

We have nearly completed Phi 3:18 which reads ***“For many keep walking, concerning whom I have warned you many times, and now continue to affirm, even weeping,”*** [now the final phrase] ***“that they are enemies of the cross of Christ,”***

The Greek word "tous" [the] and then the word "echthros" used here to describe reversionistic believers under the influence of evil. These are enemies, not just Paul's enemies, but they are enemies of the Cross.

“Echthros” means that they are enemies and hateful toward others, passively, disgustingly, or actively hostile. It can refer to an adversary (especially Satan) opposing others, opposing (God) in their thinking.

In Phi 3:18 they have made themselves enemies of or towards ***“staurou”*** referring to the Cross or crucifixion of Jesus Christ, which epitomizes the principle of grace.

So the corrected translation Phi 3:18 ***“For many keep walking, concerning whom I have warned you many times, and now continue to affirm, even weeping, that they have made themselves the enemies of the cross of that same Christ.”***

To fully understand what it means to be an enemy of the cross, we have to understand that the cross represents the substitutionary spiritual death of The Lord Jesus Christ.

There are two categories of spiritual death.

1. **Real spiritual death** which is separation from God in a state of sin which applies to man.

2. **Substitutionary spiritual death** which is separation from God in a state of perfection and impeccability which applies to Jesus Christ.

Real spiritual death applies to Adam's original sin and the status quo of the human race at the point of physical birth. Substitutionary spiritual death applies to the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross. At the time when man sinned in the Garden of Eden, mankind entered into real spiritual death, Rom 5:12 ***“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned”*** At the point of the original sin, Adam lost his rulership of planet earth to Satan. When Adam died spiritually, he entered into a state of total separation from God. He was separated from God in a state of total helplessness, there was nothing he could do to regain his relationship with God. God had to do all the work. God came to Adam in the garden, He did the judging and then provided the solution for Adam and all humans who would follow regarding our spiritual death. Adam's original sin brought on the resultant old sin nature, which is genetically perpetuated to the entire human race. From this old sin nature comes our total depravity, which includes moral and immoral degeneration.

To become an enemy of the cross is to deny, reject or ignore the principles that God dealt with on man's behalf through the work of The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. Only the perfect, impeccable humanity of Christ could become our substitute when He received the imputation and judgment for all sins in the history of the human race down to the last sin of the Millennium. When anyone makes an issue out of other people's sins, we are forgetting about the fact that God the Father has already dealt with those sins on the cross, 2CO 5:14-21.

Our Lord's sacrificial or substitutionary spiritual death on the cross brings eternal life to everyone in the human race that will believe in Him. This is why Paul also said in Rom 14:4 ***“Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”***

We have no right to judge others for their sins or failures for it is a family affair that God the Father is in control of. The enemies of the cross deny, reject or ignore the following principles:

God the Father says in Heb 8:12 ***“For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”***

Heb 10:17 ***“And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”***

Mic 7:18-19 ***“He pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession and cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”***

Psa 103:12 ***“He has removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west,”***

Isa 38:17c ***“For You have cast all their sins behind their back.”***

Psa 103:10 ***“He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.”*** The enemies of the cross deal with others according to their sins or pay them back for their iniquities toward them.

Psa 65:3b ***“As far our transgressions Thou dost forgive them.”***

The enemies of the cross do not forgive others.

Col 2:13 ***“He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us ALL our transgressions,”*** The enemies of the cross deny, reject or ignore this principle.

Isa 43:25 ***“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake [because of my honor and integrity]. Furthermore, I will not remember your sin.”***

Psa 85:2 ***“You did forgive the iniquity of Your people; you did cover All their sin.”*** The Lord has not covered some of our sin, but all of our sin.

Eze 16:63 the Lord said to people who were involved with the grossest sins you could imagine ***“I will forgive you for ALL that you have done.”***

Rom 11:27 ***“He will take away our sins”***

We should never grow so familiar with these verses and these principles of doctrine that it no longer has an effect on our life.

1Jo 2:12 says that ***“Your sins are forgiven for His names sake.”***

An enemy of the cross makes an issue out of sin.

In Rom 5:8 ***“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”***

The last phrase of Rom 5:8 is translated ***“Christ died for us.”*** The Greek word ***“apothenesko”*** is translated death and is especially used for the saving work of our Lord on the cross. This word takes the three hours of our Lord's substitutionary spiritual death on the cross and gathers it up into one entirety with the result that mankind is reconciled to God. During those last three hours, billions and billions of sins were imputed to Christ on the cross by God the Father, and every one of those sins were judged by God the Father. The humanity of Christ in Hypostatic Union died the substitutionary spiritual death for all, resulting in unlimited atonement. Christ died this substitutionary spiritual death "on behalf of us," "instead of us," "in place of us," or "as a substitute for us."

