

The Crucified of The Church
Sunday, May 30, 2021

Galatians 2:20 (NLT)

20 My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20 (TPT)

20 My old identity has been co-crucified with Christ and no longer lives. And now the essence of this new life is no longer mine, for the Anointed One lives his life through me—we live in union as one! My new life is empowered by the faith of the Son of God who loves me so much that he gave himself for me, dispensing his life into mine!

- I. What is your definition of “Christian?”
 - A. What if we were able to forget everything we have been told and all we have heard and develop our definition through what we read in scripture! (what this series is all about...)
 1. Many people in our American context “call” themselves “Christians” but what is actually required to be one?
 2. What lifestyle truly reflects one?
 3. Does the scripture I just read from Galatians describe you and how you live your life?
 4. The scripture is very clear; we are not to just believe in His resurrection...we are to be crucified with Him!
 5. We have been taught that to become a Christian would cost us nothing! The price has already been paid!
 6. That is a “half-truth”!
 - B. What can we make of these words from Christ Himself?

Luke 14:25-31 (NLT)

25 A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them,
26 “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. 27 And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.
28 “But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? 29 Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. 30 They would say, ‘There’s the person who started that building and couldn’t afford to finish it!’ 31 “Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counselors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him?

1. We have been taught to - just come and be baptized or ask Jesus into your heart!
2. Jesus as well as the Apostles said, “Take your cross and and follow Jesus and deny yourself!”
3. By saying and believing these things we have lost the very essence of what a Christian really is!
4. His life being lived through us is what Christianity is all about!
5. Don’t hear me talking about “works salvation”! This could better be described as “death salvation!” Dying to self!

Mark 8:34-37 (NLT)

34 Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. 35 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. 36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? 37 Is anything worth more than your soul?

II. Are we willing, do we have the courage and can we make the commitment to truly be a “follower of Christ?”

A. Remember, in this series we are talking about The Church! Specifically, today we are talking about “The Crucified of the Church.” That’s us!

Matthew 24:4-14 (NLT)

4 Jesus told them, “Don’t let anyone mislead you, 5 for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah.’ They will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don’t panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won’t follow immediately. 7 Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. 8 But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come. 9 “Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. 10 And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. 11 And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. 12 Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.

1. The Lord is describing the difficulty of His believers living in The Kingdom age. The time of establishing His Kingdom and the “push back” from it!
2. Okay, here is the deal! We simply do not suffer too well!
3. We do not know how to “live in a hostile environment!”
4. That’s why we want to recreate what we call “a Christian nation!” A place where my beliefs are not challenged!
5. This is precisely what the entire Book of Revelation is all about! The Kingdom of God overcoming the Kingdoms of this world! And how to stand strong whole in this world through tribulation and suffering!

B. Jesus made this whole issue so plain!

John 18:36 (NLT)

36 Jesus answered, "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world."

1. WHY are we so intent on trying to live any other way!
2. Of course, I would love for this earthly world to reflect the character of God!
3. This is possible...but not by the coercion of passing laws and forcing some kind of so-called change!
4. This world and its ways are changed the same way you were changed...through conversion and rebirth!

John 17:15-18 (NLV)

15 I do not ask You to take them out of the world. I ask You to keep them from the devil. 16 My followers do not belong to the world just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Make them holy for Yourself by the truth. Your Word is truth. 18 "As You sent Me into the world so I have sent them into the world also.

- C. WHEN will we learn that this new "crucified life" is completely independent of this world, its behavior and attitudes!
 1. I hear some of your thoughts already!
 2. You mean, we just go to church all the time? Pray all day long? Become passive with no drive for life in hopes that one day soon Jesus will snatch us out of here!
 3. If those are your thoughts, you have just realized how completely void your understanding is about what being a follower of Christ really means!

III. These are the basics of being "The Crucified Church" of Jesus!

A. Pursue and commit to being like Christ!

Philippians 3:6-11 (NLV)

6 I followed my religion with all my heart and did everything I could to make it hard for the church. No one could say anything against the way I obeyed the Law. 7 But I gave up those things that were so important to me for Christ. 8 Even more than that, I think of everything as worth nothing. It is so much better to know Christ Jesus my Lord. I have lost everything for Him. And I think of these things as worth nothing so that I can have Christ. 9 I want to be as one with Him. I could not be right with God by what the Law said I must do. I was made right with God by faith in Christ. 10 I want to know Him. I want to have the same power in my life that raised Jesus from the dead. I want to understand and have a share in His sufferings and be like Christ in His death. 11 Then I may be raised up from among the dead.

1. We are quick to say or at least believe this is just “figurative language” and not real behavior!
2. What does that really look like? To give up something for Christ!
3. What does it look like to be one with Him?
4. What does it look like to know Him?

B. Be a “crucified Church” means loving people. Genuinely!

1 Corinthians 13:3 (TPT)

And if I were to be so generous as to give away everything I owned to feed the poor, and to offer my body to be burned as a martyr, without the pure motive of love, I would gain nothing of value.

1. Let’s face it, some folks are hard to love!!
2. This can’t be done except through a crucified life and God’s life overcoming yours. He loves through you!

C. We also have to realize that because we are living from another Kingdom, there will be “push back!”

1 Peter 4:12-14 (NLT)

12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. 14 If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you.

1. Yes...life happens!
2. Realize your new Kingdom life as a Christian is not traveling in the same direction as the world!
3. Jesus' followers are traveling against the grain of this world!
4. It is always easier to "go with the flow" and just enjoy the ride! That is not being The Crucified Church!