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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Philippians 2:5-8
Lesson #13
The Way of the Cross
01/08/2023

Review: Berean's guide to "Social Justice" doctrine and deportment.

- **EXPECTATIONS** should be consistent with broken people in a broken world, awaiting an unrealized, utopian hope.
- **GOD'S IMAGE** should frame our view of all humanity.
- **FAITH NOT FEAR** should govern our choices & conduct.
- **EMPATHETIC LISTENING** should be a vital part of our learning, loving, and leading.
- **THE WAY OF THE CROSS** should dictate our path, priorities, and posture as disciples.



LIKE - Selfless suffering

JESUS - Aliens to this world

- Delayed gratification

1

In the early church, Christians were called "THE WAY".

Acts 24

"14 But this I admit to you, that **according to the Way which they call a sect** I do serve the God of our fathers, ... 22 But Felix, having a more exact **knowledge about the Way**, put them off ..."

Acts 19

"9 But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, **speaking evil of the Way** before the people, ... 23 About that time there occurred no small disturbance **concerning the Way.**"


2

(beliefs)

The **WORD** of the **CROSS**

(behaviors)

The **WAY** of the **CROSS**



What Christ has done **FOR** us

As nouns
Faith, Hope, & Love
are gifts

What Christ does **IN & THROUGH** us



As verbs
Faith, Hope, & Love
are signs.

3

1. The Way of the Cross is defined by CHRIST'S SUFFERING AND DEATH.

The good news is the promise that **we are offered resurrection power in Christ**

which we can experience ONLY as we share in Christ's death.





4

We must take our baptism seriously - both its hope and SACRIFICE.

Romans 6:4

"Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."



5

**Kingdom Power demands that we
GET OUT OF THE WAY.**

Romans 12:1

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

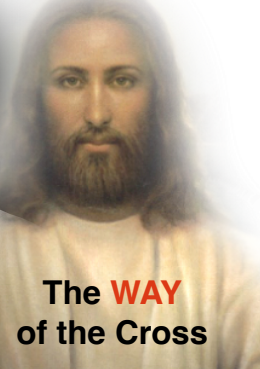
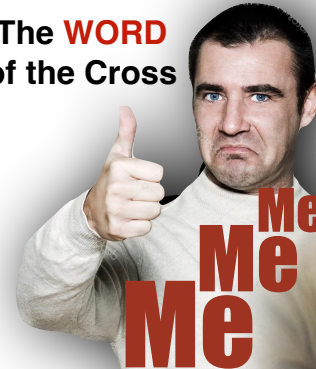
2 Corinthians 12:10

“I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; **for when I am weak, then I am strong.**”

6

Me ssiah

The **WORD**
of the Cross



7

**2. The Way of the Cross stands in
OPPOSITION TO THE WORLD.**

Romans 12:2

“And **do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect (complete).”

Discipleship is a choice to embrace a mind set

that will reveal the
**WAY of the
Cross.**



and mock the
**Values of
This World**

8

**If you want to acquire wealth, fame,
and power in this life avoid:**

1. Negativity
2. Dream killers
3. Losers
4. **The teaching and example of Jesus and his Apostles**



9

How does America measure success?

- ✓ **Competition** separates the winners & losers.
- ✓ **Rewards** go to the winners not the losers.
- ✓ **Winning** is the result of our performance.
- ✓ **Associations** determine success.
- ✓ **Net worth** defines self worth.
- ✓ **Optics** are most important.



**How successful were
Jesus and his disciples?**

10



Many love Jesus,
but only as a **means**
to the “good life”,
not as the **model**
of that life.

**Jesus is
NOT**

“Chaplain of
the American
Dream”

11

God's gifts can become idols.

America's "original sin" may be our

LIBERTY



Israel's Golden Calf can become America's "Bull of Wall Street".



