

# Stupid Preaching

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Date: 26 May 2019

[0:00] 1 Corinthians 1, if you've got your Bibles, just some thoughts around the Lord's table.! Thanks Julie. Now some would mock this message that I'm to deliver to you today.

! They would mock it. They would call it foolishness. A stupid message, something that's silly, something crazy, madness. Some would call Christians mad, idiots. They do, exactly. And doesn't the media love to paint Christians like that? Crackpots, fruitcakes, you name it. What I speak of is the cross. It was brutal, horrific. A bleeding man, scourged, injured, abused, spat upon, humiliated. It was graphic. Hollywood can't paint a picture graphic enough of that horrific sight, of his bruising, of his wounding, of his scarring, of his piercing. And yet through it all we consider his love that took him there, that held him there for us. Took him there, to the cross, to the cross. Yet some would spurn this message as if it's foolishness, hate speech.

It's not politically correct. They would spurn this message and hate this man, this man of love. They would downgrade him and spurn him and spit upon him in their hearts and minds. They would reckon him of no value, of no worth. And the cross of no value to modern mankind. Something kind of out of date. That's something we've grown out of that now in our modern world, in modern world, in this info technology world. And the cross is something old fashioned. It's out of date. It's foolishness they would say. As it says in 1 Corinthians 1.18, for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. But unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. The message of the cross, it's powerful isn't it? God's power. It's God's power for us, for humankind. God's power. It's our focal point. It's the cross. It's why we're here. It's why we are saved. It's the cross. It's the cross. It's the cross. It's why we are saved. It's the cross. It's why we are saved. It's the cross. And the mob wanted more that day.

More pain, more blood, more injury, more hatred. They vented at him. The mob wanted more that day. More pain, more blood, more injury, more hatred. They vented at him.

They wanted him crucified. They wanted him crucified. They received him not. They despised. They rejected him. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was despised.

[3:32] Rejected. What if we had been in that crowd? We would have been among their number. We would have been caught up with the crowd.

Or maybe just watching. As the crowd yelled. They screamed. They vented. They were frothing at the mouth, wanting his blood. It says in Luke 19, 14, a parable really, but speaking in our Lord's picturing ahead of what would happen.

It says in Luke 19, 14, it says they hated him. They hated him. They hated him.

They hated him. We will not have this man reign over us. We don't want him being our ruler. We don't want him being our king, our sovereign, our master.

And they crowd yelled. They cursed him. The lover of our soul. The lover of our soul disdained him, cast him aside and he trod onwards.

[5:07] He carried the heavy cross. He stumbled under its load and the throng followed him outside the city walls. As they journeyed towards the hill, the hill of Golgotha.

And this was the ultimate rejection, wasn't it? The curse of the cross. The torture. The agony. The passion.

The rejection. The gruesome torture. The shocking suffering. And the foolishness of the cross. The world mocks this message still.

It wants some other way. It wants some human effort. Some human philosophy. Some thinking of man. Some new age. The foolishness of the cross.

The world laughs still, doesn't it? The world laughs. It laughs. It mocks and continues to curse him. To shout curses at the man. Many still shout curses at Christ, don't they?

[6:11] We see the world. We see modern comedy, so-called. Fools mock at sin. They mock at the cross. They mock at Christians. They call us bigots and hate speakers and such.

The world hates Christians today. And they still shout curses at the Christ. And the mockery continues from vain men. They hate him still. They scorn him still.

A proud world considers the cross foolish. It's foolishness. They reject the payment for their sin.

They reject even the concept of sin.

They spurn his pardon. Extended. They refuse it. No. Go away. I don't want to hear it. They want to go on their merry way.

To do their own will. Not realising their pathway takes them to hell. The devil's hell. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

[7:19] Proverbs 14.12. The way that seems right. Oh, it feels so right. But it's deadly wrong.

There's a way that seems right unto a man. But the end thereof are the ways of death. God calls the cross a powerful witness.

It's a shocking witness, isn't it? It's in your face, isn't it? The cross. The cross. A powerful witness of the love of God. Of his grace.

Of his awesome power. Of his wisdom. And here is found our peace. Our great hope. Our joy. Our glad response to the cross.

Here is what gives us a joy deep, deep down within. A joy the world cannot give. And the world cannot take it away. The true joy of our soul.

[8:18] And victory is here at the cross for you. For us. Yet many want darkness still. They want to stay in falsehood and lies. And the Christ of the cross beckons still.

His voice still cries out amongst all the voices that would call for our attention. And he says, come unto me.

