

The Price, Power and Presence of the Cross

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the cross, highlighting its significance as a symbol of God's power and strength, and the believer's ability to overcome sin and temptation through God's presence and power.

Duration: 32:13

Scripture: Philippians 2:7

Topics: "Resurrection Power", "The Cross"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the significance of the cross in his sermon 'The Price, Power and Presence of the Cross,' explaining that the cross represents the ultimate sacrifice made by Jesus for humanity's sins and the power of His resurrection. He discusses how the world is offended by the message of the cross, which is rooted in the resurrection, and how this offense stems from the transformative power of Christ. Idleman highlights the necessity of recognizing the price paid for salvation and the importance of embracing the power of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives. He encourages listeners to seek the presence of God, reminding them that true hope and strength come from a relationship with Jesus. The sermon concludes with a call to repentance and a reminder that today is the day of salvation.

Transcript

The title of the message is The Price, the Power, and the Presence of the Cross. The Price, the Power, and the Presence of the Cross. And as many of you know, on Fridays, or on Friday, it was Good Friday.

And if you look at the German, the Latin, different translations, it could mean a Holy Friday, a Good Friday, and then you have Friday and the crucifixion. And that's why we brought this in. It's pretty close to what the actual size would be, and what it would look like, and imagining going back 2,000 years ago.

But then we celebrate. Normally we would have a Good Friday service. You remember the cross, and we talk about the power of the cross, and then you'd have a Resurrection Day service.

But obviously we're trying to get both of those into one. And I will tell you up front that it's because of the resurrection the world is offended by the cross. The world is offended by the cross because of the resurrection.

If there was no resurrection, there would be no offense. And this is why many people are disturbed when you mention the name of Jesus. Have you noticed that before? Not too many people get upset if you

mention any other religious leader.

But when you mention Jesus Christ, that's when people get upset. That's when they want to remove him from the schools. They want to take down crosses.

I don't know if you saw the big movements over the last 20 years to get rid of the crosses out of the seminary. Oh, I should say that. Maybe some seminaries do try to take the cross out.

But the cemeteries and the memorials, why? What's the big deal? The big deal is there's power in the cross. That's why it's so offensive, and that's why it disturbs many people. Because it wasn't somebody who just died on the cross.

It's somebody who actually said, I'm going to die on the cross for the sins of the world, and on the third day I will be resurrected. And what's interesting there is he had to die as a man. So Jesus had to take on the form of a man, and he had to die on the cross, be put to death by the Romans, by the Jewish leaders.

He was beat beyond recognition. And everything the prophets spoke of happened on the cross. But the big deal is the resurrection.

So he died as a man on the cross, fully God, fully man. We don't understand everything about that. But then we know only God, only God can be raised from the dead.

And this is why it's so important. It had to be a perfect sacrifice. I'm going to give you a three-hour lesson in about 30 seconds, for those of you who are unaware.

But from the beginning, God said that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. So in other words, the only way that sin could be covered, the only way that sin could be covered, especially in the Old Testament, was the shedding of the bulls, and the shedding of the goats' blood, and the shedding of innocent blood would pay the price and the penalty for the people, but only temporarily. That's why they looked forward to the Messiah, we look back to the Messiah, and it's the one time of shedding of blood, the innocent blood, for the remission of the sins of the world.

So that's theology 101 encapsulated on why the cross is so important. The price, the power, and the presence of the cross. The greatest gift also has the greatest price.

Isn't that so true? When you give somebody a great gift, it comes with a price. And this price was the greatest of them all. I'm going to read from Philippians 2. It's a commentary, I believe it's a thought-for-thought translation of the Bible on this particular verse in Philippians 2. And it breaks it down perfectly on the price.

Though he was God, he did not think of it as equality with God, as something to cling to. In other words, Jesus was equal with God, the Trinity. But he knew it was necessary not to cling to that.

So what did he do? He gave himself up of his divine privileges. He took on the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on the cross.

I really wish we had time to fully exhaust what this means. It means that God came down to humanity and at this perfect sacrifice, and his people rejected him. That's actually why he cried, he wept over Jerusalem when he said, Oh my people, my people, you're not listening, you're not hearing, this is the day of your

visitation, your Messiah is here.

And again, only God, only God could provide the perfect sacrifice to pay the ultimate price for the sin of humanity. Isaiah 53 says, he was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. So we have this example of humility.

He knows he was born to die, basically. He was born to die for this purpose, I have been sent, and he goes before Pontius Pilate, he goes before the religious leaders as a lamb that is led to the slaughter. He opened not his mouth, the same mouth that could have called down a legion of angels and stopped the entire process, the same mouth who told Pilate, you'd have no power over me at all unless it was given to you from above.

