



Message **Transcript**

Boast in the Blood

Jeff Schwarzentraub

Let's go before the Lord. Let's pray. Let's hear what he has to say to each one of us individually and as a church. So, Lord, we give you praise, glory, and honor for who you are. Lord, we thank you that you are with us.

We thank you. You haven't left us. We thank you that your word shines brightly into our hearts. And, Lord, really, the only thing that will keep us from hearing you is ourselves. And so, Lord, we pray right now that we would hear you, that we would hear you clearly, and, Lord, that you would share with us the very things that we need to hear right in this moment for your glory.

God, we just pause. We give you any distractions that we have, and we say, Lord, speak. For we are listening. Lord, we thank you for your matchless word. You are mighty.

You are sovereign, you are all powerful, and you're speaking right now. We give you all the praise in Jesus name. And all God's people that were ready to receive his word this morning said, amen. Amen. I want to invite you to open up your bible to the book of first Corinthians, First Corinthians.

We're in chapter one, beginning in verse 18. 1st Corinthians, chapter one, verse 18. And while you're turning there, let me bring you up to speed. We've been talking about Paul's call as an apostle and God using a man to establish his church. Then we spent a week talking about our identity in Christ and how important it was for us to know who we are in Christ.

And last week, we talked about the importance of the establishment of the church and what the church's role is and how to be unified in the church so that God can get his work done. And today Paul's gonna pick up where he left off, because he finished last week in verse 17, saying, for Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with cleverness of speech, so the word of God would not be made void. In other words, Paul said, God called me to preach. Well, today what we're gonna hear is what it was that God called him to preach. Here's what we call it in church, the gospel.

It's the good news. It's the belief that God the Father sent his son Jesus Christ to planet earth. Entire world. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless, perfect life.

He fulfilled the law. And then he died on the cross in our place for all our sins. Three days later on that Sunday, he rose from the dead. He's alive. He's living and active.

He's been offering life to anybody who would call upon him. He ascended into heaven and he dispensed his holy spirit and has been doing that to anybody who confesses him as their personal lord and savior. One day he's going to come back and he's going to judge both the living and the dead. One day, we believe we'll all stand before him to give an account for what we did with this good news that God gave. That's what Paul is going to talk about today.

What is this message? What does it look like? And Paul, in talking to the corinthian church, because they were so worldly in their thinking, is going to compare and contrast worldly wisdom and what the world thinks about this message, to what God thinks about this message, to how the world believes about this good news of Jesus, to how we believe about this good news of Jesus. And it's clarifying to us as a church to understand what this gospel is. So let me say to you from the outset, some

of you may be here and say, I've never trusted in Jesus.

This may be the first time I've ever been in a church. I don't even know what you're talking about. This message is for you. For some of you, you may say, I already know this message. I trusted in this message some 40 years ago.

But there's areas in my life God is still growing. This message is for you. Because this message that we're going to talk about never changes, never dulls, never sullies, never gets old. It is the most important message that we could proclaim and that you'll ever hear. So as we get into this word today in first corinthians chapter one, starting in verse 18, we're going to hear what it was that Paul preached.

And here's what he says. For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside. Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe?

Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. And in these first few verses, what you're going to see is why worldly wisdom fails. I'm going to give you three reasons why worldly wisdom fails today and what the cross of Christ does for us as believers in this message.

And I'll tell you about this. The first reason that worldly wisdom fails is because it supposes that the message of Christ crucified is stupid. Worldly wisdom fails because it supposes the message of Christ crucified is stupid. However, believers in Christ, like us embrace salvation through foolish preaching. And I'll explain where Paul says that in just a minute.

But notice this. Worldly wisdom fails because it considers the message of Christ crucified as stupid. You say, where do you get that? In verse 18, it says, for the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. Now, what's the word of the cross?

The word of the cross is more than just preaching. It's not just the message of the cross. It's the actual content of what's being preached. The content is that on that cross where Jesus Christ died, he himself has always been and will always be fully God and fully man. He himself is perfect in every way.

He himself died on the cross in your place, for all your sins. The word of the cross is that Jesus Christ alone is the only one who can grant salvation to people. He alone is the only one who can save. There is no other way to get to God except through the person of Jesus Christ. That's the word of the cross into the world.

The word of the cross is foolishness. Foolishness means this silly. It's stupid, it's folly. It's narrow minded. Right?

You mean it's when people would say, Pastor Jeff, you can't really believe that out of the seven plus billion people in the world that the only people that are saved and are going to heaven are people who have confessed Jesus Christ as their personal lord and savior and believed that the word of the cross, you can't really believe that, do you? Yes, I do. And I believe it because it's what the Bible reveals in the word of the

cross. And in case you want to write down these verses, I'm going to go through them rather quickly. These would be great verses for you to write down and have when you're talking to someone about the gospel, so that you would know what I'm saying is true.

