

A Messiah Crucified

- From Genesis to Revelation = everlasting gospel is revealed
- Story of redemption does not begin in Matthew = but **Genesis 3:15**
- God announced Seed of the woman would crush serpent's head
- From there forward = Old Testament unfolds / story of SEED
 - coming Deliverer / promised Messiah / God taking on flesh to become PERSON OF JESUS = THE CHRIST = covenant Son of God
- Paul confirms Gospel of God = **Romans 1:2–4** (NIV84) ²the gospel he promised beforehand **thru his prophets in the Holy Scriptures**
³regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, ⁴and who thru the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Yet = when Jesus came / not the Messiah most people expected
- **1 Corinthians 1:22** "Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom."
- **Jews** wanted /conquering King = expected Messiah to overthrow Roman oppression / restore Israel's glory / establish visible earthly triumph = **Greeks** prized philosophy / eloquence / intellectual brilliance
- Cross satisfied neither expectation = a crucified Messiah was not sign of victory to Jews / not wisdom to the Greeks
 - scandal to one / foolishness to the other
- When Jesus spoke of His coming death = even disciples struggled w/this alien idea = their hearts were set on crown / not cross
- Could not imagine Messiah would conquer by surrender
 - reign by serving / save by dying
- Powerful message of cross = shatters human expectations
 - and reveals loving heart of God
- In **twenty-first** century = we're familiar w/ images of cross
- But in **first** century = cross was shocking
 - instrument of shame / humiliation / agony

- To speak of = crucified God = crucified Messiah
 - was almost unthinkable = but that's exactly / point
- Cross of Christ = shows universe how far God was willing to go
 - to save humanity = it reveals:
 - **love** = deeper than we can measure
 - **humility** = beyond comprehension
 - **sacrifice** = that should leave every heart in awe
- **Acts 13:16–47** Paul's sermon helps us understand meaning = cross
- Traces God's faithfulness thru Israel's history = declares God raised up Savior – the Seed from lineage of David— according to promise
- Explains although / rulers in Jerusalem did not recognize Him
- They fulfilled = words of prophets = by condemning Him
- Though they found no cause for death in Him = handed Him over to be crucified = BUT story did not end there: "God raised Him from the dead" = thru this Man, Paul says, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed, and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which the law of Moses could not justify them
- **That = glory of the cross**
- Not merely story of man's cruelty = it's story of God's mercy
- Not merely about suffering = it's about salvation
- At cross = prophecy was fulfilled / sin was confronted
 - **justice** was honored / **mercy** was extended
 - **forgiveness** was made available = to all who believe
- Message remains urgently relevant for today's churches
- We still struggle w/ expectations of how God should work
 - Often want = visible power / immediate answers
 - dramatic breakthroughs / unmistakable signs
- Prefer triumph vs/ suffering = success / surrender = strength / weakness
- Want God to act in ways = that make sense to us = But
 - Cross reminds us God does not always work
 - according to human expectation

- Sometimes He triumphs = thru what looks like defeat
- Sometimes He answers = thru delay
- Sometimes He leads = thru suffering
- Sometimes His greatest work is being done
 - when we understand / least
- Important to grasp = when prayers seem unanswered / when
 - ministries seem fruitless / faithfulness seems costly
 - life does not unfold as expected
 - Must remember **Isaiah 55:8-9** God's wisdom = higher than ours
- If greatest victory in history = came thru = crucified Messiah = then
 - we must not judge God's work = by outward appearance alone
- Paul deeply understood = that's why he said he was sent to
 - preach gospel = and that gospel = centered in Christ crucified
- **1 Corinthians 2:1-5** I did not come w/ lofty speech / human wisdom
 - Determined to know nothing among you
 - except Jesus Christ and Him crucified
- His message = not designed to impress people w/ rhetoric
 - but to reveal = power of God thru Spirit = Why?
 - Because wisdom of men cannot save
 - Human brilliance cannot cleanse / conscience
 - Philosophy cannot break / chains of sin
 - **Only crucified / risen Christ can do that**
- Today's churches need = that reminder
 - We can become overly impressed w/: methods / personalities production / presentation
- May be tempted to think = if we = clever enough / polished enough
 - or persuasive enough = we can change hearts
- Paul points us back to **central truth** = power is **not** in human wisdom
 - **Power is in = everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ**
- The cross is still = heaven's answer for = earth's deepest need
- Answer to **guilt** because = thru Christ = there is **forgiveness**

- Answer to **condemnation** because = thru Christ = there is **justification**
- Answer to **fear** because =thru Christ = see **love of God fully revealed**
- Answer to **human pride** because = at the cross = **all boasting dies**
- Answer to our **uncertainty** because = if God did not spare His own Son
 - we can **trust Him** = even when = we do not understand His ways
- So when life does not go as expected = When the church seems weak
 - When your heart is burdened w/ sin = when human wisdom fails
 - **LOOK TO THE CROSS**
- Messiah was **crucified**—but He was **also raised**
- Thru Person of Jesus Christ = our Creator God who became flesh
 - is preached forgiveness / justification / everlasting life
 - to all who believe
- That = **everlasting gospel**
- That = **our hope**
- That = **message the church = must never stop proclaiming**