

**** Beginning Remarks**

The "Cross" is the main theme of human history; it is the basis by which all things are judged; it is the secret through which man gains wisdom and power. There are only two kinds of people in this world: one who knows the Cross and the other who does not. Similarly, there are two kinds of holy saints: one who is able to enjoy at any time the wisdom and power of the Cross and the other who is not...

**** Scripture Reading: Luk 23:26-56**

1. The Cross is God's Wisdom and God's Power

1) Jews look for miraculous signs and wonders and Greeks seek wisdom while we only speak of Christ on the cross. <1Cor 1:22-23>

- Paul said, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified... My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power." <1Co 2:2-5>

- "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe." <1Co 1:21>= In today's scripture reading, soldiers, rulers, and chief priests all mocked Jesus

Men vary in their practice of faith: the pious, the do-gooders, knowledge seekers and the mystical.

2) The more we know the Cross, the wiser and more powerful we become.

Pastor Lee's 30 years as a believer have been years of getting to know the Cross more.

In the ministry of exorcism, whenever the Cross is preached, the demon-possessed will start to act up.

* This method is the simplest, the wisest, the easiest, the most powerful, the most efficient, and the most effective.

witness the power and results on the night of the Passover / The city of Jericho was not destroyed by men; it collapsed by Israelites' praying and marching around the city after the ark.

- Those who believe in the foolish truth have become the major players of each generation.

3) Why isn't there any change in the lives, power and living of so many believers?

- Other methods (other than that of the Cross) lead them into a more difficult and complex environment.

- Religious teachings are easy to understand and put to practice (e.g., doing good and being sincere). But those teachings and methods thereof can neither move the H.S. to act nor drive out the demons. Without the shedding of blood, there is no method for atoning sins, changing destiny and casting out demons.

Some have been believers for ten years without ever experiencing God's miraculous signs and power.

-- The very thought system of theirs is incapable of generating the kind of thoughts, judgments, words and living in a miraculous way. Their thought system enslaves them, rejects and separates them from God's righteousness; it blinds them to God's love; it deprives them of freedom and power.

4) Having received "the light of the Cross", Christ's two disciples have been totally transformed.

- their state of weakness prior to experiencing the Cross ↔ after they understood the secret of the Cross and the resurrection..

- Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." <Gal 2:20>

- He was willing to do so because he had seen "the power and wisdom of the Cross". Therefore, he was able to see the greatest love, enjoy the greatest freedom and abundance, and testify that "I can do everything through him who gives me strength. <Phi 4:13> Such a life can change the whole world and history of mankind.

2. Jesus Christ Crucified

Why did Paul say that the Cross was the wisdom of God and the power of God?

1) It was proven on the Cross = Jesus crucified is the Christ, son of God, king of Israel and the king of all kings. = "Surely he was the Son of God." <Mat 27:54> *"the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life."* <太 27:51>

* Why did "the Creator, Almighty, and the eternal God" do this who is the "I am who I am" and the one who does what he wants to do"? Did it have to be like this? Is there any other and better way to "save man"?

- Why did the Creator have to die for the created? Why was the cruelest form of punishment used? Why did he have to suffer the mockery and insults by his beneficiaries?

- Just like the lamb to be slaughtered, Jesus Christ accomplished the great work of redemption on the Cross in silence...

=> In this there must be a spiritual reason – root of sin, condemnation, destiny, death, the power of Satan..

In this there must be newly created lives, relationships in love, etc. that he has prepared for his people.

In this there must be an eternal reason – there are some things to be remembered forever ..

- Therefore, a great price had to be paid in order to accomplish...

2) How can the Cross become the wisdom and power that holy saints will enjoy?

- Jesus Christ on the Cross is the complete victor, thereby setting an example "that would generate the greatest influence of all"; he has accomplished the most important thing. We can gain "God's unlimited wisdom and power" in five ways as follows.

"obeying completely" in order to be restored to obedience

"Yet not as I will, but as you will." <Mat 26:39> "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." <Luk 23:46>

- "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 'Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

* All our problems (regardless of what kind) result from disobedience.

* The first sin of our enemy the Devil and his greatest trick are his own disobedience and the disobedience of man through him. One instance of disobedience has engendered the disobedience that has filled the entire universe now.

* Jesus Christ was able to be completely obedient (even to death). One man's complete obedience brings about the obedience of all the chosen people (the body of Christ, the holy people).

→ After saints are born again, the devil continues to lure them into disobedience. Therefore even saints will "fall and disobey" sometimes. However, born-again saints will always come back to stand in "obedience". In other words, because of the complete obedience of Christ, "the head of the saints", saints, "the body of Christ", have gained a life of

“irresistible obedience”.