12

American values that can affect the church

1. **God will save me with my plans, toys, and crutches.**
2. **Growth and size define success and blessing.**
3. **If it produces tangible results it's of God.**
4. **God's plan is for my personal happiness.**
5. **Competition makes everything better.**



13

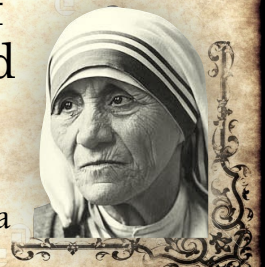
1 Corinthians 4

"8 You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; ... 9 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles **last of all**, as men **condemned to death**; because we have become **a spectacle to the world**, both to angels and to men. 10 We are **fools for Christ's sake**, but you are prudent in Christ; we are **weak**, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are **without honor**. 11 To this present hour we are both **hungry and thirsty**, and are **poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless**; 12 and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are **reviled**, we bless; when we are **persecuted**, we endure; 13 when we are **slandered**, we try to conciliate; we have become as the **scum of the world**, the **dregs of all things**, even until now."

14

"To decide that a child must die so that you may live as you wish is the essence of an impoverished soul."

Mother Teresa



15

3. The Way of the Cross works through **WORLDLY WEAKNESS**



16

Jesus' Incarnation, target audience, choice of disciples, crucifixion, and call to a life of selfless service are **consistent.**



17

Matthew 26

“52 ...“Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that **I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?**”

1 Corinthians 1

“26 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 **but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise,** and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,”



As a powerful woman, how do you respond to those who say that women are not free to be ordained in the Catholic Church?

“Power in the Kingdom of God is love. I don’t need a position or a title to exercise that power.”

Agnes Mary Donovan
Superior General, Sisters of Life



Jesus’ shunned

**the political,
economic, military,
and cultural spheres
of power.**

***His power was displayed
through worldly weakness.***

***The growth of Christianity
has left many historians puzzled.***

- **Its founder was a failure** in the world’s eye.
- **He attracted “have-nots”** and did not change their circumstances or status.
- **His followers celebrated his death** more than his life.
- **His followers were called to die to themselves,** following his example.
- **His followers were promised more (not less) suffering** in this life.
- **His followers got no time off** for good behavior.

**4. The *Way of the Cross* calls for
*DELAYED GRATIFICATION.***

2 Corinthians 4

“6 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though **our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.** 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us **an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,** 18 while **we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen;** for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

**5. The *Way of the Cross* is tied to the
*NEW COVENANT***

**We too often
claim “Old
Covenant”
promises
for this life and “New
Covenant”
expectations
for the next
life.**



Spiritual warfare in the Corinthian church

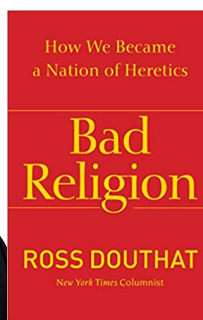
They were called to be a thermostat, not a thermometer.

They welcomed the Word but not the Way of the Cross



24

As Messiah, Jesus did not take a stand against the evil of the Roman Empire. What he did was go after the religious community for its hypocrisy.



Paul does the same thing in Romans 2 and is passive in resisting civic injustice in Romans 13.

25

The deepest longings of our heart will not be satisfied by looking to our outer circumstances.

Christ came to save our soul not our plans.

Christ calls us to a cross before a crown.

"If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied." 1 Cor.15:19

2 Corinthians 13:4

"For indeed **He was crucified because of weakness**, yet He lives because of the power of God. For **we also are weak in Him**, yet we shall live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you."

26

The Apostle Peter's testimony

Peter (before Pentecost)

Matt. 14:30

"But seeing the wind, he became **afraid**,"

16:22

"And Peter took him (Jesus) aside and began to **rebuke** Him,"

Jn. 18:10

"Simon Peter then, having a **sword**, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear;"

Matt. 19:27

"we have left everything and followed you; what then will there be **for us**?"

26:33

"Even though all may fall away because of You, **I will never** fall away." **Vs. 74** "Then he began to **curse** and swear, 'I do not know the man!'"

Peter (after Pentecost)

1 Pet. 1:14

"As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your **ignorance**."

2:13

"**Submit** yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution,"

3:15

"make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with **gentleness and reverence**;"

4:13

"but to the degree that you share the **sufferings** of Christ, keep on **rejoicing**;"

27

Philippians 2

"5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who although He existed in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped**, 7 **but emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond servant, and being made in the likeness of men 8. . . **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**"

The WAY OF THE CROSS!

28

A Berean's look at ...



29