

*M. 1111*

Convention Sermon, "Baptist Hour Messages"  
by Dr. Ramsey Pollard in 1952.

### The Undivided Heart

In Galatians 2:20, Paul rises to sublime heights. He touches upon that intimate relationship which exists between the Redeemer and the redeemed. He (Paul) speaks of "I" - "Me" - "Himself." Paradoxes thrive:

"He is crucified, yet he lives. Yet, he doesn't live, but Christ lives in him. The life he lives in the flesh, he lives by faith."

Paul's letter to the Galatians is quite severe. But, it is the severity of a compassionate heart. He is making an impassioned protest against false teachers and their doctrine of heresy. The grand old preacher is amazed that in so short a time his beloved friends are standing on shaking ground.

Judaizers have created havoc among the children of God in the churches of Galatia. Salvation by Grace was being attacked. False teachers were busy saying, 'Surely, there is something in addition to faith. Salvation is by faith, they argues, plus what we can and must do to bring it about.'

Paul's indignation against such false teaching was white hot. He didn't sit back for fear someone might say, "Old Paul is intolerant; the old man is narrow-minded; he is a bigot." He let loose all the brilliance of his keen mind. He hammered untruth to pieces with keen and forceful logic.

Superstition, paganism, and half-truths were the enemies of God and of the souls of men. The very souls of Christianity were at stake, and Paul had no hesitancy in drawing his sword and making a frontal attack on such

false teaching. In our day non-Christian cowardice would meekly bleat,  
"Do not forget we are all brothers and headed for the same place."

Paul's Godly intolerance made him condemn false teaching which allowed the eternal distinctions of right and wrong to be blurred. He didn't spend much time fearing that someone would label him as a "bigot." When God's truth and the eternal destiny of human souls were at stake, Paul spoke with all the fire, concern, and thunder at his command.

Much modern Christianity is so weak and lacking in conviction that the power of protest is gone. We are expected to swallow every kind of false teaching and heresy without blinking our spiritual eyes. Paul would not agree that anything was necessary to salvation but faith in Jesus Christ. He stood his ground. He was a herald, not an apologist.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2).

We are not to be ecclesiastical encyclopedias. Neither are we to be spiritual showmen. But we are to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The best contending we can do is not in debating or arguing these truths, but by faithfully and earnestly preaching God's word of love and redemption in Christ Jesus. When modern Judaizers preach salvation by works, by baptism, by church membership, by ritualism, by "doing the best you can," let the ambassador of God tell of Christ's atonement wrought out on Calvary.

Preach it! Tell it to men everywhere! Proclaim it in sermon and song; from pulpit and through the air! Send the message of God's Grace into every television

in all the land. God's Grace, wonderful Grace, sustaining Grace, keeping Grace--Grace that is greater than all our sins.

Paul faced a battle, and we face the same today: The conflict between those who minimize God's Grace; those who would make salvation dependent, in the final analysis, on man's integrity and goodness; rather than on the Grace of God and the external and sufficient priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Paul declared that the law is our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ; Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

Christ on the cross was a solitary High Priest. Paul does not mean he shared in the sufferings of Christ when He died for our redemption. As a sacrifice for human sin, the crucified Saviour stands alone and solitary. That aspect of the cross cannot be shared. Let no man, or set of men, dare enter the Holy of Holies. The atoning work of Christ was foreshadowed in Leviticus 16:17:

"And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place . . ."

In Isaiah 63:3, we read:

"I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me . . ."

Christ died alone -- He was forsaken by God and man; forsaken of God because "He was made to become sin;" forsaken of man because of man's sin and treachery.

Have you ever considered the loneliness of Christ? He was surrounded by folks who misunderstood him, who misinterpreted His message and mission,

and who forsook Him when the supreme trial came.

His solitary priesthood is vividly pointed out in Hebrews 7:25:

"Wherefore, He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them"

His priesthood is forever eternal because He arose from the grave. Death was conquered that day. Christ broke the bonds of sin and death. We have an eternal, solitary High Priest who offered up Himself, one for all. No one shared His suffering for our sins; not even Paul. Christ paid it all.

But, there was a sense in which Paul entered into the sufferings of Christ. So far as the claims of DIVINE JUSTICE are concerned, Paul was crucified with Christ. Christ's crucifixion stands for his. By faith, Paul was so identified with Christ that the Saviour's death was Paul's death.

"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. For he that is dead is freed from sin." (Romans 6:6-7)

Paul was free from the law--free from condemnation. In Romans 8:1, Paul with a jubilant spirit shouts:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

"I am crucified with Christ," does mean in a very vivid way that Paul knew how to relate himself to Christ. The selfish, arrogant, overbearing, Christ-hating soul was dead. He properly related himself to His Redeemer. Ambition, save to "glory in the Cross of Christ," was dead.

Another great herald, John the Baptist, put it in these words: "He (Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease."

Both of these men were Christ-mastered. They were crucified to the world.

"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."

Paul had experienced crucifixion:

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."  
(2 Cor. 5:15)

He suffered for Christ and His Godpel. He agonized over lost souls. He wept over churches led astray. He sacrificed self so far as this world with all its allurements is concerned. This heroic preacher did not feel sorry of himself. He glorified in tribulations for Christ's sake. Paul longed to enter into the sufferings of Christ. In Philippians 3:10, he says:

"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings . . ."

But after every experience, Paul wiped the blood from his eyes and began looking for lost souls.

Recently, I read of a man who wanted to start a "preachers' union." He advocated shorter hours, better pay, fewer telephone calls about nothing, no Sunday funerals. To these, I would add another suggestion--double time for wedding rehearsals and wedding receptions. Of course, in some cases, this double time would mean exactly nothing.

