

**The Preaching of the Cross**  
**Radio Notes of The Gulf Coast Radio Bible Class**  
**By Pastor Art Watkins**

**Part 1**

In 1Corinthians 1:17-24 Paul wrote: ***For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.***

The verse we will expound on is verse 18:

***18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*** In these verses the preaching of the cross is considered by some to be foolish and weak, but to others powerful and wise. The ones who consider it foolish and weak are lost Jews and gentiles. The ones who consider it powerful and wise are saved Jews and gentiles. There is a difference of opinions about the cross. All men do not see the cross the same way. The cross of Christ has divided people's minds for years.

Satan who is the god of this world causes these divisions in men's minds about the cross. In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 Paul wrote: ***But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.***

It is Satan who blinds the minds of men from seeing the truth of the cross. He is the one who convinces lost Jews and gentiles to consider the preaching of the cross to be weak and foolish. Why? Because it is the power of God unto salvation. God saves sinners by the preaching of the cross; Satan damns sinners by blinding their eyes from seeing the truth of the cross. Satan hates the preaching of the cross. He hates the message and the messengers. Throughout church history more lies and false doctrines have been taught about the cross than any other doctrine outside of the deity of Christ. The preaching of the cross has been maligned, slandered, criticized and attacked by Satan and his ministers from the crucifixion till now. Satan hates this doctrine and will do everything in his power to keep you from seeing the truth about the cross.

He has even deceived some Christians and preachers about the cross. It would surprise you to know some of the false doctrines that are taught today about the cross by professing Christians. This is why the cross should be preached, explained, and defined now more than ever.

In these studies we will see how the cross is preached in both Old and New Testaments. The preaching of the cross is not confined to the New Testament only for it is clearly found in the Old Testament.

## **The Preaching of the Cross in the Old Testament**

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul wrote: ***Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:***

When Paul preached the gospel he did so from the scriptures. He said Christ died for our sins ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES. What scriptures? The Old Testament scriptures.

In Acts 26:22-23 Paul said: ***Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.***

When Paul preached the death and resurrection of Christ for our sins he did so out of Moses and the prophets. The gospel by which we are saved today can be found in the books Moses and the prophets wrote. Therefore, when we preach the cross we are preaching an Old Testament doctrine. People who say you can't base church doctrine on the Old Testament are not thinking clearly. The cross is clearly found in the Old Testament especially places like Isaiah 53

## **The Cross in the Old Testament Prophets**

### **Isaiah 53**

***5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.***

In this verse Christ is clearly seen suffering death for our sins, transgressions and iniquities. Sin is a transgression of the law and we have transgressed every one of the laws of God. On the cross Christ was wounded and bruised to death for our transgressions and iniquities. This is no doubt the verse Paul had in mind in 1 Cor. 15:3-4 when he said Christ died for our sins.

***6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

In this verse Christ is seen as our sin bearer for it says the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. This is what Paul refers to in 2 Cor. 5:21 when he said God hath made him to be sin for us. This means our sins were imputed to him and charged against him who in turn discharged them by his sacrificial death.

***7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.***

This verse shows the willingness of Christ to become our sin bearer on the cross. Even though he said his soul was troubled at the prospect of death he put up no resistance when he was arrested, beaten and nailed to the cross. This is what Peter referred to in

1 Peter 2:22-23 when he wrote: ***Christ did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.***

***8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.***

This verse again shows us the cause of Christ's death. He was stricken for our transgressions.

***9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.***

This verse speaks of Christ's burial. He was buried in a borrowed tomb of a rich man whose name was Joseph according to Matthew 27:57 just as Isaiah prophesied 700 years before it came to pass. It also shows us the sinless perfection of Christ and the wrongful death of Christ; He did no violence. He was crucified as if he was a violent criminal but he was innocent of any act of violence. He was a sinless spotless sacrifice. This agrees with what Paul wrote in Hebrews 7:26 that Christ is: ***holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.***

***10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.***

This verse says Christ's soul was made an offering for sin and his offering pleased the Lord for it satisfied all of his just demands against our sins. This verse also spoke of Christ's resurrection from the dead for it says; he shall see his seed and he shall prolong his days. He did not stay dead for his life was prolonged. He is alive forevermore. In verse 8 is found the death of Christ dying for our transgressions. Verse 9 is found the burial of Christ being buried in a rich man's tomb and verse 10 is the resurrection of Christ for his life was prolonged.