He still calls out, come unto me. Here he was, beaten, bruised, nailed to the cross. Raised up for all to see. 1 Corinthians 1.22.

It goes to say, for the Jews require a sign. And the Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified.

Unto the Jews a stumbling block. And unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are called. Both Jews and Greeks.

[9:20] Christ. Christ. The power of God. And the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God. So called. Is wiser than men.

And the weakness of God. Is stronger than men. The power of God. It's the cross. It's his power. His power for us. His love for us.

The wisdom of God. There's no greater pathway. There's no. Nothing compares. There is no other pathway. Than the pathway of the cross.

The power of the cross. The wisdom of the cross. It's the foolishness of God. The world would call it. But it's God's wisdom, isn't it? It's the only way. That we can be saved.

And look at the cross. Here is the grace of God for us. And grace and wrath. Meet at the cross. You've got the sunshine and the shadow. Of the cross. You've got God's grace.

[10:15] You've got the shadow of our sin. You've got God's. Mercy. And you've got. The darkness of our sin. And God. Intervenes for us at the cross.

He took the wrath for us. In Christ. He took his wrath. Upon his own self. His own son. He took the shame for us. All the shame. Of all the things we're ashamed of.

He's taken it all. He's taken the shame. Our shame and sin. Because he became sin. For us. Who knew. No sin. He became sin.

For us. Our sin. Our guilt. And some hate him still. They want some other way. They want some other self-help. Or some self-actualization.

Some self-esteem. But no. Self must die. And Christ must live. In our hearts. Some hate him still. They hate the cross.

[11:14] They are enemies of the cross. Enemies of this message. They want some other religion. Some new way. Some new old. New age way. Which is

really the old lie.

We know. And they are the enemies of the message of the cross today. They're all around us.

Anything but the cross. Anything but the cross they want.

They say. Any other way. Any other way. Some other way but the cross. But there is no other way.

There is no other saviour. There is no other saving grace than the cross.

In Philippians 3.18. Paul writes. For many walk of whom I have told you often. And now tell you even weeping. That they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.

He is saying I am weeping. I am telling you there is many. That are the enemies of the cross of Christ. I hate the cross. I hate the Christ of the cross.

[12:09] In verse 19. Philippians 3.19. Whose end is destruction. Whose God is their belly. And whose glory is in their shame. Who mind earthly things.

For some the God is their belly isn't it. I just I want. I want. The craving. The appetite. The feeding of the self. Of the flesh.

Of the vain mind and heart. And will. The enemies of the cross of Christ. But the Bible says whose end is their destruction. Whose God is their belly.

Whose glory is their shame. Darkness fell. On the hill. Notice what happened next. At the moment the darkness fell.

The veil was rent. In two. The curtain of the temple was torn. From top to bottom. Wasn't from bottom to top. As if some man did it.

[13:05] To rupture the curtain of the temple. To make the way open into the holy of holies. Wasn't man who did it. It was done from the top.

By the hand of God. Almighty God. At the moment of his death. The torn curtain. Speaks to us today. It was torn in two. From top to bottom.

And this curtain. It was a thick veil. Some reckons. Some 60 foot high. It was massive. Much taller than this building. And it separated the holy of holies.

The very earthly dwelling place of God. Of God's presence. It separated that. This curtain.

Separated God's presence. Which is behind it. From the rest of the temple.

Where men dwelt. And for us. The torn curtain. It speaks to us. Of man's separation. From God. There's a big thick curtain.

[14:03] Some would reckon it's several inches thick. This curtain. Of the temple. And this thick curtain. It separated where men dwelt. From where God's dwelling was.

The holy of holies. The earthly dwelling. Of God's very precious presence. With his people. And for us. It speaks. You could see the separation. As speaking of how our sins.

Have separated us. From the holy. Isaiah 59. 1 through 2. That our sins have separated us. From the holy God. And only once a year.

Were people permitted to pass. Beyond the veil. Inside the curtain. And it was only one man. Could pass through. That curtain. Only the high priest.

Was permitted. To enter through the curtain. Once a year. To enter God's presence. For all Israel. And to make an atonement. For their sins. In Leviticus 16.

[15:01] And the cross. It speaks to us. Of that torn curtain. As the darkness fell. And as Christ cried. It is finished. The curtain was torn. From top to bottom.

And it speaks to us. Of how the very presence of God. It's not. It's not closed off to us now. The curtain is open. Amen. The curtain is torn.

Amen. And we can enter in. Today. Amen. Into the very presence of God. And some would reckon this message is stupid. It's foolishness.

