

So Noy March 30 1970 P.M. WXRI 7M  
Easter -

JESUS CHRIST, THE CRUCIFIED

I Corinthians 2:2

INTRODUCTION:

Last Sunday our thoughts were centered upon the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Today I would like for us to reverse our course a bit and go back to just before the resurrection to the cross. Paul was writing this letter to the church at Corinth, one of the great pagan centers. And the one thing Paul concentrated upon was preaching Jesus Christ, and him crucified. This was a stumbling block to some. They felt that it was an increditable thing and he preached that sinful man must look upon this cross to be saved. What he was saying was that the cross had to take place, that it was an inevitable thing that must happen. And there was no escape from it.

It took place because man was sinful and sin was opposed to God, and the grace of God was essential to man's need.

I think that if you would understand the significance of the cross, you must understand and remember who it was who died there on the cross. And we must remember that he was a Jew, that his name was Jesus, and that perhaps he was a good man -- the best man who ever lived.

Bishop Kern made a statement in one of his classes about the greatness of Jesus -- that he was above that of all other men. And a student challenged his statement and said that the parables of Jesus were so ordinary that he, himself, could write a parable that would equal in content the significance of the word spoken by Jesus. Now Dr. Kern said that if the student could write such a parable that he would pass him for the whole course and he would not have to do anything else in class. The young man promised that the parable would be forthcoming. But within a few days, however, he reported to his Professor that he had accepted an impossible assignment. How true! When we think about the destiny of Jesus and of his greatness, and of who he was. It is our duty to understand him and to follow him.

The idea of Messiah-ship in the life of Jesus is this fulfilling of a divine mission. As Messiah, Jesus, carried forth the program that was historically unfolded

in the Old Testament. Now it goes back to David, Moses, to Abraham - the father of the Jewish people in the flesh, and the father of all who in any nation or time attain righteousness by faith. Now Luke says that this purpose goes back to the time of Adam. And that it is as broad as mankind.

From his baptism on, Jesus worked toward program of God for him as one that would be executed through tragedy and through suffering. It was a fierce struggle to carry out God's purpose for him, and for mankind.

But this is not really the deepest level in answering the question to the cross - who was it that died on the cross. We do not really reach that understanding as long as we consider that Jesus was the human side. We must see that he was coming from the divine side of reality. He was not simply a man, not even a sinless man moved and controlled by a divine mission. But here is one who was abiding in the fellowship with the Holy God. And more has been said about him than any other man who ever lived.

The cross stands for the settlement of the issues of human life and destiny on every plain. The cross must therefore stand for God's plan, God's action, God's settlement of the sin question. The cross must be God's solution of the sin question. For this reason the cross was something that had to come to pass.

Again we ask the question, who was it that died on the cross. And we will have to say that it was the son of God. God himself incarnate in a human life. As a matter of fact we find that that issue is dealt with in the New Testament. And that the cross was placed where God himself was meeting and dealing with the problem of sin. That the son of God died is the great fact.

II. Who, or what was it, that put Jesus to death.

In the first place we wanted to see who was dying. In the second place we want to determine concerning Jesus, the crucified, what was it that put him to death. Another way to state this question is, what were the forces that killed Jesus.

The quick way to answer this question is simply say that sin killed Jesus. Well, now that is true but that is not the full picture, of the force that put him to death.

First, religious prejudice. Jesus came in conflict with religious people who were entrenched and men who were entrusted with religious leadership. They were comfortable in their leadership. They had inherited this system and Jesus came with many radical ideas so the leaders saw that if Jesus continued that his teaching would destroy their system. And when Jesus began to teach that the good of the common man, even to sinful outcasts was to be put above even these ordained things which they held as the law, it was like a revolution.