Anyone is an enemy of the cross if they deny, reject or ignore this principle. They are an enemy of the cross if their desire is not for all men to be saved as our Lord's desire is in 1Ti 2:4, 2Pe 3:9.

Jesus Christ was the substitute on the cross for all members of the human race, and He received the imputation and judgment of all of their sins as well. The cross demonstrates the divine impersonal love for the entire human race as sinners.

Joh 3:16 ***“For God loved the world so much that He gave His Son, the unique One, that whoever believes in Him shall never perish but have eternal life.”***

The focus of the Hypostatic Union is the cross, when the omnipotence of God the Father imputed all the sins in the history of the human race to Christ on the cross. Then the justice of God the Father judged every one of them. This resulted in our so-great salvation, which is open to the entire human race, not just to the "elect."

The central purpose of the cross is stated briefly in 1Jo 3:5 ***“Indeed, He [Jesus Christ] was revealed in order that He might carry our sins.”***

The fulfillment of that purpose of the cross is mentioned in

1Pe 2:24 ***“He Himself carried our sins in His own body on the cross.”***

1Pe 3:18 ***“Because Christ also died once for our sins, the righteous one as a substitute for the unrighteous ones, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh but made alive by means of the Spirit.”***

These unrighteous ones describes the human race as sinners, in terms of being unrighteous. Although we consider ourselves in terms of relative righteousness, as being better or worse than others, in reality we are completely unrighteous.

Isa 64:6 ***“Our righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight.”***

An enemy of the cross forgets that Jesus Christ, as our substitute, took our place. All the time that Jesus Christ was being judged for our sins on the cross, He personally remained righteous or impeccable.

Therefore, the righteous One, our Lord Jesus Christ, died as a substitute for us. The fact that Christ remained righteous while bearing our sins is what made the suffering so intense. He is the only person in history who remained absolutely perfect in spiritual death.

Therefore His spiritual death was unique. Just as the lamb being slaughtered was without spot and without blemish, even while bleeding to death, so the humanity of Christ remained impeccable and trichotomous in His unique

spiritual death. Jesus Christ “brought us to God” through His saving work on the cross, by becoming a substitute for us, by taking our place in suffering substitutionary spiritual death.

We have the privilege and opportunity of bringing others to God by fulfilling our calling as Royal ambassadors, unless we are enemies of the cross.

On the cross, Gal 3:13 tells us, **“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by means of becoming a curse as a substitute for us; for it stands written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a cross.’”**

Our Lord's sacrificial or substitutionary spiritual death on the cross brings eternal life to everyone in the human race that will believe in Him.

Therefore, our job is to communicate this Gospel and this message of grace not to try and destroy it.

Our entire sin nature, including the so-called "good part," was crucified with Christ. The fulfillment of that purpose of the cross is mentioned in 1Pe 2:24, **“And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to [not sins but sin singular, the entire sin nature] and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”**

Remember that the Bible teaches in Rom 5:12 **“Therefore, just as through one man [Adam], sin [the sin nature] entered into the world, and [spiritual] death through [the] sin [nature], so [spiritual] death spread to the entire human race because all sinned [when Adam sinned].”**

Rom 7:14 **“For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to [ten hamartian] the entire sin nature.”**

The singular of the Greek word *hamartia* generally refers to the old sin nature, as in Rom 5:12, 7:14.

1Pe 3:18 says **“For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous one as a substitute for the unrighteous ones, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh but made alive by means of the Spirit.”**

This refers to perfect righteousness, and describes our Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect "lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." But, by the sin of the world, this means the entire sin nature, not just our sins.

Jesus Christ was perfect in His humanity because He remained inside the Pre-Designed Plan of God for His life while being judged for our sins.

As our substitute, Jesus Christ had to be perfect to be qualified to be judged for the sins of the world. Therefore, the trichotomous, body, soul and spirit, or the perfect humanity of Christ remained impeccable during the entire time He was being judged for our sins.

Heb 9:14 **“how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”**

As the "lamb without spot and without blemish," our Lord's humanity persevered even though He was greatly tempted to sin as never before as He bore our sins.

There are two reasons why our Lord remained perfect as "the righteous one."

1. He was sustained by the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit in the Pre-Designed Plan of God (PPOG), Heb 9:15.
2. He utilized the problem-solving device of +H (Happiness of God), Heb 12:3. Therefore, He demonstrated that anyone who resides in the PPOG, can endure anything in life.

An enemy of the cross also **“thinks more highly of himself than what he ought to think”** Rom 12:3. He cannot accept advice, reproof, rebuke, exhortation, as 2Ti 4:2 teaches.

Some principles regarding the substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Salvation was provided through the substitutionary spiritual death on the cross which removed the barrier between man and God, Eph 2:14-16. Not between God and man, because it was man that caused the barrier between God and man.
- The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ provided the unlimited atonement which removed the barrier of personal sin. All sins of the human race have been forgiven.
- The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ provided redemption through which the barrier of the curse of the Law has been removed.
- The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ provided regeneration which removes the barrier of physical birth.

