

Essential Doctrines for OAP ©

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Alright last hour we talked about the theology of the Cross. Bill wanted me to talk this hour about the theology of preaching and as I was thinking about that, I thought it best to focus on what we should be preaching while we're out on the streets.

Now, to start we know we should be bringing the Law to the proud and grace to the humble. We know that. We all cut our teeth on that, most of us in this room come from similar evangelism circles, or our circles intertwine, they're linked together in many different ways, and we know we should be preaching the Law of God out there. We know we should be bringing people to the knowledge of their sin.

We know we should be preaching sin, righteousness, and the coming Judgment. We know we should be preaching that, and we do. But there's a problem though, I think anyways in my puny cranium, from my own observations over the years. We've gotten so good at preaching the Law, that we really forget to preach Christ sometimes.

Now, some of you in the room, and I look around and I won't embarrass you by name, but some of you are open air preachers that I highly respect, highly look up to; I mean, you've forgotten more than I know about open air preaching. So in some sense I'm going to be preaching to the quire, maybe I'm going to be preaching to the choir to all of you? And the reason I say "some," is just because I just don't know all of you, I haven't heard you all open air preach.

But we have plenty of Law and plenty of calling people to repent and believe, but we are not preaching enough about Christ and Him crucified. We're not. We're not. Listen to a forty minute open-air, or a fifteen minute open-air, or a twenty minute open-air, and you're going to hear two thirds to three fourths Law, or Law and apologetic, or Law and wrangling with a heckler; and the Gospel is almost gonna come across as an *oh by the way*.

I got to tell you this truth. Our preaching should start with Christ. The preaching of the Law should include Christ. And obviously in our preaching of the Gospel we should be all about Christ.

Those of us that have been open air preaching, we know that preaching the Law will draw a crowd. Preaching the Law, calling people on their sin, pointing a finger at somebody, "Hey you, what do you think about that? Yeah I saw where you were looking just a few minutes ago!" That's going to draw a crowd. Easy, in fact, to get someone angry at ya. But if you watch closely, it's not the preaching of the Law that disperses people, although they're offended, and they're angered by it, and they can't wait to take you on; it's not the preaching of the Law that disperses a crowd, it's the preaching of Christ.

The moment you mention the Name of Christ is when the cockroaches scatter like they do at a dirty kitchen when the light's turned on! It's not with the preaching of the Law. It's not when you're talking about other religions. 'Cause darkness loves darkness. It's when you mention the Name of Christ.

I haven't done it in a while, but something I used to do when I transition from the Law to the Gospel I would pause and I would say, "Look, I'm about to mention a Name that most of you, if not all of you hate. In fact you hate this Person so much that as soon as I mention His Name you're going to leave, some of you are going to leave. You're almost going to run. So look to your right, look to your left, look who's around you; either you or a person next to you is going to be gone in the next few seconds." And then I mention the Name of Christ.

Two things happen, either a person does stomp off and march away knowing they're walking away because they hate Christ; or they hate Christ and stay because they don't want the open air preacher to have the best of them and then they hear the Gospel. Either way it's a win!

But we need to spend more time exalting, lifting up, preaching Christ and His Cross. Our preaching of the Gospel shouldn't be a hit and run. It shouldn't be something that simply ends our presentation that we're doing on the box. We shouldn't be hiding who we are so that we can keep them there until we get to the Gospel. They should know from the minute we step up on that box who we represent. They should know from the minute we step up there who it is that we represent and who we don't.

It's not enough to say "I represent Jesus" anymore. It's not enough! Because there are too many different Jesus" out there.

There's the Mormon Jesus who is the spirit brother of Lucifer. The Mormon's will say that Jesus is the savior of the world, but you gotta know their language. When they say he's the savior of the world, they mean only this world. There are other gods who are saviors of other worlds, and they will one day be the savior of their own world! If they attain that celestial realm.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus is a created being too: Michael the archangel, who's only mentioned four or five times in all of Scripture.

The Roman Catholics, we've already talked about that. They believe much that is true about Jesus, they believe in the virgin birth, they believe in His sinless perfection, they believe He's the Son of God, they believe He died on the Cross, they believe He rose from the grave, and they undermine all of that through the blasphemy of the Mass. And through the worship of Mary and saints and other vestiges.

The Muslims, they believe in a Jesus; they believe he's a good prophet, second to Mohammed. When it was Jesus who created Mohammed, and before Whom Mohammed stood to give an account for creating a blasphemous religion against the one true God.