*Jack Wilder, Bro - Bull Dog, Lash like one - Clogged ears - Surgery Tail - George Held Pig, Fred The Tail Block, Clyde Knife, Jack Hammer, Harry - hit tail - yell - cut off heart and Pastor cut - offended members - quitters - etc -*

Jesus even taught the people that what a man ate had no religious significance. That it was his inner purity that counted and not his observance of some rules or regulations which had been imposed upon them by Scribes and lawyers. Mark 7:14. Now such teachings ran counter to the idea of those who had been the leaders for generations. And it would overthrow the leadership of the teachers of the law. From this standpoint, these leaders then, could not accept his teaching. And he was looked upon as dangerous and they were looking forward to putting him to death. That is why he had a civil trial and then he was condemned by Pilate where at last he would hand it over to be put on the cross. Now this line of thinking was carried even to the cross where they called him the son of God, the chosen of God, the king of Israel, the Christ - the king of the Jews. And they charged him with saying he would destroy the temple and rebuild it in 3 days.

Second, it was the other force that helped put him to death, they had been looking for a deliverer, a Messiah who would come and relieve them of the hated (Roman) oppression. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah but he was different from the kind the people had really looked forward to coming. Hence, this turned the common group against him. They looked for one that was going to be a political type but Jesus identified himself as a more spiritual or religious type and he called for repentance and a change of mind on the part of the people. And he meant a complete change of life. That the people

would change their nature. Now this was not easy for the people to grasp. And the people had their prejudices and they felt that anything that meant life would surely give them economic security, would give them political power, and would also maintain religion as they knew it. They also made Pilate fear that his standing with Rome was in danger, this his pride and jealousy, and fear of his loss of political power, was set in motion against Jesus. They were necessarily and essentially opposed to him because he stood for an ideal and a type of religion that meant death to them. Now these sins were controlling powers of evil in the lives of men that helped to put him to death and put him on the cross.

✓ Third, we see another thing that is involved here with putting Jesus on the cross. It was the will and purpose of God. This is something that Peter on the day of Pentecost said, Jesus was put to death at the hands of wicked men. And that this was done according to the determinate council and fore knowledge of God. Acts. 2:23. Peter gives both sides of the question. And it is a consistent idea but how are we to think of this in relation to the wicked forces combined with the purpose and mind of God. As being consistent, we cannot assert that everything in the world that takes place is a direct expression of the will of God. That would be dangerous to deny that God is God because he may prevent some of these things.

But the atonement relates to the cross and the will of God as an expression of the justice of God in bringing about moral freedom for man. Man finds that Christ is his substitute.

Hence, the death of Christ becomes an expression of God's love. Now this view we must not rule out 100% because Christ died to the end that he might accomplish the purpose of God and in the parable tares, Jesus says the tares represent the son of the evil one.

✓ Sin and the multitude of sin were the things that put Jesus to death. Jesus was the incarnation of God in human life. And sin as that which opposed God and all good opposed Jesus. It hounded him all his life and it sought to prevent him and to lead him away from his purpose.

Jesus, affirmed himself to be the son of God and that the Jews condemned him for it. He was classified as a male factor in his execution. He was put between two of these thieves at the time of his death. The sinless son of God died the death of a sinner but he didn't die the death of a sinner because he was one. But he died the death of a sinner because he was just the opposite. If he had been willing to compromise with the world, if he had yielded, he probably would not have gone to the cross. At least the Devil held this out to him in effect when he said, worship me, and I will give you authority of the kingdoms of the earth. You do not need to suffer, take the easy way. Now this is just the reason why Jesus died because he was uncompromising in his righteousness.

In order that he might save others he spared not himself.

There has been much talk in the world to the effect that one will have easier going if he follows the path of truth but the experience of Jesus does not indicate that this is so. Because the lives of the Prophets and the life of Jesus suggests just the opposite. The person who follows the path of truth will find that he is brought in deadly conflict with the forces of evil. Cain slew Able. I John 3:12. The evil man resents the goodness of the righteous man because the righteous man's goodness opposes and rebukes his own wickedness. This had been true at all times and at all places.

Jesus was uncompromising in his devotion to God. He would not have a divided allegiance in himself. And I do not believe that Jesus wants this in his followers. He was a man who followed the goodness of God and he made war on sin and evil and the world couldn't tolerate such goodness because it condemned the world. And it exposed the sham of life in the world of that time. Therefore, the world had to change or either fight back. It decided to put him to death. What he said here about the world goes also for the world's religion. For the world's best religion which at that time was the religion of the Jews -- Jesus own people. He came into head-on collision with the religion, its tradition, its comfortable respectability, and its self-centered goodness. It decided to kill him. God had endorsed Jesus and by his resurrection he

certainly didn't honor their religion. But they had pulled the house down upon themselves.

