justice and we demand justice.

If a crime has been committed, it is the job of the just judge to reward that criminal for what he has done. If he is a criminal, it is to condemn him, not to set him free. And don't we write in newspapers and editorials and don't we complain as Christians about the corruption in the legal system.

Don't we complain that the judges do not do justice. So the greatest problem in all of Scripture is how can God get away with what seems to be an abomination? How can the righteous judge of all the earth forgive you? Let me share with you something. Never met an angel, but I suppose if I asked him this question, he would agree with me.

Angels have never been appalled at the fact that God judges men. They've never asked for an explanation from God. Why did you judge them? Angels have been appalled at the fact that God forgives men.

They have asked for an explanation from Him for that one. Never forget, angels fell and God did not send them a Savior. He did not have to send you one either.

So how can it be done? There's only one way and it's in verse 25. God has set forth His Son to be a propitiation through faith. What does that mean? The cross of Jesus Christ has been so mutilated in modern evangelicalism that it's absolutely preposterous.

Let me give you an idea. Let me give you an anti-gospel. It would go something like this.

God loves sinners. Don't you wag your head at that because that's true. God does.

You're sitting there right now. But the gospel that so many people are preaching today is this. God loves sinners and therefore, He sent His Son.

And His Son came and His Son did mighty works of power demonstrating that He was the Christ. His Son did mighty works of love demonstrating that He was the Savior. And then the world rejected Him.

They hated Him. And they nailed Him to a cross. And on that cross, He died.

And on the third day, He rose again from the dead. Now why don't you come to Jesus? He loves you so much. My friend, that's about as far away from the gospel as you can possibly get.

That is no more the gospel than a man on the moon. If you're saved here this evening, you are not saved because the Romans and the Jews rejected Jesus. If you're saved here, you are not saved because they beat Him with whips and they put a crown of thorns on His head.

If you are saved, you are not saved here tonight because they nailed Him to a tree. If you're saved here tonight, you're saved because on that tree, He carried the sins of His people and His Father crushed Him. You go to that cross.

My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me? The theological problem in the mind of the Christ is not why have men rejected Me. He knew why men had rejected Him. He knew their hearts, they hate God.

That's the preposterous idea in evangelism. If we could just look like Jesus, men would come to Christ. No, if we could just look like Jesus, they'd crucify us.

Because they hate God. He said, My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me? Now let's look quickly at Psalm 22. Just quickly, Psalm 22, and I want to show you something.

It says, verse 1, Psalm 22, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Why art Thou so far from helping Me? And the words of My roaring. There is the question. There is the great cosmic question.

Christ is on the cross. All mankind has turned against Him. The nations rage.

And He cries out to the Father, Why have You forsaken Me? Then He goes on. Verse 4. It says, Our fathers trusted in Thee. They trusted and Thou didst deliver them.

They cried unto Thee and were delivered. They trusted in Thee and were not confounded. He is saying there has never been a time in the history of Your covenant people, Israel, that a righteous man cried out to You and was not helped.

But I cry out to You. Your only begotten Son. Beloved of the Father.

My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me? And then He answers the question. Verse 3. That Thou art holy. Verse 6. But I am a worm.

Thou art holy. But I am a worm. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became the worm.

He became the serpent lifted up in the wilderness. He became that goat. You know the one.

Elders of Israel would place their hands on His head symbolically transferring sins of God's people onto that thing. And then He would be chased outside the city gates. Left there to wander.

Abandoned. And then to die. And this Savior of ours, He went outside the gate.

Abandoned not only by the people of God. Abandoned by God. Because there is an issue here.

You are unholy. You should have no fellowship with God. How can God bring to His bosom that which is unclean? And my friend, you are so unclean.

How can He bring you to Himself? The only way is if He chases His Son from Him. His Son must bear your sin. And be chased out the gate.

To wander and to die. The garden. Let this cup pass from me.

Let this cup pass from me. Let it pass from me. So many people want, what's in the cup? What's in the cup? The cross.

No, my friend. Look up cup. Get an exhaustive concordance and just look it up in the Old Testament.

Go through the book of Psalms. Go into the prophets. Let me summarize them all for you.

They would tell you something like this. God speaking, because of the wickedness, because of the rebellion of the peoples, because of the sins of the nations, I will hand them the cup of My fierce wrath. I will hand them the cup of My fury and I will force them to drink it and they will drink it down and they will stagger and they will die.