***11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.***

This verse shows us again that God was satisfied and pleased with the sacrificial death of his Son. He was not pleased to see his Son suffer; he was pleased and satisfied with the complete atonement his Son made for our sins. This verse also shows us how Christ justifies sinners like us; he justifies sinners by bearing their sins and iniquities in his own body on the tree. This is what Paul refers to in Romans 5:9 when he said we are justified by his blood.

***12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.***

Notice the four powerful statements in this verse:

**\*He hath poured out his soul unto death.**

This agrees with Psalms 22:14 where on the cross Jesus said: ***I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.*** Under the law many offerings were drink offerings for sin. As the drink offerings were poured out for sin Christ poured out his life as an offering for sin.

**\*He was numbered with the transgressors**

He not only bore our transgressions on the cross, but he died between two transgressors. He became like us in every way.

**\*He bare the sin of many.**

This is what Peter refers to in 1 Peter 2:24 where he wrote: ***Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.***

**\*He made intercession for the transgressors**

He not only died for transgressors, but he made and he makes intercession for them by his own blood. In Hebrews 7:25 Paul said: ***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.*** An intercessor stands between two people. He is a go between. Transgressors like us get to God through Christ the intercessor. It's through the merits and power of his blood that we come to God, get to God and have access to God. And he is the one and only intercessor or mediator between God and man for it's through his death and shed blood alone we have access to God. Mary the mother of Jesus is not our mediator or intercessor. She needed an intercessor and mediator herself for she was a sinner like us.

In this chapter the incarnation, preaching, humiliation, rejection, sufferings, death, atonement, resurrection, and mediation of Jesus Christ are all predicted, together. This is one of the clearest descriptions of the crucifixion of Christ in the Old Testament, if not the whole Bible. But did Isaiah the prophet understand what he wrote? The apostle Peter in the New Testament gives us the answer in 1Peter 1:10-12: ***Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.***

The Spirit of Christ inspired the prophets like Isaiah to write about the sufferings and glory of Christ. But these verses tell us that when they wrote about his sufferings and glory they searched to find out two things;

**WHAT** the Spirit signified when he testified of Christ's sufferings and glory. In other words they searched to find out what the sufferings and glory were about. They also searched to find out the **manner of time** this event would come to pass. This shows us they did not understand what the sufferings and glory of Christ was or the time it would take place. This shows us something about prophecy; The prophets did not fully understand or comprehend all the prophecies they wrote about in the Old Testament scriptures, but yet everything they wrote was true for they wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. In 2 Peter 1:20-21 he wrote: ***Knowing this first, that no prophecy of***

***the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.***

Prophets like Isaiah were moved by the Holy Ghost to write about the cross of Christ, but that does not mean he understood everything the Spirit of God moved him to write. But the cross of Christ is clearly seen in the scriptures of the Old Testament prophets and when men like Paul and Peter preached the cross for salvation they did so from the Old Testament scriptures. Our faith is not based upon what Isaiah did or did not understand, but on the WORDS he wrote.

### **The Types and Shadows of The Old Testament Pointed to the Cross of Christ**

Hebrews 10:1: ***For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.***

It says that *the law having a shadow of good things to come*. The word “shadow” refers to a rough outline of a sketch of something, such as a carpenter draws on a board with a pencil or as an artist who sketches an outline of the object which he is about to draw. The *good things to come* is the one sacrifice Christ made for all sins. In the Law of Moses we can see faint outlines, sketches, figures, types and shadows of Christ’s sacrifice for sin which is the main subject of Hebrews 10.

For example under the Law of Moses there were five offerings for sin in Leviticus 1-6 and they were all types, shadows and figures of Christ’s one offering for sin.

