

The Cross of Christ – Part 2

Remember, Holiness of God; because if you don't grasp the foundational revelation of the Holiness of God, everything else in Scripture will be lightweight compared to what it should have been in regard to weight. Well then, we talk today in approaching the cross of Christ, how can we regard the cross as an "other than" experience if we don't have some revelation of the other thanness of God, this Holy God. So this is God's math that we've reviewed many times. We're approaching the last variable, that being the cross of Christ. Last week, we began to prepare our hearts to land rather than just presuming to walk into one more Christian class; that this is holy ground because if we don't regard this event as holy, what event in all of the history of existence will we regard as holy. We spoke about how to miss it as the Jews did by having a limitation of expectation. That is, He will come, but not in my lifetime and not in this way; so many of them missed Him because of that limitation. And then thinking that we know; because the instant that we think that we know fully anything of an omniscient God is when we cease to receive further revelations from that omniscient God.

We looked at foreknown, foretold, for faith; Old Testament prophecies by which our faith is kindled and fanned into a full bursting flame by seeing those prophecies fulfilled. Like Father, like Son, so that we don't make a distinction between an Old Testament wrathful God and a New Testament loving, cuddly Son; but the Father and I are One; we're One in essence, and value and purpose. Although we differ during this time in interaction with the human race by the Son adopting a subservient position in humility in order to perform the redemptive plan of the Father God and to model for us how to submit to a Holy God. The Son of God is the Lamb of God. And we looked at the different variables from the sum of His Word that play into that. It was voluntary; He was perfect; although tempted as we are, to become an acceptable sacrifice to the Father.

We looked at flesh versus spirit. That will be later in the Kingdom of God; but we looked at only the first two variables. The basis of the flesh is self; the basis in the spirit realm is God and God has spoken to us in His Son. Truth, in the flesh, is what I say that truth is; but truth in the spirit realm when you're walking in the spirit, truth is what God is and how God views everything else. Not what I say about what God said, but what God said about how He views everything.

Today we move on into the God man. The heading on this poster says God plus man equals and that's meant to be a hyphen on the right side, not a minus sign, so God plus man equals the God man. There is a mystery to Jesus as the God man. We'll try to understand it as far as it can be understood by examining the travail of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane prior to the cross. Well, why do this? Well, we do this to understand more fully who He was. That helps us to understand how we can be thought of, are to be thought of as God men also. If we don't understand Jesus as the God man in His travail in the Garden, we'll always be hesitant to think of ourselves as God men as New Testament Christians. This is a divine mystery; but understand not to understand fully is no excuse not to understand at all. Walking in the light of what is revealed while leaving the secret things to God is its own form of worship. It is part of resting in God

and invariably when we're called to rest in God, when we come to the limits of our understanding, what we're resting in is the Holiness of God. Because except we regard God as Holy, as "other than", we can never fully rest in any area in which we have partial understanding.

So, we worship God rather than to judge God by regarding His revelations as somehow inadequate. That pertains to the subject we talked about the last time with the Trinity and pertains today with the subject of the God man. Because if we judge God's revelations as inadequate in any arena, including those, then we're ceasing to rest in the Holiness of God and we are trying to rest in our own understanding while judging God's revelations in these difficult subjects as somehow being wrong or inadequate. Deuteronomy 29:29 – "The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things revealed belong to us." We're to regard this mystery as we regard all mysteries of God just like Jesus showed us. Matthew 11:25-26 – "I praise Thee oh Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent; and didst reveal them to babes. Yes, Father for thus, it was well pleasing in Thy sight." That Scripture is most commonly utilized to demonstrate how we come to God with child-like faith, not with human understanding; and it is certainly true and useful for that. But I think it conveys another spiritual truth that I'll emphasize at this point. So did Jesus praise the Father for hiding it from the wise and revealing it to babes because He understood it? Well, there is nothing in the Scripture that implies that He's speaking of His understanding because that is not the reason that Jesus gives for praising the Father. He praised Him because it was well pleasing to the Father to do it this way. The Father did it that way; it pleased the Father to do it that way; Jesus accepted that; walked in the light of that; and praised the Father for doing it this way. In other words, Jesus did not judge the Father for doing it this way and not doing it another way. He simply said "praise you, Father for hiding it from the wise and revealing it to babes for it was well pleasing in Thy sight."