What was in the cup? The wrath of God was in the cup. And what is the wrath of God? This is where apocalyptic language must take over. You say, what are you talking about? I have a small theory about apocalyptic literature.

And it's this. Whenever God reveals to man a revelation, a truth, so infinite, so mighty, so awesome, when that man tries to grasp what he is seeing from God, it's enough to almost make him insane. It is so big, so high, so strong, that he can't grasp it.

And when that mind of that prophet is pushed on the edge, as far as the mind can take in the truth and as far as human language will allow him to go, he begins to speak apocalyptically. When you talk about the wrath of God, there is no way to describe it. There are no words, there is no preaching, there is no

prophet, there are no scholars who could ever begin to describe to you the wrath of God.

But it is something like the fierce, burning, merciless justice of God poured out on men. And as I preach here tonight, do you know what's one of the hardest things? It's not the hardest thing, but one of the hardest things is this. There are some people here hearing my voice tonight that are under that wrath, and when they die under that wrath, it will be too late.

Is that you? Christ died. Let me share with you something. Well, let's go to Galatians 3. Galatians 3, verse 10.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Now, I know you don't know what that means because you're not trembling. I know you don't know what that means because you're not terrified.

And when I look at the word itself and then I take it in its context, and then I look in the larger context, and I read and I study, I don't see many men that have given much time to what this word is really all about. And so setting myself to try to meditate upon this and to think and to ask of God, what is this about to compare word upon word? In Scripture, this is the closest I can come to talking about being under a curse. And it's something like this.

The man under a curse, because of his rebellion, has become so vile, so wicked, so loathsome, not only before God, but before all that is holy, before heaven itself, that the last thing that man will hear when he takes his first step into hell will be all of heaven standing to its feet and applauding God because God has rid the earth of them. So many people live in what I call a country music mentality of morbid pity and other things, thinking that they can draw other people into that pity and make other people feel that remorse. I want you to know something.

On the day when you stand in that granite hall before God all alone, there will be no pity. There will be no remorse. You say, well, how could that be? So many people are always asking, well, when I see my loved ones, when I see this and that, won't I feel sad that they're going to hell? Let me explain something to you.

Have you ever thought of this? Have you ever asked yourself this question? Why was Hitler as bad as he was? Have you ever asked yourself this question? Why wasn't Hitler worse than he was? He loved his mother. Have you ever asked yourself this question? Why aren't you like Hitler? My friend, you are. I want you to know something.

The only thing that keeps you from being like Adolf Hitler is God restraining you. If God were to pull back His hand of mercy from you, even from the wicked, you would become so corrupt, so vile, that you would make Hitler look like a choir boy. Now, have you ever heard of anyone pitying Hitler because he would be sent to hell? On that day of judgment, when the goats are standing there at the threshold of hell, and God pulls back all restraint, you will see the most terrifying monsters you could ever have possibly ever conceived.

And you will praise God for His justice, and then you will look at yourself and realize except by the grace of God that it would have been you. And you will praise Him for His mercy. My dear friend, you will draw not an ounce, not a drop of pity from the well of any person's heart on the day you make your first step into hell.

But you will hear the applause of righteous men and angels as they worship God for condemning you. Here we are thinking this is all about us. Now look, verse 13.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. How did He do that? I can't go any farther with this verse. I've never been able to go any farther because I'm not sure about the conclusions I would draw, whether they would be heretical or whether they would be appropriate.

Did Christ truly become the despicable thing? Did He bear that wrath, that shame, that guilt? How much did He suffer? I agree with John Calvin. Just step back. Don't touch this verse.

It's too horrible to even contemplate what truly happened to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on that tree. But I want you to know that a lance in His side and a crown of thorns on His head, and nails in His hands were the least of His pain. To be forsaken of the Father and then to drink the cup of God's wrath for God's people.

To grab a hold of that cup. To drink it down. To cry out, it is finished.

Turn it over and not one drop comes out. And He did that for you. And He did that for His people.

We're always talking about the cross of Christ being the means of justification for man. Friend, that's secondary. The cross of Jesus Christ justified God.

How? This way. It finally answered that old question. How can a holy, righteous God forgive wicked men? I'm not sure about God's justice, they said.

I mean, after all, look at history. I mean, after all, look at His buddy David. I mean, after all, He saved Noah.