And you have to remember, Jesus was not weak. I see that sometimes, people think, oh, Jesus is weak, you Christians are weak. No, this is meekness, this is strength under control, that's what meekness is.

You have this enormous amount of strength, but you restrain it. That is what Jesus was, very meek. He could have desecrated Rome right then, he could have conquered the religious leaders with just the shout of his voice and called down a legion of angels and began to just wipe out humanity, but he endured the cross for us.

And it's interesting, at this point, many people, Jesus earlier, before he went to the cross, he said, this is your hour when darkness reigns. The NIV, I believe, would say that. This is your hour when darkness reigns.

In other words, this is your hour, this is your opportunity. There are seasons in life, and I want to just encourage you during this difficult season that we are all going through, that this is just a season. And it seems like darkness is reigning, darkness has triumphed, but Jesus said, this is your hour, enjoy it while it lasts.

And hell was rejoicing, the religious leaders were sneering. You can imagine him being up on the cross, his hands were, the nails were driven into his hands, into his feet right here were crossed, this was driven into his feet, and he hung there, and they sneered at him. They looked up at him and said, why can't you save yourself? You saved others, why can't you save yourself? Where is the Messiah if you are that Messiah? Save yourself.

And one of the thieves would mock him, and hell was rejoicing, the religious leaders, you could picture it, were sneering. They were spitting on the ground, and they were throwing dust up in the air, and they were saying, look at this man, he is nothing. And that's why Jesus referred to earlier, said, this is your hour when darkness reigns.

But then we know why we celebrate Resurrection Day. There's something you always have to remember, no matter how dark it gets, no matter how challenging the situation, no matter how things appear, the economies might be crushing or collapsing, you might not have a job, but there's two words you have to remember, but God. But God.

Always remember that. Yes, things do not look very good right now. Things are challenging.

But God, I might have got that bad report from the doctor. But God, I might not have a job when this is all over. But God, churches might not open for a while.

But God. And then Luke 24, the encouraging passage, now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they and certain other women with them came to the tomb. So by this time, he was taken off the cross.

Many of you know the story, of course, taken off the cross. And Pilate was surprised that he was already dead. They did not have to break his legs.

Normally what they would do is they would take something and they would break the legs of the person so they couldn't push themselves back up for breath. They would push off of this and take a breath and come down. Take a breath and come down.

So when their legs are broken, they hang there and they literally suffocate. But as the scripture said, no bones would be broken. And he gave up his spirit.

I believe it's when he said, it is finished. It's done. I've accomplished my purpose.

And he gave up his ghost. He gave up his spirit. And then they took him down and they buried him in a tomb.

And now on the first day of the week, which is Sunday, that's why Christians celebrate. That's why we meet on Sunday. It's not a mark of the beast.

It's not something the Roman Catholic churches did. It's something the early Christians have always done, is to meet on the first day of the week, very early in the morning. They and certain other women went with them.

They came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. It was for a burial to bring these spices. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

Then they went in and they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened as they were greatly perplexed about this. Have you ever been there? Greatly perplexed.

And that's what many of us are feeling this week and this month. We are greatly perplexed. Lord, what is going on? And they felt that way at this point.

And then behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. And then as they were afraid, they bowed their faces to the earth. And they said to them, this is what the men with shining garments said to the women, Why do you seek the living among the dead? A very interesting statement.

Why are you looking for something that is alive where dead things are? Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He's not here, but he is risen. That's why we celebrate Resurrection Day. Only God can say, I'm going to predict not only my death, I'm going to predict that I will rise again on that third day.

Remember, the scriptures have to be answered to. What was foretold hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Remember how he spoke to you.

Remember how he spoke to you. And I want to just encourage you. I don't know when you're listening to this.

Possibly now, possibly later. But remember what God spoke to you. Do you remember when God would speak to you through his word? He would encourage you.

He would tell you that you're going to get through this. He's going to see you through. You've got to get off of the negative news and get back on the positive aspects of the gospel.

And remember what God has promised to you in his word. That you are more than conquerors. That you're the head and not the tail.

That God will build you up. That God will sustain you. That God will see you through.

That he will go through the storm with you. That he will raise you up in the last day. That he will oversee you.

That he is your refuge. He is your fortress. He is your strong tower.

He is your Sabbath rest. Everything you find in the fulfillment of Christ, you have to remember that. Remember how he spoke to you.

Oh God, would you speak to us again? I crave that. I long for that. I want to fast and hear God.

