

RE-VIEW

Weekly Devotionals

"THE POWER OF THE CROSS"

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Situation

The cross is one of the most familiar images in the Christian life. We see it in church buildings, on jewelry, in artwork, and on the covers of our Bibles. It represents hope, grace, forgiveness, and salvation.

But in Paul's day, no one viewed a cross as a beautiful religious symbol.

A cross was an instrument of Roman execution. It was public, painful, humiliating, and shameful. Crucifixion was meant not only to kill a person but also to disgrace them. So when early Christians preached that Jesus, the crucified Messiah, was the way to God, many people thought the message was absurd.

The Jews expected a Messiah who would display unmistakable power. The Greeks valued wisdom, learning, and persuasive philosophy. Neither group expected God's salvation to come through a suffering Savior hanging on a cross.

But God's ways are higher than ours.

The cross reveals that human wisdom cannot save us. Our good deeds cannot erase our guilt. Our accomplishments cannot make us right with God. Our strength cannot overcome the power of sin and death. We need a Savior, and in His mercy, God gave us one.

Jesus did not die because He was powerless. He willingly gave His life to rescue us. At the cross, He took our sin, our shame, our curse, and the judgment we deserved. Through His sacrifice, He

made forgiveness, peace with God, and new life available to everyone who believes.

The cross may look weak to the world, but it is the strongest display of love and power the world has ever seen.

Take a moment today and consider what the cross means to you. Has it become so familiar that you no longer stop and wonder? Or does it still remind you that Jesus Christ loved you enough to take your place?

The message of the cross brings us back to the center of our faith: **Jesus died for sinners, and He is enough.**

Scripture

ReVisit - **1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (NLT):**

The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. **19** As the Scriptures say, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and discard the intelligence of the intelligent."

20 So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. **21** Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. **22** It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. **23** So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense.

24 But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

25 This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.

Additional Scriptures to Look Up This Week:

Isaiah 29:14 — God overturns the wisdom of the wise.

Romans 5:8 — God showed His love by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Galatians 3:13 — Jesus took the curse of sin upon Himself at the cross.

Colossians 2:13–15 — Jesus forgave us, canceled our debt, and won victory over spiritual powers through the cross.

Hebrews 12:2 — Jesus endured the cross and its shame for the joy ahead.

Truth

The cross reveals a truth that turns the world's thinking upside down: what looks like weakness is actually the power of God, and what looks like foolishness is actually the wisdom of God.

Paul says the message of the cross produces two very different responses. To those who reject Christ, it seems foolish. But to those who believe, it is "the very power of God."

The cross tells us something human pride does not want to hear: we cannot save ourselves. We cannot make ourselves right with God by being good enough, working hard enough, knowing enough, or appearing religious enough. We need a Savior.

That is why Jesus came. At the cross, He took the punishment our sin deserved. He carried our shame, bore our judgment, and paid the price we could never pay. Galatians 3:13 says that Christ rescued us from the curse and took it upon Himself when He was hung on the cross.

What appeared to be defeat was actually Christ's victory. Jesus defeated sin and death, opened the way for us to be forgiven, and made it possible for us to have peace with God.

The cross saves us completely. Through Jesus, we have been saved from sin's penalty. We are being saved from sin's power as God changes us day by day. And one day, we will be saved from sin's presence forever.

At the foot of the cross, no one can boast. Every person comes the same way: as a sinner in need of grace. The cross humbles us, but it does not leave us hopeless. It assures us that **God loves us, Christ has paid for us, and grace is enough.**

When guilt tells you that you are beyond forgiveness, look to the cross. When pride tells you that you do not need help, look to the cross. When suffering makes you question whether God loves you, look to the cross.

The message of the cross is still the center of our faith: **Jesus died for sinners, and Jesus is enough.**

Application

The cross is not only something we believe; it is something that reshapes how we live.

1. Come to Jesus with honesty. You do not have to hide your weakness, your failures, or the places where you are still struggling. The cross reminds us that Jesus already knows our sin, and He has already made a way for us to be forgiven. Bring your guilt, fear, temptation, and regret to Him. Do not try to carry what Christ died to remove.

2. Lay down the pressure to prove yourself. It is easy to measure our worth by our work, reputation, income, accomplishments, or the opinions of other people. But the cross says that your standing with God is not earned by performance. You are loved because of what Jesus has done for you.

3. Let the cross humble you. None of us comes to God because we are better than someone else. We all come as sinners in need of mercy. This should make us gentler with others, quicker to forgive, slower to judge, and more willing to serve.

4. Do not be ashamed of the gospel. The world may not understand why you trust Jesus. Some may dismiss your faith or

see the message of the cross as foolish. But the gospel is still “the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes.”

You do not have to win every argument or have every answer. Simply be faithful to Jesus. Speak of His grace when the opportunity comes. Let your words, attitude, and actions point people toward Him.

Paul says God uses His people to spread the knowledge of Christ “like a sweet perfume.” Your life can carry the fragrance of Jesus into your home, workplace, neighborhood, and relationships. When you forgive someone who hurt you, serve without needing recognition, show patience in a hard moment, or speak hope into someone’s pain, you reflect the Savior who gave Himself for you.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the cross and for loving me when I could not save myself. Thank You for sending Jesus to take my place, carry my sin, and pay the price I could never pay.

Forgive me for treating the cross as familiar instead of wonderful, and for trusting my own strength more than the finished work of Jesus. When guilt, pride, fear, or suffering rise in my heart, help me look again to the cross and remember Your love.

Teach me to rest in Your grace. Give me a humble heart, a grateful spirit, and courage to live openly for Christ. Use my words, choices, and relationships to point others to the hope found in Jesus. Help me live this week in the power and wisdom of the cross.

In Jesus’ name we pray,

Amen.