In John, chapter 14 and verse six, here's what Jesus said to the world about salvation. John 14 six. I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me. Those are not my words.

Those are Jesus Christ's words when he was on this planet he said, the only way of being saved is coming through me. There is no other way. The way to heaven is exclusive. Jesus said, it's through me. There is no other way.

That's according to Jesus. You say, well, I disagree with Jesus. You can do that. You can choose that. But according to Jesus, he said, he's the only way.

He's the only truth. He's the only way to life. How about in John, chapter three,

verse three, where Jesus is talking to Nicodemus, who's the leading religious leader of the day, and here's what he tells him. You must be not, you might want to think about this, or this might be a good idea for you. You must be born again.

He didn't say, I know this is kind of a hyper spiritual word, born again, but I'm going to tell it to you anyway. No, you must be born again. Nicodemus says, well, how can that be? Do I have to enter my mother's womb a second time? He said, no, Nicodemus, here's the deal.

When you were born, you physically came to life in this world. But the problem is everybody that's born is spiritually dead. And so you need a spiritual birth in the same way that you had a physical birth. In order to be made alive, you must be born again. And Jesus was saying, I'm the way, the truth and the life.

I'm the only one that can give you life for the deadness that you have. That's according to Jesus. Now, the New Testament apostles picked up on this. It's not just Jesus that was proclaiming this in acts, chapter four and verse twelve, acts, chapter 412. It says, and there is salvation in no one else.

For there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved. Did you hear that? And there is salvation in no one else. There is no other name. Now think about this, Pastor Jeff.

You're just talking to us cause we're in the church, right? No, I'm telling the world there is no other way of salvation according to Jesus. Now, you might say, well, that's stupid, that's foolish, that's idiotic, that's narrow minded. Don't you know how many Muslims there are? They're in the religion of Islam.

Don't you know how many Jews there are that are in their faith? Don't you know how many Mormons there are that don't totally believe what you believe? See all those otherworldly religions out there? Don't you know how many Buddhists there are in the world? Yes, I do.

And according to Jesus, there's one way for them to be saved. It's confessing

Jesus Christ as Lord and savior of their life, and there is no other way to get saved apart from him. In other words, the gospel's inclusive, and then anybody may come, anybody, anywhere, at any time. You can take all of your sin at any time and bring it to the cross and place it all on him, no matter who you are. You can say, I've never been in church before, but I know I need this.

Bring it to Jesus. He'll take care of it. Or you can be a person who's gone to church your entire life. You have to come the exact same way and bring it all to Jesus. But there is no other name, and there is no other way.

According to the Bible, Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and there is no other way to get to God except through him. That's what the Bible teaches. You can write this verse down, two corinthians 5:21 that says, God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us or become sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. So what happened in this word of the cross, this picture of Jesus on the cross is God took all of the sin of humanity, all of our deadness, all of our shame, our guilt, our anger, our fear, our doubt, all of the sins we'd ever commit, placed it all on Jesus, who knew no sin, who wasn't acquainted with sin, and put it all on him so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. He became sin for

us.

He's the substitute in our place. That's the word of the cross. That's the message of the cross. That's the person, the logos on the cross, Jesus Christ. Now, a lot of us have a hard time with this, especially even in the church, because we know friends and family members that aren't saved.

We know people from around the world that don't know Jesus. And some of us, even though we personally know Jesus and we would say, yeah, he's my lord, he's my savior. We have a hard time being that steadfast on the fact that only people that believe in Jesus are going to heaven, and we waver on that a little bit. So let me just tell you what the word of God says. In Romans chapter ten and verse 13, it says this, whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Anybody, any place, at any time that calls on Jesus Christ to be their personal lord and savior will be saved. It's a fact. The gospel's open to anybody that wants Jesus. But notice what it says. How then will they call on him whom they have not believed?

And how will they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? And how will they preach unless they are sent just as it is written? How beautiful are the feet of those that bring the good news. If you really believe what the Bible teaches, that there is no salvation apart from Jesus, your evangelistic fervor will increase exponentially.

Search the scriptures. Will you look around? Show me the people that are in heaven that didn't name Jesus Christ as their personal lord and savior. You won't find them. You will not find them.

Now, it may be easy for you to think, well, what about that migrant farmer in Africa that hasn't heard? And what about those people down on the block that haven't heard? And what about people that haven't heard? Here's what it will be. There's no excuse.

The gospel is Jesus Christ in him alone. And if you believe that, it will change the

course of your life and how you communicate that to other people, right? That's what I believe because it's what the Bible teaches. I believe it's inclusive in the sense anybody can come. I believe it's exclusive.