\*The **burnt offering** which was consumed upon the alter for sin points to Christ for it says in Ephesians 5:1-2: ***And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.***

\*The **meat or meal offering** points to Christ for he was the corn of wheat bruised at Calvary and offered as the bread of life to sinners. He said in John 12:24: ***Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.***

\*The **peace offering** points to the cross for by his death and shed blood we have peace with God. Colossians 1:20 says: ***And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.***

\*The **sin offering** points to Christ sacrifice for he was offered for the sins of others. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says; ***For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*** 1 Peter 2:24 says: ***Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.***

\*The **trespass offering** points to Christ’s death on Calvary for he died for our sins and trespasses. Colossians 2:13 says: ***And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;***

### **The Feast Days of the Law Pointed to Christ's Death.**

\*The **feast of Passover** observed by Israel on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month is clearly a type of Christ our Passover lamb. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5:7: ***Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.***

\*The **feast of atonement** observed by Israel is a shadow of good things to come for Christ our Great High Priest made a complete once for all atonement for our sins. Romans 5:10-11: ***For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.***

### **The New Covenant Promised in the Old Covenant Points to the Cross**

The promise of the New Covenant was made in Jeremiah 31 and Paul expounds upon it in Hebrews 10 where he wrote: ***Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.***

Hebrews 10 is one of the great chapters in the Bible for it shows us that the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was a once for all sacrifice that takes away sin for ever. But keep in mind as you read it that Paul is simply quoting the promise of the New Covenant God made in the Old Testament. The New covenant was an Old Testament promise. It is one of the greatest promises in the Bible, but it is an Old Testament promise originally made to Israel. This refutes the false theory that the church does not partake of Israel's promises.

### **The First Promise in the Old Testament Was the Cross**

God said in Genesis 3:15 to the devil: ***And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.***

This is an amazing verse because in this one verse is found the first and second coming of Christ. It's a prophecy that satan would bruise the heel of Christ. That's a prophecy of his death on the cross, but a bruise to the heel is not fatal. Christ rose victorious over the grave and defeated the devil in the process. It also says Christ shall bruise the head of Satan; that's a reference to Christ's second coming at which time he will strike a fatal blow against the devil, the antichrist and the false prophet. (Revelation 19-20)

The cross of Christ is seen throughout the Old Testament. The nature or cause of his death is clearly seen in Isaiah 53 and Psalms 22. His sacrificial death is seen in the types and shadows of the Old Testament, especially in the sin offerings and feast days of the Law. His cross is the greatest promise of the New Covenant promised in the Old

Testament. His cross is seen in the very first promise and prophecy of the Old Testament in Genesis 3:15.

### **The Preaching of the Cross in the Four Gospels**

In 1 Timothy 1:15 Paul wrote concerning Christ: **This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.** Christ came into the world in the Four Gospels. The Four Gospels describe Christ's entrance into the world. This verse tells us why he came into the world. It says he came into the world to save sinners. How did Paul know this? Because Christ said it over and over again in the Four Gospels.

In Luke 19:10 he said; **For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.**

In Luke 5:32 he said; **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance.**

In John 3:17 it says; **For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.**

Paul was aware of what Christ said and that is why he said he came into the world to save sinners. Jesus not only said he came into the world to save sinners, but he told us how he would save them in the Four Gospels.

In Matthew 20:28 Jesus said: **Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.** Paul quotes this verse almost verbatim in 1 Timothy 2:5 which says: **Christ gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.** The word ransom literally means a price paid for the redemption of captives. In war, when prisoners are taken captive by the enemy the money demanded for their release is called a ransom. It's the price paid to set them free. Anything that releases anyone from a state of punishment, suffering or sin is called a ransom. We all need a ransom because we are all by nature captives to sin. We are sold under sin, under the condemnation of sin, and under the curse of sin. And unless we find a ransom to deliver us we will perish in hell. But, we have found a ransom. And where do we find this ransom? In the Four Gospels. Matthew declares that Christ gave himself a ransom for all men. That is, he died in the place of sinners and God was willing to accept the pains of his death on the cross in the place of the everlasting suffering that all sinners deserve in hell. The one and only ransom for sinners is found in Matthew 20:28.

John 3:14-15 says: **And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.** Compare this with John 12:32-33 which says: **And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.**

As Moses lifted up a serpent on a pole in the Old Testament, Jesus Christ was lifted up on a cross in the New Testament. The serpent was lifted up to save the people from

physical death. Christ was lifted up on the cross to save us from the second death which is the lake of fire. In the Four Gospels we find Christ being lifted up on the cross to die for our sins to save us from death and hell. That's the gospel of John 3:16.

