

Albert Sheppelbaum - Crucified With Christ

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Of hearing Brother Albert Schuckelbaum for the Chicago Ecclesia, and a very important subject for all of us as we consider our Christian walk and what it means to us. The title of this subject. Crucified with Christ. Crucified with Christ.

Thank you, Brother Grice.

Sister Schapelbaum and I have been looking forward to the opportunity of meeting with you at convention. First of all, we want to bring you the love from your brethren in Chicago, and we happen to be talking to Brother Newell Friday evening, and he said to bring his love and Sister Terry's love to the brethren here. We're happy to do that.

As has been announced, the Lord directed us to use the subject of crucified with Christ, and our opening text is found in Galatians 2 and the 20th. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.

Now, the Apostle Paul is not speaking of literal crucifixion on a literal cross, because he is here saying that he is being crucified, and yet he is living.

In First Corinthians 15:31, the apostle tells us that I die daily.

He's speaking about his own experience, or the dialogue rendering of this expression is, I am dying daily. So that it could not be a literal crucifixion.

In Romans the eighth chapter, beginning with the 36th verse, we want to. Or going back even to the 31st verse, we want to consider some of the verses here in Romans 8. In the eighth chapter, the apostle repeatedly reminds us of God's love for his people, leading up to the question that is to assure us of our final victory. In verse 31, we read, if God be for us, who can be against us?

So he continues to assure us even further. In the 35th verse, we read, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril or sword, and then in the 36th verse, we read, we are killed all the day long.

So the apostle is here bringing to our attention that our Christian life is a warfare, and that we should expect under the heavenly Father's providences that we would get a variety of experiences suited to our development as new creatures in Christ, and these experiences would consist of tribulation, distress, persecution. The apostle even mentions famine. You know, the brethren like to quote the text, that our bread and water is assured and that the Lord's people would never lack bread and water, nothing else, just bread and water. But here the apostle mentions famine and nakedness and peril and sword, so that a variety of experiences, according to the apostle, are necessary for us as new creatures in Christ Jesus to test and to prepare us as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

In the 37th verse we read, nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Now here we are given the secret of success.

Because if we were to depend on our own wisdom, ability, our own resources, but if we were to get into distressing experiences, it is likely that we would fail. It is likely that we become discouraged.

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It's likely that we would say, it's more than I can bear.

But it's by or through the Lord's help, direction and provision for us that we're able to continue on even through these adversities. Learning the lessons that the Lord has for us, I often think, and I think it's a good thing for all of us to reflect back on when we first for considering consecration and all of us when we approached consecration, felt for the Lord is showing to me the possibility of running for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus that if I am faithful during the present life, I will be given the same nature as our Lord Jesus and our Heavenly Father, and the natural reaction was, well, that's too much. You know, I don't deserve anything like this.

There may be some that might be worthy, but not me. Not me. This is just too much, and I think that this is a proper condition of heart and mind that we need to keep through all of our Christian course in order to reach the state of mind where we feel, oh, I am deserving, I am worthy, and it is only a matter of time when the Lord will grant it to me. I think the our first love was due to appreciation of our own weaknesses and imperfections and the glorious prospect that the Lord had set before our mental vision and that we realized then that if we were to make a successful sacrifice to the Lord, it wasn't because of what we possessed.

It was only through the merit of our dear Redeemer that our Lord would accept our sacrifice and that our walk from day to day would not be solely because of our own wisdom, our selection of our experiences, and our ability to follow the Lord by our own ability or knowledge or wisdom, but rather it would be by his grace, and it's necessary for us to continue through all of our Christian course by his grace and that only and so the Lord is selecting for us our experiences those that we individually need to develop in you and in me, a Christlike character.

The truth of the matter is that none of us really appreciated our own weaknesses at the beginning of the course. As we go along in a narrow way, we learn gradually that we have weaknesses and to a greater degree than we realize in years gone by, and I think the Lord has done this in love for us. Because I personally think that if the Lord, at the beginning, when I was approaching the Lord, if He had shown to me all of my weaknesses at one time, I don't think I would have progressed any further, and I think this is true of all of us.

He only lets or gives us to understand our weaknesses as we develop, as we're able to handle this, as we're able to appreciate, in contrast to his love and provision for us. Because only to look at our weaknesses and not to have anything to contrast it with would be too much for any of us. We wouldn't be able to begin to walk in the narrow way, nor could we continue on in the narrow way merely looking at our own weaknesses. It's necessary for us to look to the Lord and His wisdom, his direction, his provision in all of our life's affairs. I'm reminded often of an experience that a sister mentioned.

This is years ago at the chautauqua, prior to one of the chautauqua conventions.

