

THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS

1 Corinthians 1:17-18

By way of Introduction: We are living in a day when the message of the church is changing. Churches, and even whole denominations, are moving away from the old message of salvation through the blood of Jesus, and are moving toward a message of salvation through social activism and good works.

The old blood message of the cross is quickly being replaced by a bloodless message that lacks power and that lacks hope. Instead of hearing the devastating news that men are sinners, people hear a message that tells them, "***I'm OK and you're OK!***"

Well, I would like to 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 and that purpose was to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That message was to be his focus and that message was to be his ministry.

This morning, I would like to restate the old, old message. I would like to remind everyone in this building about what happened that day when the Lord Jesus died on the cross at Calvary. Because, it was that event, which took place on a hill far away, that 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 Hill Far Away***, where 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, YOU are invited 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.**)

Isaiah 53 ¹Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? ²For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. ³He is despised and rejected of men; a man of

sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

(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!)

B. **A Startling Message** - (A brutal, awful death was experienced there on that cross.)The death Christ died on the cross was one of absolute torture.

You and I cannot even begin to imagine all the pain that Jesus was forced to endure for our sakes. 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; John 20:25** (The ancient Assyrians were the first to "crucify" their victims. However, they did not nail them to cross, they merely impaled them on sharpened stakes and left them to die a horrible death that often took several days.

When the Romans came along, they streamlined the method and added the humility and pain of actually nailing their victims to the cross. This method of death usually took several days as well.)

8. These truths don't even begin to scratch the surface of what Jesus suffered for you and me, **Isa. 52:14**. His was a bitter cup, but one that He drank of willingly so that we might be saved, **Luke 22:41-42**.

Isaiah 52:14 ¹⁴As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

(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. Friend, 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.)

- One of the problems with the modern church is that they 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 Jesus by faith what the Bible teaches about Jesus and His atoning death on the cross, **Rom. 10:9-10**. This is what the preaching of the cross is all about!

Romans 10:9-10 ⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

- 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!

I. The Preaching Of The Cross

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

A. **About Making A Statement** - Since way back in the Old Testament, the Lord has been telling us of His love for them, **Deut. 7:7-8; Jer. 31:3**.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 ⁷The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: ⁸But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Jeremiah 31:3 ³The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

- However, in 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.(**Rom. 5:6-8**)
- The Lord draws people by His Word.

Romans 5:6-8 ⁶For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. ⁸But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

- The cross is God's statement of love to the world - **John 15:13!**

John 15:13 ¹³Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his 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 in the place of the guilty one, **Heb. 9:22**.

Hebrews 9:22 ²²And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

- This is seen all the way back in the beginning when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, **Gen. 3:21**.

Genesis 3:21 ²¹Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

- This same line of thought continues all the way through the days of the Tabernacle and the Temple. There, sin was atoned for by the blood of sheep, bulls and goats, but sin; it was never taken away, **Heb. 10:4; Heb. 10:10-11**.

Hebrews 10:4,10-11

⁴For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

¹⁰By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

- However, the Lord Jesus went to the cross and died for the sins of humanity. The whole world.
- When He did, His death on the cross forever settled the sin debt of man, **Heb. 10:12-14; Heb. 9:24-28!**
- His Soul was made an offering for sin.

Hebrews 10:12-14

¹²But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; ¹³From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. ¹⁴For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Hebrews 9:24-28

²⁴For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

²⁵Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

²⁶For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

²⁷And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

²⁸So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

- Is it clear yet? If not, then listen to these two precious passages of Scripture, **Rev. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:18-19**.

Revelation 1:5 ⁵And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

1 Peter 1:18-19 ¹⁸Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

(By the way, the word "**saved**" in this verse means, "**to keep safe and sound, to rescue from all harm and danger; from destruction and from perishing!**")

C. **About Defeating Satan** - Ever since 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**.

Ephesians 2:1-3

¹And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

²Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

³Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

- 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!**"

But, what the devil did not know that day was that the Lord Jesus wasn't planning to stay dead!

- Maybe the devil should have listened closer and he would have understood that Jesus did not say, "I am finished!"
 - He said "It is finished!"
1. You see, when Jesus died on the cross, He did not die to stay dead, but He rose from the dead three days later.
 2. The Bible tells us that the victory over the devil is found in the blood of the Lamb, **Rev. 12:11**. ¹¹And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

(Satan is defeated! He may roar like a ferocious lion and he may try to keep you from God, **1 Pet. 5:8**, but he has been defeated by the power of God and you do not have to remain his prisoner this morning!

- There is power in the blood of Jesus to set you free!

I. The Preaching Of The Cross

II. The Purpose Of The Cross

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, **Rom. 6:14**, and they are made into a new creature, **2 Cor. 5:17**.

Romans 6:14 ¹⁴For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

2 Corinthians 5:17 ¹⁷Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

1. Now, the new born believer does not have to live his life in bondage to sin, **Rom. 6:6!**

Romans 6:6 ⁶Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

- (The blood has the power to change every life touched by it! There really is **wonder working power in the blood of the Lamb!**)

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**.
- There, the Bible tells us that we will never come into condemnation! Romans 8:1 confirms this for us! Thank God, no child of God will ever have to go to Hell,

Romans 8:1 ¹There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

- Satan will not get his wish! That ought to cause us to rejoice this morning!

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, **John 14:1-3**.
- And, there is only one way to get to that glorious place, **John 3:3; 7**.

John 14:1-3 ¹Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

- When Jesus said I go to prepare a place for you. Its not that he has to go and build something lie a new house. No, that's not the case, for he said in

my Fathers House are many mansions, and I go to prepare a place. Its like when you invite a guest to come stay at your house, you already have the place where they will stay, but you make up and prepare the room or place for them to lodge.

- Jesus therefore will prepare the place for the believer to be with Him when they pass from this earth.
- What a beautiful invitation it is for our Lord Jesus to welcome us into His Kingdom.

John 3:3, 7 ³Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Conclusion: Has the blood of Jesus Christ been applied to your life?

- Have you called in faith upon the name of the Lord Jesus for salvation?
- Is your name written down in Heaven?
- Is your faith in Jesus and in Him alone?
- Remember Jesus is God. He is not just God the Fathers Son.

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

Just to reassure you of who Jesus is. Look at 1 Timothy 3:16.

1 Timothy 3:16

Authorized (King James) Version

¹⁶ And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Pray.....