

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

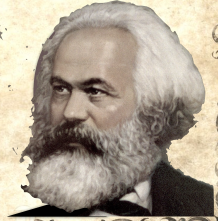
1 Cor. 1:18-25

Lesson #41

The Word of the Cross

05/27/2018

“Religion the opium of the people.”



Karl Marx

1

Ephesians 6

“⁵ **Slaves**, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶ . . . doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷ With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, . . . ⁹ And, **masters**, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

Paul's teaching

- **courageous** or outrageous

How are we to process this?



2

This teaching is shocking to:

Ancient Roman culture

by what it says to Masters

It challenged a master's "right" to exercise his "position of power" over his slaves.

Modern Western culture

by what it says to Slaves

It challenged a slave's "right" to demand freedom from his enslavement.

*Both are reminded that they are slaves to Christ **no matter where they serve.***

3

How are we to process Paul's teaching?

- **Word of the Cross**
- **Kingdom of God**
- **Bondage to Christ**
- **Freedom in Spirit**

4

1. The Word of the Cross

1 Corinthians 1

“¹⁸ For the **word of the cross** is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . . . ²² For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a **stumbling block**, and to Gentiles **foolishness**, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the **power of God and the wisdom of God**. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

Both **Propitiation** for sin and **Posture** for service

5



EWTN
GLOBAL CATHOLIC NETWORK

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

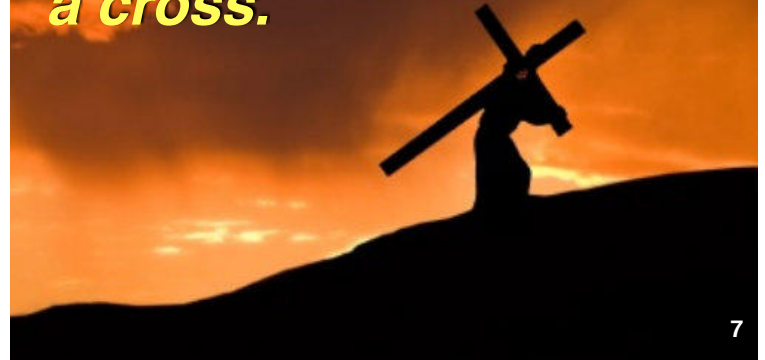
“Power in the Kingdom of God is love. I don’t need a position or a title to exercise that power.”

Agnes Mary Donovan
Superior General, Sisters of Life



6

Social justice starts with bearing a cross.



7

2. The kingdom of God

John 18:36

“Jesus answered, **“My kingdom is not of this world.** If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.””

How much of it is for this realm or the next?

8

“Thy kingdom come”

The question is WHEN and HOW?

Both Jesus and the Apostles seem to indicate that the present age will not get it right until Christ comes.

Matthew 24
Revelation 6-19



9

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, ²⁸ and the **base things** of the world and the **despised**, God has chosen, the **things that are not**, that He might nullify the things that are, ²⁹ that no man should boast before God.”

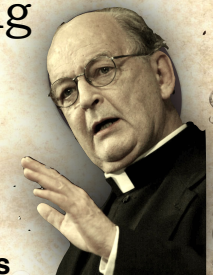
The chosen of God

- are the **losers** not the winners
- are to **shame** not reflect the world’s values.

10

“The religious left wants the kingdom on earth without its king and before its time.”

Richard John Neuhaus



11

**In this life we bear
a cross to
a banquet.**



12

3. Bondage to Christ.

John 21:18

“Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and **bring you where you do not wish to go.**”

- Slaves to Christ will be asked to share his **suffering** and go where they would not choose to go.
- We find our **new life** by losing our old.

13

Expectations for this life

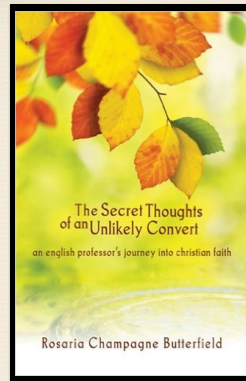
1 Corinthians 4

“10 We are **fools** for Christ’s sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are **weak**, . . . we are **without honor**. 11 . . . we are both **hungry** and **thirsty**, and are **poorly clothed**, and are **roughly treated**, and are **homeless**; 12 . . . when we are **reviled**, we bless; when we are **persecuted**, we endure; 13 when we are **slandered**, we try to conciliate;”

1 Corinthians 15:19

“If we have hoped in Christ **in this life only**, we are of all men most to be pitied.”

14



Dr. Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

lesbian,
former postmodern, feminist,
English professor

“The Scripture clearly asks disciples of Jesus to lose their old life in order to find their new life. I had to ask what must I give up to know him and yourself?”



15

**In this life we share the
fellowship of
his suffering.**



16

4. Freedom in Spirit.

- In what **sense** does Christ free us?

Luke 4:18

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim **release to the captives**, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set **free those who are downtrodden.**”

John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; **not as the world gives**, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

17

John 14

“¹⁶ I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Helper**, that he may be with you forever; . . . ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. . . . ²⁷ **Peace** I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you, Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

Note how Jesus left his disciples.

- With his Spirit and his Peace
- **But still in their circumstances**

18

Conflicting world views

The measure and means of freedom

	<i>This world</i>	<i>God's kingdom</i>
measure means	Possession of material and political wealth	Personal freedom and courage to sacrificially love
	Reformation of socio-economic-political systems	Renewal of the inner spirit

The nature of God's Kingdom

Realized in the state and in this age	Realized in the church but not in the state until Christ returns
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19

“Socialism is the religion people get when they lose their religion.”

Richard John Neuhaus

20

Our freedom is not from the suffering of this life but from the shame that it implies.

21

Some are going to feel that these points are easier on the master than the slave.

But consider what the master is asked to give up:

- The **privilege** and **power** that come with his position.
- The **freedom** to use his position for his purposes.
- The freedom from **responsibility** for those under his care.

22

“Religion is the thing that makes the ordinary man feel extraordinary; it is an equally important truth that religion is the thing that makes the extraordinary man feel ordinary.”

G.K. Chesterton

23

How are we to respond to social injustice?

A systemic reformation that is not rooted in a **spiritual reorientation** lacks both the depth and breadth for **radical reconciliation**.

Social reform

- starts with **personal** repentance,
- creating **faith communities** that reflect kingdom priorities,
- that transform **societies**.