

CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED

1Corinthians 2:1-2

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

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We're going to turn in the Bible today, to the **Book of First Corinthians**. I'm going to speak to you from **First Corinthians Chapter 2**. Now, here's my subject: **CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED**. What is it to preach Christ and Him Crucified? There's one way in which I can be like the apostle Paul; I'll tell you what it is in a moment. There are many ways that I cannot be like him; I realize that.

First of all, he was an apostle; I'm not an apostle. There were only 12 apostles. Paul was an apostle; he said, *“He was one born out of due time.”* An apostle must have seen the Lord and received His gospel directly from the Lord. That was the requirement for an apostle. Paul was an apostle. Our Lord said, *“He gave some prophets, some apostles, some missionaries, some pastors and teachers.”* That is what I am, a pastor and a teacher, I am not an apostle because there are not any apostles today; the apostles are gone.

Secondly, Paul was a writer of Holy Scripture. I'm not, I've written books and written some Bible studies, but they are not infallible, not at all. They have a lot of (me) in them. I hope they have a lot of truth, a lot of gospel, a lot of Bible in them. But they are not infallible. You see, the apostle Paul wrote the scriptures. If he's the author of **Hebrews**, he wrote 14 of the New Testament epistles; these are God-breathed. Paul the apostle, Peter, James, John and the other apostles were chosen men of God to write the Word of God and, *“holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*

These epistles and these words which Paul wrote to the church at Galatia and the church at Ephesus and the church of Thessalonica, the church of Corinth and the church at Philippi, these epistles are God-breathed. They are inspired of God and are the Word of God and *“all scripture is given by inspiration of God.”*

There is no scripture being written today; the scripture is complete from Genesis to Revelation. John, the last author in exile on the Isle of Patmos was given the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the scripture is complete.

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Another way that I cannot be like the apostle Paul, now listen to me, he was an apostle and I am not an apostle. The scriptures are infallible and verbally inspired by God. But my words are not infallible, and not inspired like the apostles words.

Thirdly, the apostle Paul and other apostles and men of that day had unusual gifts. They had power to speak and preach the gospel in other languages. They had power to heal the sick, even to raise the dead, which Paul did and others did. We don't have that today. Now listen carefully to me, preachers today do not have that power to supernaturally preach the gospel in other languages or other tongues. They cannot raise the dead, they cannot heal the blind, they cannot give ears to the deaf, and they cannot heal the sick. No man has that power today.

The Lord heals; I've seen God heal many of His people. We follow their instructions given by the apostle James; he said, *"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."* That is the instruction given to the church but no man has the power to go out here and heal sick people to prove that God is God. God is God!

Now, listen to **Hebrews 2: 3**; *"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at first began to be spoken by our Lord and was confirmed by them that heard it."* In other words, this gospel of redemptive grace in Christ Jesus is a fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures. It's the fulfillment of every promise, every prophecy, and every type. This gospel of Christ, incarnation of the Son of God was preached to us by our Lord and confirmed by these men, these apostles, who lived with Him and heard Him and followed Him. They that heard Him confirmed it; *"God bearing them witness with signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will."* In other words, when our Lord came to this earth, He said, "The Father bore witness of me, John the Baptist bore witness of me, the Word, the scriptures, bear witness of me, testify of me and the works that I do. The blind see, the dead are raised, and the deaf hear. These works that I do bear witness of me." He said one time, *"If you don't believe me, believe me for the works sake."*

Nicodemus said, *"No man could do these miracles, except God be with him."* Christ did these miracles. It said in the Old Testament that the Messiah would. Then, when our Lord died on the cross and went back to glory, seated at the right hand of God, He left these apostles, (Peter, James, John, Matthew, Luke) and all the rest of them to preach to a world that did not believe. They preached to a religious world that would not understand or comprehend the Old Testament. While these men wrote the New Testament, they wrote the gospels while they wrote the epistles, while they wrote the Revelation, while they wrote the Scripture, God gave them unusual gifts and languages.

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On the Day of Pentecost the people said, “*Every man heard them speak in his own language.*” They could even raise the dead; give hearing to the deaf and strength to the lame. These miracles, God gave them to (confirm) their ministry, to bear witness to their ministry that God sent them.

Now, the Bible is complete and a preacher doesn’t need to perform a miracle to prove that God speaks. Just speak from the Word, the Word is finished, the Word of God is complete. The scripture is complete; nothing needs to be added. All I have to do to impress on you and confirm my ministry that I am speaking for God is to tell you the truth about what God says. I don’t need to heal the sick, to prove God is alive. I don’t need to raise the dead to prove that God works miracles. It’s a miracle when you got up this morning; it’s a miracle to breathe; it’s a miracle to live; it’s a miracle to be saved; it’s a miracle for the sun to shine; and it’s a miracle every time this heart beats. Oh yes, God does heal. All healing is of God. He said, “*I kill, I make alive. I make rich, I make poor. The Lord brings down and the Lord lifted up, man’s days are in the hands of the Lord.*”

He gave Hezekiah 15 years more. Let’s pray for the sick; let’s pray for one another; let’s pray for those that are distressed and lonely; let’s pray for those who are poor and less fortunate and ask God to bless. Don’t tell people that you have power to accomplish and perform great miracles in the “name of Jesus,” when you do not have that power and you know you do not have that power and you are deceiving people and making money under false pretences. It’s God that heals, it’s God that blesses.