They would mock that such a thing could be such. That the cross could be so powerful. That it could tear the curtain. That veil. That separation. That our sin could be taken.

That we can enter in. To the very presence of God. Some would say. Preacher. Tone it down. Don't take it too seriously. Some treat Christianity like that.

[15:58] Don't they? Their Christian belief. As they would profess it. They would say. Oh. Don't get too carried away. You know. We. We're Australians.

You know. Fair going mate. She'll be right mate. Let's not get too serious about this kind of stuff. You know. We don't. We don't want to. We don't want to be considered one of those. Crackpots. That just. That Christianity is kind of. To live is Christ. For some people. We don't want to be like them.

You know. There's a young boy. Who came to. Worship. With his mother. And she came along. This little boy. Came with his mom. And during the. The sermon. As the preacher was talking about. The. The cross. And during the sermon. The boy was listening. Really hard. Really listening. Really tuning in. To what the preacher was saying. And the preacher was talking about.

[16:56] The cross. Of Christ. And as the preacher preached on. The boy was moved. And he began to weep.

He began to. It spoke to him. It spoke to his heart. The graphic. Gruesome. Horrible. Horrific. Nature.

Of Christ's. Punishment. And. Nailing. His piercing. His bruising. The crown of thorns. And it was so moving. That the boy was moved. He was moved to tears. And his mother became really embarrassed. Here's this boy. Crying. Weeping. Aloud.

God. Because he was thinking about the cross. And here was his mother. She said. She was becoming so embarrassed. Oh. Shh. Shh. She whispered to him.

[17:52] Don't take it so seriously. Don't take it so seriously. The cross. Shouldn't we take that seriously?

Shouldn't we take it seriously? People. We need to start taking the cross seriously. Not stop taking it seriously. The cross should move us.

It should move us still. The cross and its compelling power. If I be lifted up. I will draw all men unto me. We must lift him up.

Of course we know he's no longer on the cross. We know that. Glory. He's risen. He's alive. Living in our hearts by faith. The cross makes that possible.

Doesn't it? His compelling power of the cross. It tells us in Hebrews 9.26. For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world.

[18:50] But now once in the end of the world. Hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He's come once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 9.26. We're not re-enacting it here. We're not re-crucifying Christ or materially changing magically the bread and cup into anything other than bread and cup.

But it is to us a picture of that graphic picture of Calvary. That graphic picture of the cross today. So let's remember him.

The Bible says to search our hearts and to examine ourselves. And so let us eat.

So let us drink. And it's a time where we reflect on our standing, our state before his glory. The awesome God who we know.

[19:57] And I call my ushers now please to help. To wait on us with this tangible substance that speaks of the intangible.

And the world calls it foolish still. The message of the cross.

There's people who are avowed enemies of the cross. They hate the cross. They hate the Christ of the cross. Yet for us he is our saviour and Lord.

And we love him. And this is why we want to be reminded today of all of that that he has done for us. This one, our great Lord and Master. Scourged for us.

Yet risen for us. Gloriously. Reigning. In human hearts for us. And it's all because of the cross today. We don't reckon it's foolishness.

[21:04] We reckon it's the wisdom of God. We reckon it's the power of God. The love of God. As the world would reckon it of no value. For us it's of inestimable value.

It is of value beyond reckoning. The love of Jesus is powerful today. And if you can simply trust him. You can trust him now in an eye blink. In a moment of faith. Your eternity can change from heaven to hell. Sorry, the other way around. From hell to heaven.

Glory. We don't want to go to that other place. But amen. We can go from a destiny of hell to a destiny of heaven. And it's all because of his grace.

Glory to God. Because he endured such agony for us. But mostly that he bore our sin. That's what matters, isn't it? Is your sin there?

[22:02] Can you see it there on that hill? 2,000 years ago in that place. In that, behind, outside those city walls of Jerusalem. That's where your sin was paid for.

It was nailed there. Carried in his own body on the tree. That it was paid for there. And leave it there. Leave it there. 2,000 years ago.

Leave it there. At the cross. Leave it there. Paid for by his blood. Shed for you. As you receive his gift by faith. And it's foolishness.

The world would consider such a message foolish. Yet we know it's the wisdom of God. The grace of God. And it's only when the light goes on in our hearts by faith that we can see how wonderful it is.

What he has done. And is doing. The cross still works, doesn't it? The cross still sanctifies. The cross still blesses us.

[23:02] The cross still is in our hearts mind. The grace is still something we reckon on and remember.

And glory in. Thank him for. Let's be thankful. Let's be grateful. That he has granted us the grace to hear and receive this message today.

The message of the cross.