

But we long to see him face to face. But there is a problem here. Are we ready for him? Are we prepared to meet him? When we shall see him, will we be put to shame? Or will we be glorifying him? And thank God that he still gives us this opportunity to be ready for our Lord.

So dear brothers and sisters, to me I feel this is a very crucial time. We cannot afford to be complacent. We have to seek him diligently with all our hearts.

This is not a time to play around. This is a time, dear brothers and sisters, that we all get very serious about him. I feel that there is a lack of desperation in our spirit.

If we really know our time, I believe that we should feel desperate. May the Lord give us this spirit. That we will really look thankfully, selflessly unto Jesus.

The author and finisher of our faith. Now the theme of this conference, I believe is clear to everyone of us. The way to the eternal purpose of God, the cross.

In the past conferences, we shared in many times and in many ways on the eternal purpose of God. Because, to know God, is to know His purpose. Our God is a God of purpose.

Even before the foundation of the world, God's purpose a purpose in Himself. And that purpose governs all His plans and all His ways. since eternal past, after He has purposed that eternal purpose, He has been working throughout the ages and the generations for that very purpose.

So dear brothers and sisters, you can see immediately, how important, essential is that purpose. If we miss that purpose, then our whole lives will be a loss, a waste. What is the eternal purpose of God? What is it that God has revealed to us of His heart and of His mind? This mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages in God.

Thank God has now been revealed to us through the apostles and the prophets. So today, this mystery is an open secret. But brothers and sisters, even though it has been revealed, and has been recorded in the Word of God, yet, we must receive personal revelation from the Lord.

Without that revelation, the eternal purpose of God is just a vague theory. But when God revealed it into your heart, as Apostle Paul says, It has pleased God to reveal His Son in me.

Then you will find there is a transformation.

In all spiritual things, we need revelation. Because in ourselves, there is absolutely no way to know God. So may the Lord give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation.

Until the full knowledge of God. So in the past, our emphasis, was more on this matter of revelation. How we need that heavenly vision.

So, the Pharisee, Before he received, he see that heavenly vision. We found that he was grouping in darkness. He wanted to serve God.

But what he did was opposing God. But thank God on the road to Damascus. He pleased God to reveal his son in him.

And what a transformation came upon him. He became Paul, the apostle. He is one who really knows the eternal purpose of God.

So brothers and sisters, Let us pray to the Lord. That he will grant us the spirit of wisdom and revelation. That we may really know what is the eternal purpose of God.

Of course, to put it very simply. The eternal purpose of God is none other than Christ and his church. But without revelation from above.

Our understanding of Christ and our understanding of the church is completely outward. It's all superficial. And it is full of errors.

Only with revelation from above. Then we really know Christ. And we really know what the church is.

But this time our emphasis is different. Instead of emphasizing on this matter of revelation. We do not mean to say that revelation is insignificant.

It is the very basis. But we have gone over this so many times. So we feel that there is a need to emphasize the way.

You remember in the letter to the Ephesians There are two prayers that the apostle Paul prayed for the church. His first prayer is God may grant them the spirit of wisdom and revelation to the knowledge of God. But then you find in chapter 3 He had another prayer.

And the emphasis of that prayer is that we may apprehend the fullness of God. In other words, the first prayer is concerning revelation. And the second prayer is concerning the way.

Because revelation is heavenly. But without the way, the cross, it will remain in heaven. For that revelation to become reality in our lives.

To be fulfilled in us. We need to find the way. And the way is none other but the way of the cross.

So this is the emphasis for our time. Our brother Lance speaks on the cross and Christ. And our dear brother Christian speaks on the cross and the spirit.

And I was assigned to speak on the cross and the church. We will look at this matter from three different directions. The cross, the foundation of the church.

Second, The cross and the building of the church. And finally, the cross, the testimony of the church. So by the grace of God this morning we want to consider the cross and the foundation of the church.

When the Apostle Paul was ready to go into Corinth. He went there to announce the testimony of God. The testimony of God is none other than what God has revealed of Himself.

No one knows God. God is the greatest mystery in the universe. Unless He reveals Himself.

Nobody will know Him in any way. But thank God, He is the God of Revelation. He is the God who reveals Himself.

All that we know of God is because of what He has revealed. Nothing more. Of course.

What He has revealed to us is not all that He is. Because He is far beyond us. But thank God, it pleases Him to reveal Himself to us.