And that apart from naming Jesus Christ as your personal lord and savior on this side of heaven, there is no salvation for you. Now, some people get mad about that and say, well, you're putting down a whole religion. No, I'm saying that anybody anywhere in any religion at any time, whether they're steeped in Islam or whether they're just secular humanists like most of us are in our culture, if they call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they will be saved. It's the message for everybody, not just for christians. It's the message for anybody that wants to have a relationship with God.

This is why Paul said that this message is foolishness to those who are perishing. Now, if you don't believe me that people think it's foolish, try this. Here's your application for the week. Go to every person you know in your neighborhood or at work or in your social circles, in your settings, and tell them this. Hey, I'm really fired up.

I left church today and here's what I believe to be true. Jesus Christ is the only way of being saved. There is no other way. And if you don't turn from your sins, repent and believe in Jesus Christ alone, you'll go to hell like the rest of the world. That hasn't.

And see what your friends say. Cause they probably won't say, wow, what a brilliant mind you have. Right. That's not been my experience. That's not been my experience when I've shared one on one.

That's not been my experience when I preach in a church. That's not been my experience when I preached on the street. Right. My experience is that the world says that's narrow minded, that's bigoted, that's false. So why are you proclaiming it?

Because Jesus said it's true. It is the only way. And one day, everybody will stand in front of Jesus Christ to give an account for their life. It's the blood of Jesus Christ that we boast in. It's his shed blood that gives us access into heaven.

It's his blood that gives us access into relationship with himself. It's through his blood that we're given life. And do you realize in the first century, people had the same problem they had with it as they do on the 21st? I mean, think about Peter, Jesus closest disciple. I mean, at one point Jesus is asking, who do you say I am?

And Peter says, well, you're the Christ, the son of the living God. And what does Jesus tell him? Blessed are you, Simon, son of John for flesh and blood, didn't reveal this to you. But my father, who's in heaven now, if you're Jesus closest disciple and you've just discovered and been revealed to by the Father in heaven, that Jesus Christ is God in flesh, and you've told Jesus, who's standing right here, that he's got in flesh, and Jesus, who's God in flesh, speaking to you, says, peter, way to go. My dad just revealed this to you.

You get it? And upon you and this rock and testimony that you've given, I'm going to build my church, the gates of hell can't even stand against what I'm going to have you do. I mean, that's pretty affirming, wouldn't you say? So, at that point, what does Jesus do? He begins to tell them, I must go to Jerusalem and be crucified.

What's Peter do? Hey, wait a tick. Since we're so close, Jesus, let me tell you something. That's never going to happen. This bloody messiah thing.

No way. You can't die for us. What does Jesus say to him? Oh, yeah, you're right. I wasn't thinking, where do I lose my head?

Is that what he says? No, he says, get thee behind me, Satan, for you are a stumbling block to me. You're causing me to stumble. Why? Because unless I shed my blood, you have no part of me.

Right? Isn't that what the message was? So even in the first century, those who were close to Jesus, they liked talking about the miracles and all the stuff that Jesus did and all the great things he was. But to talk about this one that was going to die for them, I mean, that's not the message that they wanted to convey. That is the message.

That is the message. And the only way that message has any power is if somebody already understands that they're dead and in need of the life of Christ. It's the only way it works. Now, I remember telling a story the first time I gave my testimony, like, 25 years ago, because I'd heard this little joke, and I'm gonna tell it to you right now. And out of 500 people, one person went like this.

And I vowed I'd never speak again. But this was what I told. I told the story. I told the story about the person that was caught in a flood and it was coming up to the level of his house. And so a boat came by and said, hey, jump on in or are you gonna die?

And he's like, no, if God wants to save me, he'll save me. The boat got to where he was up on the roof and sent another boat. And, nope, God wants to save me, he'll save me. Finally, you know, sent a helicopter as he's kind of swimming for his life with a ladder. They lowered down.

He said, no, if God wants to save me, he'll save me. He died and he got to heaven. He said, Jesus, why didn't you save me? He said, I sent you two boats and a

helicopter. What did you want me to do?

Right? Thanks for participating. Now, Jesus didn't send us two boats and a helicopter. What did God the father send us? He sent us his son.

That is the message. That is the rescue. He sent us his son, Jesus Christ. He gave us his son Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for all of our sins. And when you get there, because the first one that you will see when you die is the glorified, risen, resurrected Christ, either in all of his glory where you're like, whoa, thank you, Jesus.

Or in huge terror, knowing that it's the worst day of the beginning of your worst eternity you could ever have. Because why? Because God already sent his son. Well, how come God chose to do it that way? Because he did.

That's his way. Well, I don't like that way. That's your pride. Because everybody has to come to God the same way. Whether you're five or whether you're 95, it's

through the blood of Christ.

