

# The Lost Gospel

by Paul Washer

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**Scripture:** John 3:16, Acts 17:30, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:8, 2 Corinthians 5:17, John 14:6, Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 55:6, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

**Topics:** "True Repentance", "Supernatural Conversion"

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## Description

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## Transcript

People, often times, they laugh when I get up in the pulpit because usually the first thing out of my mouth is, it's such a privilege to be here tonight. It is a great privilege to be here tonight, but I almost, I almost feel ashamed. There's a story I heard one time about a piano student of one year who was traveling through Europe and went into a museum where the piano of one of the greatest composers of Europe was displayed.

As she stood there looking at the piano, one of the keepers of the museum came up to her and said, would you like to come across the rope and play a song? She said, yes, I would. And so she played her little song and then she came back over the rope and she said, well I suppose a lot of great composers have wanted to do the same. And he said, no ma'am, you're the first.

As a matter of fact, last week the greatest pianist in Europe was here and when we asked him if he would like to sit down and play at the board, he just bowed his head and said, no, I'm not worthy. I know the history of this place and something of the men who have preached here. For myself, I have to say that the caliber of men has been somewhat low in my generation.

But I would pray that God would raise up men, men that fear nothing but sin, their own flesh. We so need revival. You just walk around the streets here in this city, you just see lifeless faces.

You look at the low standard of the church itself. The judgment of God in some way has fallen upon her. The sad thing is the greatest evidence of the judgment of God has fallen upon her.

The discipline of God is the men that she's been given to stand in her pulpits. Who no longer trust in the power of God, but in sociology, psychology, anthropology and the latest fad for church growth. I believe that the men of old discovered something that God works in weakness.

And the more you trust in the arm of the flesh, the less you'll have God on your side. These are critical, critical times. What we need most of all is the word of God, but preached in the power of God.

But men are so weak. You know, I honor the memory of men who have preached here, but I have learned this. There has never been such a thing as a great man of God, unless you would choose to refer to the Messiah.

There's only been one true servant of Yahweh, and it is his son. There's only been one word, one covenant keeper. There's only been one man of God.

All we are, the best of us are tiny, pathetic, weak men of a great and a merciful God. Revival. I don't chase revival.

Because revival doesn't come by chasing revival. Revival comes by chasing Christ. And by chasing conformity to the image of Christ.

Preaching is gospel. Tonight I'm going to do just that. Why? Because the passion of my heart for as long as I can remember in my Christian life is that Christ be preached.

I'm here to tell you tonight that the gospel is not Christianity 101. The gospel is everything in Christianity. It is not some beginning truth.

It is not a track. It is not four spiritual laws. It's everything.

It's the greatest revelation of God. And we grow and we are revived to the degree that we understand who Christ is and what Christ did for us on that tree. Don't you see? We've taken, and especially because of my own country and the ministers that have been raised up there.

We've taken the gospel of Jesus Christ, reduced it down to four spiritual laws with a prayer at the end. And it's the reason why there is no power. This country, this world is not so much gospel hardened as the ministers are gospel ignorant.

Don't think here tonight, oh he's going to preach the gospel. I already got that. Listen to me.

Eschatology is a tremendous truth that ought to be studied. And it is deep. But I can assure you this.

You'll understand eschatology the very first day that Christ returns. You'll understand everything about it, but know this. You will be an eternity of eternities in heaven and you will not even reach the foothills of understanding the gospel.

Heaven will be tracking down the glory of God in the person of Christ, in the cross of Christ. We will forevermore revel in this one thing. He shed his own blood for my soul.

It's the cross. It is not enough to say Jesus died. What does that mean? The evangelist is to also be a scribe.

He's to explain what it means. But now therein lies the problem. The most pitiful, pitiful man on the face of God's earth is the one who attempts to preach the gospel.

You'd sooner try to open up your arms and embrace every star in creation. You'd have better fortune doing that than trying to preach the gospel. I remember one time, a few years ago, just caught up in emotion, praying in a field and saying, Oh God, grant me this one thing.

That on the day I pass over to the other side and my heart has been purified, I have been glorified, my lips have been seared with your holiness. Just once let me jump up on a box and preach Christ as he ought to be preached. And then the thought just came into my mind at that moment, Son, even then you will not preach Christ as he ought to be preached.

You'll never understand him in his fullness, but that is the glory of heaven. That you'll constantly be tracking him down, chasing him, ought to know more of him. So tonight we're going to look at something of the cross of Christ.

And I can assure you at the very beginning that it will be a failure. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 5, verse 21. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 21.

He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. He, God, made him, Jesus Christ, who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him. I am not that brilliant of an intellect.

And so I decided many years ago that I would confine myself. Although we all must study theology and scriptures in its broadest sense, to know its context, I decided that I would confine myself to just wanting to know him and his cross. And throughout the years, discovering truth after truth of the person of Jesus Christ, I absolutely marvel.

There's enough in one statement, merely in the song of Solomon about him, to set you worshipping for years. There's enough power in one line of John 3, verse 16, to carry you for an eternity of worship. One thing that I think is so overlooked is that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh, as we know.

But that he walked on this earth as God in the flesh, but he walked on this earth also as man, in the power of the Holy Spirit. And he did tremendous things, exceptional things, extraordinary things. And one of the greatest is his sinless perfection as a man.

Just go home, get your Bibles, study it for a year. Think about this. To every one of you in this place tonight, let me tell you this.

There has never been one moment in your entire life that you loved the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Not one time. Not one moment.

There has never been one moment of your life that you have loved God as God deserves to be loved. Not one moment. Not in your most holiest moment have you accomplished that.

And yet there was never one moment in the life of Jesus of Nazareth that he did not love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. There has never been one event or one task or deed that you have accomplished purely and only for the glory of God. And yet every breath he breathed in and out, every beat of his heart, every conscious decision, everything he ever did, he did perfectly and completely for the glory of his Father.

