



YOUR EPIC COMEBACK PODCAST

Episode 5: The “C” of Your EPIC Comeback; CHRIST
Making a Break for Christ’s Sake
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Keith L. Bell

I came across an explanation of a very, very familiar idiom that we hear all the time, and many of us actually say it sometimes. But for others of us who reverence the name of the Lord, it is considered blasphemy. The following is the conversation about it from Reddit Answers at Reddit.com:

QUESTION: Why do people say "for Christ sakes" instead of "for Christ's sake"?

ANSWER: Christ's sake is the phrase. It's easy to slur together and make it effectively silently. Then people repeat what they hear or are saying but slurring it away. It must be that the incorrect phrase was repeated so much that it became dominant, because at this point people aren't slurring it, they're clearly saying "Christ sakes." I've heard Jon Stewart say it, Dennis on 'It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia,' and multiple individuals in person. Good to know that "Christ's sake" is the correct way though, for my own sanity.

Then other commenters chime in:

1st COMMENTER: “I say Pete's.”

2nd COMMENTER: “I do not know who is Pete.”

1st COMMENTER: “St. Peter most likely”

2nd COMMENTER: “Thank you. I had no idea.”

3rd COMMENTER: “Because pronouncing three 's' sounds distinctly one after the other is bloody difficult. If I were to write the phrase, I'd put Christ's sake. Speaking, it'll be Christ sake every time.”

I get a kick out of these types of discussions for at least two reasons: First of all, the topic is usually not really that important. Secondly, those involved in them try to get to the reason why something is said or done without delving into the original intents and purposes. But they go on from the conversations anyway, content that they have had fruitful discussion about something of real substance.

I can remember hearing one such discussion when I was a child. One day I was sitting on the steps of my friend's front porch waiting for him to come outside. Up on the porch sat his dad and about three of his dad's friends. They were having beers and discussing why it's best to make sure that the butcher weighs your meats without putting a piece of paper on the scale first. Their rationale was that the paper has weight and can therefore make your meat more expensive than it is! Yep! That was their serious discussion, and their conclusion was that the store was only trying to rip them off.

By the way, did I mention that I was just 13 years old at the time? Even at that tender young age, my mind could only think of how absolutely ridiculous their assessment was! Maybe it was the alcohol talking... But I digress.

Christ's sake is what I would like to talk about with you today. People all across America use that term when they are trying to stress the importance of something said or done or that needs to be said or done. I'd rather not use the phrase, but I do understand what people are trying to say when they use it.

Unfortunately, most of the people who say it are never really using it for the right reason. So first of all, it is NOT "Christ sakes" because "sakes" is not actually a word—though with today's thinking, anything can be a word that belongs in the dictionary as long as it goes viral. Again, I digress. I'd better stop that!

Scripture uses the term in at least four key New Testament passages:

1. For example, Romans 15:30, Paul asks the brethren to, **for Christ's sake**, strive together with him in their prayers to God for his gospel ministry.
2. In 1 Corinthians 4:10, Paul declares that he and those who served with him in the ministry have become fools **for Christ's sake**.
3. In 2 Corinthians 12:10, Paul says that he takes pleasure in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles suffered **for Christ's sake**, for when weak he was strong.
4. Finally, in Ephesians 4:32, Paul tells the saints to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God **for Christ's sake** has forgiven you.

These above four passages will be the keys to our discussion this week. If you want to live our your enduring purpose in Christ, somewhere along the line, you are going to have to "Make A Break, For Christ's Sake!"

Sometimes, you might have to drop everything you're doing or that you have so you can "make a break" for a goal God sets for you. Sometimes you might need to "make a break" from particular people who are distracting or somehow holding you back from God's purpose for your life. And sometimes you might even need to "take a break" from, of all things, the ministry so that you can get completely alone with God in order to be prepared and refreshed for something greater or more difficult to come.

Whatever the case may be, it will be a break that is for Christ's sake. Many of the people who use the term "for Christ's sake" or "for Christ sakeS" do not in any way intend to serve Christ. They are only saying it to serve the purpose of stressing their point. But could we as Christians be just as guilty of such a thing? Well, if our purpose is not above all for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then we are not living out our enduring purpose in Christ.

