

JOIN US FOR AN 8-WEEK STUDY OF HTPC'S

First Principles

A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line with a central dot and two pointed ends extending outwards.

SUNDAYS

5:45 - 7:00 PM

SEPTEMBER 13 - NOVEMBER 15

in the fellowship hall

The Power of the Cross

1. Oh, to see the dawn
Of the darkest day:
Christ on the road to Calvary.
Tried by sinful men,
Torn and beaten, then
Nailed to a cross of wood.

Chorus

This, the power of the cross: Christ became sin for us,
Took the blame, bore the wrath: We stand forgiven at the cross.

The Power of the Cross

2. Oh, to see the pain
Written on Your face
Bearing the awesome weight of sin;
Every bitter thought,
Every evil deed
Crowning Your bloodstained brow.

Chorus

This, the power of the cross: Christ became sin for us,
Took the blame, bore the wrath: We stand forgiven at the cross.

The Power of the Cross

3. Now the daylight flees,
Now the ground beneath
Quakes as its Maker bows His head.
Curtain torn in two,
Dead are raised to life;
'Finished!' the victory cry.

Chorus

This, the power of the cross: Christ became sin for us,
Took the blame, bore the wrath: We stand forgiven at the cross.

The Power of the Cross

4. Oh, to see my name
Written in the wounds,
For through Your suffering I am free.
Death is crushed to death,
Life is mine to live,
Won through Your selfless love.

Final Chorus

This, the power of the cross: Son of God, slain for us.
What a love! What a cost! We stand forgiven at the cross.

The Essays/Addresses by Machen

The Mission of the Church. March 1st, 1926 (nine years before Machen was defrocked by this domination)

The Christian View of Missions. May 7, 1933 (four years after starting Westminster Seminary and two years before being defrocked because of his Independent Board of Foreign Missions)

What Is The Church? What is her Task?

- **Church:** Westminster Confession of Faith: “the invisible Church is to be distinguished from the visible Church. The **invisible** Church consists of the whole number of those who are saved; the **visible** Church consists of those who profess the true religion, together with their children.”
- **Task:** Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20): “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”
Intensive and extensive task. Evangelism/Missions and in-depth discipleship.
- **Means:** Word, Prayer, Sacraments. (cf. Great Commission).

What is the church?

(Paragraphs 1-4)

- “There is absolutely no warrant in Scripture for supposing that any particular branch of the visible Church will necessarily be preserved. Always, it is true, there will be a visible Church upon the earth, but any particular Church organization may become so corrupt as to be not a true Church of Christ, but (as the WCF puts it), ‘a synagogue of Satan.’”
- Protestants sometimes fall into a Roman Catholic doctrine of the church Too big to fail; Implicit trust in the church rather than faith in Christ. (Example of a seminary professor: “We’re not liberal; we’re WTS!!”)

Church's Demise; Solution

Paragraphs 4-5

“Indifferentist party” works with “the Modernists.” “Great issue” is concealed.
Translation: Some pragmatic people who want to see “Gospel” advance and want to avoid controversy, get duped by liberals who want to destroy Gospel message. But it all goes buried under the banner of “success.”

Litmus test: **1.** Right message/doctrine? **2.** Corresponding works/fruits of truth, not of deceit?

True Church Unity:

(Paragraph 5-7)

- Many wished for one universal Church organization
 - “A party cannot be recognized as Christian merely because, in a purely external and physical way, it bears the name of Christ; it cannot be recognized as Christian if, in its corporate capacity...it brings forth Satan’s works.”
 - “How hollow is the external unity of committees and boards, and how deep the true unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!”
- Machen believed what the true Church stands for is found in greatest purity in the **Reformed faith**.

A Word on Reformed Creeds

- All creeds subordinate to God's Word. Attempts to summarize biblical teachings.
- Fallible and capable of improvement/change.
- But corporate witness of basic truths. Must have functional role. *"What is true is what is practical."*
- Reformed and Arminian creeds. The challenge. Romans 9:16; 11:5-6.

For what should the true Church stand?

The Apostolic Church

(Paragraphs 8-16)

- Old Testament *Promise*; New Testament *Fulfillment*. (Ceremonial laws, etc.). Christ's death, burial and resurrection according to OT Scriptures = Gospel!

Apostolic “Missions Boards”

That was a great moment in the Antioch Church when the missionaries were sent to Cyprus across the narrow seas and then to the conquest of the world. Those missionaries would no doubt have been coldly received by many modern mission boards. Did they not refuse to work with opponents of the Cross, both within and without the Church? Did not one of them later say: “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”? The idea of sending out a missionary who determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified! The thing would be regarded today as quite preposterous. Such men as Paul and Barnabas, I fear, would hardly have been appointed with much enthusiasm by some modern mission boards... And forth they went across the blue waters of the Mediterranean—humble and despised as the world looks upon such things, but with one possession that made them the mightiest of the children of men, with a gospel without which none, high or low, wise or unwise, could be brought into communion with the holy God.