So when we understand that this person, Jesus, was made to be sin, that's a terrible thing. It's an astounding thing. That the one who always beheld the face of his Father, the one who delighted in the Father perfectly and in whom the Father delighted always, everything the Father has ever done, he has done for his Son.

And to think that on that tree he was made to be sin. And I want us to think for a moment, what does that mean? What does it mean? That's a very important question. You see, it's not just enough to say these things.

What do they mean? Well, does it mean this? Does it mean that when he was on that tree, his nature became defiled, corrupted? Did he himself in his person become a vile thing? No. No. On that tree, he was still the impeccable Son of the living God.

On that tree, he was still a spotless lamb. Then what does it mean that he was made to be sin on our behalf? Well, let's look at our text. He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

How is it that the believer is the righteousness of God in Christ? This is very important. Does it mean that the moment we believe in Jesus Christ, we're somehow so changed in our nature and so infused with grace that we're absolutely perfect and we no longer sin? No. Does it mean that we become in ourselves a perfectly righteous being? Absolutely not.

Then what does it mean? It means the moment that a person, no matter how vile, no matter how wicked, moment a person places their faith in Jesus Christ, they are forensically or legally declared to be right with God. And in being declared right with God, they are treated by God as right with Him. That is justification by faith.

So that the moment I believed in Jesus Christ before the throne of God, I am legally declared right with Him. Right with Him. And not merely right with Him, not merely pardoned, but the very righteousness of Christ has been imputed to me.

So I stand before God in a position of legal righteousness. And He treats me that way. That's why He can answer my prayers.

That's why He can lead me. That's why He can love me. All the benefits of being perfectly righteous before the throne of God are now mine.

So what does it mean that Christ on that tree is made to be sin? It means this. That all the sins, all the sins of wicked men were imputed to Him. The guilt of His people was imputed to Him.

And God the Father treated His only begotten Son as guilty. As the one who must die. As the one who falls under the curse of the covenant breaker.

That's what it means that He became sin. Now, I want us to think about something for a moment that's very important. It is a puny illustration.

It is a poor illustration. But all illustrations are puny and poor when it comes to the cross. But I want you to imagine for a moment that there is a group of prostitutes in the city.

And some of the dear sisters here in this church, who've known nothing but church, who were converted at a very young age and sheltered from everything wicked in the world, they are spotless, they are delicate to such a degree that they'll not even set their foot on the floor. But they decide that they're going to go out and witness to a group of prostitutes tonight. And when they do, as they're there sharing the gospel, the police wagon pulls up and the prostitutes are thrown in.

And along with those prostitutes, all our dear sisters are thrown into the wagon. Now, I want you to think about this. Those prostitutes have been through this a million times.

They're laughing. They're telling jokes. They're calling their lawyer on the cell phone.

But our dear sisters are over in the corner of the wagon and they cannot even breathe. They're paralyzed. Not with fear, but with shame, with guilt, with feelings they have never experienced before in their life.

And then they're all pulled out of the wagon. They're thrown into the cell. Again, all the women are laughing and chatting and having a good time about it.

But our dear sisters, they sit there, shut up in their guilt, in their shame, in their filthiness. Now, you and I speaking about sin, we can no more speak about sin than fish can speak about water. We were born in sin.

In sin, our mothers conceived us. We drank down iniquity like it was water. We're so accustomed to sin, so trained in sin.

We can't see the evil of sin, the grotesque, heinous nature of sin. We can't even begin to comprehend it. But there was one who could.

Jesus Christ our Lord. And when He was on that tree, to say that He bore the sins, the guilt of His people, is to say something you and I could never understand. Though our intellect grew exponentially, though our spirituality knew no bounds, we would never understand the grotesque nature of what He experienced on that tree for His people.

And that is the task of the preacher. That is the reason we must speak much about sin. And that is the reason, if we do not speak of sin, we are deceivers.

But not only are we deceivers, we are robbers. Because unless we speak about sin, even the people of God cannot understand what Christ suffered on that tree, and thus they cannot glory in Him as they ought to glory in Him. A reporter came to me one time and he was furious.

He said, why are you always talking about sin? And I said, because I want you to love God. And he said, what do you mean? I said, have you never read, she loved much because she's been forgiven much. I said, sir, you do not love much because you do not know how much you've been forgiven because no one's ever told you how sinful you are.

You see, I gave my wife an engagement ring three years after we were married. We didn't have a lot of money. And so I pulled out, I think it was maybe \$225, maybe 100 pounds or something.

I pulled it out and I said, here, jeweler, give me what you can give me with that. He looked at me almost with anger. He went back and he brought out a ring.

And he said, here. I said, where's the diamond? And then what he did was he took a black piece of velvet and he laid it on the table. And then he laid down the ring.

And when he did, that tiny sparkle of a diamond appeared. That's why we preach about sin. Because in the backdrop, the heinous nature of sin, there the glory of the grace of God appears in its greatest light.

Let me ask you a question. Where did all the stars go this afternoon? Did some big giant in the sky come by and throw them all in a basket and carry them to the other side of the world? Where did the stars go? You could not see them because there was too much light from the sun. But when night comes and the sky is as dark as pitch, then you see the stars and the glory of those stars.

We do a great disservice to men when we fail to speak much on the radical depravity of their heart. Now, Christ, when he is on that tree, he bears the sin, the guilt of his people. John Gill used to say, he stands in their law place.

And he does. And he becomes a curse. Now remember what the scriptures say.

Cursed is every man who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law so as to perform them. Under a curse. Does that bother you? If you're here tonight without Christ, it most certainly should bother you.

You know, I've tried to find an adequate definition of the curse, the ban, to mean that someone is turned over to destruction, that there is no longer any hope for them. And this is what I've come up with after all these years. Do you want to know how horrifying, how terrible, how loathsome is the sin of man? Do you want to know what it means to be under a curse? To be under a curse or the man who dies in his sin under a curse.

