

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

You Must be Born Again!

“The habit of preachers today is to address their people as though they were all Christians and just need instruction...men and women are being treated as saved who never knew they were lost.” [Lloyd-Jones]

*“In my lifetime I did not care to hear that word that cut me most, and showed me my lost estate aright. I was vexed to hear my sins mentioned, and laid to my charge. I loved him best, who deceived me most; who said, Peace, peace, when there was no such thing.” (Jer. 5:30,31).
[Bunyan, John. A FEW SIGHS FROM HELL]*

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com (blog)

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The Two Great Categories of Men – Just Two

June 9, 2024

Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18

Scripture Reading: John 10:1-21

In our current series of messages from First Corinthians, we have heard the Apostle Paul speak of two kinds of people:

For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1Co 1:18)

Only two. Those who are perishing. And those who are being saved. Right now, throughout the world, there appears to be many, many kinds of people. White people. Brown people. Black people. Asian people. European people. Rich and poor. People of

all kinds of religions and people who claim to have no religion.

But in reality, in God's sight, *there are only two kinds, two categories of people. At this very moment YOU are one or the other.* Either you are perishing and headed for hell, or you are being saved by the power of God and on that Narrow Way to heaven. Two people. Only two. This absolute truth seems self-evident, and yet we easily miss it.

And these two classes of people are divided. Hopelessly and irreparably divided. *What is it, we must ask, that is the cause of this division?* Paul tells us plainly. It is this:

The Word of the Cross. To the one it is foolishness. To the other it is the saving power of God. Christ, in other words, is the root cause of this great separation. And He said it Himself:

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. "For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST

HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it. (Mat 10:34-39)

What do you think of that? This is Jesus, the Son of God, the One in whom we must believe, the One who went to the Cross that we might be saved. But what do you think of Him? What do you think of a Jesus who came with a sword, not to effect peace, but to divide even at the level of family. And do not miss it – this division results in TWO and only TWO classes of people:

- Those who will not take up their cross, die to themselves, and follow Christ,
- Those who lose their life for Christ's sake, and follow Him

Which class are you?

What is it that divides, or rather, Who is it who divides? Christ. The Word of the Cross.

This great divide began long before that Baby was born in Bethlehem, and yet even then He was the cause of it:

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. (Gen 6:5-8)

Two classes of humanity. The one, very, very large – those who were evil and corrupt. The other, very, very small in number, righteous in God's sight. We might put it this way:

- Those who were in the ark
- Those who refused to get in the ark

Which class are you?

John the Baptist highlighted this great divide, speaking of a great harvest to one day be effected by Christ:

"His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Mat 3:12)

Two categories. Only two. That is all. Wheat. And Chaff. Which class are you?

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of

heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast."' But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in

here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen." Mat 22:1-14

Two and only two. Those dressed in the wedding garments of the righteousness of Christ, and that one who was not dressed in a wedding garment. Those at the marriage feast, and those cast out into outer darkness.

Which class are you?

Two men and only two. Always. Only two.

Luk 12:16-21 And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, (17) and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' (18) And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (19) And I will say to

my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” (20) But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ (21) So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Two kinds of men. The rich fool who had no riches toward God. And those in Christ who have that heavenly treasure.

Of which class are you?

Luk 17:28-35 Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, (29) but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all— (30) so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. (31) On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn

back. (32) Remember Lot's wife. (33) Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. (34) I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left. (35) There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.”

Two sleeping. Two grinding. Lot's wife, and Lot. Two kinds of people. Those who are of the earth and look for their life here below, and those who set their eyes on life above. Two. Only two.

Of which class are you?

Luk 18:9-14 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: (10) “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. (11) The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. (12) I fast twice a week;

I give tithes of all that I get.’ (13) But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

How many men went to the temple to pray? TWO. Only two. One trusted in himself that he was righteous. The other confessed his unrighteousness. One left there justified. The other left still dead in his sins.

Which of these two men are you? There are only two. It is one or the other. You are either that self-righteous Pharisee trusting in your own righteousness, or you are that tax-collector looking to God for the mercy you don’t deserve.

Joh 3:16-21 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal

life. (17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (18) Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (19) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. (20) For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. (21) But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

Two classes of men. Those who believe in Christ, and therefore saved, and those who refuse to believe in Him and are under the condemnation of God. Two. Over and over we have it. Just Two.

Which class are you? And what is the Great Divider? The thing which separates and effects this division

between even the closest of kinships? *It is the Word of the Cross which is foolishness to the one and the saving power of God to the other.* Many if not most people who profess religion, even who profess to be Christians, think that such a division is a great evil. They insist that the goal of the church is to unite, not divide. To promote some condition they might call the great brotherhood of man. Examine yourself honestly – is that what you might think? And yet:

2Co 2:14-17 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. (15) For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, (16) **to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.** Who is sufficient for these things? (17) For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

Two responses to the Word of the Cross – to Christ Himself. A fragrance from death to death, to the other the fragrance from life to life. To the one, a stench. A disgusting and foolish thing. To the other the most fragrant aroma of Christ. Two. Only two. A stench. A fragrance. It is one or the other.

1Co 1:23-24 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, (24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Folly or wisdom. It is one or the other. Right now, at this moment, every single one of us are responding to Christ in one of two ways. Two. Only two. There are no other categories of men.

Of which class are you?

Mat 7:24-27 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (25) And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat

on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. (26) And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. (27) And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

The wise man built his house upon the rock. The fool built his house on the sand. The Rock is the Lord Jesus Christ. To build upon Him is to believe the Word of His Cross. The fool’s sand is love of this world, it is insisting upon one’s own righteousness – and it will not hold when the Storm of His judgment comes. Two people. Wise or foolish. Only two foundations possible.

Which one are you?

Mat 25:31-33 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. (32) Before him will be gathered all the nations,

and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left....Mat 25:46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

We are one or the other. Only two possibilities...two classes of men, women, and children. Sheep or goats. On His right or on His left. The one will go into eternal punishment (Hell). The other into eternal life in the New Creation with Christ.

Which category are you? A sheep, or a goat? There are only two. Just two. And Who is the Great Divider of men? The Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of His cross.

Mat 25:1-13 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. (2) **Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.** (3) For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, (4) but the wise took flasks of oil

with their lamps. (5) As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. (6) But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'

(7) Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' (9) But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.'

(10) And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. (11) Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' (12) But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

(13) Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Foolish or wise. Two kinds of people. Those who hear and

believe the Word of the Cross and therefore watch for Christ's return. Who order their lives and priorities upon that sure foundation. And then those fools who are too busy with the affairs of this world to prepare for that Day. Those who enter into the marriage feast, and those who find the door shut to them forever.

Which category are you?

Two groups. Two ultimate classifications of mankind. Those who are being saved, and those who are perishing. And it is the Word of the Cross which separates them.

What is this Word of the Cross? It is simply this:

1Co 1:17-24 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. (18) For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (19) For it is

written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” (20) Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? (21) For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. (22) For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, (23) but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, (24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

own mind. A supposed “good” man or woman who does not need Christ crucified. The thing does not exist. There will be many, many “good” people in hell, because they trusted in themselves and found Christ repugnant to them.

Two kinds. Two classes. On one side or the other. Traveling on Broadway to destruction or in the Narrow Way leading to eternal life. To which do you belong?

There it is. Christ crucified. Christ becoming a curse for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. It is that message which God has ordained to be the Great Divider of men. Wise or foolish. Sheep or goat. In the ark or in the flood. Wheat or tare.

Do not be so foolish as to imagine some third category created in your