In John 6:49-51 Jesus said: ***I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*** As God gave the Israelites manna from heaven to live, Christ gave his flesh and life on the cross that we might live forever. It cost him his body and flesh to give us life, eternal life. Where do we learn this? Again, in the Four Gospels.

In John 10 Jesus said:

***Verses 10-11 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.***

***Verse 15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.***

***Verses 17-18 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.***

For the sheep to have life and have it more abundantly the shepherd laid down his life for the sheep. His death was not by accident, but by design. No man took it from him. He planned to lay it down to save the sheep from sin and hell. He loved the sheep so much that he was willing to take upon himself their sins and suffer the wrath they deserve. This was planned before the foundation of the world according to 1 Peter 1:18-19.

In Matthew 26:26-29 Jesus said: ***And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*** The New Covenant has many promises. It took Paul 13 chapters in Hebrews to describe them all. The greatest promise of the New Covenant was a new and better sacrifice that would be offered once and take away sins forever and we learn of that promise in the Four Gospels. Jesus Christ is the one all sufficient sacrifice of the New Covenant. His blood is the blood of the New Testament.

In the Four Gospels we can clearly see Christ dying for sinners. We see him shedding his blood for the remission of sin. We see him laying down his life for the sheep. We see him giving up his flesh and body on the cross that we might have life, eternal life. We see him lifted up on the cross to save us from the curse of sin. We see Christ the sacrifice preaching about his own death and shed blood for our sins in the Four Gospels. But even though Christ clearly said he would die for sins and sinners it was kept hidden from the apostles. For example in Luke 18:31-34 it says: ***Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.*** Even though Jesus told them in no uncertain terms he was going to die and be raised again it says they understood none of these things... neither knew they the things which were spoken. Why? Because it says this saying was hid from them. Who hid it? God did. But it did not remain hidden from them for shortly after this in Luke 24 it was revealed to them.

### **The Preaching of the Cross in the Epistles of the Apostles**

The cross of Christ is the center piece of all doctrines in the New Testament epistles. It is also the foundation upon which doctrine is built upon in the New Testament epistles. Nearly every doctrine the apostles preached and wrote about in their epistles is based upon the cross of Christ. But even though this is true, there was a time when the meaning of the cross was hidden from the apostles. There was a period of about 3 years the 12 apostles did not understand that Christ was going to die even though the Lord said he would many times.

For example in Matthew 16:21-23 we read; ***From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.***

When the Lord told the apostles he would die and be raised again what did they say? Did they say; yes Lord we know you are going to die for our sins and be raised again and we thank you for it? Did they say; yes Lord we understand your cross and we will faithfully preach it and teach it to all men? NO. It says that Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

It's obvious from this verse Peter did not understand Christ's coming death and was not preaching it. If he was, why did he say; this shall not be done unto thee? In other words Peter was saying we will not allow this to happen to you. That is the correct interpretation of his statement because in John 18:10 when the soldiers came to arrest Jesus to put him to death Peter took a sword and tried to cut the head off of one them, but missed and cut his ear off instead.

Why didn't they understand the cross? Why couldn't they see that Christ had to die for sins? The answer is in Luke 18 where he told them again he would die. In Luke 18:34 it says: ***And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.***

In these verses Jesus Christ told the apostles to their face again that he would be put to death, but rise again. He also quoted what the Old Testament prophets wrote about his coming death on the cross, but yet what he said to them went over their heads. It was a mystery to them. It was not a mystery because it was not written down in the Old Testament. Christ's death, burial, and resurrection were all prophesied and written down in the Old Testament Scriptures. Just read Isaiah 53. It was not a mystery to them because Christ did not say anything about his cross in his earthly ministry because throughout his ministry he said over and over again he would die for sins. Just read John 10 where he said he would die at least four times. Why was it a mystery? Because it says it was hid from them. Luke 18:34 says; ***And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.*** Who hid it from them? God. This shows us something about the secrets or mysteries in the Bible. It shows us that a doctrine like the cross can be a secret or mystery to men even though it is written down in the Old Testament. It is a mystery or secret because God for his own reasons chooses to keep it hidden from the understanding of men. It stays a mystery or secret until he chooses the right time, place and men to reveal it. This is true of the cross. Prior to the cross the coming death and resurrection of Christ was a mystery to the apostles. Even though he told them he would die and even though it was written down in their Old Testament, the apostles still could not see it for it was hidden from them. But it did not remain hidden to them because later in Luke 24:44-46 it says that Christ; ***Said unto them, (apostles) These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.***