Let me say this about him. The first, the last thing he will hear when he takes his first step into hell will be all of creation standing to its feet and applauding God because God has rid the earth of him. So terrible is our sin.

So grotesque in nature. So how could we be saved from such a thing? But Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. He took upon himself our curse and became a curse.

Now, what does that mean for him? Let me just start off, first of all, in the New Testament. In the New Testament, we have a thing we call the Beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the peacemakers.

Blessing, blessing, blessing. Let's just turn that around for a moment and give the contrary of those blessings and then realize that when Christ bore our curse on that tree, this is what he suffered. The blessed are granted the kingdom of heaven.

The cursed are refused entrance. The blessed are recipients of divine comfort. The cursed are objects of divine wrath.

The blessed are satisfied. The cursed are miserable and wretched. The blessed received mercy.

The cursed are condemned without pity. The blessed shall see God. The cursed are cut off from his presence.

The blessed are sons and daughters of God. And the cursed are disowned in disgrace. Let me tell you something that I will tell you again and again.

Have you ever said this? I'm so blessed. Well, you should have this in the forefront of your mind. I am so blessed because he was so cursed.

Every time blessing rolls off our lips, it ought to roll off our lips with a sense of trembling. The only reason I can say that about me is because I can say this about him. He carried the curse.

He bore the curse. He suffered the curse of divine law, of divine justice. The very thing that should have been heaped upon our head without number, he bore and suffered.

I want us to go on. In the book of Deuteronomy, in chapter 27 and 28, we have something quite exceptional. And I'd love to read the whole thing, but we'd be here for three hours.

But here is what we have. The nation of Israel is divided up into two camps. Two camps.

One camp is on Mount Gerasim. And this camp is to proclaim all the blessings that is to fall upon the head of the covenant keeper. And then on Mount Ebal, we have another group of Israel, and they are to proclaim every curse of the covenant that is to fall upon the covenant breaker.

Now, in my notes, I've taken every one of these curses and put them in a list and show you, I will show you, how these very things fell upon the head of Christ. Fell upon the head of Christ. When he was on that tree.

Let me say something rather shocking. Jesus Christ, on that tree, bore your sin, was treated as guilty in your place, and suffered the curse. And in the words of R.C. Sproul, it was for this reason, that when he cried out from the tree, My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? The door was slammed.

God turned His face away and said this, The Lord, your God, damns you. The Lord send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke until you are destroyed, and until you perish quickly. The Lord smites you with madness, and with blindness, and with bewilderment of heart, and you will grope at noon as the blind man gropes in darkness, with none to save you.

The Lord delights over you to make you perish and destroy you, and you will be torn from the land. Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field. Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

The heavens which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you iron. You shall become a proverb and a taunt among all the people. Let all these curses come upon you and pursue you, and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the Lord your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

These are the very words, the curses, that should have been pronounced against every one of us, but on that tree, they were pronounced upon him. And furthermore, it goes on. Christ was cursed as a man who makes an idol and sets it up in secret.

He was cursed as one who dishonors his father or mother, who moves his neighbor's boundary mark or misleads a blind person on the road. He was cursed as one who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan and widow. He was cursed as one who is guilty of every manner of immorality and perversion, who wounds his neighbor in secret or accepts a bribe to strike down the innocent.

He was cursed as one who does not confirm the words of the law by doing them. These are all the curses that were to fall upon the head of the covenant breaker. That would be you.

But these curses fell upon the head of the only covenant keeper. That would be him. I find an interesting verse in Proverbs.

It says, like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, so a curse without cause does not alight. How could a curse ever set upon the one Isaiah saw and fell down and the angels cried out, Holy, Holy, Holy? How could a curse fall upon God's beloved Son in whom He was always well pleased? It was only because on that tree He bore the guilt of His people. He bore their sin and suffered the wrath of Almighty God in their place.

Now, I want us to go on. Listen to this. This is from the Psalms, King David.

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. Yet on the cross the sin imputed to Christ was exposed before God and the hosts of heaven.

He was placarded, in the words of Martyn Lloyd-Jones, before men and made a spectacle to angels and devils alike. The transgressions he bore were not forgiven him and the sins he carried were not covered. If a man is counted blessed because iniquity is not imputed to him, then Christ was cursed beyond measure because the iniquity of us all fell upon Him.

Now, I want you to listen to a passage. The Renewal of the Covenant in Moab. It's a very, very interesting statement that's made there.

It's speaking about the covenant breaker and the wrath of God that would fall upon Him. Now, listen. The anger of the Lord and His jealousy will burn against that man.

And every curse which is written in this book will rest on Him. And the Lord will blot out His name from under heaven. And then the Lord will single Him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel according to all the curses of the covenant which are written in this book of the law.

My dear friend, a sinner, as the old preachers used to say, is mighty bold while he is in fellowship with other sinners. But on Judgment Day, sinner, you will be singled out for adversity. And all the curses of the

law of God will fall upon your head.

But it does not have to be that way. For one from the tribe of Judah, the covenant keeper, bore sin, bore guilt in your place. He was singled out.

Imagine this. God's only Son was singled out for the divine adversity that must fall upon the head of the wicked. Now let me stop here for just a moment.

I know this preaching is foreign to my age. But it is only because people do not understand who God is. Isn't it amazing? Go to seminary training.

Just ask a seminary student, how many years in the seminary did you only study the attributes of God? Half a semester. Because we don't know God, we can't understand the Gospel. Usually when I preach this way, as once I had a woman stand up and she said, God cannot be this way.

I said, but old man, He is. One preacher preaching in Canada a year before me in the same conference, he was preaching on the wrath of God. And he just happened to mention at that time the AIDS epidemic as an illustration of the wrath of God.

And another woman stood up and said, it cannot be that way because little children die of AIDS and God would not do that. And he said, Madam, how many children do you think God killed when He flooded the earth? There is a wrath of God. And I would be a liar, I would be a deceiver, I would be immoral if I did not tell you.