So, that's how the Son of God rested in the will of the Father God to do it the way that the Father willed. So, should we do less? So when we come to these mysteries of God, Jesus once again is our model for how to handle the mysteries of God; because as with all things, Jesus told us how and showed us how. That's why, remember, He is the truth. Because He is God and He reveals to us by verbal expression and by modeling how God views reality. So the way God views the reality of our resting in Him is for us to simply go as far as He allows us understanding and always seek more understanding, but never have that understanding decide if we rest in God or not. We rest in the God Who did it this way; we praise Him that He did it this way; and we don't live in unrest because we don't understand it; and we don't live in unrest because we try to rest in some area other than the Holiness of God.

So the summary quote that I like about such issues as the God-man and the Trinity is: We have begun to understand when we seek to understand without having to understand in order to believe. (Comment to Dr. Buddy: Say that again, that's important.) We have begun to understand when we seek to understand without having to understand in order to believe and in order to rest. (Comment to Dr. Buddy: Say it one more time.) We have begun to understand when we seek to understand without having to understand in order to

believe or to rest. And that's nothing more than a paraphrase of Proverbs 3 where it says "trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding." Because if you're leaning on your understanding instead of resting in faith in the Holy God, then you are self-determining where the point of rest should be, which is just continuing to judge God.

Jesus as man—we know these Scriptures. Luke 2:11 – "Unto you is born a Savior." But God is eternal; He's not born; only men are born. Philippians 2:7-8 – Speaks of Jesus being found in appearance as a man, being made in the likeness of men. Hebrews 4:15 – "One Who has been tempted in all things as we are; yet without sin." But God cannot be tempted; a temptation can be thought of in two ways. It can be thought of as a test that is an external set of circumstances brought to bear on a person; or it can be thought of as an inner solicitation to do evil. In other words, I can be in a room full of cigarettes, but it's not a temptation to me because I hate the smell of smoke, can't contemplate smoking; I tried smoking in college and gave it up because I hated it and found it repulsive. So a cigarette is no temptation to me; you can submerge me in them and it's not a temptation to me. So in that sense, a temptation is an inner solicitation to do evil. Well, James 1:13 says, "God cannot be tempted by evil; only men can be tempted". Yet Jesus was tempted in every way such as we are. I Timothy 2:5 – "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus." And we know throughout Scripture, Jesus called Himself the Son of man. And Jesus walked, He ate, He drank, He slept, He cried, He bled, and He died. Well those are things men do; those aren't things that God does. So He was fully man.

Next poster. Well, let's look at the other side of that coin. Who is this Jesus? Colossians 1:15 – He's called "the image of the invisible God." Colossians 2:9 – "For in Him the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." Hebrews 1:3 – "And He is the radiance of the glory of God." Hebrews 1:3 also – He is the exact representation of God's nature. Matthew 1:23 (actually quoting Isaiah 7:14 when it says) "Behold the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son and they shall call His name Emanuel which translated means God with us." He is the God man. And Matthew 17:5 – "This is My beloved son in Whom I am well pleased." He is the Son of God. Hebrews 1:2 – "In these last days, God has spoken to us in His Son." He is the message of God. John 1:14 – "And the Word became flesh and dwelled among us." He is the Word of God. John 14:9 – "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." He is the exact representation, the likeness of God. And John 10:30 – "the Father and I are One"; He is the One God. So Jesus was fully God and fully man and that was foreknown, foretold, for faith. And here we rest in Jesus as the God man. Do we rest because we understand it fully? Do we rest because the mind of man can wrap itself around it? No. We rest because the Father did it this way and it was well pleasing for the Father to do it this way; and we praise Him for doing it this way; and we rest in the God, leaving the secret things to Him; but the things which are revealed are for us.

Back to the prior poster. The travail of the God man in the Garden—now that travail was the result, I believe, of the Son of man and the Son of God between the flesh and the spirit. Jesus knew His calling; He knew that He was the Messiah; He knew that He was

the Lamb of God; He knew Psalms 22; He knew Isaiah 53; He knew that He would fulfill all of those Old Testament prophecies; He knew that was the will of the Father; He knew that He had humbled Himself and given up the glory of Heaven, not considering equality with God something to be held onto; but came to Earth in the form of a man to do the will of the Father. He knew that He was to be crucified; He knew that He was to redeem the world.