After his resurrection from the dead Christ opened the understanding of the apostles to see why it behoved him to die. He opened their understanding to see in Moses, the prophets and the Psalms why he had to die and what he died for. All of the prophecies they made concerning the death of Christ were revealed to the 12 apostles in Luke 24 from the master teacher himself, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So the apostles were able to see in Luke 24 what was hidden from them in Luke 18. What they could not understand in Luke 18 they began to understand in Luke 24. What

was unclear to them in Luke 18 became clear to them in Luke 24. Their understanding that was closed in Luke 18 was opened in Luke 24 and from that day forward they began to preach salvation and remission of sins by the death and shed blood of Christ just like he taught them. In Matthew 26:27 when Jesus observed the Lord's supper with his disciples for the first time he said; ***And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*** He said his blood would be shed for the remission of sins and at the time he said it they did not understand it. But in Luke 24 their understanding was opened and they saw that when Christ died his blood was shed for the remission of sins and when he sent them out in Luke 24 they began to preach remission of sins by the death and shed blood of Christ. It says in Luke 24:46 Jesus said unto them; ***That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*** In Matthew 26:27 the Lord said his blood would be shed for the remission of sins. In Luke 24 they found out what that meant and when he sent them out in Luke 24 they began to preach remission of sins by his death and shed blood.

Luke 24 was an important event in the life of the apostles. For nearly three years prior to the cross they had no idea that Christ was going to die for sins and sinners. Peter even rebuked the Lord when he said he was going to die and even tried to kill a soldier who came to arrest Christ to crucify him. But in Luke 24 the Lord opened their understanding and for the first time in their life they began to understand why Christ died and what he died for and who he died for. The writings of the prophets such as Isaiah 53 opened up to them. The Psalms such as Psalms 22 and 16 opened up to them. The writings of Moses such as Genesis 3:15 opened to them. In Luke 24 they began to read Moses, the prophets and the Psalms with a new understanding. In Luke 24 they could see and understand what they wrote about the cross of Christ.

The revelation about the cross totally changed their doctrine. It changed what they preached about Jesus. Prior to the cross, the apostles preached that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God, but from Luke 24 forward they also preached that he died for their sins and transgressions just like Moses, the prophets and the Psalms said he would.

In the book of Acts when the apostles preached the cross they did so mainly from Isaiah the prophet. In Acts 8 there is a story that proves beyond a doubt that the apostles and their followers understood the cross and preached the cross of Christ in the book of Acts from Isaiah 53.

Acts 8:26-39 says: ***And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the***

charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him **Jesus**.

When Phillip found the eunuch he was reading the book of Isaiah. He had a copy of Isaiah and was reading a chapter we are familiar with today. He was reading chapter 53. What is Isaiah 53 all about? What do we find in Isaiah 53? We find such statements as these in this chapter:

**\*The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

**\*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:**

**\*For the transgression of my people was he stricken.**

**\*Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin**

**\*My righteous servant shall justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.**

**\*He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

After reading Isaiah 53 the eunuch asked the question; **I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.** Philip told the eunuch that the person you have been reading about in Isaiah 53 is Jesus Christ. This is a powerful and revealing statement for it shows us what Philip understood and believed about Isaiah 53. He understood and believed that the person Isaiah wrote about was Jesus Christ. As far as Philip was concerned Jesus Christ was the one who Isaiah the prophet said would die for our sins and transgressions.