They have to know that we represent the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. The sinless Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world and the Lion of the tribe of Judah who will return to Judge both the living and the dead.

They have to know that we represent Jesus Christ, who was with the Father in Creation. All things were created by Him and through Him and for Him; nothing has ever been made that was not made by Jesus Christ! And He will either be their Savior or their Judge. We should be making declarations like that when we start preaching.

Any herald of the king began by announcing which king he represented. He didn't go on with a list of the king's rules and edicts without identifying the king. Oh, and they spend an hour heralding to an enemy, or heralding to a village that the king is about to take over; they didn't spend forty or forty five minutes talking about what the king was going to do and what the king expected of them and what would happen to them if they didn't obey the king, and then in the last two sentences say, "Oh, by the way, this is the king." They began by announcing who they represent, because that's where their authority comes from.

Just as we talked about last hour, that great commission begins with Jesus declaring "all authority has been given to me, therefore go." Sometimes I think we're afraid to do that, 'cause we're afraid our open-air's going to end before it starts. 'Cause we're more concerned about how many people will gather around to hear us make a fool out of ourselves, that we will set aside the proclamation of our King until the end, so that we had all the time we want up on that box.

I could say that, I had to come to terms with that. 'Cause that's where my preaching was going. Now I try to begin every open-air after I say my name and the church I represent, I declare my King. And I would suggest you do that too. Not the way I do it, not the way someone else does it; but your King! You know your King right! You know Christ. You don't have to write out a long script about who your King is. You know your King! You know your King intimately. You're in His court. You're one of His beloved children. Your King has adopted you as a son or a daughter, you know your King. So tell the world Who you represent. That's part of counting the cost.

Sometimes I think our open air preaching can be, and I would say unintentionally for those of us who are truly seeking to glorify the King, and I would say that's this group here ... we're going to see open air preaching this weekend, by people who are not there to glorify the King; they are there to glorify themselves. And they will do it at the King's expense; because ultimately they don't love Jesus and they don't love people, they love themselves. We're going to see that, but that's not us. We represent the King, we love our King. But sometimes I think that we can be so caught up in our own preaching that Jesus and the Gospel is relegated to a means to an end. Instead of everything about our preaching.

So, what are some of the things we must preach? We have to preach about the sovereignty of God! We have to preach about the sovereignty of God. I don't know where everybody is theologically, and at the moment I don't care. We have to preach the sovereignty of God; because if our King isn't sovereign, He's not powerful. If our King isn't sovereign, He's not taking over anything! If our King's not sovereign, He's not going to order anybody to do anything! If our King has any competition at all, then our King is weak. There's a lot of theology out there, a lot of people who truly love Jesus; I don't question their Salvation for a second, but they make man as sovereign as our King. Not only in what they believe but in their preaching. We have to teach about the sovereignty of our King.

Turn now to Acts chapter 4. This is what the early church did! If you disagree, take it up with them in Heaven. Acts chapter four.

Look, Michelle will tell you, sometimes when I get really passionate, when I get really fired up, this thing happens called *cop eyes*; alright, I get this look on my face like you're two seconds away from going into the backseat of a car. Know that I don't feel that way about any of you, OK; I get a little worked up, I get a little passionate, sometimes I speak in very broad generalities, and sometimes that ruffles feathers, so I ask you to forgive me in advance, and I ask you to believe me when I say that I love each and everyone of you. And I'm over it already if you're not.

Acts chapter 4, verses 23 to 31. Acts chapters three through five I love, this is one of my favorite portions of Scripture, this is all about counting the cost. All about counting the cost! This is about simple fishermen and other people of no account in their culture who are boldly standing up and saying, 'Who should I obey, you or God? Bring it on!' I love that!!

Verses 23 to 31: "When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, 'Sovereign Lord,'" this is the first time that word is mentioned in Scripture. *Sovereign*. Now we see God's sovereignty expressed and described throughout all of Scripture: we see it in Genesis 1 when He created, we see it when He takes Job to task for daring to question God. And Job 38, 39, 40, is all about God just unleashing the truth of His sovereignty on this poor afflicted man who has the audacity to sin and question God and for a moment shake his fist at God. I ... oh, I shudder at the thought. The Cross, the sovereignty of God is seen at the Cross. It's seen throughout the pastoral epistles, it's seen in Revelation; God's sovereignty is expressed all through Scripture because it was written by our sovereign King. Does that make sense? But the word itself, this is the first time it's actually mentioned in Scripture.