What He reveals is His testimony. That is His testified of Himself. Who He is and what He is.

What is His purpose. What is His way. And He reveals it to us.

And this is the testimony of God. The Apostle Paul, he went to Corinth to announce the testimony of God. But in doing that, he knew that he couldn't do it with the wisdom and the eloquence of man.

Because this is far beyond any human capacity. So he decided, that when he arrived at Corinth, he would know nothing, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. In other words, Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the only way to the testimony of God.

Aside from Jesus Christ and Him crucified, there is no revelation, there is no way to the testimony of God. Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the very foundation to the testimony of God. We know that in the days of the apostles, that city of Corinth was a cultured city.

It was noted for its eloquence and for its knowledge. But it is a very corrupted and evil city. So the apostle Paul, as he contemplated of announcing the testimony of God to them, He will not match his intelligence with their intelligence.

He will not use his own words trying to match with them. He will announce to them Jesus Christ and him crucified. Because only Jesus Christ and him crucified could save them.

Can change them, can transform them. Jesus Christ and him crucified. Now brothers and sisters, today when we hear this, probably we will feel well that is very elementary.

Of course we know Jesus Christ. Of course we know him crucified. And it is because we know him and his crucifixion.

So we are saved. And we belong to him. And he belongs to us.

This is very elementary. But brothers and sisters, within that word Jesus Christ and him crucified, there is the principle to the full purpose of God. To the world.

To people who are not saved. Who are in sins and transgressions. They need to know Jesus Christ and him crucified in order to be saved.

But after we are saved, Jesus Christ and him crucified is not something of the past. When we believe in him and his cross, this is just the beginning. And if we allow him and his cross to work in our lives.

Then we will be led into the eternal purpose of God. With the Corinthians, Paul was not able to share with them the full counsel of God. Even though by announcing to them Jesus Christ and him crucified they got saved.

But after they are saved They are not growing in Jesus Christ and him crucified. They still live by their own natural life. For this reason, Paul was not able to share with them the eternal purpose of God.

But he did mention in verse 6 He said, but among the perfect we do talk about the wisdom hidden wisdom of God. Now, who are the perfect? The perfect here does not mean sinless perfection.

Aside from our Lord Jesus in this world there is no one who is sinless perfect.

Only our Lord Jesus He knows no sin. He has never sinned. He does not even know what is sin.

Aside from Him, no one is sinless perfect. But in the Scripture the perfect here means the grown up, the matured. If we believe in Jesus Christ and Him crucified not only as the means by which we are saved But we let Jesus Christ and Him crucified continue to working us.

Then we will grow. We will be more mature. And as we become more mature.

Then we can talk about the eternal purpose of God. We can talk about God's mystery. How His wisdom is in a hidden mystery.

But when you read 1 Corinthians chapter 2 From verse 6 onward. Paul in a way tried to describe what is that mystery. What is God's wisdom in a mystery.

He tells us that this is a wisdom that the world never knows. And this is a wisdom that man has never heard, never seen, and has never thought about it. It has never been thought about.

Because it's far beyond human possibility. And it concerns us. Concerns those who love God.

It is something that is revealed only by the Spirit of God. And it is for our glory. Brothers and sisters, what is it? It is the church.

So here you'll find the connection between the cross and the church. It is through the cross that the church is revealed and realized. Now we'll go back to Matthew 16.

We remember that our Lord Jesus, He went to the border of Caesarea Philippi. Caesarea Philippi We know Caesarea Philippi is a Gentile city. Caesarea Philippi Our Lord was rejected by His own people.

So He retreated to the border of a Gentile city. Then He asked His disciples a question. Who do men say that I, the Son of Man is? And of course the disciples will give Him all the good reports.

Some say you are John the Baptist coming into life. And others said you are Isaiah. Others say you are Jeremiah because you weep a lot.

Or you are one of the prophets. Then Our Lord turned to His disciples again. What do you think that I am? You have been with me.

What do you think that I am? And Simon Peter as usual the spokesman among the disciples. And He said you are the Christ the Son of the Living God. Our Lord immediately said to him Simon son of Jonah You are blessed.

Because this is not something that flesh and blood can show you. Flesh and blood can tell you that He is a prophet. But it is the Father who is in heaven who has revealed His Son to you.

