

The Judgment Of The Cross pt. 2  
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## The Judgment Of The Cross pt. 2

I want to continue this week with the judgment of the cross. I said last time that for us to understand the solution, we need to understand the problem. And really, in a lot of ways, the solution is not something that we can even describe. It's something that appears when we're willing to see the problem.

I'm not trying to focus on the negative aspects here. But I've learned something over the last few years. I've learned that if we will accept and know the darkness of the adamic man, then God finds room in our hearts to teach us the life of Christ.

Sitting here and describing my experience of Christ's life will really do nothing for you. It might make a good story, but it won't change anyone. If we want to experience life, then we need to face that life is something that we don't have or know. We need to face our nothingness for there to be room in our hearts to know His Word.

If you'll remember, we spoke last time about the first and the second, and the judgment or division that the cross makes between them. And let me start by saying something very important. If this division, this judgment between Adam and Christ, between old and new, death and life, first and second...if this is something that you think you already understand, then I'm afraid that you haven't yet even begun to understand it. I mean that in all seriousness. Only in the darkness of our natural minds could this division appear to us to be something that we already comprehend. **The more light that we have, the more we understand that this division is a bottomless chasm that grows bigger and bigger in our hearts as the light shines more and more.**

When it comes to knowing Christ, there will never be anything about which you can say, "I have learned that". A heart that sees clearly will never utter those words. When it comes to seeing Christ, even the most foundational and "basic" realities are infinitely deep. And the question is NEVER whether or not you have learned something. The question is ALWAYS a matter of how far you are currently able to see.

Paul the apostle, near to the end of his life, said

*"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead" Phil 3:12-13*

This is how it will always be. Christ is an inexhaustible ocean of reality. And He is one that will never fit in your brain. What I mean is that knowing Christ will never be something that you comprehend and store in your memory like language

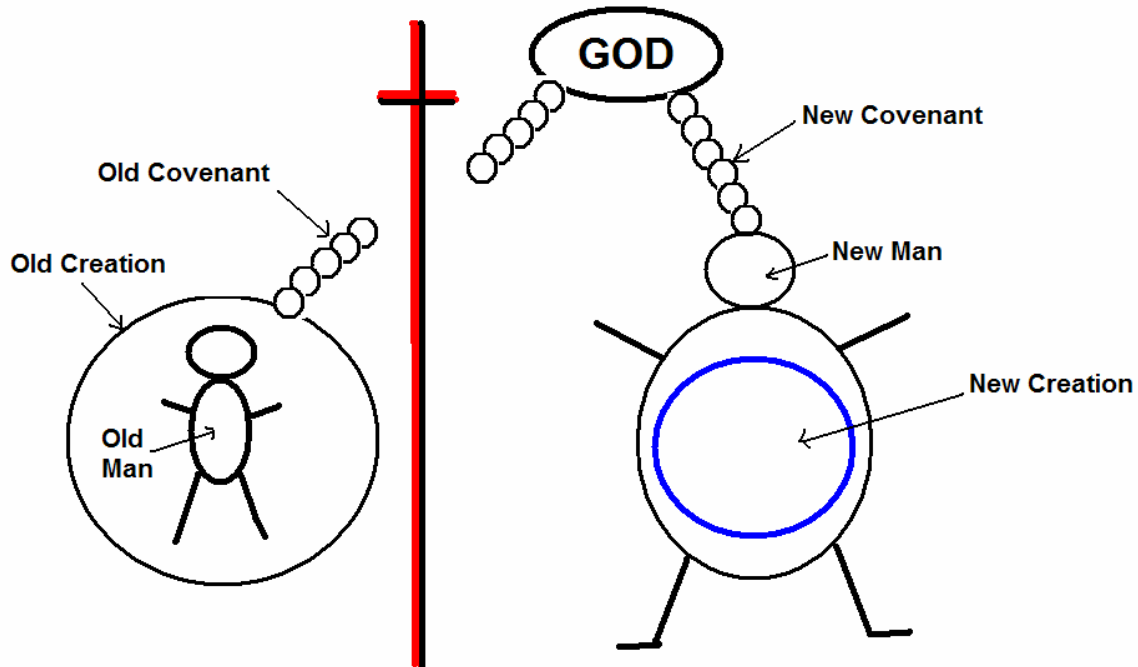
or math. Knowing Christ never fits in your memory. Knowing Christ will always be a reality of seeing by the Spirit the reality of Life and walking in, abiding in, that Light. This is very important for us to understand.

Christ is known ONLY when we behold His life through the revealing of the Spirit. Christ is experienced ONLY as that Life becomes the present experience of our soul through faith. Christ is formed in us ONLY as the truth as it is in Him grows to be more real to your heart than the lie that is true of you. Christ is glorified in you ONLY walk in His light and bear the fruit of His life in our soul. And nothing of Christ is ever fully attained. Everything of knowing Christ is always a journey that involves leaving behind world of reality and progressively inhabiting the universe of Christ.