The Bible has a host of allusions to and illustrations of what it means to break for Christ's sake. For example, there is Abraham, who was told by God to leave his father's house and just go to a land that he will be shown along the way; who went, and became father of many nations and father of our faith. There is also Joseph who was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, who fled from the presence of the lustful wife of his master Potiphar and suffered years of imprisonment for not wanting to commit adultery with her; who yet became second only to Pharaoh and came to the conclusion that the whole reason his brothers sold him into slavery it was God's plan in order to bless and preserve his father Israel's posterity. Then, there is Moses and the people of Israel leaving Egypt and crossing the Red Sea and getting to witness the destruction of Pharaoh and his army in the process.

The list goes on throughout the Old Testament of people who either by choice or by God's direction made a break from someone or something that was or would have been a hindrance to God's purpose for their lives. Yet, even in the New Testament we can see where, for example, some of Christ's disciples went from catching so many fish that their nets broke, to breaking away from the fishing trade to become fishers of men. Or how about a tax collector named Matthew who brokered revenues from his own Jewish people on behalf of Rome? He heard the call of Christ and made a break with his collecting business and became a distributor of the gospel of Christ. Then there's the apostle Paul, once named Saul, who traveled from city to city breaking up churches and persecuting Christians, who met Christ on the Damascus road and in just a few days made a clean break with his extreme views of the Mosaic law and became the most prolific preacher of freedom we have in Christ.

And it is a section of his second epistle to the Corinthians that I want to approach today. It is 2 Corinthians chapter 6 verses 14 through 18, which read:

¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?¹⁵ What accord has Christ with Belial?^[b] Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

¹⁷ Therefore go out from their midst,
and be separate from them, says the Lord,
and touch no unclean thing;
then I will welcome you,
¹⁸ and I will be a father to you,
and you shall be sons and daughters to me,
says the Lord Almighty."

Notice that verses 14 and 15 mentions words like "partnership, fellowship, accord, portion, and agreement". These words signify some level of intimate involvement. They are used to in that context to say that whenever any union demands an unlawful or illicit "partnership," or an ungodly "fellowship," or an evil "accord," or a defiled "portion," or an unbiblical "agreement," then it must of necessity be broken off for Christ's sake! Why? Because if you do not have the Spirit of Christ, then you are none of His (Romans 8:9), but if you do have His spirit within, then you will be involving Him in your sins!

So here is what I'd like to do for you today. I want to give you four things to remember about Christ's sake and making whatever break you must for that supreme reason. I will use the letters of the word sake to help you remember them:

First of all, "S" is to remind you that you make a break for Christ's sake to SERVE the purposes of Christ, not your own. S is to SERVE... To many of us have self-seeking, self-serving purposes... We need to take a lesson from the apostle Paul who declared and demonstrated that "For me to live IS Christ..."

Next, the letter "A" is to remind you that Christ's supreme purpose that we must make a break for is the ATONEMENT. Look at the word closely. It says "AT" "ONE" "MENT". Jesus said He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Sinful humanity is separated from God. And it is through the gospel of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection that those who believe become one with their Creator again.

The letter "K" is to remind you that God always wanted humanity to volitionally and intimately KNOW Him. God gave us the best illustration that we could ever have of the freewill He created in us. He gave Adam and Eve everything, even the Tree of Life, and only warned them not to eat of the tree of the "knowledge" of good and evil lest they die. He could have stopped them, but because He wanted us to have free will, He let them. But thank God that He didn't leave them in the ruined state of mind that now caused them to run and try to hide from the voice of God... Paul said that my sole purpose in life is to "know [Christ] and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering..."

Finally, the letter "E" is for that which is ETERNAL rather than temporal. Christ's service was all about taking on the form of a SERVANT in order to bring about ATONEMENT between us and God, so that we could KNOW him as we were first created to, and do so for all ETERNITY! While we are spending so much time making life all about the temporal things we can see with the naked eye, we are missing out on the blessed joy and perfect peace that comes in knowing that we are living life for Christ's sake for time and eternity, and not for ourselves, for Satan, or for a sinful, dying world.

CONCLUSION: The first verse of the next chapter, 2 Corinthians 7:1, sums it all up by simply saying, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”