"And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, 'Sovereign Lord, who made the Heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, Your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed –' for truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to Your servants to continue to speak Your word with all boldness, while You stretch out Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the Name of Your holy Servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness."

Why? Why do they speak the Word of God with boldness? Simply because they believe? No. They knew that they were representing the sovereign King and Creator of everything! That everything that happens is either directly caused or immediately allowed by God! Not a chance article in the universe! Not an accident waiting to happen. No coincidence whatsoever!

And God does not simply know that things are going to happen. He's not simply Carnac the Magnificent, if you can remember Johnny Carson from many years ago? Most of you are too young, that didn't work on anybody.

He's not some séance person, He's not some tarot card reader, He's not some predictor of the future; He is the Sovereign Creator of all things; who has predetermined, predestined from eternity past, every single thing that will ever happen! He alone is sovereign. No one else is. That's why two thousand years ago the weak, helpless, destitute, fearful men and women, could go and speak with boldness after the religious elite of that day said, "We're gonna kill you if you don't stop!" Bring it on! You're not going to do anything to us that God doesn't either cause or allow. Oh sovereign Lord! We need to be preaching about the sovereignty of God.

In Romans 9, we know that God hardens and softens whom He will. In John 1, we know that God gives the right to whom He wills to become a child of God. Romans 8, we know that God adopts children; no one adopts God as their Father. It doesn't happen!

We've got three adopted children in our extended family. My sister Sheri and her husband Ion, they've adopted three kids. Two beautiful girls, Jilatsu and Ami from Liberia and Africa, and Jay, who is now a very precocious eight, from Uganda. Jay was found on the side of a dirt road in Uganda by a police officer. Literally naked, infant, abandoned on the side of the road to die. The police officer did the only thing he could do, well he actually could have left him there because that's not unusual, to just let babies die on the streets in Africa, that happens; 'K, but he did the right thing, he picked up the baby, he took the baby to a nearby orphanage, the orphanage obviously took him in, they cleaned him up, they cared for him, they put his picture out there on the internet, my sister and my brother in law saw him, fell in love with him, spent an exorbitant amount of money to go through the paperwork, to deal with an utterly corrupt government that's in court one day, not in court the next, wanting a little money on the side, "Naw that's not enough, give us a little more" and all you can do is play their game. And then they traveled eight to ten thousand miles to Uganda. They went to that orphanage and they brought Jay home. They gave him a new name. His name was no longer orphan number two. His name was no longer dirty abandoned baby in the gutter. His name was Jay Perry. They gave him new clothes, the orphanage did everything they could to clothe this little boy, but they gave him a new home. His home was not, any longer, a poor and destitute orphanage in the middle of Uganda, it was now in a nice home in Santa Clarita, California. That's what God has done for each of us!

We were destitute, we were naked, we were filthy, we were dirty, we were alone, we were helpless; and He chose to adopt us! And He gave us new names.

We're no longer hell bound. We're no longer vagrants. We're no longer destitute and outcasts and children of wrath. We're now children of the most high God. He's given us a new name, He's given us new clothes, we're no longer clothed in the sin of our unrighteousness, we're no longer clothed in the filthy garments of our sin, we're now clothed in the righteousness of His Son Jesus Christ and we have a new home, this world is no longer our home, we are no longer citizens of this world, our home is in Heaven! We wait for that day to join our Father and our Lord and our Savior and the Holy Spirit there in Heaven. And we had nothing to do with it!

As a little baby who speaks very little broken Ugandan English, what authority did Jay have to either demand my Sister and brother in law adopt him or refuse their adoption? What power did

he have? What choice did he have in the matter? What was his decision? Nothing! Nothing!! It was entirely of my sister and brother in law's will and purview to choose and adopt Jay, and they brought him home and they made him their son as if he had come out of my sister's womb! And that's what God does with sinners. Because He's sovereign! Because He's sovereign. And that's who we should be talking about out on the streets: our sovereign King, who answers to no one, who negotiates with no one.

I think, gone should be the days when we play God's defense attorney in the unbeliever's blasphemous courtroom! Where they put the Judge of the universe on trial! I spent hundreds of hours, many many days in court over twenty years, and I never once saw a convicted criminal demand from the judge, step down from the bench, step into the witness seat and be cross examined by the criminal! I've never seen it happen. And you better believe it'll never happen with God! Never! So why would we play the blasphemous game with the unbeliever?

