

The Crucified Life

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Preacher: Mr Joe Macphee

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Let's read the Word of God as we have it in the New Testament and Paul's epistle to the Galatians in chapter 2. Galatians chapter 2. Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me also.

And I went up by revelation and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run or had run in vain.

But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised, and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

But of these who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's person.

[1 : 49] For they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me. But, contrarywise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter, for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles.

And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Only they would that we should remember the poor, the same which I also was forward to do. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles. But when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why comest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

[3 : 35] We who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.

For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin?

God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

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.

I do not frustrate the grace of God. For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

[5 : 04] Amen. May the Lord follow that reading of his word with his blessing. Psalm 71 is our next item of praise at the beginning of the psalm.

O Lord, my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone. Then let thy servant never be put to confusion.

And let me in thy righteousness from thee deliverance have. Cause me escape. Incline thy near unto me and me save.

Be thou my dwelling rock to which I ever may resort. Thou givest commandment me to save. For thou art my rock and fort.

Free me, my God, from wicked hands, hands cruel and unjust. For thou, O Lord God, art my hope and from my youth my thrust.

[6 : 11] Thou from the womb didst hold me up. Thou art the same that me out of my mother's bowels took. I ever will praise thee.

These verses to God's praise. O Lord, my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone.

Then let thy servant never be put to confusion.

Let me in thy righteousness from thee deliverance have.

Cause me escape. Incline thy lead. And to me and me save.

[7 : 26] Be thou my dwelling rock to which I ever may resort.

Thy name's commandment may to save. For thou art my walk and fort.

thee, my God, from wicked hands, hands clear and unjust.

I am of my midst. For thou, O Lord God, art my hope and from my youth my thrust.

From the wounded told me, The light blessing about me, Out of my mother's blestry, Thy light will praise thee.

[9 : 03] Seeking the Lord's blessing, let's turn again to the portion of Scripture that we read. The epistle to the Galatians, chapter 2, reading again at verse 19, verses 19 and 20.

For I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 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.

The question arises in verse 19, and in a sense verse 20. What does it mean to live unto God?

What does it mean to live unto God? Well, the answer to the question, in a sense, may be obvious, but perhaps not so obvious.

[10 : 14] The answer to the question is this, to live the way that God demands that we should live. To live the way God wants us to live, according to the true gospel.

And here we have Paul challenging the Galatians, to whom he had preached the gospel beforehand, challenging them in relation to the way that they were now living, which was not according to the gospel.

And he vehemently defends the gospel of God's grace. He tells us that in this chapter and verse 4, false brethren crept in to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us to bondage.

And he tells them in the first chapter, and he refers to perverting the truth of the gospel, wanting to add to what Christ has done, and to bring them back into subjection to the law of God, in order to secure righteousness, to secure favor with God.

And this issue which arose in this church in Galatia, also arose in the church in Philippi, and you know, I'm sure, yourselves, how strongly he challenges the people in Philippi, when he writes to them, and in no uncertain terms, and one thing about the gospel, and one thing about the word of God, it doesn't hold anything back in challenging error and sin.

- [12 : 09] What does he say to the Philippians? Beware of dogs. Beware of evil workers. Beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

These are the marks of the true Christian, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

And he begins this letter, asserting from the very beginning of the letter, Paul, an apostle, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ.

His authority is from the Lord Jesus Christ. from the Lord Jesus Christ. And he goes on at the beginning of that first chapter, to refer immediately to what Christ has done.

grace be to you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.

- [13 : 28] He gets to the heart of the gospel, of what Christ has done, and to Christ alone. Just as we were singing in that Psalm 71, O Lord, my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone.

And you know that the great reformers, of course, when they spoke of the great points of the Reformation, spoke about that. Christ alone, alone, alone.

Nothing else. Nothing else. And of course, what he says in these verses in first chapter, in the first chapter in verse 4, according to the will of God and our Father, and he asserts and he presents them with the reality, this is the divine will.

This is the divine will. And he, this is such a hard-hitting letter, I marvel that you are turning away so soon. If anyone else preaches a gospel, let them be accursed.

Accursed. Because that's not the gospel. It's not the gospel. Twice, he lays the emphasis on that.

- [14 : 46] He calls them foolish Galatians. Who has bewitched you? Who has deceived you? And he confronts them into the second chapter.

Peter. And he confronts Peter. For his dissimulation. For his hypocrisy.

For his hypocrisy. And he sets before them the reality. In verse 16. Of chapter 2.

He presents before them the reality. That a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. Here are two opposing positions.

The works of the law. And the faith. In Jesus Christ. Two opposing positions. And we have to understand, of course, the context.

- [15 : 56] And appreciate the centrality of the law. Or the Torah. In Israel's self-consciousness. They were the chosen people of God.

