

Welcome To Sunday Night Bible Fellowship



"We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ." Col 1:28

"The Weight of the Cross"

Luke 12:49-59

May 28, 2023

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50 "But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!

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57 "And why do you not even on your own initiative judge what is right?

58 "For while you are going with your opponent to appear before the magistrate, on your way there make an effort to settle with him, so that he may not drag you before the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.

59 "I say to you, you will not get out of there until you have paid the very last cent."

49 "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

We are going to see 3 effects of the cross:

1. The cross is a destiny.

"I have come . . ." - is a purpose clause.

- This is the fire of judgment.
- It is the judgment of God's wrath that will come upon Jesus at His crucifixion.
- God will pour out His wrath against sin and upon Jesus while He is on the cross.
- Jesus will bear the fire of judgment on our behalf.

"already kindled" – kindling is used to start a fire - Jesus' wish was that the crucifixion had already begun.

- Jesus, during His ministry, would bear the burden that His destiny, which was the cross.

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"baptism" – to totally immerse into something.

- The baptism here is not: 1. Water baptism. 2. Nor is it the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus here is going to be immersed in suffering and divine judgment.
- He is not going to be "sprinkled" with suffering and wrath but immersed in agony.
- Death was His destiny. Suffering was His destiny. The cross was His destiny. He felt the weight of it upon Him, His whole life.
- Jesus is distressed. Why? Because it was an incessant, relentless pressure that He felt. He did that for you and for me.

"until it is accomplished" - finished.

John 19:30

30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!"

51 "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division;"

2. The cross is a dividing line.

- This is where the Jews and others have been mistaken - they thought Jesus should be this loving, peaceful person.
- His mission was not to establish peace on the earth.
- Peace only comes individually not nationally or globally.
- The Prince of Peace will bring peace in the Millennial Kingdom. And even then there will be division.
- Until then there will be division.
- What causes the division? The cross.
- The cross divides:

There are -

- those who receive and those who reject
 - those who believe and those who scoff
 - those who are hardened and those who are softened
 - those who repent and those who spurn
 - those who accept and those who decline
 - Those who are humble and those who are haughty.
- The cross has divided all of the human race into 2 groups.

John 7:43

43 So a **division** occurred in the crowd because of Him.

John 9:16

16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a **division** among them.

John 10:19

19 A **division** occurred again among the Jews because of these words.

52 for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.

- This hit hard to the Jew because family was everything.
- One of the reasons the Romans hated Christianity was because it divided families.

Matt 10:21

21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

- The message of the cross divides men and women, families, friends, churches. Students, parents.
- Jesus is saying "I, and the cross I will bear, will be a dividing line."
- The cross will be an offence.

Gal 5:11

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.

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Why is the cross offensive and therefore divides?

- “1. It offends man’s sense of dignity, because it addresses all men as sinners.
2. It offends man’s wisdom because it asserts that salvation comes only by divine revelation. Christ cannot be known by anyone, except He reveals himself to you and in you.
3. It offends man’s pride because it declares that the only way of salvation is substitution . . . Imputed Righteousness.
4. It offends man’s love of self because it demands surrender to Christ as Lord.
5. It offends man’s sense of self worth because it declares that salvation is by grace alone—Distinguishing Grace—Sovereign Grace—Free Grace—Irresistible, Effectual Grace.”

- Don Fortner

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- Look how it cuts deep – close relationships.
- The gospel condemns and makes man accountable and the world hates that message.

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3. The cross is a decision.

- Jesus expands His audience to the crowds.
- They were good at predicting rain by what they saw in the clouds.
- They were right.
- Clouds come over the Mediterranean Sea from the west and it rains.
- Simple observation with an accurate result.

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55 "And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day,' and it turns out that way.

- South wind comes up from Arabian desert, it is going to get hot. And it does.
- They were able to observe and come to conclusions.
- Simple observation with an accurate result.

56 "You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?"

- Look at all of this massive pile of evidence we have seen in Luke -

Think of all of the evidence so far in Luke –

The announcement that He would be born.

His conception.

His virgin birth.

The testimony of angels.

Zacharias.

Elizabeth.

Joseph.

Mary.

Anna.

Simeon.

His genealogy.

His baptism.

The affirmation of the Father.

The affirmation the Holy Spirit.

His triumph over Satan and temptation.

His teaching.

His miracles.

His power over demons, disease and death.

John 1:14

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:11

11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

Luke 4:16-21,28,29

16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,

19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD (MESSIAH'S FIRST COMING)."

20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

28 And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things;

29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.

56 "You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?"

- You can analyze the natural and come to the right conclusions, why can't you do that with the spiritual?
- That's hypocrisy – claiming you have the ability to analyze.
- They were able to recognize a hot day but not a hot hell!

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- Bingo! Here is why – on their own they have evil, fallen hearts, that will not believe in spite of all the evidence.
- They are tainted. Their flesh is filled with pride. They will not humble themselves and receive the truth.
- Jesus is exposing them for what they are – incapable on their own of believing. They need a change of heart before they will believe, which only God can do.
- In this verse Jesus is demonstrating and proving to the whole world through the ages the inability of man.
- Mankind is “fallen and he can’t get up.”

Rom 3:10-11

10 THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,

THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

John 6:44,65

44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;

65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."

58 "For while you are going with your opponent to appear before the magistrate, on your way there make an effort to settle with him, so that he may not drag you before the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.

“Opponent” – The legal one who is bringing a charge against you.

“Magistrate” – The ruler, person at the top in the legal system.

“Judge” – The one who makes the decisions.

“Officer” – The one who carries out the sentence of the judge.

- Here is the bottom line: **Settle out of court.**
- You don’t want to let your case go to court where you will have to face the judge for sentencing.
- You are guilty and that will be exposed at your trial.
- You want to settle with your opponent (who you owe the debt to) before you get to the Magistrate, long before it goes to trial.
- Everyone who goes to trial will lose.

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In the court of life:

- the opponent is God.
- the magistrate is God.
- the judge is God.
- the officer is God.
- God has a case against every sinner - our debt of sin.
- The sinner has no way to pay.
- God has provided the way of payment through the cross of Jesus Christ.
- You have a decision to make – will you accept the payment or reject it?
- If you reject it you will find yourself at the Great White Throne Judgment.
- It will then be too late.

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Application

1. We should be eternally thankful to Jesus Christ for bearing the weight of the cross on our behalf.
2. We will feel the weight of the cross in our relationships which may divide us from others around us, even our own family members.
3. Everyone in this world must make a decision regarding Christ before it is too late. Reconcile with Him today.

59 "I say to you, you will not get out of there until you have paid the very last cent."

- You will find yourself in an impossible situation someday.
 - It is impossible to pay in prison.
 - There will be no compromise, no plea bargaining.
 - You will have to pay the full amount ("every last cent") and you have no ability.
- "cent" – smallest Jewish copper coin.
- So the implication is, you will never get out of hell.
 - Your sin will need to be paid for – either by the blood of Jesus Christ or by your infinite time in hell, but make no mistake, it will be paid for.

Heb 9:27

- 27 it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,
- Why is hell eternal? Because it is an infinite debt to an infinite God who has been offended infinitely, therefore the punishment will be eternal.
 - Every person born in this world should feel the weight of the cross upon them to make a decision to receive or reject the gift of salvation offered to avoid judgment.