I'm not really sure about this justice. One look at the cross and all those questions come to an end. You want to know how much God hates sin? Do you want to know how just God is when His Son bore sin? God crushed Him.

It says in Isaiah, And it pleased the Lord to crush Him, to mill Him, to grind Him like powder. The pain of the cross. The cross no one ever wants to talk about anymore because it's not very popular.

The cross in the back of the store that never makes its way up to the storefront window is this cross. It is a cross of wrath and a cross of shame. It's not a plus sign for the human race.

It's a declaration of our depravity and a justification of a holy God. So when Christ died, He vindicated the Father. And when Christ rose again from the dead, the Father vindicated Him.

This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Can you imagine when He ascended up? Can you imagine that? Can you imagine after having done this work of works when He ascended up? Now I'm going to draw from the Patristics and they weren't always right, but they were clever. I want you to look at something.

In Psalms 24. I just want you to look for a moment. Psalms 24, verse 3. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in His holy place? Modern vernacular, who's going to heaven? Who's right with God? Who can stand there? Okay.

He who has clean hands. Does anyone here qualify? Has a pure heart. Does anyone here qualify? Who hath not lifted up his soul into vanity.

Idolatry. Is anyone here free from that? No. Not sworn deceitfully.

Is there anyone here who hasn't lied? No. So it's over. It's just over.

The answer is no. And every time you keep coming back and every time you knock on the door of heaven, the answer will always be no. Until you beat on the door, until your knuckles are bloody, the answer is always going to be no.

You cannot come in. Never has there ever been a man who knocked on that door and the door was opened unto him until Jesus. I like what the patristics do here.

I really like them a lot. Because in verse 7, this is what they did. They said this was Christ and His ascension.

And it's a marvelous thing. It says, can you imagine Christ ascending up as a man? He is the man for us. He's God in the flesh, but He's the man for us.

Remember Job? If there was only someone who could lay His hand on God, lay His hand on me, bring us together. If there was only a man, if there was only a mediator, if there was only someone. Can you imagine Christ? In verse 7 it says, Maybe He cried out to the doors and He said, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.

But that wasn't good enough because no one's ever put His hand on the latch before. No one's ever knocked at that door. I can just hear them.

Can't you hear them on the inside? Who dares knock on this door? These doors have never been opened to anyone from the outside. You're not coming in here. And so in verse 8, who is this King of glory? Who is this knocking at this door? He says, The Lord, strong and mighty.

The Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates. Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.

The answer back this time I don't think is quite as strong. It's a bit timid. Who? The Lord of hosts.

He's the King of glory. Can you imagine? Can you imagine when Christ entered in there? I don't know how it happened. I think about these things.

I never sleep at night. Just think about this for a moment. When those doors opened up and those angels, they were made for Him, you know.

They were. They were made for Him. They opened up their eyes.

They saw Him. He was the only reason why they were ever supposed to be. And they opened up that door and there He is.

Imagine that. Imagine the sound of angels falling on their faces. I don't know if they've fallen.

I don't know if they have faces, but... Can you imagine what that was like? And then Christ. Can you imagine Him looking at the Father? Can you imagine the Father looking at the Son? Can you imagine Him sitting down looking at His Father and saying, It's finished. It's finished.

You said, well, He said that on the cross. Yes, He did. Well, He said it again.

It's finished. You know, I've always wondered about the thing of intercessory and Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father and all this. And I always wondered, what does that mean? Is He just always there? How does it work? I really don't know.

But I was thinking one day. You know when it says that Christ holds up with the Word of His power, He sustains all things. Have you ever read that? Well, the word there is a word that's used sometimes in describing an atlas.

I mean, an atlas groaning under the weight of the world. There He is just groaning and holding and straining just with the weight of the earth. That's not what the writer says about Christ.

He says He does it with His Word. Can you imagine? I mean, how creation really was. Just think about this for a moment.

I mean, He just went like that. And it was. And He'll go like that one day and it won't be anymore.

But can you imagine that it says that absolutely everything there is is held up by Him. I mean, constellations and stars and planets and crickets and clowns and rocks and stones and everything that's ever been made. Man, microbes, angels, everything has been created and is sustained by Him.

That doesn't mean that He sits there all day going, it's up, it's up, it's up. Stay up, stay up, stay up. He just said, stay up.

It stays up. It stays up until He says, come down. The same way when He looked at the Father and He said, it's finished.

