

THE CROSS – It Is The Power Of God

1 Corinthians 1:17-18 - For Christ did not send me to baptize, **but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.** (*Paul addresses the Corinthians about division in the church*)

¹⁸ For **the message of the cross is foolishness** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved **it is the power of God.**

Intro: We are living in a day when the message of the church is changing.

- Churches are moving away from the old message of salvation through the blood of Jesus,
- They are moving toward a message of salvation...
- through social activism and good works.

The old bloody message of the cross is quickly being replaced

- By a bloodless message that lacks power and that lacks hope.
- Instead of hearing the devastating,
- but life changing news that we are sinners,
- people hear a message that tells them, "***I'm OK and you're OK!***"

I will take the same stand that the Apostle Paul took all those years ago.

- When he wrote to the church in Corinth,
- Paul reminded them that **he had been called for one purpose**
- **That purpose was to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ!!!**
- That message was to be his focus...
- That message was to be his ministry.

Today, I would like to restate the old, old message.

- I would like to remind everyone about what happened that day when the Lord Jesus died on the cross at Calvary.
- Because, it was that event.....
- Which took place at Calvary 2,000 years ago
- **It altered the future for every person** who places their faith in the One Who died there that day.

Please join me as we revisit the old, old story one more time.

- I would like to take you back to a little hill just outside the gates of the city of Jerusalem,
- We will encounter an event that purchased and provided salvation
- For every person who receives that event as their very own.
- Let's return together to the cross of Calvary, and try to grasp ***The Message Of The Cross!***

****As we do, please let the Lord speak to your heart and if you have never been saved, **I invite you to come to Jesus today for salvation through His precious blood.**

I. THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS

A. A Strange Message - *That there should be life out of death.*

- The Jews were looking for a Messiah Who would throw off the Roman yoke and give them liberty from their captors.
- They totally missed the fact that their Messiah would be One Who would suffer for the sins of the people,
- **Isa. 53:1-3 - He was despised and rejected by mankind!!!!!!**

Note: *The message of the bloody cross of Jesus is still a strange message!!!!*

- To those who have never experienced *its life changing power.*
- To them it is "***foolishness***".
- This word comes from the same word from which we get our word "***Moron***".
- **To the lost** the idea of trusting a suffering, bleeding man for salvation is moronic!

1 Cor. 1:21-24 - ²¹For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.²²Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom,²³**but we preach Christ crucified:** a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,²⁴**but to those whom God has called,** both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**

The Good News of JESUS Christ still sounds foolish to many....

- Our society worships power, influence, and wealth
- Jesus came as a humble, poor servant, & offers his kingdom to those who have faith
- This looks foolish to the world, ***BUT Christ is our Power and Salvation!!!***

B. A Shocking Message - A brutal, awful death was experienced there on that cross.

- The death Christ died on the cross was ***one of absolute torture.***

****Allow me to refresh your mind this morning about the terrible price Jesus paid for you as He suffered for sin that day.

1. Scourged - **Matt. 27:26**
 2. Beaten - **Luke 22:63-64**
 3. Spit upon - **Matt. 27:30**
 4. Beard Plucked from His Face - **Isa. 50:6**
 5. Mocked - **Matt. 27:26-29**
 6. Stripped Naked - **Matt. 27:35**
 7. Nailed to the Cross - **Matt. 27:38** The Romans came along, they actually nailed their victims to the cross.
- This method of death usually took several days as well.

Note: To hear the details of Christ's death on the cross is disturbing!

- But, ***it is a necessary truth that must be proclaimed*** and must be heard before there can be salvation.
- There is ***only one way for you to get to God*** and that is by the way of the cross.
- ***There is no salvation apart from faith in the work of Jesus on Calvary!***

C. **A Simple Message - Not clouded by demands and details, but delivered in simplicity and clarity.**

- The modern church; we have tried to attach too many conditions to salvation.
- However, the Bible is clear when it tells us that the way to be saved
- Is for the sinner to accept by faith what the Bible teaches about Jesus
- **His atoning death on the cross,**

Rom. 10:9-10 - If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved.**

¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that **you profess your faith and are saved.**

- This is what the preaching of the cross is all about!
- It is not about you quitting your sins!
- It is about you coming to Jesus by faith!
- It's not about turning over a new leaf,
- **it's about placing your faith in Jesus and Him alone for salvation!**

II. **THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS**

A. **About Making A Statement** – Through Christ's death on the cross,

- God was able to declare boldly, for all to see,
- His boundless, matchless **love for the lost of this world.**
- **The cross is God's statement of love to the world –**

John 15:13 - Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

B. **About Providing Salvation** - The Bible, tells us that there is no other way to cleanse sin, **but through the sacrifice of an innocent one.**

- The Lord Jesus went to the cross and died for the sins of humanity.