Prove to me that God exists. They know that God exists! They simply suppress that truth by their unrighteousness. They love themselves more than they love God, they love their sin more than they love God, so they suppress the Truth they already know about God because they hate Him. And we want to play the game?! We make the unbeliever the one who is the holder of truth. While we say that God is sovereign, while we say that God is in control, we actually step down to play God's defense attorney in a blasphemous courtroom run by unbelievers who hate God! Where's the worship in that? Where's the authority in that? It's given to the unbeliever! We have to stop that. We have to stop that. We have to stop arguing with people about the existence of God. We have to stop playing God's defense attorney; He is the supreme Judge over all: He's sovereign!

The Trinity, we have to preach the Trinity. It is what differentiates us, along with the resurrection, which we'll talk about in a minute, is what differentiates us from every religion created by sinful men. We are monotheists who are believing in one God who is triune.

There are many succinct definitions out there, I really like the definition James White gives for the Trinity; he says, "Within the one Being that is God, there exists, eternally, three co-equal and co-eternal Persons, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Within the one Being that is God there exists, eternally, three co-equal and co-eternal Persons, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Trinitarian monotheism: that's us! Multi-syllable words for the night, I hope it's not too late? The Trinitarian monotheism is what makes Biblical Christianity distinct from all world religions.

There are three foundational truths about the Trinity: one is monotheism. Yes the Muslim, the Mormon, the Jehovah's Witnesses would all insist that we worship three gods: that we don't worship one god, we worship three. But we don't. The Bible, start to finish, makes it very very clear that God is one, that there is one God, there is no doubt about that; but He is God in three divine persons. Never does the Bible identify the Father as the Son, or the Son as the Spirit, or the Spirit is the Father. The Bible clearly teaches the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit have each eternally existed as divine Persons.

It was a shame, I guess a year or so ago, this aberration known as the Elephant Room, that leading Evangelicals decided to court a Modelist, a Oneness Pentecostalist, a heretic, an unbeliever, and link arms with him and put their hands on his shoulder and call him brother: a

guy named T.D. Jakes, who denies the Trinity. He sees God as one person in three manifestations: God the Father became God the Son, who became God the Holy Spirit. That's blasphemy. That's heresy. And we have to be careful, it's a fine line, it's a fine line, but we have to be careful because sometimes we can drift into Modalism in our preaching on the streets. Absolutely unintended, I know we believe in the triune God, you wouldn't be here if you didn't believe in a triune God, Bill would not let you in the room if you didn't believe in the triune God, I can assure you of that. But we slip toward Modalism in our preaching, listen carefully, listen carefully to the difference: "God became a man in the Person of Jesus Christ. God became a man in the Person of Jesus Christ." Did He or did He not? Ok, "God the Father sent His Son to earth in the Person of Jesus Christ." Did He or did He not? One is Modalism, one is not. God came to earth in the Person of Jesus Christ, that is true, but it's too ambiguous. It's too ambiguous! T.D. Jakes would nod his head, clap his hands and say, "Yep, I believe that! God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. A different manifestation."

We have to be more precise in our preaching, because there is so much subtlety in the lies that are out there today. 'God the Father sent His Son to earth in the Person of Jesus Christ. The Son has eternally existed with the Father, and He took on the form of human flesh, and He dwelt among us. He died and he rose from the grave, and He still has that human flesh. And He still has that human flesh. It wasn't simply the spirit of Jesus that rose from the grave, my friends, it was the glorified God man who rose from the grave and sits at the right hand of Power. We have to be more precise when talking about the Trinity.

Obviously we need to be preaching about the eternal deity of Jesus Christ. Jesus was, is, and always will be God. We see that throughout Scripture, but we have to preach that He has eternally existed. We have to preach the personhood of Christ, and that He was deity in His personage; He may have set aside some of the prerogatives of His deity, but He never ceased being God. He was not simply a man or a glorified man, as the Mormons would teach. He was and He is God.

We have to talk about the miraculous incarnation of Christ, we should not be afraid to talk about the virgin birth as if the Catholics own the doctrine! They don't!! The Word of God does! Seven hundred years before Christ was born to Mary, Isaiah prophesied that He would be born, not in any old Bethlehem, but a specific Bethlehem. There's more than one ya' know? We should be preaching the miraculous incarnation of Christ.