It's admitting that you're a sinner, believing Jesus is the only answer and confessing him as your lord and savior. It doesn't matter how many degrees you have or what life experience you have or who you think you are. It doesn't matter how sinful you've been or anything else. You all have to come the same way. See, that's what Paul was saying.

And that message is foolishness to the world. You mean you're telling me that if Hitler would have repented in his dying breath and believed that Jesus died for him, he would have been saved, too? Absolutely. Well, that doesn't seem fair, because he didn't earn it. None of us earn it.

Nobody comes, we're dead. We need the life of Christ. That's what Paul's telling them in the church is so important that we preach this message. We preach the message of the cross. At the cross where Jesus bled and he died.

And why did he bleed and die? For us and for our sin. That's how grievous our sin was. Peter struggled with it. We still struggle with it.

But I'm telling you, friends, it's truthful. It's foolishness to those who are perishing now, you'll hear people say stuff like this. Pastor, you can't really believe that all people everywhere that don't trust in Jesus are going to hell for eternity. You can't really believe that Christianity is the only way. Hey, you can't really believe that Jesus Christ is the only way?

Yes, I do. What do they say? That's foolishness. Why? Because they're perishing.

Here's what they're saying. Here's what's true. They're already dead. When you hear somebody say something like that, here's what they're screaming out loud. I'm already dead and I'm going to die in the future.

That's why I think the way I think I'm already dead. That's why it's foolish to me. That's what they're saying to you. So when we're presenting Jesus, what are we presenting? We're not presenting a way for them to be a better person.

We're presenting a way for them who are dead to be made alive, aren't we? I mean, that's the word of the cross. It's foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those of us who are being saved, to those of us who know Jesus. What is it? It's the power of God.

God has the ability to take any sinner at any place, in any time that's destined for hell, rescue them, sanctify them, grow them, and present them faultless before his father in heaven with great joy. And that's not too hard for him. That's the power of God. And we get to experience that for all who call upon him. Amen.

I mean, the gospel draws this line in the sand and says, you have to choose, because Paul is calling on the people in Corinth to do the same thing. In verse 19, he quotes from Isaiah 20 914, he says, for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the cleverness of the clever. I'll set aside. He's telling Jerusalem at the time,

you think you're so wise in your own eyes. Let me tell you, I'm so powerful over everything.

Then he says this. Where's the wise man? Where's the scribe? Where's the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

Now, if you've been a Christian for a while and you're growing with Christ, you'll see exactly what he's saying. Where's the scholar? Like, where are the multi phds? Where are all these wise people? Where are these wise talk show hosts, these wise political funds?

Where are they? Has God not made them look foolish? Because here's the truth about wisdom. There's nothing about worldly wisdom that will bring you into a relationship with God. Nothing.

No matter how wise it seems, no worldly wisdom brings you into a relationship

with God for all eternity. That's why it's stupid. That's why it's silly, right? And you can watch people and you say, oh, man, I got this book. It's called the secret.

It's so important, it can't bring you into a relationship with God, and it can't do anything for your life, right? Paul's like, where are all these smart people? And here's what you'll hear people say. They'll say stuff like this. You ever heard this?

This was such a good book. It's helping me become a better version of myself, trying to become a better version of myself. When I read the Bible, the version I read about those that don't know Jesus is their best works are like filthy rags that basically were little piles of manure compared to the glory of God. So when I hear somebody say, I'm just becoming a better version of myself, I hear I'm becoming a better pile of manure. That's what I hear.

I mean, in light of the glory of God, what difference does it make what you accomplish in this world if you don't have a relationship with God through the person of Jesus Christ? Right? Now, hear me on this. There's nothing wrong with reading books. There's nothing wrong with getting wisdom from other people.

I do it all the time. It's just primary to everything we do has to be this word of the cross. It has to be the gospel of Jesus Christ. Why? Because Paul's calling these people into account.

Like, hey, with all your wise people and all your smart people. I mean, bring the smartest people you want from our world that don't trust Jesus. Bring them up on this platform, and one thing you will never hear from them with any certainty is how to have a genuine relationship with God, because they don't have one. Pick any talk show host. Pick your favorite.

I mean, you shouldn't have a favorite talk show host, but just pick one, right? They can't bring you into relationship with God unless they're going to talk about the crucified messiah, Jesus Christ, as being the only way. This is why Paul says in verse 21, for since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God. In other words, there's nobody that wakes up and knows innately that Jesus Christ is Lord who died on the cross for your sins. You don't just wake up and know that, like, the heavens declare the glory of God.

Like, you could see that there's a God. You can look at the mountain ranges and say, someone had to make that. You can see a newborn baby and think to yourself, wow, there had to be a God behind them. You can think, there may be a God, but there's no specific revelation. When you wake up and say, must be Jesus.

