

A Sermon from 1 Cor: II, 2.

W.

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For I determined not to know any
thing among you save Jesus Christ
and him crucified.

We have already far advanced in the
solemn season of Lent and are fast approach-
ing to the anniversary celebration of that
important event to which it is preparatory,
the sufferings & death of Christ — an event
the thought of which ought to make every serious
& reflecting mind to pause & consider, for that the
only begotten Son of God should lay down his
life for the world for a world of apostate &
rebellious creatures is a fact so marvellous
and amazing that the hardest heart ought
to melt in tears of penitence & love. It is
an event of such deep interest for every sin-
ner that if he rightly views & understands it
it will become the principal subject of his
study & meditation; he will never cease to think

of it never be weary of pronouncing his praises
on the dying love of Christ. To devote to the ce-
lebration of this important event one day more
particularly what can be more becoming &
desirable; nay even to set apart a certain season
for its due commemoration & preparatory meditation
is to say the least a most laudable practice.

For this purpose Lent was instituted & kept by
in the earliest ages of the Church long before corruption
& mere outward observances & ceremonies assumed
the place of true religion. Christians would attend
to prayer & meditation accompanied with vigils
or watchings & fasting. That these originally
well intended & pious practices were abused,
carried to extremes, ^{as they have} & degenerated into a mere
mockery of holy things does not argue against
their proper observance, for what is their however
pure & holy but is defiled in the hands of sinful
men. Not that we would urge for a moment any
rigid observance, for no voluntary mortifying
of the body, no fasting & watching for days & nights
not even the uttering of many prayers can avail
us any thing, if our hearts are not deeply impressed
by the love of Christ, if we are not by laying aside

all unpalatable desires & appetites daily crucified
with Christ; if we do not willingly & gladly deny
ourselves & serve the Lord in sincerity & truth.
As of old God was not pleased with the offerings
and sacrifices of those or of the lip service of those
whose heart was far from him so he can neither
regard any external rites & observances among
his professing people of the N. P. Church, if their
hearts are not renewed & sanctified. Alas!
less than that we put any more in such
things even, if rightly & devoutly attended to.
They will at the utmost be only helps & means for
the exercise of true godliness & piety. Hence our
Church though she with a laudable object in good
intention retained the ancient custom of observing
Lent yet she left it to every man's conscience
how to act & remove these ancient practices, for no
compulsory service only a willing sacrifice can
be pleasing to God; no abstinence from lawful in-
dulgence when practiced contrary to our inclination
but self-denial when originating in love & devout
love to God can promote our growth in grace
and sanctification. The true believer however
will not fail at all times, so in particular
at this season to contemplate & meditate upon

the humiliations & privations, to which Christ submitted
the prayers & supplications, the fastings & watchings,
with which he laboured for our salvation; the suffer-
ings & agonies the crucifixion & death which
he endured to procure our redemption: the cru-
cified Saviour will often & much engage his
devout thought & his grateful admiration.

The text we have selected and into which we
shall now under the Divine blessing and aid
inquire, will tend to promote the pious &
devout feeling we have described and show us
the importance of that event the commemoration of
which is approaching. We shall have to observe

I, The occasion which elicited St Paul's language.

II, The importance of the subject insisted upon.

III, The effects which its declaration produces on the hearers.

I) The occasion which elicited the Apostle's
language we discover in the unfavorable
condition of the Corinthian Church. No
sooner had the Apostle planted & estab-
lished that Church than Satan attempted
to sow tares among the wheat. False brethren

seem and pretending but erroneous teachers
seemed to have crept in among their hearers
overbo and ~~con~~ perverted the faith of some
It does not seem indeed that they generally
were reduced into error, for the Apostle in
his introduction admits that they were abounding
in knowledge or enriched as he expresses it
in all utterance & knowledge, that is he to
say they were possessed of many great & ex-
cellent gifts. Indeed their principal failing
seems to have been to make too much of shining
gifts & human talents whilst they overlooked
or at least partially neglected the grand
leading principles of the doctrine of the
Gospel. They had in short as a body not continued
in the simplicity & purity of the Gospel of Christ.
Hence, as is generally the case when the leading
and distinguishing tenets of the Gospel are
departed from or not sufficiently adhered to,
an unhappy division ensued. Some professed
to be followers of Paul, others of ~~Apostles~~
others of Cephas or Peter whilst some
either sincerely adhered to Christ alone or
pretended to do so. Such a difference of opinions
such a sectarian spirit could arise from no
other source than from a lack of sound &

