10-25-26 Preaching of The Cross

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All right. Good morning. Welcome to our communion service. Those who have never been here before, when we've done this, we make the whole service in remembrance of the Lord, and so we'll do a lot of music, and we will do the elements as we progress through the service. So, well, yesterday was interesting. We had the defending collegiate basketball champions and the defending football champions on the field at the same time in Michigan, and for the longest time, we had a baseball score. So, anyway, it was it was a tough game. I thought I was going to have to get some maize and blue out today, so for Troy and Austin. But anyway, the good guys squeaked one out in an ugly game. But we were talking about through music. I guess we were singing about taking up your cross, and I know that you know sometimes we get hung up on definitions and terminology. You know, we certainly can go back into the Gospels when that was said. But the point that was being made to that song is, we should not be ashamed of going out. And it gives the idea of preaching the cross. And so I think I remind you that First Corinthians 118, when it says, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to unto us which are saved it is the power of God." Right. So the preaching of the cross. So there's times where when that terminology is used, it's the same thing as saying I'm preaching the gospel, but yet Paul would say it's the preaching of the cross. Now, here's where it gets interesting. That would have meant different things at different times in the Bible, right? Deuteronomy 21:22 through 23. It says, "If a man hath committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree. His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day. For he that is hanged is accursed of God. That thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. Later we would see Paul use this idea in Galatians 313 when it says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." But listen to what else he says: "Being made a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" Yesterday's curse is today's redemption. Now, this got me thinking about a book that C.R. Sam has written called "The Twofold Purpose of God." I don't know if any of you have read this before, but he makes a point about anticipating revelation in other places of Scripture, and this is a real fallacy today in Christendom. Right? It's like they say, in acknowledgment of this progressive revelation and some of what Paul had said, they try to push it back and say that it's always been there. It hasn't. Similar to what we just looked at, right? It's this idea of looking back versus looking forward from a passage. Recently, I was asked to come in talk to the women, the women's Bible study. I didn't even have to wear my heels that day; it was great. But they wanted. Rachel said, "I need you to come in, and I just want you to clarify something because a few of the ladies had had an issue with something, and so I did. And it was the idea that about the Old Testament, because we will say when we're looking at the Bible that Genesis one one is in the Old Testament of our Bible, but in reality, the Old Testament did not begin till 2500 years later, and here's what I mean by this. In Hebrews 919 through 21, it says, "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled blood, sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament, 2500 years after Genesis one one, which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. In the same way that in Hebrews 915 through 17, previously in this passage it says, "For this he is the mediator of the new testament," which of course. In our Bible, when we pick it up, we say is Matthew one one. However, listen to this: He's the mediator of the New Testament that by means of death, Jesus didn't die in Matthew one one. I mean, unless

you all got a different Bible than I do. That's not when that happened. We have to realize a couple things here. Now, moving on from that, he says, "For the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, which started with Moses, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also, of necessity, be the death of the testator, for a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise, it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. So, we can look back and say, yes, Genesis one one in what we're looking at in our current Bible today is in a portion of Scripture called the Old Testament, but the Old Testament did not begin until Exodus and Moses. In the same way, we can look at what was called the New Testament in our Bible and realize that it could not have began at Matthew one one because Jesus had not died. Right. This is just a summary, a name to summarize this portion of Scripture. In fact, when the Old Testament was canonized, it was not called the Old Testament because Jesus hadn't died yet. What was it called? The Law and the Prophets. It was called the Scripture. So when you see places in the Bible where it says, "According to the Scriptures," that's what that portion would have been called, because we needed Jesus to die before we could have a New Testament. This is important, and you'll see this moving on because in the Gospel that Paul preaches in First Corinthians 15. Let's just read this. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Now we're going to come back to that phrase just in a second. But before, I think it's important that we see this which I also received. I was reading this book on Paul that I got from Boyce College the other day. I probably got a couple months ago, and anything that's written about Paul, I try to kind of consume. You know, it's interesting to see the different viewpoints. But there was a whole chapter, and they were trying to make sense of the mystery that Paul received. Essentially, saying it was all from Peter over a 15-day period of time. There was good stuff in the first three chapters of the book, and I'm like, "What are we talking about here? You lost me at this chapter." I'm like, "I think I might even write the professor, right?" But anyway, moving on, it's like something like this, which I also received, but yet Paul tells us in Galatians 111 and 12 where he received it from, and it wasn't Peter. In fact, it says, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, which was just summarized in First Corinthians 15, is not after man, for I neither received it of man. Neither was I taught it, but how? By the revelation of Jesus Christ. He tells you how he received it. So in First Corinthians 15, you can understand when he says that which I also received from Revelation, directly from Jesus Christ. This is important: how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried and he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. I think it's important that we do not confuse Paul establishing facts of a historical event with the revelation kept secret before the world began. Remember, First Corinthians 15 is a chapter that deals with resurrection. It's actually known as the resurrection chapter of the Bible, and he goes after these first four verses here starts giving an account of eyewitnesses that saw the resurrected Christ. So the point here is he's establishing that the death, burial, and resurrection is a historical event that can be trusted, because a lot of people where they turn to this and say, "Yeah, but Paul, it says according to the scriptures, Paul is just saying what was already revealed." I'm like, "Well, where do we see Paul's gospel before Paul?" Well, Isaiah 53, and I'm. Like, do we do we see the prophecy of an event, a historical event that's about to take place or will take place in the future, or do we see Paul's gospel? So let's test it. Isaiah 53, starting in verse one, says, "Who hath believed our report?" I'm going to read it first, and then we'll go back through it. Who hath believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, a root out of dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness. And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid it as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions; he