Right? How do you know that it's gonna be Jesus? Because God said that in the wisdom of God, the world in its wisdom did not come to know God. Here's how God did it. God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

How did God bring people to Christ? Through people that stand up and are foolish enough to proclaim that the word of the cross is the way to God. He's not talking about foolish preaching. I mean, I've seen some people do some foolish things when they preach, right? He's not talking about people that are clowning around while they're presenting the word.

He's talking about people that are foolish enough, according to human wisdom, to believe that Jesus Christ is the only way. And they proclaim that with all boldness. And when they do, God uses the preached word of Christ to draw people to himself. That's what he does. You think about why, you know Christ somewhere, somebody somewhere along the line told you that Jesus Christ was Lord.

They had to. That's how we know God uses the foolishness of preaching. And I would just tell you in our day, because I'm going to preach on preaching next week, which is exciting for me. In our day, there's not that many people that will stand up and tell you this because they're fearful. Cause they really deep down, don't believe Jesus Christ is the only way.

I'm gonna tell you this. I will tell you this. As your pastor, I'm getting mad. As your pastor, I believe this book. I will always believe this book.

I believe Jesus is the only way. And when people try to cater to some other way of doing it, what happens is they send people to hell. And I refuse to do that under my leadership. Refuse. Amen.

Thanks for letting me rant just a little bit on that. Get fired up about Jesus. I mean, look at the world. What's the wisdom of the world done? I mean, I look at the things that are on the rise.

Hatred is on the increase, certainly since I was a kid. Wars are on the rise. Conflicts are on the rise. Misunderstandings are on the rise. Drunkenness and alcohol and drug abuse on the rise.

Crimes on the rise. Abuses are on the rise. Divorces are on the rise. And they're not only just increased in terms of number, but how about frequency, intensity and severity of how they are? I mean, how's our world doing?

So when I hear a political candidate stand up and talk about how they're going to bring world peace or whatever, I'm laughing. You can't do it. Unless you can eradicate sin, you cannot do it. Jesus Christ is the only answer for the world, right? That's why Paul goes on in this book, and we'll read it in a couple of weeks.

In one, corinthians 318 say, let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks he is wise in this age, he must become foolish so that he may become wise. It's through the cross that we experience the power of God. And I will not stop that message. And I will encourage you as people of harvest to continue to share that message.

Even if people think you're foolish, it's a sign that you're sharing the right message. Right? You're sharing the right message. Don't be afraid to share. Jesus Christ and him crucified, it's through his blood that you've been made alive.

That's why Paul said in Romans 116, for I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes. Once you believe, it goes from being foolish to the greatest news on the planet, forever and ever. Amen. Right? Worldly wisdom fails.

It supposes this message of Christ crucified is stupid. Give me something else. But as believers in Christ, we embraced this through the foolish preaching, the preaching of this word of the cross, belief that Jesus died and shed his blood for us so that all of our sin could be forgiven, so that all of our lives. It's a simplistic message. World's wisdom's complicated, convoluted.

You gotta read 30 million books just to kind of keep up with it. Here's how simple Christianity is. It's Jesus and him crucified on a tree. He bled and died for you, and he rose from the dead three days later. It's that simple.

It's that clear. Do you want it? I do. It's the power of God. Let me give you a second reason why worldly wisdom fails.

Worldly wisdom fails because it begs for a sign or enlightenment. Worldly wisdom begs for a sign or enlightenment. However, believers in Christ experience both his power and his wisdom. Notice what it says in verse 22. For indeed, Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom.

What do Jews want? They want it a lot like what we want. They want a sign.
Prove to me that you're the messiah. Prove to me that you're real.

Did Jesus perform any signs during his earthly ministry? I mean, what did he do?
He fed about 25,000 people one day from five loaves and two fishes. He restored sight
to the blind. He healed leprosy, he calmed the seas.

Heck, he even raised people from the dead. And people watched him do all those
things. And then what did they say? Hey, just show us a miracle. That'll be enough.

What do you want him to do? I mean, for some of us, we approach God the
same way. Hey, God, if you come through in this area, you do this, then I'll believe. No,
you won't. He's already come through for you.

God the father already sent his son Jesus, who died for you. He already rose

from the dead for you. He's already given you the sign that while you were still a sinner, Christ died for you. You have all the sign that you need. Right?

What do Greeks look for? Look for wisdom. They look for something intelligent. They look for something philosophical. They look for something when they receive it that they can tell other people I'm on a higher plane than you.

I know a lot about this stuff. They don't want to come the same way. Don't tell me if I have five phds, I'm the smartest person in the world, that the only way to God is I need to repent of my sin and trust Jesus Christ and his death on a cross. Yes, I'm definitely telling you that. That's it.

See, certain people look for wisdom. Certain people look for a sign. What's Paul say that he does in the middle of all that? Because, don't get scared. Because some of you guys get scared sometimes.