Yet knowing all of that, in Matthew 26:39 – He said “may this cup pass from Me.” Well if Jesus is fully God and Jesus is fully man, from what part of Jesus did that cry come? It could not have come from the spirit which was always one with the Father; it had to come from Jesus as the Son of man, or what we might call flesh. The flesh wanted no part of this cross. Well, how do we know? We know in the spirit Jesus was one with the Father. In speaking of the usage of body, soul, and spirit, those of you who habitually use the so called dichotomy of body and soul, with soul being the immaterial part, we also know as I’ll review now in New Testament Scripture; there are at least a couple of places where it’s spoken of as body, soul and spirit as if there is a trichotomy (that is three divisions). Hebrews 12:4 (Speaking of the Word of God, it says) – “it pierces to divide soul and spirit.” Paul also uses that terminology in I Thessalonians 5:23 – “May your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete.” So if we use the trichotomy or the tripartite, with the immaterial consisting of soul and spirit and with the soul being thought of as mind, emotion, and will, then we look at it the following way. How troubled was the soul of Jesus in His mind and emotions at the contemplation at what He was being called to face? Matthew 26:38 – “Then He said to them, My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death.” Can you imagine having your emotions troubled, grieved to a point of death? In Luke 22:44 (and being in agony... He was praying very fervently and this isn’t the agony of the cross; this is the agony of the contemplation of the cross which was impending) – “And being in agony, He was praying very fervently and His sweat became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground.” You see in human terms, that’s grief and agony to the extreme at the mere contemplation of the cross. No wonder that the Son of man cried out may this cup pass from me. Understand your flesh will never want to drink what God calls you to drink. Your flesh is anti-God because it is based on self. Your flesh will never be convinced; your flesh will never be anything other than denied, crucified, overruled, conquered; the flesh cannot be improved; that’s why it has to be denied. Because you can’t improve the flesh else this Holy God Who is omniscient, would have said, “Improve your flesh.” But He doesn’t ever say improve your flesh; He says “deny your flesh, consider it dead.” Because it is anti-God, it is hostile to God, it is friends to the world and it cannot be improved. It is to be denied.

So thank God that Jesus didn’t stop there, that there’s a comma, not a period...My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from me, yet, not as I will but as You will. That came through the spirit. See, that’s the cry of the spirit that had always been One with the Father and still was at that point. That’s the One Who only did what He saw the Father do. The One Who only spoke what He heard the Father speak. Thus Jesus, as the Son of man, in spite of being grieved to the point of death, laid down that will of the Son of man, in fleshly terms and in submission to the will of the Father that the redemptive plan be fulfilled. So was Jesus tempted as we are? Well, yes He was. Scripture tells us that. So

He had an inner solicitation to do evil; that is to be spared the agony of the cross, but that would have violated the will of the Father. It would have let mankind go to Hell, and it would not have fulfilled the redemptive plan, if that cup had been passed from Him. But if He's tempted as we are, if He walks and eats and drinks and cries and bleeds and so on, the Son of man would want that cup to disappear from Him. But Jesus as the one person with these two aspects laid down that Son of man cry, laid down that agony of being troubled to death, grieved to the point of death, perspiring blood at the mere contemplation of what awaited Him. In spite of that, He laid it down and said "yet, not My will, but Thine be done."

You see that temptation from the Son of man fully man, and He couldn't be fully man without wanting to avoid suffering in the flesh. It had been there since He was born; it's just we never noticed it. How do I know? Because He was tempted in every way, such as we are. Well, how are we tempted? We're tempted to lie, to cheat, to steal, to fornicate, to do everything to satisfy the lusts of our self centered nature; yet He was tempted without sin. Because every step along the way, if anything like that should bubble up, "oh yet, not My will, but Thine be done." That inner solicitation to violate the will of the Father had never come close to overruling the Spirit's pleasure as the Son of God and doing the will of the Father. That's why He could say earlier in Scripture, in Matthew 11:30 – "My yoke is easy; My burden is light." Because any contemplated pleasure of violating the will of the Father is reduced to insignificance in the pleasure at the right hand of the Father. But this time, the travail was different. This time the agony involved in doing the will of the Father was different and exponentially so, not trivially different. This time, His soul was troubled unto death. This time He perspired blood. This time His inner solicitation to violate the will of the Father was verbally expressed—may this cup pass from me. This time, His yoke could not possibly be called easy. His burden could not possibly be called light. This time, He needed help to see the mission through. So, what did He do? He prayed. As He perspired blood; as His emotions were troubled unto death, He prayed and what happened? Luke 22:43 – "Now an angel from Heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him." Well, He wasn't praying to the angel; He was praying to the Father. So Who sent the angel, other than the Father? The One to Whom He was praying. And that's a real life example of modeling for us what is available to us as New Testament Christians. Hebrews 1:14 says as much, speaking of angels it says – "Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" So it is revealed that they are for us; that we pray and they will be sent. And Jesus has modeled that for us in the travail of the Garden of Gethsemane.