2nd Century Church

(Paragraph 14)

- NT is a controversial book! Truth in contrast to error. Always. What something is; and also what something is not. “...great Christian utterances come only when men’s souls are stirred.”
- God brought the Church through early conflicts, not through the “instrumentality of theological pacifists, but by the instrumentality of that glorious fighter, the Apostle Paul — The Judaistic doctrine of human merit was kept out...also the pagan sublimation of the resurrection into a mere doctrine of immortality. AUBURN AFFIORMATION.
- **Conflict within the Church**
- **Gnostics** used Christian terminology but, like modernists of Machen’s day, were **opposed to Christianity at its root —**

“Despite the insidiousness of the danger, the **Church was saved**. It was saved **only because** the leaders were **no theological pacifists**, but **mighty contenders** for the faith! Irenaeus wrote his great work against heresies, and Tertullian contended against Marcion, and so the **gospel was preserved...**” Not afraid of controversy. God be endlessly praised for that!

The Reformation

(Paragraphs 18-20)

- “Always there have been pacifists who have endeavored to conceal the issue and to bring about the false peace of compromise. But always there have been some true men who have resolutely refused.” (Ecumenical creeds...Augustine/Pelagian view of sin...the Reformation)
- Gospel preserved in the Church. Reformed creeds: consistent expression of Christianity. Do not desert such a glorious heritage!
- Many voices during the time of the Reformation that counseled compromise. “But, thank God, there were also true men who would not listen to the Tempter’s voice.”

Machen's Context, 1920s

(Paragraphs 21-22)

- Plan of Organic Union would have caused the Church to cease to be Christian in its corporate capacity at all... Auburn Affirmation signed by 1300 ministers... Synod of NY approved the licensing of a minister who refused to affirm the Virgin Birth of Christ... **SOCIAL GOSPEL WAS THE RESULT. TODAY. ALLEGED SHARED DOCTRINAL COMMITMENTS BUT JUMPING STRAIGHT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE GOSPEL CRITICAL THEORY; BLM; Revoice...**)
- Those who avoid controversy are either:
 - not conscious of denying the Bible and Christ; Cross fails to hold central place in their hearts
 - OR they don't yet see how serious the danger is
- “Can they be made to see **in time?** That is the question of all questions... You who belittle controversy... God grant, brethren, that the mists may be dispelled from your eyes, and that you may yet witness in this time of crisis, **before it is too late, for the Lord Jesus Christ.** If you do, then our Presbyterian Church will be saved as a **true Church of Christ**, and will go forth again with **new power for the salvation of the souls of men.**”
- I feel as though it were a crime for us ever to rise from our knees, expect to speak the word that God has given us to speak.”

The Christian View of Missions

- *Also by J. Gresham Machen*
- *Originally a radio address - May 7, 1933*

Characteristics of the early Christian Church

(Paragraphs 1-5)

- It was a **missionary church** - with an urge to carry their message to the ends of the earth.
- Outward facing!! “If Christianity ever settles down to be the religion merely of one nation or of one group of nations, it will have become entirely untrue to the tradition which was established for it at the beginning. There was evidently a tremendous urge among those early Christians to carry their message to the ends of the earth.”

Not a new religion

(Paragraphs 6-10)

1. Old Testament as guide. “From the beginning, Christianity was a religion founded upon a book.” Taught God as holy Creator.

Universal sinfulness of man

(Paragraphs 11-14)

2. Universal sinfulness of mankind. “At the very heart of the real Christian missionary message is the conviction that every individual hearer to whom the missionary goes is in deadly peril, and that unless the message is heeded he is without hope in this world and in the dreadful world that is to come.” That impels biblical missions!

Jesus Christ

(Paragraphs 15-20)

3. Preaching Jesus Christ! As a Savior from divine wrath and from the awful bondage of sin. As the fulfillment of a glorious divine promise, as the culmination of a mighty divine plan shown in God's written Word. His death and resurrection from the dead

- “At the basis of the Christian message...was **not** an exhortation, **but** a gospel; **not** a [social justice] program, **but** a piece of news.” Not mere example. But Savior.

Radically doctrinal

(Paragraphs 21-22)

- “The early Christian church was radically doctrinal. It proclaimed facts; the facts about God the Father, the facts about mankind lost in sin, the facts about Jesus Christ.” Paul in Thessalonians. 3 years.
- The early church [allegedly] proclaimed him as Savior by his atoning death, but he himself we are told, kept himself out of his gospel and preached a simple and universal gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man..” NO! No Jesus v. Paul religion.
- “...those same joys may be ours, and in exactly the same way...”
- *Fundamentalists*. “...has resisted the current of the times and has a faith like unto yours...God may speak to your soul. He may use even my poor words to touch some forgotten chord in your heart and to bring again to your mind the great and precious promises of the holy book. There may even now be one of you who will say: “All my wisdom, all my goodness, all my striving are vain; oh, Lord Jesus, be my Savior now!” THAT IS TRUE MISSIONS! MAYBE THE LORD WILL CALL YOU TO GO AND TELL GOOD NEWS.