But I also must tell you this. The reason for wrath and man's greatest problem, man's greatest problem is that God is good. You say, well, how can that be? Well, criminals are not afraid of corrupt judges.

They make them their friends with a bribe. They work in cahoots with them arm in arm. Criminals are not afraid of corrupt judges.

Criminals are afraid of good judges. You say, but God is love. Therefore, this thing about hate, divine hatred or wrath, it's an impossibility.

No, God is love. Therefore, it is not only a possibility, it is a reality. Do you love Africans? You must hate slavery.

Do you love children? You must hate abortion. You see, if I came to you and said, do you love Jews? And you said, yes. And I said, well, what do you feel about the Holocaust? Well, I'm kind of neutral on that.

It really doesn't bother me much. You see, that's an impossibility. God is good.

God is love. But he loves all that is like himself. And rightly so.

If he was any other way, he'd be a monster. Would you really want an omnipotent God who was not all good, all holy? Not at all. You'd be terrified.

And thus is the great problem. If God is just, he cannot forgive wicked men unless first justice is satisfied. And justice was satisfied on that tree.

Because the sin of wicked men was imputed to the Son of God. And it pleased Yahweh. It pleased the Lord to crush him on that day.

And in crushing him, justice was satisfied. Divine wrath was appeased. And now God can be, as the Apostle Paul states in Romans 3, he can be both just and the justifier of wicked men.

I don't know how it goes here in Wales or England. I preach countless places in the U.S. and have godly saints who've walked with the Lord 30 years in conservative, Bible-believing churches come up to me weeping and saying, that's the first time in my life I've ever heard such a thing preached. I always knew it was true, but no one ever preached it.

I never understood. How could His death simply atone for my sins? What went on there? You see, the world doesn't know the Gospel because we're not preaching it. This is a deep thing.

And we're to draw out from that deep and make it so that a child can understand it. And they can. If the Holy Spirit of God is working, and I can assure you this, if He's not working, a 65-year-old tenured professor from Harvard can't understand it.

It's a work of the Spirit of God. But we must begin to preach these truths again. You want revival? You can't have revival without the Gospel.

You can't have the Gospel without a biblical God. And you can't preach a biblical God without being a scandal to your age and having men rail against you. Before we go on, I want to look for a moment at the priestly blessing.

Let's just go for a moment again to Numbers 6. Look in verse 24, Aaron's benediction. Numbers 6, verse 24. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you. The Lord be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance on you and give you peace.

The moment a pastor, professor, anyone takes this, they would do well to explain to the student, to explain to the congregation, here we have a tremendous theological and philosophical problem that even casts doubt upon the very nature of God. Well, what is it? How can God do this to a wicked people and still be good? There's only one way. And that is that everything due that wicked people has been poured out on a substitute.

The only way that God can pronounce blessing upon His people is that He pronounced curse upon His Son. The only way we can be spared from the wrath of God is that His Son bore the fullness of that wrath. There's enough here to take you through eternity on your face in worship.

Oh, my dear friends, there are conferences everywhere about getting people fired up for so many things. You understand the gospel. You can be alone for the rest of your life in a barrel and no one will need to tickle you spiritually.

Because it is in that gospel, it's in that gospel that we're moved. The Holy Spirit so delights in honoring the Son. Making much of the Son.

Making much of the gospel. And so should we. I want to go on for a moment and speak a little more about the wrath of God.

As I said in Ireland, I want to repeat it here tonight. One of the hardest things for me to deal with is the time around Easter. Holy Week.

Whatever you would like to call it. Because I will hear so many preachers stand up. They will describe everything that can be described about Roman crucifixion.

They will go through every medical document that's ever been written on the pain that Christ suffered from a crown of thorns. From a whip. From carrying a beam.

From dehydration. From nails in His hands and His feet. From hanging on a Roman cross.

And they should. Why? It was a necessity that it be a bloody death. It was a part of the crucifixion.

But if you only go there, you have not preached the gospel. Let me give you an example. I was in a seminary in Eastern Europe years ago.

And I was teaching and teaching and teaching. And I was tired. And so I walked into the library there.

It was actually in Moldova or Romania or somewhere like that. And most of the books were written in German. And so I'm looking around trying to find something I can read.

And I found a book, *The Cross of Christ*. Not the one written by John Stott, but just one that I'd never heard of before. And I pulled it off and I started flipping through it to see what the man had to say.

And I came to this. When Christ was hanging on that tree, the Father looked down from Heaven at the suffering inflicted upon Jesus Christ by the hands of the Roman soldiers. And He counted that as payment for our sin.

That's heresy. My dear friend, you are not saved because of just what the Romans did to Jesus. You're saved because of what God the Father did to His only begotten Son on that tree.

Now think about it for a moment. Jesus is in the garden and three times He prays, And again, preachers talking about Jesus in His omniscience at that point being able to foresee the cat of nine tails and the Roman cross and the nails and the crown of thorns and the mockings. And thus He did not want to go to that tree.

That's absolutely preposterous. And I'll tell you why. After the death of Christ, His resurrection, then His ascension.

I want you to think about something. His followers for the next few centuries, thousands, maybe tens of thousands, were crucified on Roman crosses. Many of them were crucified upside down, covered with pitch and set on fire to provide lights for the streets of Rome.

And history tells us, the books of martyrdom that have been handed down to us, they tell us that most of those saints went to those trees singing hymns and counting it joyfully a privilege to die for their Master. Now are you going to tell me that the captain of their salvation is in a garden hiding from the very same fate? Is Messiah so weak that He cannot endure with joy the very things His followers endured? What was in the cup? What was in the cup? I remember several years ago, I went to a school, a classical school, classical Christian education, reformed school, very impressive. And I told the headmaster, I said, I'm going to teach on propitiation.