So, I’m not like the apostle Paul in that he was an apostle, and I’m not like the apostle Paul in that he wrote scripture. I’m not like the apostle Paul in that he had power to raise the dead and give sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf. God has that power! But, let me tell you how I am like the apostle Paul, listen to this. Paul was first and foremost a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ; that first and foremost was his calling to preach the gospel. In this way, I can be like Paul.

Listen to what he said in my text, **First Corinthians Chapter 2**; (turn to it if you will), verses **1-2**, he said, “*Brethren when I came to you I came not to you with excellency of speech, I came not to you with wisdom, (man’s wisdom, and intellectualism), I came to you declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ, and I’m determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*” That’s my message, Christ and Him crucified. In that way, every preacher can be like Paul.

You know, when Paul came to that great city of Corinth, the great city of wealth, power and learning, city of debaters and philosophers; did you know that he could have showed off a little bit? He could have spoken about the heritage of his fathers, of the customs and traditions of the Jews; he was schooled in those things. He said, “I’m a Hebrew of Hebrews, I’m a member of the Sanhedrin, I’m a Pharisee; I sat at the feet of Gamaliel, but *I’m determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*”

Well, he could have preached on the law. He could have preached on the ancient customs and ancient writings; he was a scholar. He could have conducted a healing campaign

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couldn't he? He could have healed people and showed off, spoken in other tongues and languages. He said, "*If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more.*"

You know, he could have told of his experiences. What about that experience on the Damascus road? What about that experience of raising Eutychus from the dead? What about the experience when the snake bit him on the hand and he shook it off in the fire and they waited for him to die and he never died? What about the experience when he went to the third heaven and heard things that wasn't lawful to utter? He didn't preach those things; he said, "*I came to you determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*" I didn't come to you with intellectualism, "*excellency of speech,*" (oratory).

Paul could have bragged about his connections. He knew King Agrippa, he knew Felix, the right-hand man to the king. He established churches all over the then-known world. No; **verse 2**, "*I'm determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*"

I see something in that word "*determined.*" I see three things in that word; note this: **First** of all, if a man determines to do something, there must be a temptation to do otherwise. A man does not determine to do anything if he has another choice; he just does what he has to do. Paul said, "I could have done other things, but I determined to preach the gospel."

Secondly, if a man has to determine to do something, there must be some opposition against it, otherwise, why wouldn't he just go ahead and do it? So Paul said, "In spite of the opposition, "*I'm determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*"

Thirdly, that word "*determine*" reveals the importance of preaching Christ. I'm determined to preach Christ and His cross because, "*the Son of man must be lifted up!*" He must be lifted up! "*There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ the Lord. Christ is, the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by Him. This is the record, God hath given us eternal life and that life is in His Son. He that hath the Son of God hath life.*"

So, I'm determined! Here stands a man converted and called to preach the gospel. He was a famous man, a learned man, a well-known man, a man of great experience, a man of great wisdom, a man of great talent, an educated man, standing in a great city, and he says, "*I'm determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*"

Well, I ask this question today. What is it then to preach Christ and Him crucified? What did Paul do and what did Paul say, what is it to preach Christ? What must I do to be like the apostle Paul? I'll give you about **four** things.

First, it's to preach the glory of His person. Now, get this, to preach Christ and Him crucified is to preach the glory of His person; Christ and Him crucified. Lots of men were

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crucified. Lots of men died on crosses in those days. That was a Roman way of killing criminals. Even on this particular day, three men died on crosses. Well, what's so special about Jesus Christ and Him crucified? What's so special about this man Jesus Christ and Him crucified that we should look to Him on the cross and not to all the other crosses? I'll tell you, it is who He is! Who He is determines the success, and efficacious power of His work and death.

If you will turn in your Bible's to **Hebrews 1**, it says, "*God, (Almighty God) who spake to our Fathers by the prophets, in various times and in various ways, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son.*" That's who this Man is; Jesus of Nazareth, He's the Son of God. Now, watch these eight things: "*God has spoken to us by His Son, the one whom He hath appointed heir of all things. The one by whom He made the worlds. The one who is the brightness of His glory. The one who is the exact image of His person. The one who upholdeth all things by the Word of His power. The one who by Himself purged our sins. The one who is sat down at the right hand of God.*" What's the difference and what is unusual? What is beyond comprehension in the cross of this Man, Jesus Christ? It is who He is! "*Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh, seen of the angels, justified in the spirit, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory.*" That's who He is!

"*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.*" Oh yea, lots of people died on crosses, but God died (once). God in human flesh died on a cross. That's what makes Him special, the glory of His person.