The death of Jesus on the cross was inevitable and what would have become of the atonement if the Jews had not killed Jesus. The death of Jesus however was not accident - not an accident in history. It was the result of coming together with the moral forces of the universe. Now it did not take place because he was born just when and where it was. It was not due to the fact that Jesus was a Jew or that he was born in Palestine. But it took place because sin is sin and because God is God. If the son of God should come at any time from Adam's day unto the present, the Gospel tells us that the son of man must suffer and die. It could not be otherwise when a holy God should come as man into a sinful world. It was not an accident of history, it was something that had to happen. The world was dominated by sin. And when God came in the form of the flesh, then there was a great conflict.

Now the death of Jesus on the cross was not just to manifest a sentimental love toward men to change their attitude toward God and life in general. But it was the result of a moral and inevitable result of the coming together of the sin of man and the holiness of God in the life of Jesus. It is God's ordained method of meeting sin as guilt in the world. So far as we can see, God had no other alternative. That God must crush sin or else he must surrender the world over to the rule of sin. And God was compelled to do something within himself that he might redeem men.

### III. What was the result of the crucifixion of Christ.

What happened because of this transaction.

First, we remember the resurrection. Jesus arose from the dead. This was the first transaction which we must remember. The thought of Jesus and of Paul not only was the death of Jesus seen pre-figured in the Old Testament but his resurrection was pointed out as well. Luke 24:26, I. Cor. 15:3. It was the death of Christ that brought salvation and God accepted the offering made by Christ for man's sin. Now the resurrection is not some kind of a post script that is an after-thought. By no means,

it is represented as the vital message of the New Testament. It is not something just added on, it was something that was the very heart of the saving work. The fact that he came into the world as the Holy One, the world being dominated by sin, and sin being in direct opposition to the moral nature of God, the deadly struggle took place and Jesus was put to death. Well the thought was that the conflict that resulted in complete victory. But the resurrection came and the life of man caused the forces of Hell to set upon Him to destroy Him. But the coming of God into the life of man brought judgment and Jesus was judged as not worthy to live, to put him to death. But at the same time, that brought on the death of Jesus, brought about also his resurrection. For God was led to lift him up from the dead. And he broke the bonds of death. It was impossible that he should be held by death since he was divine.

The death of Jesus under the world's condemnation which is the other side of the result, is that Jesus rising from the dead was an expression of God's judgment on the world. Now the world had judged Jesus as worthy to die. But God had judged him worthy to live. And in raising Jesus, God had condemned the world to die unless there should be a reverse in the judgment.

Second, another thing that came out of the death of Christ on the cross was a new life, for Him, as a grain of wheat he fell into the earth and died. And out of that death came new life. And it was an abundant life. Jesus as the Messiah was willing to suffer that he might be glorified. Now we who have Christ must suffer. Peter on the day of Pentecost tells that Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified, God had made both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:26.

Being the living Christ, he was given in authority in Heaven and on Earth in the resurrection. Matt. 28:18. That he had a name that was above every name and one day all creation, all things in Heaven and Earth, and under earth will bow to him. Phil. 2:5 and 11.

And linked closely to this is that not only new life comes to Jesus through the

cross but (through Christ) comes new life to men. The New Testament gives us the view that we are saved by being given a new life. A life that comes from fellowship with the crucified and risen Saviour. Jesus conquered sin, death, and rose from the dead. And those that share in this victory, the victory becomes ours.

(It was God's method) of dealing with sin, particularly sin as guilt. Now we must remember that God was not forced into a corner by sin and forced to do something about it. But God, in the cross, dealt effectively with sin and dealt with it on his own as he chose. And conquering this with his own goodness, it was not just an act of defense but it was a case of forcing sin off the field of action. God gave him the final revelation within himself and the final problem was not suffering but sin. And sin is a central problem of the universe today. God provided a solution to the problem in the cross. Victory of sin in the resurrection.