But I didn't know that you've got kindergarten students all the way up through twelfth grade, through secondary, in the auditorium. And he said, Brother Paul, it won't be a problem. I said, I'm going to teach on

propitiation.

Brother Paul, it won't be a problem. And so as I began to teach, I finally came to a point where we were in the garden, and I asked a little girl, I said, now we're in the garden, Christ is saying, let this cup pass from me. What was in the cup? And I'll never forget, a little eight-year-old, nine-year-old girl raised her hand.

I said, yes, dear. She stood up, she put her hand on the desk, back erect, and she said, Brother Paul, the wrath of almighty God was in the cup. Out of the mouth of babes.

I would love to have a statistical report on how many times that truth has come out of the mouth of evangelical pastors. I would doubt that it be often. Psalm 75 says this, For a cup is in the hand of the Lord, and the wine foams, it is well mixed, and he pours out of this, surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink down its dregs.

Goes on, Jeremiah agrees. He says, For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, He says to me, Take this cup of the wine of wrath from my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it, they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them. What was in the cup? The wrath of almighty God was in the cup.

I want you to imagine for a moment. Imagine a dam of water, a river of water dammed up, and the dam is 10,000 miles high, 10,000 miles wide, and filled to the very brim with water. And you are in a little community about an eighth of a mile from the bottom of the dam.

And all of a sudden, you and the rest of the people who live in that town hear a mighty explosion. And you look out the window, and this 10,000 foot tall dam has in one moment disintegrated in a massive explosion. The fleet of foot can't escape.

The strongest swimmer will go down with the weakest. There is absolutely nothing to be done. Your village will not only be destroyed, it will be wiped clean.

There will not be an identifiable molecule left of anyone. And as you stand there, and that wall of water draws near, right when it's about to light up on your head, the ground opens up and swallows it down. That is the cross of Christ.

The wrath of God toward wicked men. And on that tree, he opened himself up and swallowed it down. So now not even a spot will hit the pant leg of one of his children.

He drank it all on your behalf. He drank it all on your behalf. It's as though he reached up and took the cup of the wine of God's wrath out of the very hand of God.

The cup that was destined for you and for me. And he drank it down. The old writers said things like this.

He extinguished it. He exhausted it. Who but a mighty Christ can do such a thing? It goes on.

Imagine for a moment two giant millstones. One against another. 10,000 pound millstone on top of 10,000 pound millstone.

And then all of a sudden, you put in a grain of wheat in between the two. Within a fraction of a second, the pressure bursts open the hull. And by the time it makes its way around to the other side, there's nothing left.

Christ, like a grain of wheat, fell to the ground and died, having suffered the wrath of God. But he's satisfied. And so is the Father because it brings forth much fruit.

A people, holy, purified, called by His name. Now, I want you to know that a man that I want to meet, there are several men that I want to meet when I go to heaven. But one of them is a man who has helped me so much.

His name is John Flavel. Because he has written some of the most beautiful things about Jesus Christ that I've ever read out of the pen of any man. And Flavel wrote, many, many years ago, a conversation between the Father and the Son with regard to the people of God.

And I want to simply read and comment on that conversation. I call it the Father's Bargain. This is the way it goes.

Flavel says, Here you may suppose the Father to say when driving His bargain with Christ for you. People just don't talk that way anymore. It wasn't a hard driving, was it? Because Christ did not come by force, did He? He voluntarily, joyfully, for what was set before Him, He came.

Nonetheless, Flavel says, Here you may suppose the Father to say when driving His bargain with Christ for you. The Father speaks. My Son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls.

Oh, one of the first truths of the Gospel. To recognize your misery. Misery.

Not a flash in the pan misery. Not an intermittent misery. But a continuous, continuous, gnawing, biting misery.

My Son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves and now lie open to my justice. Justice demands satisfaction for them or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them. Justice will have its day.

It will be there on Calvary for you or it will be for you an eternal day in hell. These are weighty things. A person called in a while back at a Detroit radio station.

And they said, He's just always so somber. Yes. Yes.

Within a ten mile radius of where my feet are planted, tens of thousands of souls are going to hell to preach eternity. To preach like a dying man. Preaching to dying men and preaching as though I shall never preach again.

Do I know joy? Yes. Do I know laughter? Yes. Do I play with my children? Surprisingly, yes.

To such a degree that I've been the object of many a rebuke from more serious clergymen. But when I speak about these things, some of you sitting here right now will in a hundred years be so glorious because of your relationship with Jesus Christ, you will be so glorious that if you could see your image as you will be at this moment, you would have a tendency to want to fall down in worship. And some of you will be grotesque monsters in hell.

Now, how am I not supposed to be serious? Now, the son responds, Oh, my father, such is my love to and pity for them. My dear friend, there has been much rightly said about the glory of God, about God doing everything for his own glory. That is so true about Christ in a sense dying for God, for the glory of God.

That is true out of the mouth of a wise theologian. But some of our younger brethren who say these things forget that the same Christ who died for the glory of God died because he loves men. You throw that out of the equation, my friend, and you've lost the gospel.

Such is my love and my pity for them. He loves men. Wicked men.

Yes, I know all about the wrath of God, but I don't have time to give you a two-hour lecture on the wrath of God and the love of God. But I must preach the love of God. I long to preach the love of God.

It is the love of God and the mercy of God and the tenderness of God that leads men to repentance. I want you to know that many times when I preach on the streets and many times when I share with people one-on-one, I do not share with such passion as I do now. But right now I'm preaching to Christians and when I see Christianity in the world today, it is not preaching the gospel.

And for this reason I speak so hard. Christians must repent of the gospel that they are preaching. Leonard Ravenhill used to say we ought to put most of the evangelists on a boat and send them to an island and while they're leaving we ought to sing the doxology because they'll be on that island never to hurt anyone again.