Would you speak to me again? God, your people need to hear you. Your church needs to hear you. God, do not remain silent any longer.

Speak from on high and let us open our ears, God, to be heard on high. Would you not revive us again that your people may rejoice in you? Lord, would you speak to us individually through your word, through maybe dreams if necessary, through worship, through situations. Begin to lift up your people and encourage us because we need to hear from our God in these dire times.

And if people would cry out again and they would say, oh God, speak to your people. We would hear. He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit of God is saying to him.

Remember how he spoke to you when he was in Galilee saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men. See, it's been fulfilled. This is what the prophet spoke of, that he will be delivered into the hands of sinful men, he will be crucified, and on the third day he will rise again.

Now, I often talk about this, but there's people who probably are listening that have not heard me before or talk about this. And they're probably saying, yeah, but they maybe hid the body or they made it up because most historians agree that Jesus lived. This is not a fable.

This is not a fantasy. This is not Disneyland. This is the truth.

A man named Jesus lived. Even Josephus writes about it in his works. A man named Jesus Christ lived.

Many miracles were attested to him. He was crucified and it is said that he rose again. The problem we have, or you, I guess, would have saying that they hid his body, that it's all made up, is that many, many men gave their lives.

And they did not give their lives for a lie. They saw the risen Savior. They experienced Him.

That's why some were hung upside down. Some were killed with a spear or a sword. Fox's Book of Martyrs you can read.

You're not going to die for a lie. You're not going to die for a fairy tale. Because you've been changed by the power of God and you have to shout it on the rooftop.

So that was the price. That was the price that Jesus paid. Now the power.

I love this verse in 1 Corinthians. The message of the cross is foolishness. Now if you're saying, hey man, that is foolish.

This whole thing is foolish. The message of the cross is foolishness. But I need to keep reading.

It's foolishness to those who are perishing. So if you are in your sin, you're enjoying your sin, you're in rebellion against God, absolutely the message of the cross is foolishness because you're perishing. But it goes on to say, but those who are being saved, those who are being saved, it is the power of God.

So you can't have it both ways. Either a person is perishing or they've been saved by the power of God. And once you go from darkness to light, once you go from debauchery to wholeness, once you go from filth to holiness, you begin to say, it is the power of God that saved me.

What kind of power is that that can turn a dead man, a dead man into a living, vibrant follower of Jesus Christ? What is that? That's not just positive thinking. That's not brainwashing. There's a change that happens in the human heart.

They go from death to life. They go from hell to heaven. They go from being in darkness to this wonderful, glorious light of Jesus Christ.

The heart has changed. It's interesting on this topic of power. You know what power is.

It's strength. It's energy. And like I said earlier, God is never portrayed as weak, as powerless.

He is actually portrayed as all powerful, all knowing, all seeing, omnipresent, omnipotent, all the omnis. He fits the criteria. And also under this definition of power and strength, it is the capacity to withstand great force or pressure.

So it's the capacity. So who else can absorb great force or great pressure? Not even Satan can. Satan was defeated on the cross.

Do you realize this? When Jesus began his ministry, he went out into the wilderness, and he fasted for 40 days. That might be a word for some of you. We need to get that powerful strength back, that spiritual power.

He went and he fasted, and he came out in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is clear on this. He came out in this great force and pressure.

And the demons did not bicker with him. They did not barter with him. They did not fight him.

They had to bow their knee to Jesus Christ. Oh, Son of God, do not throw us into the abyss. It is not yet our time.

Oh, and they would ask for permission. They would cry out to God and say, Do not hurt us. The demons had to flee.

The demons had to listen to the Son of God. It was the power and the strength of Jesus Christ. Now here's the interesting thing.

Once you believe in Jesus, and now you have the Holy Spirit residing in you, you feel that same power. You feel that same presence. You have the Holy Spirit of God in your life.

And who can stop God Almighty? We sometimes sing that song, Who can stop God Almighty? The weapon may be formed, but it will not prosper. When the darkness falls, it won't prevail. I'm sorry, when the darkness falls, it won't prevail.

Because the God I serve only knows how to triumph. My God will never fail. Oh, my God will never fail.

You have to remind yourself of that. You've got to put on those worship songs, then encourage, and they build you up, and they strengthen you. Why? Because now you have the capacity to handle great force and great pressure.

Do you know the people that are falling off to the wayside during this COVID-19 crisis? Those who are having nervous breakdowns. Those who are faltering and falling. It's because they don't have the presence and power of God in the inside of them.

They cannot withstand that pressure. And the only way, I talked to you, I think, two weeks ago, imploding. Imploding is when the pressure on the outside is greater than the strength on the inside.