There was a windstorm, and the sister was under the tree and a branch broke off and fell near her, and someone nearby said, you're lucky that that branch didn't fall on your head, and she said, there is no such thing as luck with the Lord's people.

That isn't a proper term. It's the Lord's providence. The Lord so directed it that it didn't fall on my head. But it wasn't a matter of luck, and so I think that this is true of every experience in life of the Lord's people.

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There is no such thing as you had good luck or you had bad luck. It was Providence. Providence permitted this experience, or Providence withheld that experience, but not luck. Nothing happens to us that the Lord does not permit.

That every step of our way is directed by the Lord, all for our highest spiritual good. Now, these experiences that are described as cross bearing, we read of this in Luke 14:27, and our Lord Jesus said, whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. So cross bearing is being, God forbid, will under unfavorable circumstances, unfavorable conditions when doing the Lord's will may bring trials or opposition or some other unfavorable circumstance. But in our endeavor to do Lord's will, even though we can foresee the adverse reaction, we continue on.

Because this is what the Lord wants me to do, and it isn't easy. The natural tendency would be, I can see what would happen, and I'm too smart for it. I'm going to avoid it. But that is not doing the Lord's will. That is doing our own will.

That is doing just the opposite of what the Lord wants us to do, because we're all capable of it, and sometimes I think that it may be true of most of us that we do that to some degree that we do. We see the Lord's will for us, we recognize that this is right. But because of circumstances, we say, well, no, that's carrying it a little too far. I won't go that far.

I won't permit this to happen, and of course, the human mind can justify anything. We see this so pointedly in the world today. They justify any course of action, and they call it good, and the Lord's people can do the same thing if they would permit.

They can justify any course of action, any viewpoint can be justified.

And this is not always pleasing to the Lord. Because the Lord has not told us to believe anything we wanted to. We can't insist, or we shouldn't insist that each one believe as I do. Nor should we insist that everyone do as I do. The only thing we can do is to point out to others what we believe is the Lord's will for all of us that are endeavoring to do what is pleasing and acceptable to him.

And then each one, according to their appreciation, applies this, applies this in part, or applies this in full. Each one, according to their individual appreciation or determination or zeal in doing the Lord's will, for some part is sufficient. They've done their duty. Others want to do the Lord's will to the full extent. Part is not enough is not satisfactory, but each one must apply it.

But the Lord has not given us the privilege of selecting what we are to do, what we are to believe. He's given us very specific instructions as to what his will is for his people, what his doctrines are for his people.

The Apostle Paul had the same problem. Through his experiences there was a diversity of doctrines, and the Apostle Paul, we believe, was directed by the Lord in all that he taught and in all that he instructed the church, and at times he became very pointed in his opposition. You recall the time when Peter withdrew from The Gentiles.

He would meet with the Gentiles. Peter was an apostle selected by our Lord, and yet when Paul realized that he was not doing correctly, that his position was really contradictory to what it should be, Paul didn't hesitate to tell Peter that he was wrong. He did it in a nice way, but he didn't hesitate to tell him that's wrong. If you as a Jew live as the Gentiles, why would you make the Gentiles live as the Jews?

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That is wrong.

We can only according to the Lord's direction. For us, we're to believe what the Lord wants us to believe, and we've been given down at the end of this age. A complete plan for human salvation. The Lord hasn't given us everything.

You know, we can ask a lot of questions that none of the present can answer, and the Lord has deliberately withheld this information because he knew human nature perhaps better than we do. You know, if he gave us a lot of information perhaps about Jesus experiences as a young man, how many discourses would the brethren give on Jesus life up to 30 years of age? But he didn't want us to dwell on this, so he gave us a void, and anybody that speaks about Jesus youth up to 30 years, he has to speculate largely.

There are only two or three incidents that they can refer to and after that they have to fill in with speculation.

He could have given us as sometimes the brethren bring up the resurrection work. How will it take place? A lot of detail the brethren would like, and the Lord hasn't given us a lot of detail about how this will take place because we'd spend a lot of time on that also, if we had the information to work with, we would spend a lot of time on it. The Lord doesn't want us to get into that.

We have sufficient in the divine plan of the ages, all that we need to make our calling and election sure. They're sufficient there for our heads and our hearts and to enable us to stand against all the various ideas not only in the world, but also among the brethren.

I guess this has been true of the truth movement for many years, because I remember very distinctly years ago when I was coming into the truth and we would at Chautauqua. Brother Wilson would quite often say at that time, I'm going back now. What is that? 35 years?

Would use an expression that stuck to me. It was an illustration. He said, you know, Bible students are like Heinz products, 57 varieties.