When He did, His death on the cross ***forever settled the sin debt of man,***

Heb. 10:12-14 – But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,¹³ and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool.¹⁴ For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

- ***When we believe in Jesus,*** he makes us completely right with God...
- ***Our loving relationship*** leads us to follow him in willing obedience...

C. **About Defeating Satan** - Ever since the Lucifer sinned and became the devil, he has been in the business of *trying to hinder the work of God.*

- He loves nothing better than *keeping souls in bondage* and *seeing them condemned to Hell,*

Eph. 2:1-3 - Made Alive in Christ

As for you, ***you were dead in your transgressions and sins,***² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

But, when Jesus went to the cross, I am of the opinion that the devil thought he had won the victory that day.

- I am sure he rejoiced when Jesus cried out, "***It is finished!***"

Jesus did not say, "***I am finished!***" He said "***It is finished!***"

- You see, *when Jesus died on the cross,*
- ***He did not die to stay dead,*** but
- ***He rose from the dead three days later*** and nailed old slew foot's coffin lid shut!

The Bible tells us that the victory over the devil is found in the blood of the Lamb,

Rev. 12:11 - They triumphed over him **by the blood of the Lamb** and **by the word of their testimony**; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Note: Satan is defeated!

- He may roar like a ferocious lion and he may try to keep you from God,
- **But he has been defeated by the power of God**
- You do not have to remain his prisoner this morning!
- **There is power in the blood of Jesus** to set you free!

III. **THE POWER OF THE CROSS** - When the power of the cross is appropriated, **three great and wonderful things take place.**

Notice what they are:

- A. **Sin Dies** - When a person places his/her faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, **that person is forever changed!**
- **The chains of sin are broken,**

Romans 6:14 - For sin shall **no longer be your master**, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

- They are made into a new creature,

2 Cor. 5:17 - Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ**, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Now, the **new born believer** does not have to live his life in bondage to sin,

Rom. 6:6 - For we know that our old self was crucified with him **so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with**, that we should no longer be slaves to sin

- B. **Hell Is Defeated** - No blood washed, blood bought individual will ever experience the flames and fires of Hell!

- One of the most precious verses in the Bible pertaining to this subject is found in

John 5:24 - "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes in me who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has **crossed over from death to life**.

- There, the Bible tells us that **we will never come into condemnation!**

Romans 8:1 - Therefore, there is now **no condemnation** for those who **are in Christ Jesus**,

C. **Heaven Is Delivered** - *The **blood is the key** that unlocks the gates of glory!*

- When the blood is applied,
- The child of God becomes instantly destined for an eternity in Heaven with the Lord!
- That is His promise to every believer,
- And, there is only one way to get to that glorious place,

John 3:3 - Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, **no one** can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.

Conc:

When evangelist John Wesley was returning home from a service one night, **he was robbed.**

The thief, however, found his **victim to have only a little money** and some Christian literature.

As the bandit was leaving, Wesley called out, "Stop! I have something more to give you." The surprised robber paused. "My friend," said Wesley, "you may live to regret this sort of life.

If you ever do, here's something to remember:

'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin!'

The thief hurried away, and Wesley prayed that his words might bear fruit. Years later, Wesley was greeting people after a Sunday service when he was approached by a stranger.

What a surprise to learn that this visitor, now a believer in Christ as a successful businessman, was the one who had robbed him years before! "**I owe it all to you,**" said the transformed man.

"Oh no, my friend," Wesley exclaimed, "**not to me, but to the precious blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin!**"

Has the blood been applied to your life?

Is your name written down in Heaven?

Is your faith in Jesus and in Him alone?

If you need to come to Jesus for salvation this morning, this altar is open!

If you need to come and get you walk with God straightened out, this altar is open.

You come while the Lord is dealing with your heart today!