=>When a saint is willing to seek ways of obedience in his daily life, he will receive “every good and perfect wisdom and power from above” and the Devil Satan’s power and authority are broken down and removed. That is why we say “the Cross is God’s wisdom and power”. Obedience is the simplest, the wisest, the easiest, the most powerful, the most efficient and the most effective way!

Revealing “the greatest love” to rid off all the deceptions and misunderstandings that come from the Devil”

= To pray for those who mocked and hurled insults at him: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” <Luk 23:34> At such painful moments, he accomplished the work of redemption, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.” <Luk 23:43>

* After man sinned, the Devil continues to deceive us that “God is only a severe judge”. We really have misunderstood God our Father until we see Jesus Christ on the Cross showing God’s infinite, unconditional, absolute and eternal love (Agape), thereby revealing “God as the loving father of all peoples” and breaking all of Satan the Devil’s deceptive powers.

* After saints have been blessed by God’s great love, the Devil continues his work of deception that “God will not a weakling like you.” The Israelites out of Egypt were often tempted while in the wilderness that “the Lord is bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword.” In fact the most miserable of all we experience in our daily life is that we are tempted to think “God detests me and he is about to punish me.” But each time we are reminded of “the eternal, infinite and unconditional love (even when were enemies of God)” revealed on the Cross, we are able to overcome any accusation and come before the throne of grace in full confidence with no fear to confess, receive cleansing and “reconciliation with God”, and gain freedom as well as “blessings from God”.

→ The Devil is accusing “the beloved people of God” day and night. <Rev 12:10> But “they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.” <Rev 12:11> “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” <Rom 5:8> “What, then, shall we say in response to this” If God is for us, who can be against us?... Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?... <Rom 8:31-39>

* All who have received God’s eternal and infinite love can see God’s love revealed in all their circumstances, all conditions and every step of their way. → They are also able to love all peoples, even their enemies...

=> Jesus Christ completely broke the Devil’s deceptions and accusations on the Cross. Regardless of the circumstances he is in, when a saint makes judgments from the perspective of “God loves me”, he will enjoy the infinite moving, wisdom and power from the H.S. and experience the instant removal of the forces of darkness. That is why we can say that “the Cross is the simplest, wisest, the easiest, the more powerful, the most efficient and the most effective method.”

Complete penal substitution of condemnation, redemption, and death to restore God’s justice and righteousness (not man’s)

= “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani-which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’” <Mat 27:46>

* All the problems of man are the result of “sin” = sinning / inability to solve the problem of sin because all who sin are not able to free themselves from the bondage of “the law of sin, the law of death and the law of condemnation”. Those who sin are not able to free themselves from the power and authority of Satan “because the devil has been sinning from the beginning.” <1Jo 3:8>. Those who sin cannot free themselves from the power of “judgment” “because the prince of

this world now stands condemned.” <約 16:11> They cannot escape from the power of “death” “for when you eat of it you will surely die.” <Gen 2:17> “For the wages of sin is death” <Rom 6:23>, they cannot escape the fate of “condemnation”. They will be condemned as the devil now stands condemned for God said to Satan, “Because you have done this, cursed are you.” <Gen 3:14>

→ Only Jesus Christ suffered condemnation and punishment for the redemption of his body! When a chosen of God’s understands this secret and is born again, the root of sin will be removed from him forever. While on his journey heavenward, he will be able to continuously cleanse himself of the sins committed when he is weak with “the sin offering and the guilt offering (repent to be renewed)”, receive again God’s pleasure (fellowship offering) and give thanks (grain offering).

On the Cross, Jesus Christ broke all of the devil’s deceptions and accusations. Though he accuses saints day and night, saints will triumph at any time by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. That’s why we can say that “the Cross is the simplest, the wisest, the easiest, the most powerful, the most efficient and the most effective method.”

Bringing to saints “a new life, belonging, relationship, destiny, and inheritance” through his “complete death and burial”

= “It is finished.” <Joh 19:30>: confirming his burial in the tomb after death

* Only by receiving a new life, a new identity, and a new destiny can we separate ourselves from “the destiny of the old self and enjoy all the abundant inheritance, power and blessings God has prepared. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” <2Co 5:17>

* The Devil took away from man only one thing, i.e., “identity as children of God”, thereby causing man to lose all and everything. Therefore all of the devil’s tricks and deceptions are focused on this one secret. In other words, he lets saints do everything (going to church, reading the Bible, praying and serving) except having them understand the keys facts such as “the confirmed evidence of regeneration/once saved and forever saved” (even the so-called conservative churches and denominations also say that “‘justification by faith’ is not wrong; but you’ll lose your salvation if you lose your faith.”).