And that was back there.

And so apparently it hasn't changed much. The varieties are a little different today than they were then, and I don't know whether we have exactly 57 or not. But we have a lot of varieties of brethren, and as you go from group to group, one is right and the other one is even more so.

And so they can't meet together because this one is not straight on this and that one isn't straight on that, and they can't even get together to study with one another, to help each other, encourage each other along the narrow way. I know that there are. I'm not saying by this that I believe that divisions should never take place. Because the Apostle Paul tells us that divisions are necessary, that they would take place.

And under certain circumstances, I think it's the only thing to do. But I'm also inclined to think that in our day some divisions are not necessary. I don't think that the Apostle Paul would approve all the divisions that have taken place. But they continue regardless of whether we approve them or not. Brethren feel that strong enough about different points, feel that they should not mute with one another.

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But these are tests upon us. The Lord foreknew and through the Apostle Paul had indicated that those experiences would come to us to test each and every one, regardless of which side we're on, whether we're of those who stay or those who leave. There's a test upon us as to whether we're trying to follow the Lord's leading, trying to copy his spirit, or whether we're doing that from a party spirit, a sectarian spirit. Whether it's pride that's motivating us or whether it's love for the Lord and His truth. Only.

This, of course, can only be answered by those who are involved. Why? Why do I stay? Why do I leave? And in either case, it is an individual matter.

We can't answer for others as to why they do it. The bearing of the cross, cost bearing, doing our Heavenly Father's will is perhaps. You know, we like to think that perhaps the trials are greater in our day than they've ever been. But I don't think this is so. I think what makes the trials today more severe is because it's on us.

You know, we're involved. So it's the greatest trial that has ever confronted the Church because it affects me. But I think that this has been true of brethren in the past. They've had similar trials, similar difficulties, similar tests, along basically the same lines as to whether this is true or not true. Whether I should continue meeting with the brethren or I should not. One grower reminded us a short time ago, he said, well, you know, a lot of the Brethren are expecting.

They're waiting for persecution from Jezebel, from Bread and all down through the harvest period of then expecting persecution from Jezebel, and he said, well, you know, I haven't had any persecution from Jezebel, but I have had some from the Brethren.

So we are down towards the end of the age when our difficulties and trials are not so much from the outside, at least at the time being. I don't know what the future holds, what experiences are ahead of us, but at the present time, the world chooses to ignore us, and whatever we may do in the way of witness work, they either don't permit us to do it or if we do it, they just turn their head and that's all there is to it. They don't. Very rarely do we get a response from someone that's very derogatory.

We do get that in the mail occasionally where someone really takes us to task for being so ignorant and misleading others and so on. But it's through the mail. We rarely run into someone personally that runs us down that badly. But it does happen occasionally. There are those who feel very strong that the truth is anything but the truth, and they're willing to express themselves to that effect.

We believe that the world or even the nominal Christians are not bearing the cross in any sense of the word, but they are not serving the Lord. They are not serving the Lord in the sense of having come into a relationship with him through full consecration, and that the Lord is accepted, their consecration through a begetting them to the divine nature, and that now they are being prepared as members of the body of Christ, and that they, in order to prove to develop, they must pass through all these experiences, these adversities, these problems faithfully. Now the Lord is developing in us a character that would be in full conformity to his and that of his dear Redeemer.

You know, our Redeemer prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane that they may be one for which us as I with Thee, one not only to have the divine nature, but to be one in purpose, in objective.

And this is difficult for us because we tend towards earthly things, and the Lord is trying to teach us through the varied experiences to wean us away from the earthly, and we have the Heavenly

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Father's viewpoint, as was brought to our attention this morning. Our Heavenly Father has the objective of eventually making all of his intelligent creatures 1. Under the figure of the pyramid, our Lord, the topstone and everyone else coming in conformity, in character, likeness, being in one, in thought and purpose and desire.

Now, of course, this does not come naturally to us, and the Lord is teaching us through these experiences, and sometimes they're very repetitive to teach us that the only thing that he wants from us is that we would have his viewpoint, that we would do his will completely. Our Lord is an example of one who fully wanted to do the Heavenly Father's will. He wanted to do it without reservation, contrary to his natural preferences, contrary to anything that he might think of.

His only intent was in doing to the Heavenly Father's will. I was wondering if it may not be a help to us. It has been to me to think of why is the Lord testing us so thoroughly in having our will so fully submerged into his will.

And that is, we believe, as has been suggested many times, that the divine nature is life within itself. It's a being that cannot be destroyed.