Prior to the cross the apostles were like the eunuch; they did not know who the person was in Isaiah 53 that suffered and died. But in the Acts period they knew it was Jesus and they preached what Phillip did in Acts 8. It's obvious from these verses that the apostles and their followers knew full well that Jesus Christ was the sacrifice God promised in Isaiah 53 and that he had died for their sins and transgressions. They learned this directly from the Lord in Luke 24 and they also learned more about Christ's death from the Spirit of God when he came into their hearts in Acts 2. Before the Lord went back to heaven in Acts 1 he made a promise to the apostles in John 16:13 where he said: **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he**

***speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.***

The Lord said that when the Spirit of God came and he came in Acts 2, he would guide them into all truth and that includes everything he taught them prior to the cross while he was yet with them. He said unto them in John 14:26: ***But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*** While the Lord was with the apostles on earth he told them many times he would die as a sacrifice for sin. At the time he said it, they did not understand it. But he said that when the Spirit came he would teach them all things and he would cause them to remember all the things he had taught them while he was with them and that includes what he had said unto them about his cross. In Acts 2 when the Spirit of God came into the hearts of the apostles he continued to teach them what Christ taught them in the Four Gospels; especially what he said about his death on the cross.

But there was an event that happened between Luke 24 and the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2 that gave the apostles more insight into the cross. In Acts 1:3 he spent 40 days teaching the apostles before he went back to heaven and before the Spirit came in Acts 2. No doubt he elaborated further what he had said unto them in Luke 24 concerning his death on Calvary. Can you just imagine what you could learn from the Lord if you could sit in a private 40 day Bible conference taught by him? I can assure you that during that 40 day Bible conference the apostles asked him many questions. I know I would.

After a 40 day Bible conference with the Master Teacher himself the apostles were filled with knowledge they never had before, especially concerning his cross because the cross is the foundation upon which they based their doctrines in their epistles.

In Luke 24 the Lord opened the understanding of the apostles and revealed to them why it was necessary for him to die. He then spent 40 days teaching them further what he had taught them while he was yet with them. And then in Acts 2 he sent his Spirit into their hearts to continue teaching them and reminding them of all the truth he had taught them. What they learned from Christ and the Spirit can be seen in their epistles, especially what they learned about the cross. We know Paul preached and wrote about the cross, but so did the other apostles.

Peter in 1 Peter 1:18-19 said: ***Forasmuch 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:***

In 1 Peter 2:24 he wrote: ***Who (Christ) his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.***

In 1 Peter 3:18 he wrote: ***For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.***

In 1 John 1:7 he wrote: ***But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.***

In Revelation 1:5 John wrote: ***Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.***

I believe Paul wrote the book of Hebrews, but some say that one of the other apostles wrote it. But whether Paul or one of the other apostles wrote it does not matter. What matters is what Hebrews says about the cross.

The writer of Hebrews says in Hebrews 9:14: ***How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*** \*Hebrews 9:26 says; ***But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.***

Hebrews 9:28 says: ***So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.***

Hebrews 10:11-12 says: ***And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God***

From these verses, we can see the apostles understood the cross perfectly when they wrote the Hebrew Christian Epistles. They understood, preached and wrote that Christ died for their sins and was raised again from the dead. What they did not know prior to the cross, they understood perfectly after the cross. They saw it for the first time in Luke 24 when the Lord opened their understanding to see why he had to die. They understood it more fully when the Holy Spirit became their teacher and guide in Acts 2.

I am emphasizing these undeniable facts because they are some extreme hyper dispensationalists who actually teach that the 12 apostles did not understand or preach the cross for salvation until many years after Christ died. Pete Ruckman says that they did not find out why Christ died until 15 years after his death! People like Ruckman would have us to believe that for 15 years after Christ died, men like Peter walked

around scratching their head trying to figure out why Christ died on the cross! They say they found out about the cross from Paul who they say was the first man to understand and preach the cross for salvation. That is total non sense and any man who teaches such non sense should never be taken serious. Anybody who can read 6<sup>th</sup> grade English can plainly see the apostles knew about the cross and were preaching the cross years before God ever saved Paul. They found out why Christ died in Luke 24 from the mouth of the Lord himself. They found out why he died from the writings of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms. They learned even more about the cross and its blessings when the Spirit of God became their teacher in Acts 2. And in Acts 8 we find one of their followers preaching that Jesus Christ is the one who suffered and bled and died for our sins in Isaiah 53. And throughout their epistles they said over and over again that Christ died for their sins and rasied again from the dead just like Paul.

The preaching, writing and prophecies of the cross are found throughout the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It is found in Genesis 3 long before God gave the Law to Moses. It is found in the scriptures of the Old Testament Prophets. The cross was preached by Christ throughout the Four Gospels. It was preached and wrote about by ALL of the apostles in the New Testament epistles.

Next; Part 2