And you have the power of God in you as a believer. So here's a little bit of personal application on the power, the power of the Holy Spirit, the power of God, the power of the cross, and embracing Jesus Christ. The verse in Revelation, and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the power of their testimony.

That's the only way you can overcome any demonic influence. I don't know where you're at when you're listening to this. I don't know if you know God, but the only way you can overcome the demonic onslaught against your life is overcoming by the blood of the Lamb that was shed for you and the power of your testimony.

Why is that so important? Because it's one thing to have the blood of the Lamb, but if there's no testimony, it doesn't impact your life. A testimony is that the power of the blood has been applied. I feel the power and presence of God, and here's my testimony, Satan.

God is greater than you. God has already triumphed. You've already been defeated.

Greater is he that's in me than he that's in the world. I have this testimony. I have this living hope.

I have this power and presence of God and the Holy Spirit in my life. In Acts 1.8, 1.8, you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. We forget that in the Christian faith.

We think it's just the meek, mild-mannered, little, you know, Clark Kent. No, no, it's Superman. It's Superman.

He puts on, and that's the power of the Holy Spirit in your life. The problem is many people are not filled with that power. They're filled with the things of this world.

It's the power to overcome. It's the power to overcome. Do you need to overcome this week? Do you need to prevail? That's what it is, the power to overcome, the power to prevail, the power to withstand, the power to stand.

Mark 16.8, and they will pick up snakes with their hands, and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all. They will even pray for the sick, and they will be healed. But here's the thing.

You don't tempt God and say, well, I'm just going to go grab a rattlesnake. You don't test God. God's saying, when you walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and you're doing ministry for me, you can trust that nothing bad will fall upon you if you're living according to my will and living and in the center of my will.

So those are two key important things you have to remember. The price, Jesus paid the price. Jesus paid the price.

And then you have the power of the Holy Spirit, the power, the same power, imagine this, the same power that rose Christ from the dead is residing in the life of a believer. It's amazing. So we have the price, the power, and now the presence.

Oh, let me talk to you about the presence. This is wonderful. It's not just intellectual knowledge.

See, it's one thing, you know, a lot of religions have to do this, but all religions have to do this except Christianity because this is a relationship with God and he fills you with his presence. But other religions don't have this presence. It's the presence of peace and assurance and hope and joy.

So now, once you believe, the Holy Spirit comes in, resides in the heart of a believer. You can quench and you can grieve that Holy Spirit or you can submit and surrender to God. God Almighty abides in the heart of a believer.

Isn't that, to me, that's amazing. That's amazing. But you know what else still resides in me? The old Shane Eidelman.

And that is not a pretty picture. So you have this new person, this new life in Christ, tons of peace and assurance and hope and joy, but then the old man knocks on the door. Hey, remember me? Remember me, fear and doubt? Remember me, confusion? Remember me, sin? Remember the good old days? And you've got this struggle.

Paul said our choices are never free from this struggle. I've got the Holy Spirit yearning for the things of God and I have the flesh yearning for the things of the flesh. And these two choices are at odds.

That's why Paul says crucify the flesh. Don't entertain it, make no provision for the flesh. Don't plan ahead to sin.

Don't quench and grieve the Spirit of God, but fully surrender your heart and your life and you can feel the presence and power of God. Jesus said, if you believe on me, as the scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. And I want to say, oh God, do what you are famous for again.

Oh God, would you stir the hearts of revival and restoration and renewal. God, do what you're famous for. Convict the hearts of our leaders.

Bring healing and wholeness. Bring safety and security. Oh God, restore us.

Will thou not revive us again so that we can rejoice in you. Oh God, do what you are famous for. And if you're struggling with darkness and depression and despair, the chances are you've not repented of your sin.

You've not embraced God's wonderful gift on the cross. And see, that's really how this works. It's one thing to know.

You ask most people, even those listening to this later, they'll say, I know about Jesus. I know about the cross. I heard all that when I was younger.

But you have to receive. You have to receive that gift on the cross. You have to repent and say, that price was paid for me.

That price that he paid was for me. I repent of my sin. Basically, I put you on the cross.

Me and billions of other people put him on that cross. We have to acknowledge that. And oh, the presence of God comes upon your life.

And where there was despair, now there is hope. Where there was fear, now there is peace. And the presence of God.

Because think about this. What can man do to you? All they can do is kill the body. Jesus actually said, don't fear man who can kill your body, but fear God who can cast both body and soul in hell.

See, there is a judgment to come. And if the pulpits would get back to that, you would see revival. You would see the nation breaking.