Well, how about us as God men? Is it pertinent to us to understand the concept of the God men? I think it is; because we're not mere man. We are God men too; and it's not heresy to say so and it's not pride to say so; it's humility to say so because that's what God says and humility agrees with God and makes adjustments to align with the will of God and the expressions of the truth of God. Pride is to resist those things and make excuses. But humility accepts it and walks in the light of it. So when I say I am a God man, it's not heresy, it's humility; because we're born again. See we're born of the Word of God; born of the seed of God; born of the spirit of God; spiritually alive. So we speak

of the resurrection from the grave at the time of the rapture. It will occur; but the true resurrection has already occurred. I have been resurrected from a dead spirit to an alive spirit—to a spirit that is full of the Holy Spirit of God. How can I be anything other than a God man if I am spirit and my spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit of God? I Corinthians 3:16 – “Do you not know?” I mean Paul is expressing what he would regard as milk with this statement. “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you?” That’s how we walk as He walked in I John 2:6 – it tells us we ought to walk as He walked. Well, how do we do that? Well, we do that like Jesus did; because we are born of the Spirit of God, yet tempted constantly by the flesh to violate the will of God. The good news is we are not alone in that struggle. It’s not an idea of just our will power; but it’s in His will, power. We access the power of God by functioning in His will rather than thinking that it’s left to us as mere men to overcome the temptations to sin. We have help available in our travail in this struggle between the flesh and the spirit. But that help comes only when we cry out. And that cry will not come if we’re not willing to engage in the battle rather than forfeiting to the flesh. Because, pay attention, lest you drift; if you’re not paying attention to the truth of God, you will drift back into the well worn ruts and grooves of the flesh nature.

So if your flesh with self as the basis is not screaming in protest, then it probably is not being contested. So we have to cry out...”not my will, but Yours be done.” We have to cry out, “Father strengthen me to obey you and not my flesh.” So you may say, “well, I cannot overcome my flesh.” Well, you’re right and you’re wrong when you make a statement like that. There is secular wisdom that comes close to spiritual wisdom, but it’s not really the fullness of it. You’ve heard the saying, particularly in the sports world, that the man who says he can and the man who says he can’t are both right. Because if you think you can’t, you can’t. But if you think you can, you can. But in the spirit realm, here is how that’s to be viewed. If you say, “I cannot overcome my flesh”, you’re right in that flesh cannot overcome flesh. So, if you’re thinking I, alone, you can’t overcome your flesh. You’re right also, if you’re saying by that statement that I cannot overcome my flesh that you have more faith in the power of your carnal nature, than you have faith in the power of an omnipotent God, then you’re right. You can’t overcome your flesh. And if you’re saying that you believe that you have the power of an omnipotent God in you, but you don’t think it can be accessed, then you’re right. You can’t overcome your flesh.

Matthew 9:29 – “Be it done to you according to your faith.” Well, what is our faith? Remember the sequence. Our faith is not in ourselves, including overcoming sin as New Testament Christians. Our faith is not in faith as some vague abstraction term. Our faith is not in our faith. Faith is only pertinent to the degree of the object of the faith. Our faith is in God. Our faith is in specifically Jesus, the Holy Son of the Holy God, and He is omnipotent and He is the One that spoke the Heavens and the Earth into existence. I John 5:4-5 – “For whoever is born of God” (is that us?). Well if you say no, that means you’re not saved. Whoever is born of God overcomes the world. It’s not stated as an “if” or “maybe” or “possibly”. If you’re born of God, the world has been overcome and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world? See, it’s not just faith. He who believes that Jesus is the Son of

God. When your faith is in your salvation, your justification, based on the grace of God and your faith is in God as through His grace empowering you to overcome sin to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That's when true sanctification occurs to be transformed into the image of God. But as long as you're trying to complete in the flesh what was begun in the spirit, you will live a life of frustration as a mere man trying to accomplish holiness, whereas if you could have accomplished holiness, you wouldn't have needed a Savior to begin with. So your dependence has to be on the power of an omnipotent God.