So brothers and sisters no one know our Lord Jesus But the Father and to whom the Father is pleased to reveal When we come to the Lord Jesus The Father reveals His Son to us and in us. What a mercy, what a grace, what a love. Because of this revelation of the Father concerning His Son.

on the basis of that revelation. Our Lord Jesus gave further revelation. He said You are Peter You are a stone On this rock I will build my church And the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

This is the first time Our Lord Jesus mentioned the word church while He was on earth. I will build my church On this rock And you are Peter So brothers and sisters What we have here is What is the foundation of the church. Foundation is most important to a building.

Even though it is hidden Yet it is most important. What is the foundation of the church. Some people say Because the Lord said you are Peter You are a stone On this rock I will build my church Therefore Peter is the foundation of the church.

Thank God Peter knows better. Because in 1 Peter chapter 2 In verse 5 he said as we come to the Lord Jesus Our Lord is the living stone. As we come to him we all become living stone.

And we are to build together into a spiritual house. A holy priesthood. To offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

So Peter is not the foundation of the church. If he is the foundation. And as you read on.

You will find that how our Lord turned to him and said Satan get behind me. That foundation has already been shaken. So brothers and sisters We know for sure That Peter is not the foundation of the church.

Nobody is the foundation of the church. Christ Jesus is the only foundation. Peter is just a little small stone.

So we find the foundation of the church is none other but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. But after our Lord Jesus revealed the church to the apostles, Then immediately afterwards in verse 21, From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go away to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed and the third day be raised. Our Lord revealed to Peter, I will build my church.

And it will be built on the rock. It will be built upon himself. Then He further revealed to His disciples, that He must go to Jerusalem.

He will be rejected by the chief priests, by the scribes, by the Pharisees. He will be killed, But on the third day, He will be raised from the dead. This is the first time that Our Lord Jesus began to reveal to His disciples what will happen to Him.

After He has revealed the church, After He has revealed that He is the foundation of the church, Then He began to explain to His disciples, How is this foundation laid? He said He must go to Jerusalem. He must be killed.

But on the third day, He will be raised. Before His crucifixion, We find there are three occasions That Our Lord Jesus revealed to His disciples about His crucifixion. This is the first occasion.

Then we find in chapter 17 of Matthew, After His transformation, Then He was in Galilee. And in Galilee, He continued to reveal to His disciples. That He must go to Jerusalem and be killed.

Then the third occasion was in Matthew chapter 20. On His way to Jerusalem, He again revealed to His disciples.

Now brothers and sisters, Our Lord Jesus is the foundation of the church. And that foundation is the confession of Peter. That you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Our Lord Jesus is the Son of God. He is the Eternal Son of the Eternal God. He is forever the Son of God.

Even after He came into this world, And He called Himself the Son of Man. And yet He is still the Son of God.

The Father acknowledged that. This is my beloved Son. That never changes.

And He as the Son was sent into this world. To be Christ. Christ means the Anointed.

Without that He cannot be Christ. And you know how Satan tried to persuade Him from the cross. Even when He was tempted 40 days in the wilderness.

Satan tempted Him. You don't need to go to the cross. All you need to do came from the temple.

And let everybody see you descending. And they were all believing. Brothers and sisters, our Lord rejected.

That is not the way for His exodus. And even at this last minute Satan tried to use His beloved disciples to dissuade Him from the cross. But our Lord knows better.

Thank God. So brothers and sisters, first of all, the cross is necessary for our Lord Jesus. If we proclaim a crossless Christ, there is no salvation.

But more than that, our Lord Jesus, He went to the cross. He was there for 6 hours. From 9 o'clock in the morning to 12 o'clock.

We find that He was surrounded by His enemies. Not only the priests and the people, they mocked Him. Even the robbers that were crucified with Him mocked Him.

And in the darkness, in the hidden way, the enemy is surrounding Him. He suffered tremendously, not only physically, but mentally. But thank God, His Father was with Him.

Then at 12 o'clock, we find that the sun was dark. And it was from 12 o'clock to 3 o'clock. It was not man, not man, that rejected Him and crucified Him.

It was not just Satan trying to destroy Him. His own Father, whom He loved from eternity, turned His face against Him. In Isaiah 53, it says, Jehovah, God, crush Him.

And that's the time when He cried out, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? He does not say, My Father. When He was first crucified, He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. The Father was with Him.