How many countless nations have I gone to where I hear stories such as in Romania where a brother came to me and said the American evangelists that come over here. And they go back to the states and say 10,000 people got saved in their meetings. Well, I've got news for them.

If everything they say about my country and how many people in my country has been saved, then my country, every person in it has been saved four times. It's not true. It's just not true.

We need to repent of the gospel we're preaching. Are we like the Pharisees who Jesus said they would go over a mountain and sea and everything else, but when one person became their convert he'd be a two-fold son of hell? Should our gospel that we preach, and I do not know you so I must speak for my own country, should the gospel that we preach be propagated and exported or should it be quarantined? He says, O my father, such is my love to and pity for them that rather than they shall perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their guarantee. Bring in all thy bills that I may see what they owe thee.

Bring them all in that there be no after reckonings with them. Now listen to this. Do you know how sometimes a young man will go off being married, full of love and romance, and come back six months later and he's hanging his head saying, What have I gotten myself into, pastor? I had no idea that marriage was this way.

If I had known it, I would have never jumped the broom, never gotten married. Christ isn't that way. He didn't get to that tree and say, What have I done? I didn't know it was going to be this far.

I didn't know it was going to cost this much. No, before he ever went to that tree he said, Father, bring in all their bills. Bring in every one so I may know what they owe thee.

And after knowing everything that we owed him, he went to that tree for us. And listen to what he says. Oh, this is a beautiful statement.

He says this, Lord, bring them all in that there may be no after reckonings with them. Do you hear that saying? Do you hear that? Know after reckonings that he has pardoned all your iniquity and you have

become the righteousness of God and Christ. And there is no wrath waiting you, waiting for you on that day.

And know this also, feeble saint who joins my company, my company of men whose Christian progress can be defined this way, three steps forward, two steps back, one step forward, four steps back, nine steps forward, three steps back. I can assure you I know how much you fail because I know how much I fail. But know this, when you see his face on that day, there will not be a scowl upon it.

He will not look at you with disgust or disdain. He didn't shed his blood to have such a mournful reunion with you. There will be no after reckonings.

And thus you're free. You're free. You're free.

And the carnal professing churchman says, if that be the case, let us sin. But the truly converted Christian says, if this be the case, oh, let us love him more. Then he says, at my hand shall thou require it.

I will rather choose to suffer the wrath that is theirs than they should suffer it. Upon me, my father, upon me, be all their debt. Now listen, the father responds, but my son, if thou undertake for them, thou must reckon to pay the last might.

Expect no abatements. Now, what does he mean by abatement? We used to work on the Amazon some or on the Marino River in northern Peru. And we, our boat, we never really had a good top on it.

So if you saw a storm coming down the river, you know that storm, it could literally take your boat under in a matter of five minutes. Before you can even make your way to the shore, it can take down your boat. Fill it up with water.

Sink it to the bottom. And so as you see that storm brewing, you're making your way for the shore, but at the same time, you're praying for an abatement. That the storm will somehow lessen.

That it will die down. That it not come at you with such a force. But he says here.

He says thou must reckon to pay the last might. Expect no abatements. And then listen to this that Flavel wrote.

Son, if I spare them, I will not spare you. Think of that. Do you know, many people understand Ezekiel's longing or God's longing through Ezekiel for a man to stand in the gap, to build up the walls and to stand in the gap.

They somehow think that you stand in the gap to keep the devil out or you stand in the gap to keep unbelievers out or persecutors of the church out or you stand in the gap. Do you know why you stand in the gap? Because God's coming. The wall's broken down because of the sin of the people and God's coming.

He's the one you've set yourself in the gap against. As Abraham did on that day and interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah. As Moses did on that day before Israel.

Because you need to understand this. From what did God save you? The question would better be put this way. From whom did God save you? God saved you from Him.

I always like to put it this way. He saved you from Himself, for Himself, and by Himself. If I spare you, son, if I spare them, my son, I will not spare you.

And then the son replies, content, father, let it be so. Charge it all upon me. I am able to discharge it.

Who but Christ can say that? You know, sometimes I hear these preachers say, God looked all over heaven and couldn't find an angel willing to come. God looked all over the earth and couldn't find a man worthy to die. My dear friend, you empty heaven of every one of its angels and you crucify them on a tree and they cannot pay for the sins of God's people.

I was teaching one time at a university. I was doing a thing for a Christian group and a person kind of stood up in the middle and they screamed out. They said, I want to know something.

I said, okay. He said this, how can one man suffering a few short hours on a tree pay for the sins of a multitude of men and save them from an eternity of suffering? The reply, because that one man on that tree was worth more than all of them put together. Take everything that is, mountains and molehills, crickets, clowns, stars, suns, solar systems, dirt, doesn't matter, everything you can lay your hands on with all the people that have ever been from Adam to the last man, set them all in the scale, set Christ on the other side and He outweighs them all.

It's Christ. That is why we must speak much of His cross, we must speak much of His person, much of His deity, much of His humanity. We must spend our life seeking to know Christ, thinking great thoughts of Christ and proclaiming Christ.

He says, content Father, let it be so. Charge it all upon Me. I am able to discharge it.

And though it prove a kind of undoing to Me. Isn't it amazing the way love sees things? To describe the cross as kind of undoing to Me? You ever heard a man who says, for the love I have for that woman, I'd fight an army and it would seem like a little thing. I would lose my own soul and it would seem still to be a good bargain.

My love is so great for them. Christ's love for His people is so great for His bride that He sees it as just kind of an undoing to Himself. Oh, how He loves His bride such that He made Himself a servant that He might come fetch her.

He goes on and He says this, Though it impoverish all my riches, empty all my treasures, I am content to undertake it. I want to finish just with this. One of the most splendid narratives in the Bible, the story of Abraham obediently following the commands of God in the sacrifice of his son, Isaac.

Now, this is what God says to him. Take now your son, your only son, whom you love. Do you think God was saying something a little more there? Do you think He was looking forward to something a little farther down in history? Listen to that language.

