

# Gospel of Christ Crucified

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*[1 Corinthians 1: 22-25] 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.*

The cross is the physical symbol of Christianity. The cross represents Jesus Christ who was crucified. He was crucified as the Lamb of God for the whole of humanity. When a preacher brings the gospel of Christ to the people, the story of the gospel must contain the story of the crucified Christ. Without this message about the crucified Christ, the gospel is meaningless and not genuine. That is why the apostle Paul wrote that he preached the crucified Christ. He described the gospel of the crucified Christ as 'the power of God and the wisdom of God.' Let us consider the meaning of these two characterizations of the gospel of the crucified Christ.

## ***First, the gospel of the crucified Christ is the power of God***

When we observe the nature around us, all things of nature testify of the power of the Creator. As we watch the sunrise in the east in the morning, we are amazed at the awesome power of the sun that radiates warmth and light to the whole solar system, particularly to the earth so that all things on the earth including you and me receive light and life from its radiated energy. God the Creator has instilled power in all His creation. Likewise, God planned that the sins of all repenting sinners are washed clean, and the sinner is transformed into a new person as a child of God through the blood of Christ shed on Calvary's cross.

This power is not just rhetoric, but it is applied effectively to every sinner's life who repents and accepts Jesus Christ as his/her Savior and King. This mystery was proclaimed in the garden of Eden by God when Adam and Eve sinned.

*[Genesis 3:15] And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

This was God's word of prophecy to the Old Serpent the devil. The seed of the woman will come and bruise Satan's head to damage his design and plan. Jesus, who was born of the Spirit of God through the body of a virgin woman named Mary in the village of Bethlehem, Judea in the land of Israel some 2,000 years ago, came to this world so that He could fulfill God's plan of human salvation to bring them back to Eden whereas the sinned Adam was driven out of it. Jesus saves people from Satan's clutch and brings them back to God, thus crushing Satan's plan of taking humanity to sin and death.

God reaffirmed His plan of human salvation to several faithful people including Abraham, Jacob, Judah, and David. Christ the Messiah was to be born from their lineage, as a descendant of David. And this prophecy was fulfilled when Mary, a descendant of David gave birth to Jesus who was adopted by Joseph, another descendant of David. Thus, the 4,000-year-old prophecy was fulfilled by this humble couple of David's lineage.

God wants to have His own family that is composed of former sinners who are cleansed of their sins through the blood of the Lamb of God. That is why when a person listens to the story of the crucified Christ and accepts Jesus as his/her Savior, the power of the cross takes this person from the realm of sin and death to the holy realm of God's presence in a very supernatural, miraculous way.

The apostle Paul explains this miraculous transformation as a death to the former self together with Christ. In other words, a repenting sinner as he/she accepts Jesus as his/her Christ, goes through a spiritual death to the former self, and is born again into a new creature, a godly creature that is now accepted into the family of God so that he/she now enters the blessed presence of God in a wholly miraculous way. That is because the power of God works through the process and this power comes to that person simply because Christ died for us on the cross. The power of the cross brings about the transformation of every repenting sinner.

*[Galatians 2:19-20] For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

### **Secondly, the gospel of the crucified Christ is the wisdom of God.**

What other religion in this world has such a story of God sacrificing His own Son to save the people? Have you ever read or heard of such a religion as Christianity, where God, out of His love for His creation, sends His Son into the world in a very humble way and has Him cruelly crucified at the hands of unbelievers so that His death and blood become a sin offering to God?

*[John 3:16] For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

This is totally contrary to the wisdom of this world in any generation. Even now, the world has not learned the true meaning of this wisdom of God, who sacrificed His most precious being, His own essence and personification, into death by crucifixion, the cruelest form of death, as a sinner, when He was sinless but obedient Lamb of God. What is amazing is the Son was totally submissive to the plan of His Father because the same love of God toward humanity was in His heart also. This love was the driving force through the 33.5 years of His earthly life and thereafter.

*[Philippians 2:5-8] Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

We are saved from the devil's clutch of sin and death through the blood of our Savior Jesus freely shed on the cross. The power of the cross has saved us from the destiny of sin and death back to Eden, the realm of God's presence. This plan of human salvation is God's wisdom of saving us and Jesus willingly placed His body into the hands of evil men so that His sacrifice could be offered up, once and for all, for the redemption of every repenting sinner. Oh, how marvelous is the wisdom of God! Oh, how unsearchable is the depth of His love! And how blessed we are that we have entered His salvation through the free sacrifice of the crucified Christ!

*"Oh God our Father! We are truly thankful for our salvation that has been made possible because Your Son Jesus was willing to go to the cross on Calvary and die for all sinners. We were sinners but our sins were blotted out because of His blood that was freely shed on the cross. Why would You make such a sacrifice for us sinners? We realize it was because of the great agape love in Your Heart. May the same love grow in our hearts so that we also may show forth the same love to You and to others around us. We love You and we love Jesus with all our hearts! Amen."*

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