And for them, the law was to show covenant members how to live within the covenant. And of course, that's right in a sense. How to live within the covenant. And there were covenant works prescribed to them.

But the law was never given for that purpose. The law was given for that purpose. For that time. Until God continued his revelation.

And in a sense, it served its purpose in salvation history. And he tells them that in the third chapter. In verses 23 and 24 and 25 of the third chapter.

But before faith came, we were kept under the law. Shut up unto the faith, which should afterwards be revealed. Shut up unto the faith.

[17 : 10] Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. It was never meant to lead them to righteousness, but to lead them to Christ and to the revelation of Christ.

And he goes on in chapter 4 of this remarkable epistle. And he says this in chapter 4 and verses 8 and 9.

How be it then, when you knew not God, you did service unto them, which by nature are no gods. But now after that you have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements?

Whereunto you desire again to be in bondage. You observe days and months and times and years. They were as orthodox as orthodox can be in their keeping of the law.

But he says to them that clinging to the law for the purposes of righteousness is nothing less than idolatry because it obscures the view of Christ and what Christ has done and the actual nature of his work.

[18 : 31] Christ is our salvation. Christ is the door. Christ is the gateway to salvation, not their keeping of the law.

So he says to them, what is it to live unto God? For I through the law am dead to the law that I might live unto God in verse 19 and in verse 20.

The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God or by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

So that's the question for us. How can we live unto God? Three things have to be true. Firstly, this, there must be death. Death.

Secondly, there must be life. And thirdly, there must be living by faith. Living by faith. Firstly then, there must be death.

[19 : 38] The images of death and life are used often in the scriptures. It's one of the great themes of scripture. Death and life. You hear in the world in which we live, people use cliches all the time.

Well, it's a life and death matter. I was reading an article the other day saying politics has now become a life and death matter. Well, maybe for some, but hardly.

The gospel is a life and death matter because it's dealing with the reality of your life and your death and your eternal rest. When you die, where are you going?

Where are you going? And so that theme of death and life, which is the better way of putting it in the gospel, is a key theme.

And there are so many similarities in this epistle to the Galatians with Romans, where that theme is also brought out. And the reality is that the way to eternal life and freedom is through death, through death.

[20 : 50] Now, that's a remarkable statement. Life through death. And in Paul's experience, there was a death.

We get in this epistle part of Paul's testimony, part of his testimony. We see and we read in verses 13 and 14 of chapter 1.

For you have heard of my conversation or my conduct in times past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it, tried to destroy it.

He tried to destroy the church. This was who he was. He was Saul of Tarsus, the great opponent of Christ, the great opponent of the gospel.

You have heard, that was the way I was then, and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals and mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

[22 : 00] Who was like him? A Pharisee of the Pharisees. His credentials were impeccable. But everything that he tried to do to destroy the gospel, was only working death.

According to the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. Isn't it remarkable? He thought he was blameless before the law of God, that very law under which he was condemned.

As we all are by nature, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We are all under his wrath and his curse in bondage.

there must be a death. There must be a death. And this death, which is not part of his subjective experience, that came later in his experience, but there was a death here in his experience, as there must be in the experience of every Christian.

What happened? How was there a death in Paul's experience? Well, this way. I am crucified with Christ. There was a crucifixion and there was a death.

[23 : 27] There was a death. When? When Christ died on Calvary's cross. I am crucified with Christ.

I have been crucified with Christ over 2,000 years ago on that cross of Calvary at that very moment, at that very time.

When Christ was crucified, Paul was crucified. And if you're a Christian, you were crucified. What happened?

Christ died. Yes. How did he die? Why did he die? He died because he loved me and he gave himself for me as an offering and as sacrifices.

And he tells us in that, in verse 4 of chapter 1, who gave himself for our sins.

[24 : 36] For our sins. He died in the room instead of his people, bearing their sins in his own body to the tree, as Peter tells us.

Or as we have it in 2 Corinthians and chapter 5 in that marvelous chapter, which resonates so strongly in this epistle.

2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 14, For the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead.

Or that all died. That all died. died. He had to die the way the law demanded.

And what did the law demand? It demanded that the curse of the law would be taken away. It demanded that the penalty of the law would be satisfied.

[25 : 46] What is the penalty of the law? The wages of sin is death. Death. He tells us in chapter 3 and verse 13, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us.

For it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree. What is the curse of the law? It is bondage to sin and to Satan. What is the law saying?

The law is saying, The soul that sins it shall die. And here is the Savior bearing my sins, bearing your sins if you are a believer.

He is bearing them in his own body on Calvary. On Calvary. On Calvary's cross.

He had to die the way God demanded, the way the law demanded, the full penalty of the wrath of God.