Content, Father. Oh, now take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you. Now, as we know the story, the old man in obedience to God takes his son and there's something very interesting there.

We hear of no struggle whatsoever from Isaac. I believe again God telling us something further on down the line with one greater than Isaac. And when the old man's will is set to do the will of God and the knife is to be brought down to slaughter his son, his only son, his son whom he loved, his hand was stayed by the voice of an angel and the angel said, don't stretch forth your hand.

Then Abraham turned around and he sees a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. And he says, Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide. My dear friend, let me just ask something of you.

The Lord does provide. He provides for our needs. He gives us clothing and shelter and food and so many things.

But please, don't be like so many in Christianity today that only say Jehovah-Jireh after they talk about their new car. That is almost blasphemy. Jehovah-Jireh will provide.

Provide what? A substitute. A substitute. When we hear people use biblical terminology in the way they do, we come to understand that their God indeed is their belly.

That they can get more excited about material blessings from God than they can about the spotless Lamb of God. Now, the curtain comes to a close and everyone breathes a sigh of relief, don't they? What a beautiful ending to the story. The only problem is this.

It's not the ending of the story. It's the intermission. The blood of bulls and goats will not save Isaac's life.

So the curtain opens back up and there's a Messiah hanging on a tree. And God lays his hand upon the brow of his son, his only son, his son whom he loves. And he takes the knife out of Abraham's hand and he slaughters him there.

The sacrifice had to be offered. You see, you can spend years just sitting and looking at this. When I hear people talk about the gospel as something contained in a tract and then they go on to more important stuff, everything, this is everything.

This gospel is the power of God. Salvation. These are worth night watches.

Do you understand? These are worth in the middle of the night saying no to sleep and reveling in what God has done in Christ. He shed his own blood for our soul. And then on the third day, up from the grave he arose.

Arise, my love. As the doctor, Dr. Jones, said, God placard him up on that tree. For what reason? To prove once and for all that God is just.

God, the accusation comes, you said that Adam was supposed to die. God, Noah, he should have died with the rest of them in the flood. Why did you let him go? Abraham, your friend, how can you call him a friend? He was a liar.

He put his life in jeopardy. In some ways he did not believe you. And David? You're going to call him a son, a man after your own heart? God, where is your justice? God, how can you show such mercy to the likes of them? And then God 2,000 years ago pointed to that tree and ended all accusation.

He's like a spare Noah as a divine decree. I could make friendship with Abraham. I could call David a son because there is the Lamb who died for them all.

And my justice was satisfied that day. Oh, what a Savior. What a Savior.

And now I will not tell you. I will not ask how many of you want to go to heaven. Because that's not the question.

I hear preachers today. God loves you. He has a wonderful plan for your life.

And so the self-centered westerner, he says, what? Yes, God loves you and has a wonderful plan for you. Really? I love me too. And I have wonderful plans for my life.

You mean God will work with me because He loves me as much as I love me? And He has great plans, even greater plans for me than I have? I'll take a God like that. Do you want to go to heaven? Who doesn't? That's what political theory is all about. Build a utopia on earth.

Heaven is a utopia. Everybody wants to go to heaven. They just don't want God to be there when they get there.

The question is not do you want to go to heaven. The question is this. After hearing the preaching of the gospel, has the Spirit of God so worked in your heart that the God you ignored and hated and the truth of Him suppressed, do you now desire Him? Has something happened to you? Do you long for Him? Do you want Him? Is there something in you that is drawing you to Him? You delight in Him.

You want God. The question is not do you know you're a sinner. Go ask the devil if he knows he's a sinner.

Of course he knows he's a sinner and he delights in his sin. The question is not do you know you're a sinner. The question is after hearing the gospel, has God so worked in your heart that you're beginning to see the vile wretchedness of your sin and the very sin you once loved you're now beginning to hate? The question is not again, do you want to go to heaven? The question is this.

Do you want Christ? Do you want to be clean? Do you want to be made anew? And if the answer is yes, the response is not, then pray this prayer after me. He's an evangelist. One of them saying, pray this prayer after me.

Well, out loud? Yes. Well, that makes me feel uncomfortable. Well, I tell you what, I'll pray it.

And if it's what you want to say to God, squeeze my hand. Behold the power of God in American evangelicalism. The call is never.

Would you like to pray this prayer? The call is repent and believe the gospel. And then when they ask you, I'm not sure I know what that means. Can you tell me? Then the evangelist sits down.

He doesn't go back to the hotel room. He doesn't go eat with the other pastors. He sits down if necessary all night and all the next day explaining to that person repentance and explaining faith and helping them to know Christ, that Christ would be formed in them.

Rather than this superficial work of the day that matters not and has left in its wake a bunch of converted, non-converted people. We've turned born-again into born-againism. Little decisions of little men who thought they were getting a good deal or at least thought they might try Christ and see if He can fix them up a bit.

The soul of a man, because it is created by God, deserves more than that. But to say that God commands all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel and then teach them as they're asking you questions, as you're counseling them, my dear friend, this is what the Bible says about repentance. Is any of this a growing reality in your heart? Do you sense any of what the Bible says repentance is that it's working its way in your heart right now? If they say, yes, I do.

There's at least the seed of it. There's something meager, but it's true. I have repented.

Then you lack one thing. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As my little six-year-old said the other day, Daddy, I know, but I don't know how.

Son, let's sit again. Listen. Verse after verse.

Until Christ be formed in thee. I'll tell a story that I love telling. And I'll end on this.

I know I've preached a lot. This is, I was sharing with my brother the other day. This is one of my most favorite things that ever happened to me.

I was preaching just about 30 kilometers south of Alaska in Canada, in British Columbia. Actually, they told me that the grizzly bear population outnumbered the people. And I got in this little chapel, and I began to preach.