I'm sharing a gospel with this person. They're so smart. Don't get scared. I'm

sharing the gospel with this person. I don't know enough about the Bible.

They're looking for a sign. Don't get scared. Here's what Paul said he did with those people. But we preach Christ crucified. That's all he did here.

I know you're really smart. I know you're looking for sign. Let me just tell you something you really need to know. Jesus Christ died for you. That's what you need to know.

To Jews, a stumbling block. And to gentiles foolishness. Why was it a stumbling block to Jews? Because the Old Testament records in deuteronomy, chapter 21, cursed is anyone hung on the tree. How could a messiah die on a tree?

He's cursed of God. Here's how Paul answers them. Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us. For it is written, cursed who curses anyone who hangs on a tree. What did Christ do?

Yeah, he was cursed. How was he cursed? With our sin? With your sin. That's why he died.

God the Father took all of your sin and put it on his son and cursed him so that you wouldn't have to be. Jesus Christ is your substitute. That was a stumbling block to Jews. It's a stumbling block to many jews today who are still awaiting the coming messiah, who's going to rule and reign. I'm waiting.

That coming messiah who's going to rule and reign. But I got news for you. His name is Jesus Christ. He's already been here once he died and rose. And you need to place your faith and trust in him.

Amen. That's what he's saying. Our world still begs for a sign and enlightenment. Give me a sign. Enlighten me.

Prove to me not. It's just your pride. Let me tell you this. If you believe that Jesus Christ died and rose for you, you will experience his power and his wisdom. Notice what it says in verse 24.

But to those who are the called, who are the called? The call to the ones that God has reached out to you and by faith shown you that Jesus Christ is Lord. Both Jews and Greeks, in other words, all of us. Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Now, why don't you think about your life when you came in here today?

What are you looking for? And just think for yourself. What's your biggest problem? Okay. I guarantee it boils down to two things.

I need to know what to do. I need wisdom on this, and I need the power to do it. I don't have the power to accomplish what I need. I don't know what it is. It could be your marriage, could be your kids, could be your family, could be a relationship, could be financial stress, could be your house, could be any number of things.

I need wisdom to know what to do, or I need power to get it done. What do we have in the cross? We have the power of God and the wisdom of God. So while many people would say, yeah, non believers, they think the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. Let me tell you about some of the people in the church.

Some of the people in the church who would say, I've trusted in Christ. I believe that he's forgiven all my sins past, and I believe he's going to bring me into glory in the future. They think that the message of the cross is foolishness for the present. In other words, when I have a problem, I'm not going to Jesus. I need a real expert like Jesus was.

He was powerful enough to save me from all my sins and gave me wisdom for the way of life. And he's powerful enough and wise enough to deliver me faultless before the throne. But I got a struggling marriage, so I need to go see a counselor.

I need to go read a book. I need to go see somebody that's really wise and let

me just step off to the side and say, there's nothing wrong with biblical counseling. There's nothing wrong with reading a book. There's nothing wrong with seeing somebody else as long as that's secondary to the fact that in the present, you come to Jesus Christ first and receive his blood. In the present first.

Jesus has power over whatever your problem is and has wisdom for whatever your problem is. And instead of looking everywhere else and saying, the cross of Christ is foolish, hey, pastor, give me something really good for my marriage. I am. It's the blood of Jesus Christ. If you'll own that, it will change your marriage.

If you own it, it will change your family. If you own it, it will change your identity. If you own it, it will change your finances. It's the blood of Christ. It's just as important for you now as it was the day that you first believed, right?

And in church, sometimes we're like, yeah, I already believe all that. I already believe the gospel. Give me some real stuff, okay? I am. It's the blood of Jesus, right?

You still need it as fresh as you did before. That's what he's saying. I don't care if we're talking about your marriage, your purity, your anger becoming more tender. If you say, I need hunger for the word, I'm just not enjoying going to church or, hey, you know what? I just feel like I have pride built up.

What do you need? You need the blood of Jesus in your life. Anytime you come to Jesus and you confess to him what your sin is, what your needs are, and how you're dependent upon him for it, he can flow his blood through that area so you may not be permanently perishing, but there may be an area in your life where you feel like you're dying. That's where you need the blood of Jesus to reach down and just touch it all over again. And it's available to you.

I've got great news. It's available to you. The blood of Jesus is available to everybody today. Isn't that good news? He's got the power and the wisdom for whatever you're dealing with.

That's the gospel. It's not just, oh, I got saved, and, oh, one day I'm going to

heaven in the present. Hey, the gospel is still good for you, too. The blood of Jesus is sufficient for you right now, too. Isn't that good news?