You would see people on their face before God. Because it's biblical to say there is a judgment coming. There is a God who loves you enough to send his own son.

And unless you repent of your sin, you will not avoid the wrath that is to come. That's biblical. Jesus spoke more about hell than heaven.

And you have to tell people God loved you enough to tell you, you are under the wrath and condemnation of God, unless you turn from your sin. It's amazing to me. I read books.

Many of you know, I've talked about this before, books 100 years old, 200 years old. Wesley's journals, Whitfield. And this was a constant theme in their messages.

Repent, repent, repent. The sin abounds. And grace does much more abound.

And the blood of Christ and the call to holiness, the call to redemption, the call to avoiding God's judgment. Now fast forward 100 years, and now it's all of us talking about positive things and motivation and how can I just encourage you in your sin. And don't be convicted.

Don't feel bad. We don't want to talk about those things. People might get upset.

Yeah, it's time to burst the bubble. Half-hearted approaches to believing in God. And so it doesn't interfere with my life.

They are over. Half-hearted approaches are over. It's full surrender and commitment to God Almighty.

So let me close with this. The price. There was a price that Jesus paid.

I'll close with this and we can go right into worship. The price is dying to self. That's the price you have to pay.

Jesus paid the price. And the price you have to pay is dying to self and renouncing your sin. And I talk to people often or they'll e-mail and they'll say, but I understand that, but I don't want to get that serious.

I don't want to get that serious. Well, then you don't want God because there's nothing else more serious on the planet. There's nothing more serious than having that right relationship with God.

Not COVID-19. Not the economy. Not China.

Not Russia. Not a vaccine. Not a one world government.

The most important thing on the planet is do you know Jesus Christ? Has he saved you and redeemed you? And if you say, I don't want to get that serious. I want to really question the sincerity of your heart. And it's funny they closed.

I want to close with what I read earlier. Why do you seek the living among the dead? Why do you seek the living among the dead? The angels asked the ladies this and the same call goes out, the same question goes out to us today. Why do you seek the living among the dead? In other words, if you want living things, vibrant things, you want to be built up spiritually speaking, you don't look for that in dead things, in dead areas, dead media that is just dead and lifeless, friends that are dead and lifeless.

Why are you looking for Jesus Christ among dead things? Like the songs say, this is how I fight my battle. This is how you're going to have to fight your battles with hands lifted high. This is how I fight my battles with my body bowed down in humble adoration for a savior who died on the cross for me.

This is how I fight my battle submission to the word of God. This is how I fight my battles in complete brokenness, independence upon God. You've got to come down off your high horse, repent of your sin, and believe in the only name that saves.

There is no other way. There is no other person to believe in or good work to do. Jesus was crystal clear.

He said, I am, emphasis added here, I am the only way, the only truth, the only life. There is no other way. You cannot come to the Father except through Jesus Christ.

That's the point of the cross. That's the point of the resurrection. That's the point of preaching sermons.

That's the point of the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Did you ever think that this could be a wonderful wake-up call from God? Sometimes God needs to slap us in our face. He needs to shut down everything.

He needs to wake us up. It wasn't until he woke me up that I finally said, okay, God, enough, enough. So embrace this wake-up call.

What they call a pandemic could be a wonderful opportunity for you to turn your life over to Jesus. And for those who maybe have drifted from him, prodigal sons, wayward daughters, come home. Come home.

Listen, if I do know anything, I know this, that God's patience is not forever. The Bible talks about when you hear his voice, do not harden your heart. When you hear his voice, make that decision today.

Today, I challenge you, look throughout the Bible. You will never see where it says ponder it for the future. It's always today's the day of salvation.

Turn to the cross today. Turn to Jesus today. There might not be other chances.

Oh, you're just trying to scare me. Absolutely. I'm trying to give you a reality check because we are not even guaranteed our next breath.

Today's the day of salvation. So we're going to go into worship, and we're going to praise the name of Jesus. Oh, praise the name of Jesus.

Oh, praise the name of Jesus. Even where you can do it in your own home, you can rewind this later, and you begin to praise that wonderful name. If you can't praise that name, then you don't know him.

Praise is adoration. Praise is lifting up. Jesus, thank you for saving me.

Thank you for pulling me out of the gutter. Thank you for breaking that addiction and that stronghold. Thank you for governing and guiding my life.

Lord, thank you for holding me through this storm. Thank you that your word says you will never leave me nor forsake me. The economy might.

All people might. Things might fall apart, but if I have God, I have everything. Oh, Jesus, we praise the name.

We praise that name this afternoon.

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