And right when I got up into the pulpit, a man came through the doors, and he was so burdened. A giant of a man. A giant.

And he sat down on the front row, looked to be about 65 years old. His fingers were this big around. And I preached the gospel.

And after I preached the gospel, I came down and I said, Sir, what's wrong? You're the saddest human being I've ever seen in my life. And he pulled out an envelope, and he pulled out of that an x-ray, and he said, I've just been to the doctor, and he told me I'm going to die in three weeks. And he said this.

He said, I've never been in a church. Never read a Bible. I believe there's a God.

And one time I heard some fella, he said, tell some other guy about a man named Jesus. Worked out in the bush on a working cattle ranch all his life. And I said, Sir, you heard the gospel.

Did you understand it? He said, well, yes. Who wouldn't understand it? And I went through it. Do you understand what the Bible says about your sin? Yes, I see that I'm a sinner.

And after every answer, he would say, but is that it? I mean, I understand that I'm a sinner. And I said, do you understand the death of Christ? Yes, I understand the death of Christ, but I mean, I understand your language. I understand the concept.

Is that all that it is? He said, I'm going to die. We went through all the other things. Do you understand repentance and faith? He said, well, I mean, I grasp the concept, but is that it? Now I submit to you, what would have many done? They would have said, Sir, would you like to pray this prayer and ask Jesus to come into your heart? And then maybe they would have gone on to the next preaching engagement, boasting about how many people got saved in the meeting, although most of them didn't show up the next Sunday.

And I said, Sir, you're going to die in three weeks and I'm supposed to leave tomorrow. Here's what I'll do. I'll cancel my plane and we will stay here and consider the gospel until either you are saved or you die.

Let's begin. No trickery. No exceptional methodology.

Sir, let's go through all the wonderful promises about he who believes. About he who believes. About the one who believes.

We prayed and we went over text after text. He would ask questions. I would explain.

We would pray. Again, going back to this, Sir, he is not asking you to go up to heaven and bring Christ down. He's not asking you to go into hell to bring Him up.

He who believes, Sir, it is faith. But my dear friends, listen to me. You're crying out for revival and you know it's a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

Well, know this. How much more conversion of a man is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit? I would submit to you that there is a greater manifestation of the power of God in the conversion of a wicked man than there is in the creation of the universe because He created the universe ex nihilo, out of nothing but with a man. He is creating a new creature out of a mass of wicked depravity.

And so, Sir, let's go through this again. And sometimes, honestly, I have seen people come to know the Lord so quickly. Oh, I see that.

I mean, I can see that. I believe. But this man over and over.

The night was going on. We're praying, reading Scripture together. And I said, Sir, read John 3.16 again.

He said, well, we've read it quite a bit. I said, no, but it's a good one. Read it again.

And he sat there and he went, For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. And then he went, I'm saved. I'm saved.

All my sins are... It's so clear. I am saved. My sins are gone.

I said, Sir, how do you know? He said, haven't you ever read this verse before? What is... You see, souls are so important that you deal with them. And sometimes men come to Christ just like that. Praise God when they do, but they do it by the Spirit.

And with other men, you must labor with them. It's not good enough to just preach the Gospel and get them to say some words after you. There's the dealing of the Holy Spirit in the life of a man.

Now I know that today there is a great raging debate. The more Arminian brothers, the more Calvinistic brothers. Some of you might come out of here tonight saying Paul Washer preaches this way because of Calvinism or as I've been blamed, no, he's an Arminian.

No, he's a Calvinist. No, he's an Arminian. My brothers, if Charles Wesley was here right now, he would be saying amen.

If John Wesley was here, he'd be saying amen. And if Leonard Ravenhill was here right now, he'd be saying amen. The issue in Christianity today that must be dealt with.

Yes, eternal decrees are important. Yes, these other things are extremely important. And I know what side I come down on.

But the problem here is that we've lost the doctrine of regeneration. That we see conversion as just some mere, I agree with the gospel. And then we have evangelists popishly giving people assurance instead of realizing that the gospel is a supernatural message.

The acceptance of the gospel is a supernatural work of the Spirit of God. Laboring with souls. That they may know Him.

That they may know Him. For their own good. And for the glory of Christ.

Now, I hope you've come here tonight to meet with God. Because if you've come here tonight to meet with me, you've made a mighty poor choice. I don't want to talk to you right now unless it's about the condition of your soul.

That you believe yourself to not know Him. And I will talk with you. You come grab me by the arm, we will stay here all night.

I will talk to you. Yes. But listen to me.

But listen. Oh, my dear friends. You want revival? I'll tell you how much you want revival.

Just listen to your conversation after this meeting. You're talking about the rain? Or going out for coffee? I don't know why you've come. Now, it should not be necessarily a burden.

A loving and godly conversation among us can take all manner of forms. But you're not here to meet men. You're here to meet God.

And I trust that God will do with you what He desires. But let's pray right now. And then I'll turn the service over.

Father. Father. I come before you tonight in the name of your Son.

And I praise you. I worship you. We adore you.

We ascribe greatness to your name. What is man that thou shalt take thought of him? The Son of man, thou shalt be concerned for him. You are a great God.

And a great King above all gods. Your steadfast love extends to the heavens. Your faithfulness to the clouds.

Oh, Lord. Lord, Lord. This is a day of machines and wheels and cars.

And man-made power. Oh, Lord. It is a time of those who should be separate from the world seeking to be relevant to the world in the name of the world.

We are weak. And we are hopeless without you. The church, oh, God, needs reviving in our day, oh, Lord.

It needs reviving in our day. Oh, God, the words that we heard, the stories that were told us about times when you moved among men. They were men of like passion.

And the need was no greater then than it is now. Oh, God, move in the hearts of men and women and children and clergy and laymen. Oh, God.

Lord, nothing of false fire. Nothing of stirring up the flesh. But, oh, dear God, that all flesh would be abased and Christ would be exalted.

In Jesus' name.

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