John 15:5 – “apart from Me, you can do nothing.” So apart from Jesus, we can't overcome our flesh. But the good news is we're not apart from Jesus. That's why we're never tempted, never, ever tempted beyond what we are able. Well our solution to being tempted is to try and wrap the temptation into greater and greater suppression through psychologic control until one day it reaches a point of exploding with volcanic force. That's what happens when we see our preachers fall. Our television preachers – they fall because they try to wrap, through suppression in the flesh, just like Peter who says, “I will never deny You.” Well, Peter's faith was in himself, not in God. I Corinthians 10:13 – “No temptation has overtaken you but such as common to man and God is faithful Who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation, will provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it.” Now we tend to think as the way of escape is to have God change the circumstances so as to diminish the pressure on our flesh. Well, God may change your circumstances; but more commonly, He wants your flesh to be controlled in the circumstances. That's why self control is listed as a fruit of the spirit and not circumstance change listed as fruit of the spirit. In Galatians 5:22-23 – (comment to Buddy: say that again, Buddy. Say what you just said.) He wants self to be controlled in the midst of the circumstances, more than He wants to change the circumstances; because if that were not true, under the fruit of the spirit in Galatians 5, He would have listed circumstance change rather than self control.

So I'll use myself as an example so as not to embarrass anybody else. If I'm in church and I notice a very attractive woman, what's my reaction? Well, if I notice she's pretty, there's no problem; because the truth is, she is pretty. But if I start to contemplate how to engage her in conversation solely because she is pretty, while neglecting other Christian ladies who are not as physically attractive, then a problem has begun. I'm now showing partiality to one child of God over others based only on her physical appearance. That can only be of the flesh, never of the spirit; because we're told in II Corinthians 5:16 – “therefore from now on, we recognize no man after the flesh”; and I would add “or woman after the flesh.” And if I progressed to take the next step to contemplate what it would be like to have her sexually, then I've upped the ante in regard to sin. Up to that point, if I take that walk, all that I've done is to default to the flesh by not engaging in the battle. I've simply accepted the control of the flesh rather than loosing the control of the flesh. At that point, I'm not worshipping God, I'm worshipping my flesh because I've dismissed God to let flesh be on the throne. So, what is a Christian to do? Well, that's why we're told there's a battle. And the battle is a lifestyle, not an event; and it's a battle over your next thought. So what can you do to become the aggressor in that battle? Ephesians 6:17 tells us that the sword is the Word of God; but the sword does no good in

the sheath. The sword has to be taken out and take up that sword of the spirit which is the Word of God... "Father, not my will, but Yours be done. This lady is a temple of your Holy Spirit. May I never violate Your holy temple. This lady is the glory of her husband in the covenant that you call holy matrimony. May I never lead her or anyone else to violate that covenant. May I never violate my covenant with You, my Holy God. And my covenant made before You with my wife in holy matrimony. May I never threaten this other woman's relationship with her God, her husband's relationship with her God, her relationship with her friends, her church members and so on. May I never destroy our functions as four Christians, me and my wife and her and her husband on planet Earth to bear witness of God, through glorifying Jesus Christ, by ever saying my will be done, not Your will be done; and thus, try to seduce this lady." But if I'm left on my own energy and I'm left on my own lusts, and I'm left on my own thoughts, I will follow through and try to seduce this woman. But if I know who God is and who Jesus is as His Son, and I know that I'm not a mere man, I'm not left alone, I am indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, the omnipotent God Who spoke creation into existence.

And that's the pathway by which I'm able to escape the temptation. By taking out His Word, reminding myself of who I am, reminding myself of what my purpose on earth is, reminding myself of who she is, reminding myself of her covenant with her husband in holy matrimony, you see. How can I be an ambassador to represent Him? Anytime I step out and fulfill the lusts of the flesh, what I'm doing is sabotaging myself as an ambassador of Christ, as a living epistle to reveal Christ, as an earthen vessel to bring Christ to a hurting world, you see. So I have a choice when I view it that way. Fulfill my sexual lusts for about 5 minutes, or fulfill my purpose, my eternal purpose to bear witness of Jesus Christ, you see. And then the choice becomes easy, my burden becomes light, my yoke is easy. Because, oh, I'm now viewing this reality according to how my God views this reality. And only then is there joy and peace, because the other side will bring only trouble. So my time is more than up, and I thank you for listening.