* At the moment a saint is restored to his eternal identity, belonging, relationship and inheritance as those of the chosen”, he will be able to be restored to all.

= restoration of identity → restoration of promise → restoration of the clear leading of the H.S. → restoration of “God’s good will” hidden in all circumstances→ restoration of joy, thanksgiving, hope and praise → restoration at any time of a life of living sacrifice in walking with God → seeing God’s blessings → giving testimonies to gain more blessed people → continued expansion for the spread of the gospel

=> Jesus Christ’s complete death on the Cross, his being buried and his resurrection has brought his body the restoration of a new life, a new identity... It’s useless to study and search for a hundred years, as an orphan or a beggar, for a “blissful life” / While under the curse of a condemned fate, regardless of what we try, the end remains within the curse. However, in any circumstances, as long as I judge all things from the perspective of “I am a child of God” I’ll see at once how I am being loved and blessed and, with it, come the beautiful moving, wisdom and power. That’s why we can say that “the Cross is the simplest, the wisest, the easiest, the most powerful, the most efficient and the most effective method.”

On the third day he was raised forever, triumphed forever and has become “the first fruit” of all who are blessed and saved.

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” <Joh 11:25> “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <1Co 15:22>

* The first condition for one who wants “absolute peace (regardless of the circumstances)” while on earth is to “firmly believe that he will never die”, on which the conditions and contents of all peace and happiness are based. Everyone has a lot to fear but all things we fear for are summed up in “the fear of death”. Only if we can overcome “the fear of death”, we will overcome all those which make us fear death one by one. “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.” <Heb 2:14-15>

=>Jesus Christ died and resurrected, thereby bringing us eternal life as well as a new life and a new living. All who know they will never die will surely seek the wisdom and power of eternal significance and gain eternal crowns, happiness and blessings with their transitory life. Saints will receive the wisdom and power from above and eternity right away when they explain whatever they are faced with on earth from the perspective of “eternal vision”. Just like Paul enjoying all the more the power from the H.S. in all kinds of persecutions and suffering as well as martyrdom, only those who are willing to die and resurrect with the Lord will be able to enjoy such spiritual blessings. That’s why we say that “the Cross is the simplest, the wisest, the easiest, the most powerful, the most efficient and the most effective method.”

3. Living by the light of the Cross everyday

1) All who have received “the light of the Cross” have received the H.S. and will live under the law of the Spirit of life and in the new way of the Spirit.

- not in the old way of the written code, thinking and doing things in a rigid way
- two laws of the mind waging wars against each other – “things of the flesh” and “things of the spirit”
- When I choose the H.S. to follow the Lord and see God’s pleasure with me, my heart and mind can guard “the grace and power from above”.

- All saints who have experienced this secret will love to pray more and more, thereby enjoying blessings as a result.

2) Dying and resurrecting with the Lord at any time <Phi 1:20-21, 2:5-11, 3:7-14, 4:4-7, 11-13>

Need to understand “the secrets of the Cross”—particularly the five ways described hereinabove

Need to connect “what has been accomplished on the Cross” with my life

Need to dwell on: when making judgments about everything, I need to choose the method of the Cross, i.e., making judgments through the perspective of the Cross as described hereinabove

3) Getting equipped: we also need the Cross-focused knowledge of the Bible, history, all things and my life.

how to “get to know God more → communicate with God → walk with God”= 36 lessons

how to gain Christ-centered understanding of the entire Bible= Bible Overview

= bible study taught on the road to Emmaus <Luk 24:26-27> Paul’s teaching at Antioch for one year <Act 11:19-30>, in the Hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus for two years <Act 19:8-20>, training disciples in Rome for two years <Act 28:30-31>

three-year study, confirmation (practice), experiencing, and sharing

=> I will see more and more the wisdom and power from the H.S. will accompany me, meet many “God’s people”, and bless an entire generation. Once again we should grasp Paul’s declaration and testimony: For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified... My message and my preaching were not with

wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power." <1 Co 2:2-5> "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified." <1Co 1:21-23>

**** Concluding Remarks**

**** Prayer Topics of the Week ****

1) The Cross is God's Wisdom and God's Power: *Do I understand what this sentence means? Why can I receive wisdom in simplicity, power in ease, and results in efficiency for my thoughts and methods through the Cross? Have I experienced the same thing in my life?*

2) Jesus Christ Crucified: *Can the Cross as I know it drive out all of the devil Satan's deceptions, tricks and accusations? What kind of a close relationship between God's wisdom and power revealed on the Cross, as described in Outline 2, and my life and my living?*

3) Living by the light of the Cross daily: *Do I receive "the light of life and power" from the Cross everyday? Do I live according to the law of the Spirit of life? Are the Cross messages I preach powerful enough to have an impact on others?*