We as believers in Christ, we experience his power. We experience his wisdom. And let me give you a third reason why worldly wisdom fails. A third reason why worldly wisdom fails is because worldly wisdom boasts in human accomplishments. Worldly wisdom boasts in human accomplishments.

However, as believers in Christ, we boast in his blood. We're boasting in his blood. Everything that we are and every good thing that we have is all from Jesus. We are boasting not in who I am. I am boasting on who Christ is in me and what he wants to do with my life.

I'm boasting in that because apart from Christ, we can do nothing. That's what Jesus is saying. Notice what Paul says in the next three verses. He's talking about his church, this church in Corinth. For consider your calling.

Consider at the time that you were called to Jesus, brethren, there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble. He doesn't say, there weren't anybody that was wise. There weren't anybody that was mighty. There weren't any nobles. Not many of you.

I mean, not many of you, when you were called to Christ, were world renowned. Not many of you were. Maybe been some, but not many of you. That's what he's saying. He knows what he goes on to say.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. Why? Because anytime anybody anywhere gives their life to Jesus, it lets the world know that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father, even though these seeming people look like idiots to the rest of the world, he says, and the base things of the world, or the lowly things of the world and the despised, God has chosen the things that are not so that he may nullify the things that are. Now, in case you are sitting here saying, well, I'm a pretty big deal, right?

And I was a pretty big deal when I came to Christ. Let me tell you something. If you give your life to Christ and you go all in with Christ, there will be a lot of people that say you're stupid. Look at what you could have had in this world. Look at what you could have been in this world, and you gave all that up for Jesus.

That's what God's saying. God is saying that anybody, anywhere, at any time that comes to the cross of Christ and gives their entirety of their allegiance to God, right? And doesn't boast in their human accomplishment, but gives their entire allegiance to God. The world will look on and be like, foolish, silly. When my wife and I got married and we're getting to know each other, I remember some of her friends.

She was introducing me to some of her friends and some of her non christian friends. Their only understanding of christians that spoke were televangelists. And so they were kind of talking to my wife. Is he going to ask us for money when he meets us? What does he do?

Freaky stuff. Right? And on top of that, like, even after we got married, right, it's like, you know, one of those things where Kim is going after God with all that she has.

And my wife was working on her PhD at the time, and I remember when she came back one day after telling her friends, yeah, I'm not gonna finish school. I'm gonna support Jeff and his ministry.

And, you know, by God's grace, if we have a family, I'd really like to stay home with my kids. You know what some of her non christian friends said? Stupid. You would waste all your degrees and all your gifting and all your stuff just on that, man. And I had looked at him and said, that's because I'm awesome.

Nah. Right? But the world looks on as stupid. Why? Because what the world wants you to do is have worldly accolades and worldly accomplishments.

But in the light of the glory of Christ, they'll mean nothing. They'll mean nothing. When you're standing before the all powerful, all infinite, almighty, all incredible God, what earthly achievement are you going to be able to present that's worth anything? I mean, boasting human accomplishments. We know it's stupid.

I mean, let me tell you about one of mine, because I'm really proud of it. When I was eight years old, you know, I was one of the best basketball players at the YMCA in my league, man. I was really good. As a matter of fact, we had one game where we only scored 24 points. I scored all 24.

You know why? Because I was an awesome basketball player. Are you guys proud of me? I mean, I'm surprised I don't have an award sitting up in my house as, like, highest point score. I mean, right?

You see how silly that is? I mean, I promise you, if I met Steph Curry, that conversation probably wouldn't come up. Why? Because in light of who he is, it would mean nothing. I'm telling you, no matter what you've accomplished in this world, in light of Jesus Christ, when you stand before him, nothing you've accomplished will mean anything apart from trusting and boasting in his blood.

Nothing. Even as a pastor, it's not wrong to have goals. I have goals. I want to take the gospel all around the world. I want to be a church that's known for a group of

people that are fervent with the gospel and all this stuff.

Can I tell you how much it's going to mean when I stand in front of Jesus and say, hey, look what I did as a pastor. You didn't do anything, Jeff. Worthwhile as a pastor. It was only what I did through you. Do you know that?

We won't do anything great for God. It's only what he does through us. There's no boasting in front of the Lord. What are we going to boast in? I'm going to boast in the fact that, Jesus, I trusted in your shed blood, and it's the only reason I am even here.

I don't even deserve to stand anywhere near your glory. But you're so awesome and I love you. That's what Paul is saying in verse 29. That's why we don't boast in worldly accolades. Why?

So that no man may boast before God. You will not boast when you meet Jesus, I promise you. But, God, I led a small group for like a whole year. It's not gonna count,

right? God, we traveled like 40 minutes to church.

I mean, you're not going to impress Jesus with your accolades. Okay, so you don't need to impress other people with your accolades here. And you don't need to go after all of them. Let another man praise you, not yourself. I mean, just trust the Lord.

