

WEEKLY ENCOURAGEMENT

from Johnny Hunt

IT'S STILL THE CROSS

PART TWO

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

I. THE DIVIDING OF THE CROSS | VERSES 18, 21

- The cross is the great divider.
- The cross stands between me and heaven and between me and hell.

A. THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING | VERSE 18

- **“Who are being saved”**—present tense participle (passive voice)
 - Indicates the inability of those who are being saved to accomplish that end in their own strength.
 - It is God who is acting to save them through His own power.
- **Illustration:** When I was under conviction of the Spirit of God, after hearing the message of the cross, I was concerned that if I received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, I would not be able to change. The truth is, I could not change myself, but the power of God in the cross changed me!

- **“At Calvary”**

*Years I spent in vanity and pride
Caring not my Lord was crucified
Knowing not it was for me He died
On Calvary*

*Mercy there was great and grace was free
Pardon there was multiplied to me
There my burdened soul found liberty
At Calvary*

1. Believing from a Human Side | Verse 21

- **“The world through wisdom did not know God”**

- God wisely established that man could not come to know Him by human wisdom. That would exalt man, so God designed to save *helpless* sinners through the preaching of a message that was so simple the “worldly wise” deemed it nonsense.

2. Believing from Heaven’s Side | Verse 21

- **“It pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe”**

- Salvation comes only through faith in the message of the cross.
- **NOTE:** It is not foolish preaching that pleases God; it is the foolishness of the message being preached. This proclamation does not refer to the act of declaring a message but to the content of the message. The content of God’s message is the gospel, **“the word of the cross”** and **“the power of God.”** It does not refer to a special technique of oral communication, rather, it pertains to the content of what is declared. He is talking about preaching which is foolish in the world’s eyes—the simple, unadorned, uncomplicated truth of the cross of Jesus Christ that allows no place for man’s wisdom or man’s work, or man’s glory.

B. THOSE WHO ARE PERISHING | VERSE 18

- **“perishing”**—present tense; did not describe a future possibility, but rather a present reality.
- **John 3:18, “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”**
- **“perish”**—the act of perishing has already begun and will continue unbroken unless there is repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ. The word “perish” means “to loose from something.” Those who are lost are being continually loosed from any relationship with God.

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II. THE DEFINING OF THE CROSS | VERSE 25

- The cross defines the *source* of man's problem and the *solution* to man's problem.

A. THE SOURCE

- Sin: human wisdom sometimes sees the immediate cause of a problem, but it does not see the root, which is always sin. It may see that selfishness is a cause of injustice, but it has no way to remove selfishness.

B. THE SOLUTION

- Savior Jesus Christ: Salvation

- The only message a Christian has to tell is the message of the Cross—of God the Son becoming man, of His dying to pay the penalty for our sins, and of His being raised from the dead in order to raise us to life.

- **1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."**

- The very part of God's plan and work that seems most ridiculous and useless from man's natural standpoint exhibits His greatest power and greatest wisdom.