

# Christ Crucified

Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:22-24).

Is this statement by Paul concerning his preaching an oversimplification? Or is it actually the case that the term Christ crucified accurately denotes the preaching of that peerless apostle? In 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 he declared:

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

This verse affirms not only that Paul preached “Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” but that his preaching was limited to that theme; he knew nothing else to preach. That which he here terms, “Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” he calls simply, “the cross,” in 1 Corinthians 1:18, where he wrote, “For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”

While we know that the preaching done by Paul was not limited to the mere fact of the crucifixion of Christ, it is significant that he used these terms to denote what he preached. The cross of Christ was central to the preaching, not only of Paul, but of all inspired preachers in the New Testament. The magnificent sermon delivered by Peter on Pentecost of Acts 2 centered around the cross, and showed both logically and scripturally that Jesus of Nazareth whom the Jews had crucified had been raised from the dead, thus proving Him to be the Christ, the Son of God. In preaching to Cornelius and his household, Peter declared:

And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest (Acts 10:39-40).

The Jewish leaders at Jerusalem knew exactly what the theme of the preaching was that was done by the apostles. They said to the apostles on one occasion:

Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us (Acts 5:28).

Obviously, the apostles had been preaching about the crucifixion of Christ.

Jesus was speaking of His crucifixion when He said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32).

We understand that Jesus had to die to enable God to be infinitely just and at the same time justify sinners (Rom. 3:24-26). But why the cross? Why crucifixion? **The cross underscores the seriousness of sin and God’s hatred of it.** The world glorifies sin. The religious world, in large measure, has chosen to classify sin as an ailment instead of a misdeed. Even in the church, sin is overlooked and its seriousness is minimized. But if one wants to know if sin is really bad, let him look at the cross. For me to behold the cross, realizing what took place there was brought on by my sins, causes me to see that sin is not something to be smiled at; it is serious. God hates sin.

**The cross emphasizes man’s lost condition.** The familiar parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost boy (Luke 15) remind us that the “Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). If one wants to know God’s estimate of how terrible it is for one to be lost, then let him look at the cross and see the price God was willing to pay to redeem lost humanity.

Continued on page 3

## BELVEDERE BEACON

“Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

Volume 9 Number 47 November 23, 2008  
A PUBLICATION OF THE BELVEDERE CHURCH OF CHRIST

535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841-2574

(Greater Augusta, GA area)

### Jesus’ Blood Keeps on Cleansing

Many years ago, when I was a very young preacher, I believed that unless one specifically named every sin he committed and specifically asked forgiveness of each one, as he became aware of such sins, God would not forgive them. Eventually, I came to see that this was an untenable (and unscriptural) position for more than one reason:

1. One would have to be omniscient to even know all of the sins he commits. Surely, we all sin without even knowing we sin, and we likely do so every day.
2. On numerous occasions, faithful saints have died without warning, having no time to reflect upon or ask for forgiveness of a sin or of sins they may have very recently committed, even if they are conscious of having committed them.
3. My former understanding of this matter would make it practically impossible for the most godly person on earth to be saved.
4. The Bible teaches that, as long as we constantly “walk in the light” (i.e., live our lives devoted to God and in obedience to His Word to the best of our abilities) the blood of Christ constantly “cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7; cf. Rom. 8:1—KJV). The present tense form of *cleanse* in the Greek language demands this understanding. Note that this cleansing is conditioned upon the definite and unvarying dedication (not sinlessness) of our lives to the Christ and His Truth. Note also that the resultant continual cleansing covers “all our sin”—even those sins of which we might not be conscious and those for which we might not have an opportunity to ask specific forgiveness. Surely, this wonderful and comforting promise is an expression of the wonderful grace of God, apart from which none of us who are saved at last will be saved.

My change of convictions on this subject several decades ago does not mean that I am now indifferent to temptation or careless about sin and its consequences. Nor does it mean that I have in any way abandoned the Bible’s teaching concerning the need to confess my sins as I become aware of them and, if they are against a person, to the respective party against whom I have sinned (1 John 1:9, et al.).

Let us, as God’s children, “walk in the light” as fully as humanly possible, knowing that, at our best, we will sometimes fail to do so and thereby sin. To deny this fact means that we have lied and that we have implied that God is a liar (v. 10). Let us also, however, enjoy the comfort and hope the Scriptures afford in the assurance that, by continuing to live in harmony with the will of God (“walking in the light”) as much as it is possible for dedicated saints to do, the blood of Christ will keep on cleansing us of sin and thus keep us ready (and able) to enter the heavenly portals at last. This principle, I have long been convinced, the Bible teaches.

Dub McClish, Denton, TX

#### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

##### SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.

Morning Worship 11.00 am.

Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

##### WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

EVANGELIST: Ken Chumbley - Tel. No. (803) -279-8663

www.belvederechurchofchrist.org E-mail church@belvederechurchofchrist.org

**PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION**

This week the nation pauses for the Thanksgiving holiday. For many it will be a time of gathering with their families and for partaking of a special meal together followed by a day of mad shopping on "Black Friday," as it has been called for the purchasing of gifts for the Christmas holiday. Sadly, for many the real meaning of Thanksgiving and the reason why it was set aside as a national holiday are often all but forgotten. What follows is the proclamation that President Lincoln made in 1863 during the Thanksgiving holiday period. It should give us all reason to ponder the day and to use it to be thankful to God for His bountiful provisions for us.

"The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle, or the ship; the axe had enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years, with large increase of freedom.

No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and voice by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-eighth."

May all have a great Thanksgiving. Our prayers will be with those of our number who will be traveling at this time.

*Ken Chumbley*

**NEWS AND NOTES**

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett and mother, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick's aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron's sister who is having health problems, Myrtle Grimsley, Lanny Niver together with his daughter and Tim Smith.

Les Culpepper was sick Sunday with bronchitis, he is some better and was able to be out Wednesday.

Ken Chumbley would like to thank Glenn Aaron and Michael Farmer for preaching and Ron Wilson for teaching the adult class last Sunday while he was in the meeting in San Mateo, CA.

Our next pot-luck will be after the morning worship service on December 14. Plan to stay and enjoy this time together.

**Christ Crucified continued from page 4**

**The cross points to God's love for sinners.** Though God hates sin, He loves sinners. That which pictures God's hatred of sin is that which portrays God's love for sinners. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

Perhaps a passage even more meaningful in one sense is Galatians 2:20:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

This passage does not merely say He died for sinners, but for me; as much for me as if I were the only sinner in the world. He loved me, and gave himself for me!

**The cross emphasizes the necessity of obedience to the Scriptures.** Jesus went to the cross because that was the only way He could be obedient to the Scriptures. With the cross casting its shadow over Him, He said: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Mat. 26:53-54). In Philippians 2:8 Paul wrote that Jesus "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Do you want to know if obedience to that which is written is important? You will find the answer when you look at the cross.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world (Gal. 6:14).

*Bobby Duncan  
Deceased*