So anyone who is given the divine nature would continue on throughout eternity, and even the Lord would not be able to destroy them. They would have life within themselves, not dependent upon the Father, nor the Son, nor anyone else, nor circumstances. They would have life within themselves, and they would continue on into eternity.

The Lord is preparing us so that we would be so thoroughly in harmony with him, so desirous of doing his work, will, even under adverse circumstances, and of course, this test, you know, if everything was serene, everything was compatible to doing the Lord's will, it wouldn't be difficult. Most of us would be able to fall in doing the right thing if. If it were the easy thing to do, and we'd be successful. The difficulty is that there are attractions of all kinds.

Our natural tendencies draw away from doing the Heavenly Father's will. All sorts of pressures are put upon us to draw us away from doing the Father's will only, and so it's necessary that we continually hold to the Lord as closely as we possibly can in meditation, study and prayer, and to realize, I think it's necessary to realize our own unworthiness of all this. To realize and to keep this before our mind.

I don't deserve it. But by the Lord's grace, I will endeavor to do his will to the extent that I can, and we'll all fail, we know that. But then we have an advocate that we come to, to ask for his forgiveness, to intercede for us that we might be given another day in which we might try again to do our Heavenly Father's will of our Lord Jesus. We read in Hebrews 12 and 3.

And we like to read the Wemus rendering. Who endured such hostility directed against him by sinners.

Now, if you can imagine the position of our dear Redeemer, as we were told this morning, he was the one who created all. As the Heavenly Father's agent. He created the universe, the earth, everything we see about us. He created humanity, and he came here to die for Adam's children.

He who had given humanity everything they had, plus their life, and he was going to lay down his life that they may have life even more abundant.

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Received hostility, ridicule, and eventually crucifixion, literal crucifixion, and under those circumstances, some of us would be inclined to resort to righteous indignation. It's wrong. This isn't right. After all I've done for him and what I'm doing for him now.

And what are they doing? They're persecuting me and they're going to crucify me.

But our Lord Jesus didn't look at it from this standpoint. He looked at it as doing His Father's will. His Father wanted him to go through these experiences, even the death on the cross, and so he willingly accepted this as from his Father and not from the scribes and Pharisees. They were incidental to the arrangement.

The Lord was merely permitting them to do this.

But our Heavenly Father was directing it. He was the one that had decided that these were the experiences that our Redeemer would go through.

The Apostle Paul speaks about his own difficulties in doing the Father's will in his cross bearing, and we'd like to read a few verses out of the seventh chapter of Romans, and we'll again read it from the Weymouth's rendering.

I find therefore this rule that when I desire to do what is right, evil is there with me in my inmost self. All my sympathy is with the law of God. But I discover in my faculties a different law at war with the law of my understanding and leading me captive to the law which is in my faculties, the law of sin. Unhappy man that I am. Who will rescue me from this body of death?

God, to whom be thanks? Through Christ Jesus our Lord. So then I myself serve with my understanding the law of God, but with my lower nature the law of sin. So here the Apostle Paul tells us that he had a conflict, a personal conflict, that though he wanted to, with all his understanding, with all his heart, he wanted to do the Lord's will. But he found that he had another problem.

There was a problem of his own human nature entering in and being contrary to doing the Father's will, and so he had to continually ask for the Lord's grace and strength, realizing all the while that he would come short, that even his best endeavors would be imperfect.

And so it's necessary for us to prove, as it was in the case of our dear Redeemer, to prove our love and loyalty to the Lord under adverse circumstances before we can be worthy to receive the Divine nature. We read in Hebrews 5:8, 9 of our Lord, though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him. So here we're told that our Redeemer, who was always in full harmony with His Heavenly Father, had always done His Father's will, and that there was never any instance that he didn't want to do His Father's will, or that he wanted to do his own will, but rather that he was always obedient to His Heavenly Father. But when he took on human form, our Heavenly Father required of him that he learn obedience not under preferable circumstances, under easy circumstances, but rather under adverse circumstances, that he would prove to His Heavenly Father that He would be willing to do his will under trial, persecution, and even death.

And that in this way he would be proved worthy to receive the Divine nature, and because he was faithful, he has opened the way for us, and he, as our High Priest, is able to sympathize with our difficulties, with our inabilities, to always fully live up to what we like to do, that we come short in

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doing our Heavenly Father's will.

At consecration, we promised the Lord that we would always endeavor by his grace to do his will to the best of our ability. They were really saying that we would be willing excuse me, that we would be willing to bear our cross regardless of the circumstances, regardless of the experiences that come to us. In Luke 9:23, we read, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me, denying our own preferences, our own wills, our own aims, our own ambitions, and doing only our Heavenly Father's will, and so we must learn as to what is our Father's will, and then as we learn it, we must endeavor by his grace to do it to the extent of our ability.