[26 : 51] Colossians chapter 2 presents it so powerfully. And you being dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, that is, before you were saved, hath he quickened together with him having forgiven you all trespasses.

Listen to this now. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Or as the Gaelic puts it so beautifully, it's a new boy chadhamus in Giln, trenach round that thing, through that very cross. The whole guilt of your sin, the whole handwriting of ordinances, your debt before the law of God, all your debt, all the guilt of all your sins, past, present and future, nailed to the cross, nailed to the cross.

Even this, even the demands of conscience, oh, when your conscience suddenly rises up and tries to condemn you, look to the cross, look to the cross, redeemed.

Christ, as he said in chapter 3, hath redeemed us. We were bought with a price, the price of Christ's sacrifice of himself in our room and in our place for our sins.

[29 : 03] and he gave a perfect atonement for sin and a full and perfect obedience to the law. He met all the law's demands.

The law demanded death. Christ met all its demands. All its demands. And a perfect obedience and divine justice was satisfied.

And there's a marvelous verse in Isaiah 42, 21, which says this, The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake. He will magnify the law and make it honorable.

He will. Who's the he? Well, the servant in Isaiah 42. He will do this. He will magnify the law and make it honorable.

the law that is holy and just and good, as he says when he writes to the Romans. I remember many years ago being in a house and someone said, How did Christ magnify the law and make it honorable?

[30 : 17] And the answer from one of the men that we love dearly who's now in glory, this was the way he answered the question. The law, he said, demanded man's obedience.

And of course when the law didn't get it, the law then pronounced the curse and the penalty. man's obedience received the God-man's obedience.

Do you see? Do you see? Do you see the wonder of Christ? This law which demanded man's obedience demanded it.

it received the God-man's obedience. And that obedience is now imputed to his people so that they no longer have to keep the law or look to the law for righteousness.

For righteousness. Listen to what he says to the Romans in Romans chapter 10. In that beautiful chapter, brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.

[31 : 41] For I bear them a record that they have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge for they being ignorant of God's righteousness have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Christ is the end of the law to righteousness for everyone that believeth.

And he uses in this very epistle the example of Abraham. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness before he left her of the culties.

Oh, there was a death in Paul's experience. At this time and at this place the law carried out its death penalty against him and against you.

What became of him is true of us too. We died to the penalty and to the demands and to the curse of the law.

[33 : 11] Somebody put it like this this great conversation between the law of God and the sinner. So here's the law of God and here's the sinner and the law of God says man have you obeyed my commands and the man says no I have transgressed them in thought and word and deed.

Oh well then the law said have you paid the penalty that I have pronounced upon those who have disobeyed have you died in the sense that I have said the soul that sinneth it shall die and the man replies yes I have died I died there on the cross outside the walls of Jerusalem for Jesus died there as my substitute and representative I died there as far as the penalty of the law is concerned and the law replies and the law says this you say Christ is your representative and substitute then I have no further claim of penalty against you the curse which I pronounced against your sin has indeed been fulfilled my threatenings are very great but I have nothing to say against those for whom

Christ died oh how glad we should be for that verse that we find in Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4 that great verse it almost sits there and I don't want to say unnoticed but but in a sense the full thrust of what this verse says but when the fullness of the time was come God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons there must be a death and there was a death not a subjective experience but an objective reality it's the view of the covenant my friends the covenant it's a covenant view a covenant view it's the outworking of the plan of salvation whose terms are written inside the covenant of redemption and the outworking of that covenant and the unfolding of the history of the world is an outworking of the covenant or how how we must grasp that thought that the outworking of the world in which we live is an unfolding of God's plan mysterious as that can be to us and for us and this reality that you died in him and with him is one of the great doctrines of scripture the doctrine of union with

Christ of which John Murray Professor John Murray said the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation for for I through the law I'm dead to the law that I might live unto God 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 in Christ we get everything that Christ has to offer and in writing to the Philippians he said that I might be found in him in

Christ what does he say then not having my own righteousness which is of the law but the righteousness which is from God by faith it is freedom it is freedom like the birds freedom freedom from bondage freedom a blood bought freedom through a blood bought righteousness a blood bought forgiveness of sins even before you ever drew breath isn't that remarkable even before you ever drew breath death the question arises who was put to death on

[38 : 51] Calvary's cross there was a death but who was put to death well the scriptures tell us in Romans chapter 6 and verse 6 the answer to the question is given to us knowing this that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin who was put to death the old man the unregenerate man the person who is by nature what he is or what she is he describes himself as I said before you have heard of my conversation or my conduct in time passed in the Jews religion the old man put to death the old man dead in trespasses and sins put to death oh it wasn't the flesh that was put to death in the sense that the flesh is still in us that is indwelling sin and we still have that power of indwelling sin against which you fight and battle every day of your life if you know anything of