In the third place, we read that the cross brought about the complete grace of God. A Gospel that was coming in the grace of God that was free and man could voluntarily respond to God's grace. God's free act on the cross, man in him, would find a blessing. Not as a slave.

In the Old Testament we hear the forgiven of sin in Psalm 32:51. It is a clear expression of the depth and the goodness and mercy of God. But when we look beneath the surface of the cross, we come to see that here was death, on a Roman cross revealing the grace of God. And the grace of God as being in control of this universe.

Therefore, as a great theologian has said, (we) do not need to bow to the superficial shrine of the God of science because science takes the process of induction and follows certain formulas, but when science goes over into the field of religion or theology, it cannot cover the human experience. He may be a wizard in science but he may be ignorant in the field of religion. The cross reveals that we have a God of grace who has tender compassion and gives us the whole reaction of God against sin. The cross compels us to revise our thinking about the power of God. The cross has been said to be foolishness to men. And that God chose that which is foolish to men to reveal his wisdom. He chose the weak things of the world that he might put to



shame the things that are mighty. I Cor. 1:18-31.

Now that His disciples were not to fight back and resist evil men, and the enemies but what they practiced was the thing that was to be put to the test. Now the Messiah could have saved his life by compromise but he had power to deliver himself and rather than this, he resorted and submitted, to the treatment at the hands of the enemy.

Fourth, the cross demonstrated that sacrifice is the law of life in God's universe. Sacrifice is the price of life everywhere in this world. It is both true in the animal, the human realm, think of it. Birth is painful and life begins at the cost of suffering. Physical life, moral and spiritual development come through toil and suffering. The seed must die, that new life may spring into being. And this we find demonstrated in the hearts and lives of people through the ages.

Fifth, the cross reveals the self defeating nature of sin. Now this comes to us out of the Scripture in many places. Sin defeats itself. Man who schemes to exalt himself is sure to fail. He who gives his life away to Christ and others saves it. But the man who takes up the sword will perish by the sword. Matt. 26:52.

One who plans to destroy others destroys himself.

Ecc. 10:8. A man who digs a pit for another man to fall into, falls into it himself.

The sinner brings to himself the doom that he would bring on another. Rom. 1:18-32 reveals that sin is its own punishment. There is a true sense in which a man sends himself to Hell. Man doesn't have to wait until he dies to go to Hell, many are there now. Some people cannot escape Hell because they cannot escape themselves.

Now this does not mean that God has nothing to do with a sinner's doom. He has everything to do with it. A man cannot live a self centered life and be happy. The kind of moral order in which God has created, the stars must stay on their course, and deep tides the world moves. But the selfish man cannot be happy because his own moral constitution makes it an impossibility. The self-defeating nature of sin is what

V.6  
man's  
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it is because God is what he is. And in the heart of God is the cross. And out of the cross flows the life of the universe. *Gods Sun on Cross - spirit on - crown Thomas - Azony - 6th - Sun refused to die - forsaken, How you seen Christ men,*

Therefore, it is no accident that the cross is at the center of the Christian life. And this principle is one that we need to heed. The way of the cross.

In the year 1900 Galveston, Texas, had never had a hurricane. The U. S. Weather Bureau sent word that one was coming. They urged the people to leave the island which joined the mainland by one iron bridge. Those who lived on the mainland took heed. But the residents of Galveston went out and looked at the sky. It was calm - only a gentle breeze was blowing, and in their indifference and in their selfishness they went to bed. During the night the gentle breeze, turned into a strong wind, the strong wind brought the tides and the water broke the bridge like a twig. The next morning, the city of Galveston was virtually gone.

✓ We people in America refuse to heed the warnings of Gods word. We are baking in the sun of the gentle breeze of prosperity but one day this breeze will be gone. And so will go the nation that has lost its fear of God and its reverence for the cross and place that God would have the cross in our society. We have lost our sense of direction and we have lost our fear of God. We should ask the question which way to the cross, and find this way to the cross and return to the Christ.