



The Cross of Christ **Part 1 : The Centrality of the Cross**

1 Corinthians 1:17-25

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

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.

19 For it is written: "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND BRING TO NOTHING THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRUDENT."

20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;

23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,

24 but to those who are 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.

From this passage it is clear that Paul considered that it was the message of the Cross that was central to the message and ministry of the Church.

This was the whole purpose of the Incarnation

Philippians 2:5-11

He indicated several times that He would be crucified Matt. 16:21-23; 20:17-19; Mark 9:31

There were many opportunities presented to Jesus to avoid the death of the cross:

Satan's temptations Matthew 4

Through His disciples, e.g. Peter Matthew 16:21-23

At the Garden of Gethsamene Matthew 26:37-44

On the Cross Matthew 27:40,42

From the Foundation of the world

The Cross of Christ was not an afterthought. It was God's plan even before the foundation of the world.

Revelation 13:8

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

1 Peter 1:20

20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

1 Corinthians 2:7,8

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,



8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

The Gospel is the message of the Cross

1 Corinthians 1:17-18

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

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.

Luke 24:46-49

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And you are witnesses of these things.

49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

The Early Church preached the Cross of Christ

The very first sermon of the Church Acts 2:22-24;

At the healing of the lame man Acts 4:8-10;

When faced with persecution and threats Acts 5:29-32;

The first sermon to the Gentiles Acts 10:38-43;

Paul on his first missionary journey Acts 13:29-32

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (*i.e. the message of the Cross*).

The message of the Cross of Christ is the main message of the Church.

We cannot replace the message of the Cross with good music, with nice friendly people, with perfectly organized programs, with fun activity, with messages that are nothing more than motivational speeches and feel good sermons – because none of these can save a soul. The Cross of Christ must be preached.

1 Corinthians 1:21

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

The simple Gospel is the power of God



Romans 1:14-16

14 I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.

15 So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

As believers we must share the message of the Cross of Christ. Let us not be ashamed of this message. It may be foolishness to some, and a stumbling block to others. But we preach the Cross of Christ anyway. It is God's power to save and transform the lives of those who believe.

The Gospel in a nutshell John 3:16,17