And we must continually be on the lookout as to what is my Father's will for me today, what is my Father's will for me in this circumstance? And am I learning the lesson that he intends? Am I mainly concerned in doing his will and his will alone. Am I taking up my cross and following him? Am I really offering up my sacrifice that I had promised to him regardless of the natural disappointments or difficulties that it might lead us?

And each one has different experiences at different times in their lives, and each one must depend upon our Heavenly Father and upon our Redeemer and advocate for that strength and help to carry us through.

If you forgive a personal experience. When I came into the truth, I'm not inclined to be a leader by nature. I'm not the kind of person that said, I'm going to lead the way. Who wants to follow? This is not in my makeup.

So when I came into the truth, I was looking for a leader.

I don't know if I ever told anyone this, but in my mind I was casting around for a leader. Someone who I could look up to, someone who would sort of set the pace for me and would help me along the way.

But I never found one, and it was only through very difficult experiences that I learned that the Lord didn't want me to have someone whom I would have as my leader here on earth among the brethren. The Lord wanted me to stand on my own, my personal relationship to him, and it wasn't dependent on whether brethren approved or disapproved. It was just a relationship between me and Him.

It was a hard lesson to learn, but as I look back, it was the lesson I had to learn but the hard way. So we thank the Lord for all of his experiences to learn that our consecration was to him, that our devotion was to him and that we would endeavor to do his will rather than follow anyone or any group of brethren, but rather realize that we have an advocate that we come to for the necessary strength and encouragement and direction, and this is not possible at the very beginning of the way. All of us need some help and encouragement at the beginning from others. In fact, we need it all the way through our Christian course.

I'm not trying to suggest here that we become individuals and that we have a class of one or two. But I think that what I'm trying to say is that we all must reach the point where we're able to draw the strength, the courage, the necessary, whatever we need for our spiritual growth and development. We draw that from the Lord's word and from our Lord personally, and that we don't depend on brethren for this. Brethren can be a great help.

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They've been a great help to me, and they continue to be a great help to me. I appreciate the fellowship with the brethren I never tire of meeting with the brethren, even those whom I've never met before. I appreciate meeting new brethren and I draw encouragement and help from brethren whom I've never met before in the way they meet their experiences and their understanding of the truth and their dependence upon the Lord. All of this is an encouragement to me, but it isn't that I depend on them solely and that I would feel that I can't continue on unless I received it from them. But the Lord in his mercy has provided, provided all that I need.

And he's promised to provide all that each and every one of you need for your development as new creatures in Christ. We have all received a comprehensive understanding of the divine plan, and I believe the reason it is given at this end of the age is because of all the confusion, the diversity of opinions that are existent and that without the truth we would not be able to continue on, that we would become confused and discouraged and would give up. But the Lord has opened our mental vision to understand the divine plan of the ages through Brother La Soul. You know, we'd like to think sometimes, sometimes there is that temptation to say, you know, I studied this out.

I worked on this a while with concordance and Bible, and I worked this all out and now I come to an understanding of the divine plan of the ages. Now, very honestly, brethren, I don't think this is true of any of us. In fact, I have never met anyone who came to an understanding of the divine plan of the ages who had no contact with brethren whatsoever. I didn't hear of anyone here nor old that has ever been able to come to an understanding of the divine plan of the ages other than either directly or indirectly, they had contact with Bella Russell and his writings. So it's an exclusive group that we're a part of and we received it from one source.

Whether we want to admit it or not, that's up to us individually. But no one understands the divine plan of the ages who knows nothing about God. Russell never heard of any of his writings, has never talked to anyone who has read his writings. They do not understand it. If they do, I never heard of him and I've never heard of anybody talk about that person or persons.

So the Lord has provided amply for us, promised to lead us to the very end of our Christian course through sickness and sin, through trials and blessings, and, you know, there's a balance. You know, the Lord doesn't give us all trials because most of us would crumble if we had all trials. You know, after a while we'd get too depressed and we'd say, well, now I can't continue on. So he balances off.

He gives us trials and blessings and trials and blessings, and encourages on step by step, closer to the goal of developing the Christlike character, and may the Lord add his blessing.

Thank you, Brother Shovelbaum. I think there were some very sobering things for us to think about in that very much in harmony with this theme that we have chosen for the convention of sowing to the Spirit so that we can reap of the Spirit life everlasting, and some good things for us to think about, I think, in connection with this and in harmony with all that we've been considering here today, and I think it's been a very practical lesson for us living with each other as we go through our Christian walk.

A few announcements prior to dismissing for.