As eternal God, Jesus Christ can have nothing to do with sin. He cannot sponsor sin and He will have nothing to do with human good or evil except to reject and condemn it. This is another part of the cross that people do not

understand. He not only paid the price for sin at the cross but He rejected anything our human nature can produce, and therefore both human good and evil.

This means that you can be an enemy of the cross by being a church-goer, religious and becoming legalistic and self-righteous. In fact, there were a lot of Judaizers who influenced many of the Philippians to get involved with Judaism and religion and producing human good.

They were truly enemies of the cross.

Enemies of the cross promote salvation plus works, which is a false doctrine that rejects God's grace policy in the provision of eternal salvation for the human race. Enemies of the cross reject the total helplessness of mankind under real spiritual death. Enemies of the cross promote salvation by works, which makes the distinction between Christianity and religion.

In **Christianity**, mankind is eternally saved through the work of God. God the Father planned it, God the Son executed it on the cross, and God the Holy Spirit reveals it.

In **Religion**, man seeks to gain the approbation of God through some category of human works, self-sacrifice, personality, or energy of the flesh. Remember that Christianity is not a religion. In Christianity, God does the work and man is the beneficiary apart from any merit or any works.

We have these categories of salvation by works which are rejected by the Word of God, as in Eph 2:9, "***It is not by works that you are saved.***"

#### **A. Verbal Works.**

1. Repent and believe. Repent means to change your mind about Christ, as occurs under the Holy Spirit's ministry of common grace. This word has been misinterpreted. No one is saved by feeling sorry for his sins.
2. Confession of sins. This is only for the believer in rebound.
3. Begging God to save you. This is ridiculous, coming from one who is spiritually dead.
4. Inviting Christ into your heart. This is total nonsense and blasphemy. A spiritually dead person cannot invite eternal God, the Lord Jesus Christ anywhere! Not into his heart, his home or his life.
5. Acknowledge Christ publicly. This is not effectual for salvation. This is a distortion of Rom 10:9-10 which is about cause and effect. The cause is faith; the result, as the believer matures, is to witness, to acknowledge Christ. But you're saved only by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **B. Ritual Works.**

1. Circumcision was the favorite of the Jews. Galatians was written to correct this. The Galatians were very excited about Paul's ministry and responded and became believers. But after Paul left, the Judaizers counteracted, telling these new believers they could not be saved until they were also circumcised. These Gentile believers swallowed this. So Paul wrote Galatians, a letter telling them they'd gone astray from the Gospel.
2. Salvation by baptism, which is prominent today. This was started by the Lutherans in the Reformation, copied from the Catholics, a heresy that has always existed in the Church Age. Baptism was a testimony to retroactive positional truth and current positional truth before the completion of the Canon.
3. Partaking of the Eucharist.

#### **C. Psychological Works.**

1. "Come forward" in an invitation at the end of a service.
2. "Raise your hand" during prayer.
3. Walking down the aisle.
4. Give a public testimony to your faith in Christ.

These are jumping through psychological hoops, it's psychology and not salvation. These make an issue of you and call attention to yourself. But salvation is designed to call attention to Jesus Christ!

#### **D. Corporate Works.**

1. Join the church; if you don't join, you're not saved.

2. The Tithe, this was commanded in the Mosaic Law as a 10% income tax for the client nation Israel. Tithing has no spiritual connotation, either for salvation or blessing. Giving is a matter of the privacy of your own priesthood. The amount you give is based on your own self-determination and has nothing to do with any blessing.
3. Church-related works. Just work faithfully around the church and God will save you. This becomes more popular at certain times.

### **E. Religious Works.**

Religion is the devil's ace trump. Satan counterfeits Christianity through religion. Religion is one of the greatest systems of both moral and immoral degeneration.

1. Keep the Mosaic Law. This is a result of the Reformation. It started out with justification by faith, but it gradually moved to the works of keeping the Law and eventually developed into the Galatian compromise: First you have to believe in Christ; then you have to keep the Law.
2. Do penance.
3. Practice the "Lordship of Christ." This refers to the false doctrine taught by the ignorant that "if Christ is not Lord of all He's not Lord at all." This is a failure to understand one of the forty things done for us at the moment of salvation. By the baptism of the Holy Spirit entering us into union with Christ, He is our Lord at the very moment of our salvation. Whether we recognize this or not is a matter of cognition of pertinent doctrine. But you do not have to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord for salvation. It is "believe in Christ" only.
4. Practice asceticism. What you give up at any time is inconsequential! People want to take what they have given up in their lives and compare it with the work of Cross! But the work of salvation was provided "en toto" on the Cross.
5. Self-denial.
6. Maintain a healthy body. To associate salvation or spirituality with health foods and vitamins is ludicrous! All of these are forms of being an enemy of the cross of Christ, as we conclude Phi 3:18.