& clear views of the main part of true & vital
religion, faith in Christ as our only & all-suffi-
cient Saviour, love to God & love to the
brethren. When these are neglected a party
spirit & sectarianism will always assume
the place of true Christianity. Those ministers
to whom the Corinthians respectively professed
to adhere were all the true & faithful ser-
vants of God & heralds of the Gospel; they
were themselves not divided but they were
like all other men, possessed of different
gifts & various degrees of talents, differing
not in the essentials of the Christian faith but
only in the mode of delivering the great doctrine
of the Gospel or at the utmost about some
minor points which always ought to be considered
subordinate & never to divide the believers.

Paul distinguished himself by his expanded
views of the liberty of the Gospel being entirely
free from all Jewish prejudices & narrowness
even for thus he would be best qualified
for his ministry among the Gentiles for whom he
was now particularly destined. Peter, it

should seem living & labouring principally
among his Jewish brethren would act with more
caution with a more tender & scrupulous regard
to Jewish rites & observances, as it would not
have proved expedient to wound tender
consciences on that point. Apollon it appears
was possessed of much eloquence and
having been educated among the Jewish &
Heathen philosophers at Alexandria,
he no doubt, would more suit those who
taste was somewhat inclined to human wis-
dom & elegance of speech. But whatever may
have been the grounds of divisions & differences
& disputes the mainspring of them was, confidence
in man. To make too much of any man known
great good & excellent always proves injurious,
it is sure to draw us away from Christ. ^{even the true} ^{servants of}
but instruments in the hand of God, however ^{Christ}
holy & talented they may be more or less gifted
each excelling not in all things but every
one in a measure endowed with certain in-
dividual qualifications each fitted for some
particular purpose for some peculiar sphere
of labour. Their gifts are talents lent by their
Divine Master, To love them gifts more than the

Given to esteem the instrument more than him
who employs it is idolizing the creature & dishonoring
God. The weaker instrument must indeed not
be despised because God by employing it
honors it, but the stronger must neither be
honored ^{more} than is due to an instrument or a servant.
otherwise we are sure to err. Thus one class of sects
which have arisen in the Church of Christ
would not have arisen if men had adhered more

Thatacceptance from the simplicity of the Gospel of certain distinctions, if they had not mistaken
and an undue outward appearance & for for the matter, substance,
attachment to of religion. The admiration of human wisdom
man instead on the one hand or some shining gift possessed
of Christ accom- by many of the primitive Christians as an equivalent
panied by dis-
union must have
also to an in-
consistency of
living is a
common fact
and the reproach
which the Apostles
accumulated on the
the Christians
throughout his
and Episcopacy
writing that that
such was the case with them the hubbubake city of Corinth offered many perplexities.

wants; he alone can unite us if we are united
to him, if he is the man & substance of our belief
and the object of our love. This will lead us to consider