Without the miraculous incarnation of Christ, Jesus is born with the nature of Adam and he can't save anybody. He can't save anybody. If he was born of the seed of Adam, he inherits Adam's sin and we're all lost forever; and Jesus died for no one but Himself. But we know that's not true.

The hypostatic union: fully God and fully man. Philippians chapter 2. And yes, some atheist, some cut and paster, some internet hound dog will come up to you and say, "Ah all these doctrines were determined at the council of Nicea." They know everything about the council of Nicea except what the council of Nicea was about! Anytime someone comes up to me and mentions the council of Nicea, I put up my hand and say, "You've been on the internet haven't you?"

Philippians chapter 2, verses 5-11, God's Word tells us this: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a Cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the Name that is above every Name, so that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

We must be preaching that Jesus Christ was, and is, fully God and fully man. As I shared with you last hour, only God can satisfy the perfect wrath of God; and only the perfect Man could pay the penalty for sinful people like you and me. The only sacrifice that would satisfy God had to be fully God and perfectly man without sin. We must be preaching about the hypostatic union of Christ. And the sinlessness of Christ.

I know these things seem so basic, but they're very easy to forget in the heat of the moment. They're very easy to forget when you're finally into the Gospel and some heckler hits you with a question or an objection ... ya' know, let me pause here just for a second to remind us all about hecklers: you are the supreme allied commander on that box, you are running the show, you are the preacher. The heckler has no authority, the heckler has no right, this is not a fair fight, this is a war! We're not playing by the markets of Queensbury rules. You don't stop preaching the Cross because some angry, whiny, drunk man in the back has a question. "Hey, if you really want to talk to me, wait right over here. When I'm done preaching Christ, I'd be glad to talk to you." We don't have to play with the enemy! We're announcing the edicts of our King; we're gonna let someone interrupt us for that? Only if we can use them, yes, use them! Use them. Use hecklers to further the proclamation of the Gospel, but don't let them take you off the mark. Don't let them confuse you, don't let them distract you, don't let them upset you. Ignore them, preach around them, preach over them! Preach Christ! Give the enemy no quarter. You don't have to be a jerk, (I'm a jerk sometimes), you don't have to be a jerk about it. You don't have to be a jerk about it, you don't. You could politely say, "Look, I'm preaching the Gospel, and when I'm done preaching I'd love to talk to you." You just ignore 'em and you keep going. They're a tool of Satan to try to get you to stop preaching the Gospel. And again, they're gonna show up when you mention Christ! They're not gonna show up when you mention the seventh Commandment. They're not going to show up when you mention lying and stealing and coveting and blasphemy; they're gonna show up when you begin to exalt the Name of Christ. Cause they love the Law because they think they keep it. They hate Christ!

So preach around them, preach through them, preach over them; answer the question only if it furthers the proclamation of the Gospel. Don't let your preaching of the Gospel become a sinful argument between two sinful men. As I have done too many times to count. No nothing else, boast of nothing else but Christ and Him crucified.

But we must speak about the sinlessness of Christ. "God the Father made Him, God the Son, who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf." The sacrifice of God, the only sacrifice acceptable to God is a sinless, perfect, spotless lamb, and that is Christ.

And we ought to be talking about the miracles of Christ. That He turned water into wine, that He walked on water, that He healed the sick, that He raised the dead, that He knows the thoughts of

men; this distinguished Him as God. Mohammed, even in the Koran, admits he's done nothing: "I got no miracles! I got nothing!" Christ performed miracles because God can, only God can.

And we must be telling people what Jesus said. Our preaching of the Gospel should be so interwoven with Scripture that the undiscerning will have a hard time knowing where Scripture starts and Scripture ends because there's so much of it. Does that mean you have to have a photographic memory? Very few of us do. I don't. This is why I hold this in my hand without apology.

I never walked out on the streets with an empty holster, because I had memorized how a gun works. Right! That would be kind of stupid wouldn't it?! I know everything there is about a gun, I memorized the nomenclature of the gun, I know how fast a hundred forty seven grains of lead travels, I know what the destructive capabilities is of the bullet once it fires, I know all of that so I could leave the gun at home! And I certainly don't want anyone to be offended because I'm carrying a gun in my holster, after all I'm a deputy sheriff, they already don't like me. That's crazy!