Here is why I said all of that: If we are seeing with His light, then we are going to find that this thing called judgment, this division that we described last week, is an amazingly immense thing. It is an endless chasm, a bottomless division, that only ever becomes a more and more extreme and important thing. This division still confronts my soul today with the same newness and shock that it confronted me with several years ago when I first saw it. I know it will always be that way.

So we need to spend some more time on this. We will always, in one way or another, be spending time on this. But I want to focus on it for a little while. And I hope that each time we can open our hearts up to the Lord like children who are just beginning an enormous journey and have no idea of the way.

Ok. So we have the first and we have the second and we have the cross that divides them. Let me try to demonstrate this with a diagram. In a very abbreviated summary...the first involves the old man, living in an old creation, relating to God in the old covenant. God, at one time, had a relationship to that man, in those natural things, according to that old relationship. The cross put an end to that. The cross cut between God and the first. And the cross established a new Man, in whom we have come to be a new creation, who relate to God according to a new covenant.



This makes a nice diagram. These are easy words to agree with. But what does all of this mean? What is the first man? How does he function? Let me say a few things about this man. And as I say these things about the first man, remember that the cross has made all of these things irrelevant.

The first man is natural. That is to say, he is flesh and blood and bone. He is physical, material. That man knows himself, and knows his surroundings with the faculties of five senses. Sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell. These five senses connect a natural mind to the natural world and help the natural man define natural reality.

This man has absolutely no ability to know anything or relate to anything spiritual. Flesh gives birth to flesh. Spirit gives birth to Spirit. The two are contrary to each other. They are different realms and realities and lives. They are known by entirely different senses and minds. They have nothing in common except that the physical is the testimony of the spiritual. The natural is a dim shadow of the eternal.

The soul of the natural man is entirely conscious of self, and is motivated in every way according to self-preservation and self-love. This is the nature of the natural man. This isn't merely some of what the natural man thinks. This is the source and reality behind all of his thinking. The adamic man is a soul that declared his independence from God in the garden, and who has ever since lived from and for self. Whether or not he ever comes to see it, this man is a slave to self-preservation....and resists the death of the cross in every conceivable way.

This man is not always afraid of physical death, so long as physical death is thought to secure a greater gain to self. But this man is always naturally opposed to the cross because that is where the self, the self-loving soul, ceases to be the life and purpose and identity of this body. As a side note, man creates religion because of this dilemma. Man creates religion because we appreciate morality

and law and the idea of relationship with God. But religion allows the natural man to keep the idea, in one form or another, that man can have morality and law and relationship with God and still live in and for and by SELF. Everyone wants Jesus. But nobody wants His cross.

The natural man wants a relationship with God according to his own interests, based on his own priorities, in alignment with his own understanding and values. He desires to bring God into his world, to pray to him out from his own mind and nature, and through God to find the security and blessing of his own purposes. But none of this means anything.

The natural man thinks he can know God with his natural mind. And yet he cannot. Paul says that there is not one that knows God, no not even one. The natural man thinks that he can please God with the works of His nature, the obedience of His flesh, the submission of his will. But he cannot. Jesus says that the flesh profits nothing. Paul says that we are by nature hostility towards God, children of wrath. The natural man believes that forgiveness of transgressions and shortcomings is his primary need. But this is not true. This is like cleaning up a toad and calling it a man.

The natural man is perfectly helpless. He is utterly unrighteousness. He is unable to approach God, to know God, to relate to God except in the imaginations of his own mind. The natural man was created to bear in his soul the life of God and to be conformed to that Life and become expressive of that life. But, rejecting the tree of life, the world was filled with a humanity that fell short of this purpose. We have fallen short of life inwardly. And we have proven that we cannot even obey the law of life in external commands and regulations.

Again, you hopefully have understood this by now, but I am not saying these things because I want to make us feel hopeless. I am saying these things because I want our hope to be in the right thing. **There is hope. But there is no hope for the natural man. There is hope, but only after we forsake in our hearts what God has forsaken at the cross.**

And this is what the law was meant to demonstrate. Do you understand that the law of Moses was given so that you could understand this division? The law didn't accomplish the division. That didn't happen until the cross. But the law was given so that you could comprehend the need for the judgment of the cross. This is so important. I realize that many of you have read Not I but Christ where I talk about the law. But let me say a few things about it even so.

*The Law was never given as a means for humans to really become righteous. Over and over again we learn from Scripture (and experience if we're honest), that the Adamic man cannot keep the Law. Paul says "by the works of the Law NO flesh will be justified." (Romans 3:20)*

And that is why he tells us that "*the Law is a ministry of condemnation, and a ministry of death*" (2 Corinthians 3:7,9). What does that mean? The Law was two things. It was God's description of His own nature. So, the one hand, it established a testimony of the glory and righteousness to come in Christ, and on the other hand, it exposed the indisputable fact that man fell infinitely short of that righteousness. Thus, the Law condemns man's attempts to live as righteous before God. The Law exposes our need for a righteousness that is granted based on faith. It was divinely

intended to condemn our efforts to live under it in the flesh, to live by the knowledge of good and evil.

