

“Making The Cross Of None Effect”

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Text: I Corinthians 1:17, John 12:32

Theme: Ways in which we too can make the cross of none effect.

Introduction:

1. “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”
 - a. Hence, some say that baptism is no part of the gospel.
 - b. Paul was not here belittling or depreciating baptism—but he was declaring that baptism was not the main purpose of his ministry, that it was not his principal work.
 - 1) That is, Christ sent me, not so much to baptize, as to preach the gospel.
 - 2) He had not been sent to ceremonialize but to evangelize.
 - 3) So preaching the gospel was his chief mission; baptizing was a thing he could do if the occasion required it, or he could leave it to others to perform.

2. "Not with wisdom of words."
 - a. The Greeks prided themselves in wisdom -
II^{Co}Corinthians¹:22.
 - 1) Graceful rhetoric and winning eloquence were used by them to win others to their ideals. Paul was well trained; he could have resorted to wisdom.
 - 2) But Paul did not speak with great eloquence -
II^{Co}Corinthians¹⁰:10.
 - 3) Hence, God sent him to preach, not with human eloquence or worldly wisdom.
 - b. The modern world prides itself on its supposed wisdom.
3. "Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."
 - a. That is, lest the success which might attend the preaching of the gospel should be attributed to the graces of human eloquence, rather than to its true cause—the preaching of Christ and him crucified.
 - b. We must not call attention unto ourselves, but unto the cross of Jesus Christ.

Discussion:

- I. The hope of the world is in the cross of Christ -
 - A. Judaism could not offer man remission of sins -
Hebrews¹⁰:4.
 - B. Hence, it was God's plan that through the death of Christ man's redemption would be accomplished -
II^{Pe}Peter¹:18-20.
 - C. Therefore, salvation is possible only through Jesus Christ - John¹⁴:6; Acts⁴:12 - "*I must needs go home by the way of the cross;*
There's no other way but this."

- II. Yet the cross can be made of none effect- how?
- A. By “wisdom of words.”
1. Paul preached a crucified Christ in clear and earnest speech; he told the people that Jesus, who was crucified at Jerusalem, was the Son of God and the Savior of men, and that all who would be saved must surrender their all to him in gospel obedience.
 2. This truth needs no artificial dress, for the plain preaching of a crucified Savior was far more powerful than all the oratory and philosophy of the Greeks.
- B. By teaching premillennialism -
1. Premillennialism invalidates the cross by affirming that there is a difference between the Jew and the Gentile - Romans 10:12.
 2. The partition between Jew and Gentile had been broken down in the death of Jesus on the cross- Ephesians 2:11-17.
 - a. Premillennialism is wrong on this point.
 - b. This error invalidates the effect of the cross.
 3. Premillennialism erects anew a wall of difference between the Jew and Gentile, thereby making the cross of none effect, if premillennialism be true.
- C. By perversion- Galatians 1:6-9.
1. To pervert the gospel is to change it by adding to it or taking from it. When either is done, it then becomes a perverted gospel which would be powerless to save.
 2. The gospel as preached by Paul was the God-ordained work of the cross; therefore, to pervert it was to make the cross of none effect. If none effect, then it would not save.
3. Modern example:
- a. Mormonism
 - b. Its gospel is either unnecessary (if indeed it is the same as the Bible) or to be rejected if, as in fact it is, contrary to the Bible and thus not able to save.
- D. By our conduct- Philippians 3:18.
1. “Walk” is a figure of speech used in the Bible to represent manner of life or conduct.

- a. Genesis²²:9; Romans¹⁴:4
- b. Ephesians 4:1; I¹Thessalonians⁴:12.
2. Therefore we are admonished to “do all to the glory of God. Give none offence....to the church of Cod.”- II²Corinthians¹⁰:31,32.
3. How can we so walk as to make the cross of Christ of none effect?
 - a. By neglecting the assembly.
 - 1) Hebrews¹⁰:25.
 - 2) By this we make the cross of Christ of none effect upon those that watch our lives.
 - b. By giving of our means miserly and haphazardly.
 - 1). II²Corinthians⁶:2; II²Corinthians⁹:7
 - a) The cross of Christ is the very essence of sacrifice.
 - b) Did Christ give up anything to accomplish our redemption?
II²Corinthians⁸:9; I¹Peter²:21.
 - 2) There are so many deserving and worthwhile efforts that need our support.
 - a) In the areas of evangelism.
 - b) In the areas of benevolence.
 - c. By failing to teach the gospel to others - I¹Peter³:15.
 - 1) When honest people make inquiry about the gospel, and we are unprepared to answer, we thus make the cross of Christ of none effect.
 - 2) The kingdom of God can only be advanced by teaching - Matthew²⁸:19,20.

- 3) The necessitates diligent study.
 - a) I Timothy 4:13,16; II Timothy 2:15.
 - b) Need to have a daily Bible reading program.
- d. By sowing discord among brethren.
 - 1) When strife and discord take the place of peace and harmony in the church, love is destroyed - James 3:16.
 - 2) Many are the passages in the epistles of the New Testament in which Christians are commanded to love one another -
 - a) Romans 12:9; Ephesians 3:2
 - b) I Thessalonians 4:9; I John 3:14,15; 4:7,8,20.
- e. By living worldly, ungodly lives -
Romans 12:2; II Corinthians 3:17; 6:17; James 4:4.
 - 1) Christians are to be the salt of the earth -
Matthew 5:13.
 - a) The world is corrupt and the only way for the world to be saved is for the church to save it with the preaching of the cross.
 - b) But “if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”
 - 2) When we drink what the world drinks, smoke what the world smokes, watch, look at and read what the world wathces, looks at and reads, then we have no proper influence upon the world.

- 3) Christians are to be “the light of the world.”
 - a) If there is no difference between the life and conduct of a Christian and one who is not, then how is the Christian ever to become the light of the world?
 - b) The world is in darkness, but if the world gets into the church, then the whole thing becomes darkness.

Conclusion:

1. A world is watching our manner of life, for we are epistles “known and read of all men.”
 - a. Do we so live that the man in the world will want to become a Christian because he can see Christ in us, and thus will want to become like we are?
 - b. Or do we so live that we become a repulse to the world? If so, we then make the cross of none effect.
2. Let us always bring honor to the cross of Christ.

Invitation:

1. If you have not obeyed the gospel of Christ, the cross is of none effect to you.
2. If you have obeyed the gospel, but are living unrighteously, the same is true³. Consider the thieves on the crosses and the effect the cross of Christ had on each of them.

Bibliography:

Originally by Melvin J. Wise