However, I doubt that Paul would have been interested in joining such a union. God's preachers are to be men of sacrifice; men who gladly suffer for Christ's sake. Power comes through suffering. Paul was proud of his battle

scars. In the closing words of his letter to the Galatians, he cries out!

"from henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

He vindicated his apostolic authority by bearing the marks of Christ in his body. By suffering, rejoicing, suffering, victorious suffering, the Gospel has been carried and planted among all the nations of the earth.

Paul greatly rejoiced at the love of Christ for him. The dynamic of his great life was the realization that Christ loved Paul; the wonder of it; he was overwhelmed; he was utterly amazed that the Lily of the Valley, God's Son, The Rose of Sharon, The Fairest of Ten Thousand, loved him.

Paul faced the fact that Christ loved him even when he was persecuting the saints of God. It dawned upon Paul that Christ loved him as though there were no others upon whom he might lavish His love. God help us that this majestic truth may burn itself into our every heart.

An old woman of the slums, gloriously converted, became the subject of taunts, persecution, and jeers. They ridiculed her zeal for Christ. Finally, one persecutor said, "I think you are the ugliest old woman I ever saw." Then answered the redeemed soul, "Isn't it wonderful that Christ could love an old ugly woman like me?"

For Paul, Jesus came into the world; took upon Himself Paul's sins; died on Calvary for Paul's salvation; arose from the grave for Paul's justification; and now, He is at the right hand of God making intercession for Paul. It was not Paul's love for Christ; but Christ's love for Paul that sent him out with a

flaming heart to preach the unsearchable riches. That, and that alone, explains the greatest life of the Christian era.

John Wesley had such an experience. He had been a preacher, after a fashion; but one day, in great spiritual unrest, he went to a service in Aldersgate Street. Something happened. Hear his words:

"About a quarter before nine, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation; And an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sin." From that day on, John Wesley was a different preacher. There was a note of compassion never before evident in his ministry.

That is what Paul meant when he said,

"I am constrained by the love of Christ."

If you want to know the secret of Paul's zeal, of his compassion, of his power, of his earnestness, I believe you will find it in the fact that he was overwhelmed by the knowledge of Christ's love for him. The curse of modern-day preaching is the shameful lack of compassion. Too many preachers are calm expositors of truth rather than impassioned preachers of the gospel.

We have allowed intellectual pride to stifle heart power. We have allowed ourselves to be laughed out of our enthusiasm. We have let the devil convince us that if compassion and zeal are elements in our preaching, some "highbrow" will point the finger of scorn and contempt in our direction and pronounce that we are emotional; and, therefore, lacking in intelligence.

There is no conflict between intelligence and emotion. Paul had both;

and, if we are to be worthy witnesses for Christ, we must have something to say, and we must deliver our souls with compassionate zeal. A great revival will never come until preachers have the same spirit Paul had when he wept:

"I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren."

He loved Christ, and he loved lost souls. The secret of his desire for others was the glorious reality of the love of Christ for him. He cried out;

"For the love of Christ impels me . . . "

Let this fact grip you! Christ died for you! He loves you and intercedes for you! As this fact floods your soul, you will love Christ. Why do we fail to win souls? Why are we self-satisfied? Why the lack of evangelism in nearly 5,000 Southern Baptist churches reporting not one single soul baptized last year? The reason is evident. We do not love Jesus Christ. What is wrong with Sunday School teachers, Training Union leaders and sponsors, WMS officers, deacons, Brotherhood leadership, when they fail to function in their places of responsibility? The reason is obvious--they do not love Jesus Christ!

When Jesus turned to Simon Peter and asked, "Lovest thou Me?" he asked a revealing question. God help us--we do not love our Lord like we should. Why have we not carried the Gospel to the ends of the earth? Why have we not taken the Southland for Christ?

Just one answer comes from the thoughtful and honest heart. We do not love Jesus. Paul did love him; therefore, he gave his life in service. He preached Christ crucified; he magnified the blood; he glorified in His resurrection



and with unspeakable joy, anticipated His second coming.

Paul lived a life of gratitude--gratitude to God--gratitude to Christ. No motive in all this world is so powerful as the motive of love. Because of Christ's love, Paul was a flaming evangelist--winning the folk Christ died to save.

"Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Paul had a worthy conception of the atoning work of Christ. Men who are not clear on this subject should not attempt to preach Christ. There is no place on our seminary faculties for teachers who "wobble on the axle" concerning the propitiatory work of our Saviour. If he is not crystal clear at this point, he should be dismissed--and that speedily.

Baptist people do not want their money used to pay the salaries of seminary and college professors who hedge on the fundamental and basic truths of Christianity. The forgiveness of sin, which is man's greatest need, is eternally bound to the death of Jesus Christ. We are redeemed with atoning blood.

Peter says:

"For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" (1 Peter: 18-19)

In Ephesians 1:7, Paul states: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."

In Colossians 1:4, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin."

In Hebrews 9:12, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His

own blood he entered in once the Holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

If a man rejects the atoning blood of Christ, he cannot be right with God. Paul was amazed at Christ's love for him. The Saviour proved it beyond a shadow of a doubt. Paul never could get away from the fact that Christ died for his redemption. It broke his heart; it enabled him to endure; it fired his soul with compassion; it challenged his keen, intellectual powers; it produced an intense longing in his heart that all men might know his wonderful Redeemer.

It gave birth to an inexpressible longing in his heart to see Jesus in the new Jerusalem; it made him perfectly willing to stay below and continue his preaching of "Christ and Him crucified."

There are several theories of the atonement. Some of them confuse, rather than give light. The best theory I know is, "Jesus died for my sins." All of us can understand that, and it is the greatest fact in all the world."

No wonder Paul, in great joy, proclaimed:

"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; Yet not I but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)