So it is to walk out onto the streets without the Word of God. I know some very dear, godly men who are great preachers who will never take a Bible out with them, and I couldn't disagree with them more. This is the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. And we ought not to be so arrogant to think that we know this book so well that we shouldn't have it in our hands, ready to pull out and fire when we need to.

And we shouldn't fear about people thinking we're Bible thumpers, when we should be Bible thumpers!! It's OK to be a Bible thumper! You know this idea that we shouldn't carry signs, we shouldn't carry Crosses, we shouldn't carry Bibles cause all of the bad preachers do that? WHY ARE WE GIVING UP THE GROUND?! Why are we giving up the ground to the heretics? Why are we giving up the ground to Westboro Baptists? Why are we giving up the ground to the enemy? TAKE IT BACK! Carry a Biblical sign with a Biblical message for a Biblical reason. Carry the Cross! Take your Bible with you because it's the Word of God and the Sword of the Spirit. It's your primary weapon, it's your primary tool

And we have to be telling people what Jesus said about Himself. How many times have we heard "Jesus never claimed to be God." Right? WE ALL KNOW HE DID! So open up the Word of God and tell 'em that "Before Abraham was, I AM!" Deal with it. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one comes to the Father but through me."

And then lastly, the resurrection. 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

Now this isn't exhaustive, you know this right? You know that this list of things that we should be preaching, you know that this isn't exhaustive. Alright, I'm sure there are things that I haven't mentioned that we're going to preach while we're out there; but there's only so much time.

1 Corinthians 15, beginning in verse 1: "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the Gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the Word I preached to you – unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in

accordance with the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born,' most literally: as one aborted, 'as one untimely born, He appeared also to me.'"

One of the most common things to be left out, one of the most common doctrines to be left out of a Gospel presentation is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is. It's not intentional, but we do; we leave out the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's what differentiates Christianity from every other religion. Every other religion worships a dead god. They either worship a figment of their own imagination or they worship a demonic being. We worship the risen Lord! We worship the only God who can save because He is the only God who defeated sin and death and rose from the grave. We have to preach the resurrection of Jesus Christ! We have to preach the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Word of God says, further on in 1 Corinthians 15, that if not for the resurrection, we, as the followers of Christ, are to be the most pitied among all people! The reality is that everyone else is the most pitied among all people. Those who deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Whether religious or unreligious, they are the most pitied among all people. And we ought to remember that too. We ought to remember that even whit the angriest, vilest, hecklers, that these people are to be pitied. No patronized! Alright, we could pity them in such a way as just to set 'em off, right, to get their goat. To sin right back at 'em. We shouldn't be patronizing people. But we absolutely should have a heart of pity towards these people who deny the resurrection of Christ. They are the most pitied of all people. Not us, because He is risen. He is risen indeed! We're not to be pitied, they are. But we ought to have that frame of mind, especially when we're dealing with the vilest among them.

Man, an open-air can turn into a fight between two sinful men in a blink of an eye! In a blink of an eye. And unbelievers are just standing there watching, and when they see you lose it they go, "Gotcha!" And so they justify their unbelief because of their sin. It won't stand up in the Supreme Court, right, it won't stand up before God: "I didn't repent and believe the Gospel because at Church Hill Downs in 2013, Tony was an idiot! That's why I didn't repent and believe so I think you ought'a let me go." That's not gonna help them. Right? But why even cause them to stumble that way?

When you feel that anger raising up in you this weekend, and it will, whether you're new at this or you've been doin' it for years and years and years, remember that they are to be pitied. And maybe that'll help you back down, maybe that'll help you to keep your emotions in check.

Now it's taken about forty five minutes to go through this, that doesn't mean your open air has to be forty five minutes of this theology, although there's nothing wrong with that, nothin' wrong with that, OK; but we most certainly should be preaching more about Christ than I think many of us are. And a good way to right the scales, to balance the scales, so to speak, or to tip them more towards the Gospel, begin your open-air by declaring Christ. Begin your open-air by declaring Who it is you represent. And if everyone runs away, so what, ultimately we preach to an Audience of One. Alright, the ultimate goal is not to draw a crowd, the ultimate goal is to glorify Christ in our preaching. To boast about the Cross. Everyone that God wants to hear the Gospel when you get up to preach, will hear it! They will hear it. Whether they're standing right in front

of you or your voice is carrying farther than you ever thought it could. Everyone, because God is sovereign, everyone God wants to hear your preaching, will hear it. Don't let the size of the crowd or the lack of a crowd distract you. Don't let your own pride and your own arrogance and your own need to draw a bigger crowd than the next guy, take you off the mark. Remember Who you you're here to represent.