was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. With his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted. Yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and is a sheep before her shears is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Now, we're going to read it again, but with a little context. Isaiah was a prophet to whom Israel. Now, if I read this in that context, would you even think it is Paul's gospel that's being revealed in this? For example, what if we read it like this to make it make more sense? Not changing the King James version, I'm just saying for added flavor text today. What if we read it like this? Who hath believed Israel's report, and Israel is the arm of the Lord revealed. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground, which hath no form nor comeliness. And when Israel shall see him, there is no beauty that Israel should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and Israel hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and Israel esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne Israel's griefs and carried Israel's sorrows. Yet Israel did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for Israel's transgressions; he was bruised for Israel's iniquities. The chastisements of Israel's peace was upon him, and with his stripes Israel are healed. All Israel, like sheep, have gone astray. Israel hath turned every one to his own way. The Lord hath laid him the iniquity of all of Israel. He was oppressed; he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as sheep before her shears is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Would it change anything if you understood the audience? The importance of this is we're basically to a point of downplaying Paul's position and Paul's message as something that was previously revealed, you do not see the fullness of the mystery in that passage. You see the prophecy of an upcoming event, and we will have the benefit of looking back at that event once Paul reveals this mystery that was kept secret, and see that it was that event that allows him to be able to portray the mystery, and that's a big difference. And you may be like, yeah, but you're just kind of, this is a matter of semantics. And I would say it's more than that, because people want to discount that what Paul had to say was different than what was previously said. Now let's look at Luke 1831 through 34. If the 12 would have known this, because it had already been revealed, the full gospel already revealed, supposedly in Isaiah 53, the 12 would have known this. In fact, Jesus quotes Isaiah in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. So Isaiah would have been known. So knowing that, in verse 31 of Luke 18, he took unto him the 12 and said unto them, Behold, we go to Jerusalem. All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, shall be mocked and spitefully entreated, and spitted on. They shall scourge him and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things, and the sayings were hid from them. Neither knew they the things which were spoken, because they should have said, "This is what we've been waiting for.". This is the gospel. In fact, Peter in Matthew 16 says, "Hey, this isn't going to happen. We will stand up. We will not let this happen." And what does Jesus say? Get behind me. Says, "says Get behind me, Satan." But yet, that would have been the path. That would have been the gospel. They should have been embracing the fact that Christ has to come and be buried and rise again, so that we can have eternal life. And in fact, Peter's saying, "We're not going to let that happen." In fact, we get to the day of Pentecost, and Peter's message is, "Ye men who crucified your Messiah." It wasn't good news until Paul. Now listen to some of these verses here, where Paul is going to dictate a time in Romans 321. Listen to these these words that describe time. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Romans 324 through 26, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed through the forbearance of God to declare, I say, at this time. Listen to what Paul is saying here: His righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Galatians 323. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should, afterwards, be revealed, and say, "Well, what is the big difference here?" Because we can look back and say, "Yes, Jesus had to die on

the cross for us to have this today." What I'm saying is, had the principalities known, they never would have crucified the Lord of Glory, the mystery never would have come into fruition. It was kept secret before the world began. That's why Paul consistently says, "My gospel," so that it not be confused. And some elements of this gospel you will not see in that very personalized message to Isaiah or Isaiah to Israel is things like this in Ephesians 216, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, but excuse me by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. One body that was a kept secret before the world began. You don't see that at all in Isaiah. Colossians 120, having made peace through his blood of his cross, and by him to reconcile all things unto himself. By him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. There was never a point in time where Gentiles and the Jews were all going to be brought together in one body, and there would be neither Jew nor Gentile. This was being revealed by the Apostle Paul. There was never anywhere in Scripture even prophesied about an entity called the body of Christ that was revealed through the apostle Paul. So what Paul's revealing in this gospel is, hey, you don't have to be circumcised. You don't have to go through Israel and be a proselyte to get to God, because anybody in Isaiah 53 would have had to if they weren't Israel. You see the difference, and if we just shortchange what Paul's saying to just saying he's just saying what was always there, what he's saying when he says, "According to the scriptures," is he's relating it back to an event that happened that was prophesied about. That wasn't the mystery. Jesus dying on the cross, shedding his blood and rising again. That was not the mystery. It's the effects of that historical event that was kept secret before the world began. So I look at this. What we should not do is read or anticipate mystery in a lot of these older passages in the Old Testament, even in early Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They did not know. It was revealed to the apostle Paul, it is not the same thing. I think it's important that we understand that today it is faith alone and the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is not keeping any of the feasts. I mean, let's not forget Acts chapter two. Everybody says the church started there. These people are all gathered together to keep the day of Pentecost, but I don't hear one preacher saying when they when they do the whole repent, be baptized for remission of your sins, and keep the Jewish feasts. Yet every attendant was keeping a Jewish feast and would have believed that circumcision was necessary. Neither of which are preached. We have to keep things separate. So the reason I want to bring this up is why people want to say, why should we, as the body of Christ, have communion for the Lord's table? I think we have even more reason to do it than we could have had at other periods of time, because we today who are far from God, with no hope in this world, as it talks about in Ephesians chapter two, we we remember that this broken body on the cross and His shed blood on the cross gave us forgiveness and brought us near to God, faith alone in that we should remember that that was given to Paul as he was revealing it to the Corinthians. It's not that we're placing ourselves back under the law, but as often as you do this, do this in remembrance of Him. And so we take a moment like this and we do this to remember what He has given us, specifically in this dispensation of grace.