But now, God, the God of the universe, the holy God, the righteous God, crush Him. Because there He became a sin offering. He who knows no sin was made sin for us.

Brothers and sisters, He could not bear it. He cried out. And the Father could not bear it.

So He turned His face to the love of God. Thank God. Our Lord Jesus suffered eternal death for us during those three hours.

Separated from God. That is eternal death. But He was willing for us that we may be saved.

Before He passed away, He said, It is finished. The work of redemption is done. Christ has fulfilled His mission.

And He gave His Spirit back to His Father. In other words, The Father has received Him back. Because the next day is a great Sabbath.

So no one that is cursed and hanged should be there. So the soldiers came. Usually when a person is crucified, it is a lingering death.

So they came to make sure that those who were crucified were dead or may dead. The two robbers, they are still living. So they break their legs to speed them to death.

But when they come to the Lord, they saw He was already dead. But to make sure that He was dead, a soldier thrust his spear into His side. And out of it comes out blood and water.

And Apostle John was there. He saw it. And he witnessed, bear witness to it.

In John chapter 19, He said, I saw it. Blood and water came out. I bear witness to it.

And my witness is true. Now brothers and sisters, why is it that John is so emphatic on this fact? Because out of his broken heart, came out the last and it is already disintegrated. Blood and water.

What is the meaning of it? Because the blood and water that came out of the side of our Lord is the material for the building of the house of God. Blood for the remission of sins. Water giving His life to us.

He poured out His life like water. Brothers and sisters, these are the materials for the building of the church. The church is not built with you and me.

The church is built with the blood and water in you and me. The material for the building of the house is Christ Himself in you and me. It is not you and me.

It is Christ in you and me. It is His blood that washes away all our sins. That clears up all the sins that are against God.

And it is His life poured out into us. And this becomes the building material of the church. So, brothers and sisters, we find that the cross is necessary for our Lord Jesus.

Because without it, He cannot fulfill His mission as Christ. On the contrary, He will be our condemnation instead of our justification. Because He is the only one who lives a perfect life.

But thank God He is willing to go to the cross for our sake. Now, brothers and sisters, and from this very cross of Christ, comes the material for the building of the church. I believe, brothers and sisters, we need to see this very clearly.

Because to many, when you talk about the church, now, what is the church? Many people think that church is that stone building or brick building or even wood building around the corner of the street. And I believe, brothers and sisters, we know better. We know this is not the church.

Now we say, what is the church? We say, church are those who are saved. Because the church means the called-out ones gather together. So, we are the called-out ones and we gather together.

So, that is the church. In other words, we are the church. Now, in one sense, that is true.

But in the strictest sense, this is not true. The church is not you and me. They are you and me.

But the church is not built with that. The church is built that which comes out of Christ. Because only that which comes out of Christ can return to Christ.

The church is a living body. It rejects all foreign elements. So, what is not of Christ will be rejected.

Only what is of Christ can be joined into the body of Christ. I think this is a very important principle we need to hold on. The problem with the church today is not outside.

It is not outward of persecution. Fact tells us the more persecution, the stronger the church. The problem of the church is you and me.

Are you seeking for a perfect church? Some people said, if you are there, there is no perfect church. That is very true. We are the problem.

Because we in our natural life is a foreign element. So, to the living church of the living God, it will be rejected. That is why we say again and again, the cross needs to work in us.

It so works that it will eliminate all that is not of Christ. Only what is remain of Christ will be built into the living church of God. The cross is not only a necessity to Christ.

The cross is a necessity to everyone of us. His cross gave us the strength to bear our cross. So, after all, it is from Him, through Him, and unto Him.

Let us pray. Dear Lord, our hearts are deeply moved by Thy love. Our hearts are moved by Thy love.

Who are we that Thou willing to go to the cross? Sometimes, Lord, we wonder if it is worthwhile. Thou has done so much for us. But where? We pray that Thy Spirit will search our hearts.

Do not spare us. May Thy cross be transplanted into us. And deliver us from ourselves.

That Thy eternal purpose may be fulfilled in us. Dear Lord, forgive us. Forgive us for delaying Thy return.

Pray that we may, by Thy grace, be a people who hasten Thy return. Quickly, Lord Jesus, in Thy precious name we pray.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/8/SID8430.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stephen-kaung/the-cross-and-the-church-part-1/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net