Paul said, "*Who is it that condemneth it's Christ that died, yea rather, is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, ever liveth to make intercession for us.*" Who is He? The angels said at His birth, "*Glory to God in the Highest, and peace, good-will toward men. Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is none other than Christ the Lord.*"

The Father called Him "*My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*" The demons fled before him saying, "*We know who you are, you're the Holy one of God, have you come to torment us before our time?*" The ocean calmed down at His voice, the grave gave up the dead when He spoke. The sun hid His face when He died. The angels announced His resurrection. Heaven received His coming, "*Lift up your heads O ye gates, be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors and the King of glory shall come in.*" The heavens announced His return. My friend, what is it to preach Christ and Him crucified? It's to preach the glory of His person!

Secondly, what is it to preach Christ? And listen, we've got a subject, why would I want to preach anything else? I'm preaching the greatest subject known to God and men. I'm preaching the most essential message that a man can hear. I'm preaching the message of life and death, light and darkness, truth and error, and of hope and despair. To preach Christ and Him crucified is to preach the excellency of His character. Listen to the scripture, "*God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin.*" Did you hear that? Here is a man that is born of a woman, born on this earth in the body of a human being,

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Bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, “*who knew no sin, who did no sin,*” who thought no sin, who loved God perfectly, who kept every law, jot and tittle.

Abraham was a friend of God, but he wasn't without sin. Moses was the meekest man on earth; but he wasn't without sin. David was a man after God's own heart, but he wasn't without sin. Mary was highly favored of God among women, but she wasn't without sin. John the Baptist was the greatest man born of a woman, but not without sin. Paul was the greatest apostle, but not without sin. But, this Man “*knew no sin.*”

Boy, if I could just get you to see that one on that cross. He didn't die as an example, no He didn't. He didn't die as a martyr. He didn't die as a reformer He died as a Substitute. He died a guiltless man for the guilty. He had no sin, He knew no sin, but He took our sins in His body on the tree and He died for the sin of His people.

Let me show you something. Here I am, flesh and blood and bones. Here's my sin, very many, very black and very heavy between God and me. Christ came down in my flesh, “*Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh,*” just like I was born of a woman, yet without sin. Here's the sin on me, not on Him, but He took my sins, “*He who knew no sin, was made sin for us.*” He bore our sins in His body on the tree and those sins separated Him from God. He said, “*Why have you forsaken me?*” It's because of sin, not His, but mine. The wrath of God fell on those sins and our Lord died under the weight of those sins. He was crucified and bore our sins in His body on the tree and died that we might live. Oh yes, to preach the excellency of His character, and the glory of His person, Christ and Him crucified.

Thirdly, to preach Christ and Him crucified is to preach the power of His blood. Yes, I'm old fashioned. Somebody said, “Your gospel is the First Century gospel.” It's older than that! My gospel goes back to Abel's lamb. My gospel goes back further than that to the foundation of the world when He was, “*the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.*”

Did you know that the word (blood) occurs in the Bible more than 450 times? That's right, more than 450 times. The first blood that was shed on this earth, do you know when it was? When was it? Let me tell you, Adam and Eve had sinned; they discovered their nakedness. They tried to hide from God. They took fig leaves and tried to cover their nakedness. God Almighty came in the cool of the day. You remember the story. “*Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?*” Adam said, “*I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*” Then the Lord slew an animal, shed its blood and took the skin and covered Adam's nakedness. The first blood shed on this earth was to cover Adam's sin.

When was the first blood that you read about in the scriptures that was offered as a sacrifice for sin? That was Abel's sacrifice. God had respect for Abel's sacrifice because it pointed to the cross. You see; all the blood on all the altars in the Old Testament could never put away sin. That blood was shed to point to Christ, to point us to Him. “*It's not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to put away sin, but this man, after He had offered one*

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sacrifice for sin forever, sat down at the right hand of God, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleanseth us from all sin. Oh, the power of the blood! There's no sin so black, there's no guilt so great, no life so wicked, and there's no heart so evil, there's no past so corrupt, no person so far away that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse us and make us white as snow. God said, "*Come, let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, I'll make them white as snow.*" What is it to preach Christ and Him crucified? It's to preach the glory of His person, the holiness and excellency of His character, and the power of His precious blood.

Fourthly, to preach Christ and Him crucified is to preach the whole of His work. Now listen to me, don't go away. I know we have a lot of crosses on buildings and people are wearing crosses on their lapels, people have crosses in their homes and all of these things. Let me tell you something, it's not the actual cross that saves; it's the one Who died on that cross. You are making a great mistake to worship a cross. Our worship and faith and dependence are upon Him who died on that cross. Actually, the blood of Jesus Christ fell on those people who crucified Him, but it didn't help them. You can literally be bathed in that blood falling off that cross and not be cleansed.

When we preach the blood of Christ, we're preaching the whole of His work, His incarnation, His death, His obedience, His burial, His resurrection, His reign, His intercession and His coming again. It's the Lord Jesus Christ that saves; not the cross and the literal blood, it is the glory of His person and the power of His blood that justifies the ungodly.