Boast in his blood, boast in what he's done in you and who you are in him. That's the joy of the christian faith. He says when we do this, he says, but by. By his doing, notice it's not our doing, it's Christ's doing. He's the one who calls us and sanctifies us, enlightens us.

It's God's doing. By his doing. You are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Do you know what we are? You know who we are because of the blood of Christ?

I mean, think about these. These are instantaneous and progressive ideas of who

we are in Christ. Instantaneously, we receive wisdom. We receive the knowledge of all of God's glory, and we desire to align with him. We have alignment with his desires.

And guess what happens as we continue to grow in Christ? We continue to know more of his glory and have a greater desire to align with him. That's wisdom. I want to do it God's way. What about righteousness?

Do you know that in the moment that you trust Christ that you're declared completely righteous? I mean, even if you walked in here today as a criminal, if you walked in here today as an adulterer, even if you walked in here today with all sorts of sin steeped on you, the moment you call out to Jesus, immediately God declares you righteous by faith. Right? You're made right with God through faith. And then there's this progressive aspect where we continue to walk out our righteousness in him and what he's given us.

We've been given sanctification. It's a fancy word from being set apart. We've been made holy in a moment. And then what do we do? We grow in our holiness and our purpose for God because of who he sees us.

And then finally, redemption. I love redemption. You know what redemption means? Purchased. Do you know it's not just that you chose Christ.

God bought you. He purchased you in Ephesians 1:13-14. He says, it's a deposit guaranteeing your inheritance in the saints. God already put a deposit down for your life and says, I'm coming back to get her. I'm coming back to get him.

I'm coming back to get you. I already bought you. You belong to me. You're mine. Honor me with your body.

We're redeemed. We belong to him, right? That's what God has for us. That's why Paul ends this section, referring to Jeremiah 9:23. So just as it is written, let him who boasts boast in the Lord.

Jeremiah nine says, let not the wise man boast about his wisdom. Let not the strong man boast about his strength. Let not the rich man boast about his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this the Lord who exercises justice and righteousness, righteousness on the earth. What are you boasting in? Are you boasting in his blood?

That's what I boast in. I am all that I am because of the blood of Jesus. Any good in me is because of the blood of Jesus. I boast in that the world may say otherwise. But the more the world screams foolish, silly, narrow minded, the more I say, redeemed, sanctified, wise and righteous, because of the blood of Jesus in me.

And here's the truth. One day, everybody, every knee will bow, every tongue confess in heaven and on the earth and under the earth that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the father. Make no mistake about it, Paul said, I didn't fight with you. I didn't argue with you. I didn't tell you you had to.

But I persuaded you because I preached to you and proclaimed to you the gospel of Jesus Christ is for you. So I know in this place we have people that come they're checking things out, people that come and say, get me out of here. Here's what

I want to tell you. That what you feel in your heart right now is God calling you to himself. He loves you.

He loves you with an unconditional love. So much that even before you were born, he died knowing all the sins that you would ever sin. And here's how you can become a Christian. Here's how you can have life in his name. By admitting that, hey, I'm a sinner.

By believing that Christ Jesus died on the cross for your sins and rose from the dead and simply just confessing him. Jesus, I want you to be my personal lord and savior. You can do it right where you're sitting. And for those of you who are sitting here who said, I've done that, this reminded me of how great and how glorious my salvation is. What's the area of deadness in your life where you need the blood of Christ?

Where you've been looking somewhere other than the cross? What's that area you've been looking for? Somewhere other than the cross? Cause the answer is found in the blood of Christ. So the way we're gonna end our service today, after I pray, is

our ushers are gonna pass out our elements for communion.

And whether you're a part of our church or not, if you've confessed Jesus Christ as your Lord and savior, we want you to partake of this meal with us together. And as you hold those elements in your hand, I want you to ask yourself, have I trusted in Jesus Christ as my lord and savior? If not, why don't you make this your time? And if you have, and you're sitting here today, and the Holy Spirit has been speaking something to your heart about a specific area, where does the blood of Christ need to flow into your life in a fresh, powerful, and wise way today? Because God wants to bless you that way.

So, let's pray. And as I finish praying, the ushers will pass out the elements. So, Lord, we give you all praise, glory, and honor for who you are. Lord, we see that the wisdom of the world comes short, and we see that your wisdom has power and glory in the cross of Christ. So, Lord, as we partake this meal together that you've invited us to do, Lord, show us who we are.

And if you're here and you've never trusted Jesus, here's how you do it. Jesus.

Just say it in your own heart. I admit I'm a sinner. I believe that you died for me and rose and right now I confess you as my lord and savior.

Lord, have your way in this moment as we reflect on all you've done for us. In Jesus name, amen.