That is why Paul tells us that “the *Law was added so that transgression would increase.*” (Romans 5:20) The Law was like shining a flashlight on Adam. It exposed the nature of sin in Adam and caused *sin* to manifest itself as many individual *sins*. And so the Law was given, both to keep them as a testimony of the coming Seed, and to expose what they were by nature. In other words, it was given so that sin (the nature) could be clearly seen through individual transgressions. It was the righteous standard of God put up next to the hopeless condition of Adam. And it condemned Adam to death.

We are probably all becoming familiar with Galatians 2:20, but look what Paul says immediately before it.

*Gal 2:19 For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

God did not give the Israelites the Mosaic Law as a means of securing true righteousness. The Jews of Jesus' day had completely turned the Law into a cause for boasting, rather than a cause for needing Christ. The Jews of Jesus' day attempted to turn the Law into a righteousness of their own. Paul refers to this in Romans 10:2 – how his zealous Jewish countrymen had refused to submit to God's righteousness and tried to establish their own. Jesus actually tried to convince them that they weren't really keeping it. He tried to show them that they could never keep it. He said to them “you have heard, do not murder, but I tell you that hating your brother is murder. You have heard don't commit adultery, but lusting after your neighbor is adultery”.

*Gal 3:19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made.... 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have **given life**, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

Do you see it? The Law was added only because of the people's transgression. So God used the Mosaic law to testify of His nature and purpose and promise in Israel, and simultaneously, to expose *their need for the righteousness of His seed*. He used the Law to “shut up everyone under sin” (Romans 3:22) so that they would see their need for the promise of LIFE to be received by faith.

That is how the Law has become a tutor to lead us to Christ. The Law given to Moses pointed a rebellious people to their need of a righteousness that was not of themselves. It pointed them to another kind—another Seed.

So the Law was never something that the Jews were supposed to carry around and use to boast in their own righteousness or their own obedience. Those who did this

totally missed the intent of the Law. This is one of the reasons Jesus spoke such condemnation over the Pharisees and Sadducees in His day. They were boasting in the Law—the very thing that was condemning them.

That is why Jesus says in John 5:45, *“Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope”*. And in John 7:19, *“Did not Moses give you the Law, and {yet} none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?”*

In other words, “You’re setting your hope in the Law, and the very thing you hope in is condemning you, because you are failing to live according to it.

Jesus had harsh words for these people because they were rejecting LIFE again. They rejected Life in the garden in favor of their own knowledge of good and evil, in favor of their own desire to be like God, to live as their own source, and by their own judgments. And here Life comes into the midst of their world and offers himself to those who had all of the promises and types and shadows and prophecies. And still they reject life. Still they suppose the natural man to somehow be sufficient.

So, the Law could never bring life. It was meant to bring condemnation. What God was really showing forth through the Law was the need for Adam, that fallen kind, to be *brought into the grave*. He was demonstrating the need for our death. The Mosaic Law lifted up a righteous standard next to the law of sin and death in Adam, and exposed the hopelessness of our condition. The Law described God’s righteousness, and then compared us to it. The result was that the Law showed us for what we were and condemned us to death.

And that is why the New Testament is always making statements like these:

- *“The Law came in so that the transgression would increase”*. Romans 5:20
- *“I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “YOU SHALL NOT COVET”. 8 But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead”*. Romans 7:7
- *“For while we were in the flesh, **the sinful passions, which were {aroused} by the Law**, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death”*. Romans 7:5
- *“Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; **for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin”**”*. Romans 3:20
- *The Law is “a ministry of death” and “a ministry of condemnation”*. 2 Corinthians 3:7,9

Again, the Law was meant to demonstrate to us that we needed God to bring Adam into the grave and start a whole new creation in Christ—not just a new start with Adam, but a new nature, a new life altogether.

Adam is not repairable. Adam can not be patched. There is nothing of the old that can pass over into the new. We are going to be looking at the cross so we can

understand how the Lord accomplished this, but for now we are simply trying to establish the need for judgment.

Our view of the cross has to do with sins that need to be forgiven. God's view of the cross has to do with the man of sin that needs to be destroyed. And when we don't understand God's view, God's judgment, then we are like people who try to knock bad fruit off of their tree before anyone sees it, and who go into their prayer closet and ask that somehow the same tree will produce different fruit next year.

Jesus had a different idea about the bad tree. When Jesus saw a tree that was not producing good fruit he cursed it and watched it wither from the roots upward. When John the Baptist addressed the bad adamic tree he promised that Christ would lay the axe to the root of that tree.

I'll close with this. We have to understand this judgment. Our problem is not that we're not in Christ. If we are Christians than we are certainly in Christ. Our problem is that we are in Christ but without judgment. We are in Christ but we are, for the most part, perfectly ignorant of the division of the cross. Let's ask the Lord to deal with us about these things.