Christ but the old man and that takes us on to the second point there must be life nevertheless I live here now in his subjective experience Christ comes to him Christ comes to him and he speaks of that at verse 15 of chapter 1 but when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the heathen immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood when it pleased God to reveal his son in me here was Saul of Tarsus doing what he was doing and nobody was doing it like he was doing it in persecuting the church there was no one like him and it's probably safe to say that there was nobody in that day or perhaps ever who tried to go as far as it was possible for a human being to go to destroy the church but yet the law of

God arose in his heart it pleased God to reveal his son in me but God had already begun to do his work why was the law given it was given for transgression Saul Saul why are you persecuting me it is hard for you to kick against the bricks here was the law doing its work the work for which it was put set out that is to reveal sin and that is as he explains to us our school master our school master to bring us to Christ there must be life and that life enters in at the moment of our regeneration when we are united to Christ and when you are united to Christ you are united to a living and exalted saviour you are saved everything changes everything changes and he speaks of that in this epistle chapter 6 and verse 15 he says this for in

Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but a new creature or a new creation as it should be a new creation second Corinthians chapter 5 verse 7 17 if any man is in Christ Jesus he is a new creation all things have passed away behold all things have become new there must be life and the gospel is full of the reality of life John 1 4 in him was life and his life is the light of men this is the glory of every Christian Christ in you the hope of glory united to Christ in his death all these years ago and now in your subjective experience salvation salvation you're saved and everything changes everything changes and you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins and

Christ in us is a permanent indwelling a permanent indwelling Christ is not a visitor who comes and goes but a permanent indwelling through the Holy Spirit the life-giving spirit the life-giving spirit or there may be times in our experience when we don't feel that but that's a different thing it doesn't dismiss the fact that it's true when you're saved Christ comes to dwell in your heart through the Holy Spirit and it's permanent permanent resident in your heart but he says a remarkable thing nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ liveth in me Christ liveth in me everything changes but of course some things don't change in the sense that your physical appearance doesn't change you still are who you are

[45 : 50] Paul was still who he was he was a Jew he looked the same he still had his heritage and who he was just as we do I'm still who I was I was born in Barra I'm still a Baruch you're still from Lewis from North Tolstair most of you anyway you're still who you are but all these things now consecrated to God to live to God to live to God and how do we live to God living the way God demands us to live the way God wants us to live there must be a death there must be life and there must be living by faith the life that

I know live in the flesh that is in this world in the world this present world this fallen broken world in the shadows this world with all its enmity against Christ this great enemy Satan who goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour the enemy within indwelling sin its dominion has been broken you're no longer in bondage you're free but we still have indwelling sin in us which Paul calls in another place oh wretched man that I am who shall free me from the body of this death there is still as it were that sin in him that he calls this body of death and there is still in us that self as somebody said the unholy trinity of me myself and

I and this life that I know live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God or by faith in the Son of God in what the Son of God did and he did it because he loved me with an everlasting love and he loved me and he gave himself for me I live by faith death to self and here even in this reality that is the death life theme I must die to self every day in order to live to God I live by faith in the Son of God by faith faith that great gift from God the gift that God gives us in order to respond to the gospel in order to respond to that divine effectual powerful call and to allow us to live as

God wants us to live by grace you are saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works lest any man should boast and he speaks of that in chapter 3 and verse 11 in that great text but that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident for the just shall live by faith the just shall live by faith and the whole emphasis of that text by the way is not about the day to day living by faith it's about life it's about life the just shall live by faith but new life as if he's saying without faith it's only death it's death and life that just shall live by faith and he goes on to explain in chapter 5 and verse 6 something of that faith something of that faith he says this for in

Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but faith which works by love by love isn't that remarkable by love him who loved me and gave himself for me I came across that hymn that was written some time ago by George Matheson a preacher who lived in the mid 1800s and he wrote it in the context of a particular experience in his own life a terrible experience and you can look it up for yourselves the time is passing oh love that will not let me go

[51 : 25] I rest my weary soul in thee I give thee back the life I owe that in thine ocean depths its flow may richer fuller be Christ who loved me and give himself for me for me if you were to ask Paul at this time and you were to say to him well Paul you wrote this epistle to the Galatians I want to ask you a couple of questions Paul he might say okay please ask me a couple of questions and if you asked him Paul who is Christ oh he says the one who loved me and gave himself for me and if you were to ask him well who are you know

Paul who are you know oh he said I am someone who was loved by Christ and for whom he gave himself and if I was to ask you every one of you who are you what would you say would you say I am someone who was loved by Christ and for whom he gave himself oh my heart's prayer is that that would be true that that would be true that you would know that love of Christ in your hearts that your heart and my heart would burn within us Amen May the Lord bless these thoughts on his word let's pray