It was finished. And it will stay finished forever until He says it's finished no more. But He'll never say that because He's given you His Word.

It will never be finished. What was paid on that cross will never be finished. Now, one other thing that's very important is this.

You think you can get to heaven by being forgiven and you're wrong. You need more than forgiveness to get to heaven, my friend, because when it asks in Psalms who can ascend into that holy hill, it's talking about a righteous man. And even though you're forgiven, that doesn't necessarily mean you're righteous.

And so here's something very, very important that's very, very dear to my heart. Jesus Christ not only died for me, Jesus Christ lived for me. And that I am forgiven by virtue of what He did for me on that tree when He died.

And I am righteous before God because He lived a perfect, righteous life before the Father. And He gave me that. Just like Joseph.

No better than Joseph. Joseph had a coat of many colors and he wouldn't share it with his brothers. Jesus took His coat of many colors.

And He shared it with His people. His righteousness clothes us. You know, when I look sometimes in Isaiah 6, it really just mesmerizes me.

And why? Because the angels can't look at Him. But it says, I'll look at Him. Could it be it's because angels have righteousness of angels? We have the righteousness of Christ.

Could it be that's the reason why they long to look at the things that have been given to us? Now, my friend, I've got a question for you. Some exploratory question. There's only one way you can be saved and that's if you repent of your sins and you believe in Jesus right now.

And let me ask you a question. Instead of explaining what repentance is, let me just give you this. Maybe you came here tonight and you don't even know why you came.

Or you came because your parents made you. Or you came because that's what you always do, but you really weren't thinking about God moving on your heart. And you got exactly what you wanted.

The whole time I've been preaching and the other brother was preaching, you were looking at the clock. You were wondering why you had to be here. You were waiting to get out.

One of the things you want to do is flee from this place. Just get out of here. You're bored to tears.

Your mind is wandering. I've got bad news for you. If that's you, you cannot be saved.

You say, what do you mean? Exactly what I said. With the present condition of your heart, you cannot be saved. Your heart is as cold as a stone.

There is no work of grace. And you are in terrifying danger of hell. You say, well, that makes me afraid.

Good. What should you do? Leave here right now. Go out in the field.

Go to a barn. Go to your room. And cry out to God for mercy as though hell were opening up its mouth and swallowing you down.

Cry out, God, I have a heart of stone and with this heart of stone, I'm going to bust hell wide open. Give me a new heart. But if you're here and you came with no purpose whatsoever of understanding or knowing the Gospel, but while the preaching was going on, you heard a voice within a voice.

You begin to think about your condition. You begin to think about your sin. You begin to be bothered by the holiness of God, by the wickedness of your own nature.

You begin to be afraid and troubled. And you're sitting there right now looking at how filthy you are and you're wondering, can you be saved? And you're willing to do absolutely anything to be saved. I've got good news for you.

That's the beginnings of the work of repentance. If you hate that sin so much, then turn away from it and come to Christ. Fall upon Christ.

Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved. What does it mean to believe in Christ? I'll give you a definition that an old deacon shared with me one time from his testimony. He had heard the preaching, it bothered him, and he went up in the hayloft.

And as he was there in the hayloft wondering what does it mean to believe in Christ unto salvation, he stood there with part of his feet on the loft and part of his feet hanging over. And he said to me, he said, Paul, all of a sudden, and this is what he said, he said, God, I am going to trust in Christ and Christ alone.

And if what Christ has done for me on the cross is not sufficient to save me, then I am going to hell because I refuse to trust in any other thing.

Trust in Christ. And I beg you, I beg you, I beg you to trust in Christ. I beg you to trust in Christ.

I beg you not to walk out these doors. I beg you not to live another second. I beg you to trust in Christ.

I finish by telling you this, the saddest thing for a preacher is whenever he preaches what I have preached, he knows he's failed. There is no way. I've looked in dictionaries.

I've studied hard. I've read all I can read. And there will never be a way that I will ever be able to tell you how precious Jesus Christ truly is.

There will never be a way that with a human tongue I'll be able to tell you how much you need Christ. There will never be a way I will be able to describe to you the terrors of hell, the bliss of heaven, and the saddest moment for a preacher is when he walks out of a pulpit and he knows he failed. Just know this, Christ is much greater.

He is much sweeter than I could ever make Him known to you. So come to Christ.

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