Everybody remembers the names of the kings throughout history, nobody remembers the names of the heralds. No one! A herald gets about that much in an encyclopedia, right, and you don't even have his name, just what he did. That's it! That's it. You might have five or six or ten pages about the king, 'oh and before the king went into this village, his herald went out and said this.' That's who we are! That's who we are. Remember who we are. Right? We're heralds of the King. He's glorious, His Name is above every name. "There's no other name given among men under Heaven by which we must be saved." There is no other name but the Name of Christ to which every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. It is His Name we want everyone to remember this weekend. Not us. Not us.

And if you focus on these important doctrines and others, your preaching is going to be better, and more importantly, it's going to be more Biblical. And it's going to focus a lot more on Christ, then your ability to tear down a heckler. Don't we ultimately want the heckler to get saved? Really? Well that'll be seen in our preaching. That'll be heard in our rhetoric. And it'll be seen and heard when with the skill of a great apologist, we see the neurotransmitter misfire going off in the person's head, when they say, "No I can't know anything for certain." And you say, "Do you know that for certain?" And they just start to bob and weave like, ya' know, their world just fell apart; and inside we're going, "Yeah! Did we get that on video?! Did we get that on video?!" Instead of saying, "Now, now he's ready! Now he's ready to hear the Gospel! Now he's ready to hear about my King! Now he's ready to hear about the love of Christ! Now he's ready to hear about grace, now he's ready to hear about mercy! The Lord's breaking him, I didn't break him, the Lord's breaking him! I'm seeing it happen right before my eyes!! Now he needs the Gospel, now I'm gonna love on this person! I'm gonna kill him with kindness now!! I'm gonna heap burning coals over this person's head!" As they hear the compassion in our voice and they see it in our eyes, and maybe even through our tears.

Let's make sure we're boasting about Christ. Let's make sure that His Name is the only Name being exalted. That He's the only One being remembered. Let's glorify Him. With every breath, with every word, with every thought, with every deed, with every footstep, with every tract we hand out, with every prayer we pray, let's exalt Christ! And not worry about what happens to us in the process. Let's deny ourselves, take up our Crosses, let's follow Christ this weekend for His glory.

When we come together and we tell our stories and we put the salve and the bandages on our wounds, we're exalting Christ. We're not exalting our prowess, we're not exalting our capabilities, we're not exalting our endurance, we're not exalting our perseverance, we're not, ya' know, taking each other's compliments with false humility, but we're glorifying and we're exalting Christ! Alright!

Father, we do want exalt You. Lord Jesus, we do want to exalt You. And Holy Spirit, let us not forget You, let us exalt You, who, so often, because so much is done that is false in your Name,

Holy Spirit, we are often afraid to mention You; we are afraid of being lumped in with those who would malign You and blaspheme You and that is a sin on our behalf, when we do that.

Holy Spirit, we ask that You would be with us throughout this weekend. We know that You intercede for us. We know that when we do not know how to pray that You intercede for us with groanings too deep for words. We know, as the Lord promised His disciples, we can also rest in the promise that when we do not know what to say, You will give us the words.

We know that when we are fearful, you will embolden us not to fear men who can only kill the body but to fear You O God who can destroy both body and soul in Hell. So Holy Spirit, we ask that You would fill us, would empower us, would go out before us, would keep us mindful of our own sin, would keep us repentant. That you would enable us to love Christ more, that You would enable us to love the lost and our enemies more, that you would enable us to love each other more as we go out there this weekend, that we would put our brother and sister before ourselves, that we would not count our open-airs, that we would not worry about who's on the box and whether or not we are getting enough time. That we would think more highly of our brother and sister than we do of ourselves. That we would put others first, before us. That we would want to see our brothers and sisters grow in conformity into the image of Jesus Christ for His glory this weekend, even if means sacrificing our own time on the box, or our own spot handing out tracts, or the number of conversations we have help us to put each other before ourselves.

Father I pray that you would bless our time of fellowship into the evening tonight and as we go into the streets tomorrow and throughout this weekend. Father, be glorified in everything we do, in Jesus Name, amen.

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