II) The importance of the subject is indicated
upon by the Apostle in our text. This is

a belief in a far other man to a crucified Redeemer.
The language & sentiments of the Apostle on this point are indeed
striking & surprising. For I determined not to know any
thing among you save Jesus Christ & him crucified. We
are almost ready to ask whether the Apostle's meaning & resolution
in practice were such as his language implies or how much
we understand him. He certainly would not mean
that this was the only subject upon which he would
preach, that as if there were no other truths, doctrines
or precepts which he would expound & urge upon the
learned attention of his learners as if he considered
nothing else of importance. Indeed his writings
show that there were other topics upon which he laid
great stress that he neglected none of the great truths
which are implied in the Christian religion and
that he inculcated upon his converts all the
precepts & duties which were consistent with their faith
with all the warmth & force which his spiritual energy

and zeal inspired. But all other truths he
was aware observed their importance from an
abstract in this great & stupendous fact that
Christ the only begotten Son of God was crucified
for sinners. This forms the most prominent
feature in the Gospel dispensation, the distin-
guishing mark of the Christian's faith, the funda-
mental ground of salvation, all the designs of
mercy which God had intended to manifest
to a sinful world were based upon this
fact. Christ crucified on the cross of Christ, are
terms which comprehend the whole work of redemption
they designate the atoning sacrifice which Christ
has made for the world. His condescension
from the throne of glory & bliss into that of assuming
nature and even the form of a servant, all the
privations he endured all the reproaches & con-
tradiction to which he was subjected all the toil
& labour of his earthly career, his sufferings both
mental & bodily that is to say the sorrows he endured
in his flesh & the agonies he suffered in his soul, all
is closely connected with his crucifixion. But this

is named as of primary importance in as much
as it is the most extreme ^{of all} humiliation to which
Christ was subject, the summit of his suffering,
and the consummation of the reconciliation which
was required. The death of the cross was not
only attended with much pain it was attended
with the utmost shame in as much as it was
so ignominious as to be inflicted only on the greatest
malefactors & slaves. What could be a stronger
token of Divine love as well as of Divine
justice look upon Christ hanging on the
cross covered with wounds & blood and mark
~~what a high & painful low~~ how clearly how low
seen purchased how great the price which
was required, how high ^{& just} God must be to
demand such a satisfaction. Truly sin is so high
its guilt is great indeed but consider likewise
that God himself gave also the sacrifice, he
so loved the world that he gave his only begotten
Son since then you see this doubtless layer
of redeeming & Divine love. The resurrection of
Christ from the dead sheweth so strong a testimony
of his Divine character & his exaltation to the

right hand of God are indeed grand & sub-
lime topics for the Christian's admiration
and contemplation full of comfort to his
anxious soul but then considered on his cruci-
fixion & death, the one was the toil & labour
to procure ^{us} redemption the other the reward and
honour received by the Saviour, the one was the cause
the other the seal of our redemption. By giving up
his body a sacrifice for our sins he paid the price
by rising from the dead & ascending to glory he
proves that the price was accepted. ~~Nothing~~
~~mysterious event the death of Christ on the~~
~~cross as a sacrifice~~

Indeed that both of Scripture turn upon the
doctrine of the cross of Christ, it necessarily proves
the impotence & guilt of man as well as Divine
justice wrath & indignation against sin, as well
nor does it less prove the wisdom & omnipotence
of God in contriving so great & marvellous
a plan for our redemption. ~~That~~ that the whole
point to this important & mysterious event, all the
sacrifices slain on the Jewish altar were typical
of the sacrifice of Christ, and to it they through

it alone they could be of any avail; the prophets
again foretold of Christ as the future Redeemer
and with men a conspiracy indicated
his sufferings & atoning sacrifice, the
deepest humiliation to which he should be
subject, than the reports justly known

~~This doctrine as circulating~~ & however others
might see how some might be a source of this
charge & humiliating to him how others might
be encouraged to excel setting forth some of
their favorite themes, was determined to unshake
his whole knowledge in it; never to grow weary
of it never to recense any other truth as of more
importance but to direct his preaching so that
all might hear on it & flee from it. Mark in this
also the humility of the great Apostle. He was what
we would term a literary character conversant
with the learning of the day, & might have preached
more than any other Apostle of his arguments
but he counts all loss, all of little value compared
with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Not
human wisdom he knew, not elegant language not
pompous oratory will have such an effect as to convert
the sinner. And I believe when I come to you can
not with excellency of speech or of wisdom declaring unto you
the testimony of God."