

The Wisdom & Power of Christ Crucified

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Preacher: Mike Loosa

[0:00] Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, God, you are all wise and all powerful.

! Amen.

Well, good morning, church. It's great to see all of you here this morning. A warm welcome if this is your first Sunday at Shoreline. And we are walking through the book of 1 Corinthians.

We just started a few weeks ago. So if you don't have a Bible, there are some Bibles in the back table bookmarked to today's passage. If you haven't already, turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 1. 1 Corinthians 1. And I want to ask if you have ever heard the story about an atheist philosophy professor at the University of Southern California. Now, this professor would challenge students every year at the end of the semester to stand up if they still believed in Jesus.

[1:16] Because all throughout, he would berate Christians and talk about how foolish it was. Well, as the story goes, after 20 years of no one ever standing up, one bold freshman made the stand.

The professor called him a fool and said that if God existed, he would prevent this piece of chalk from hitting the ground and breaking. And as the professor released the chalk, it slipped out of his fingers, off his shirt cuff, onto the pleats of his pants, down his leg, and off his shoe.

And as it hit the ground, it rolled away unbroken. The professor walked out of the lecture hall, and the freshman walked to the front and proceeded to share his faith in Jesus. Now, this story has such appeal to Christians because it seems to provide empirical evidence that God exists, right? We want to see verifiable proof of God's power at work, and something like this is that proof, right? Well, we don't actually know whether this story is true.

Don't get me wrong. I have no doubt, I have no doubt whatsoever that God could have acted in that way if he so choose. God can defy the laws of nature that he's spoken to existence.

[2:31] Can he not? God can prove his power with accompanying signs of healing and prophecy and speaking in tongues as he wills. He's the creator God.

But whether or not that story is true, I think it misses the point. And whether or not God gifts a particular local church with the so-called miraculous gifts does not change this truth, church, that the miraculous power of God is most clearly on display in the cross of Christ.

In the cross of Jesus Christ. That's where the power of God is most clearly on display. So if you're here this morning, you're thinking, man, this church is so obsessed with the cross.

Like, that's for Good Friday. Why are we still talking? No, no, no. The cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. We give our, every week, we give our attention to Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And this, friends, this defies all human logic. This defies human reason. It defies the dynamics of worldly power. And yet, Paul asserts in today's text, it is the power of God.

[3:39] And the title of today's sermon is The Wisdom and Power of Christ Crucified. The Wisdom and Power of Christ Crucified. And our main point for today, the one thing that I want you to take from this sermon, from this text, is that our only boast is Christ and him crucified.

The wisdom and power of God. He is our only boast. The cross of Christ is our only boast. Now, the passage for today is divided up into three clear sections. And the first one shows us the conflicting perspectives of the cross.

So that's the first point, the conflicting perspectives of the cross. And Paul lays out these two rival perspectives right at the start. He says in verse 18, look in your Bibles, for the word of the cross is

folly to those who are perishing.

But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. Now, the word for, right at the start, it clues us into the fact that Paul is connecting to what he said before.

He's connecting that to what he is now saying. Now, if you remember last week, Paul began to address the problem of division in the Corinthian church. They had formed these factions based on allegiances to one leader or another.

[4:53] And Paul began to address that serious problem by bringing them back to gospel doctrine, right? To show them then how the doctrine of the gospel ought to inform and transform their culture in the church.

Is Christ divided? He said in verse 13. Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? Now, that would become the roadmap, as it were, for the next few chapters as Paul expounds on each of these three topics in reverse order.

He briefly addressed baptism last week and then transitioned to addressing the cross, asserting in verse 17 that the power is in the cross of Christ.

which becomes the theme of today's text. But the world doesn't think so, does it? For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing.

The cross is folly to the world. Look down also at verse 25 in your Bibles. The cross is perceived by the world as utter foolishness, as utter weakness.

[6:05] You mean to tell me that the salvation of the world is in that man hanging like a crucified criminal on the cross? That's insanity.

Right? Let's just call it what it is. That's insanity. And Paul says down in verse 22 that Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom.

The Jews were looking for a Messiah who would come with military might, right? Who would conquer their Roman oppressor, who would reestablish the throne of David and bring about peace and security that would never end.

What they weren't looking for was the suffering servant. You know, the one predicted by Isaiah who would be despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

How could that man from backwater Nazareth, how could that man who is now a curse according to the law hanging on a tree, how could he be the Messiah from the royal line of David?

[7:09] That's foolishness. The Greeks, which represents not only the ethnically Greek here in the text but also Gentiles, we see that by the usage of the word Gentiles, all non-Jews, they were looking in that culture for men who could woo and wow a crowd with their brilliance.

They were looking for orators and philosophers who could capture and persuade the audience with these lavish rhetorical displays. So how could Paul, this unimpressive preacher, speaking about such a ridiculous story, be anything but a babbler and a fool?

The cross is disgusting. It's abhorrent. We don't even talk about the cross in our culture. It's for the vilest of criminals. And Paul is claiming that eternal life and salvation comes through the cross?

What an offense. It's easy to see why the message of the cross would have been such a stumbling block, literally scandal, affront to the Jews and then folly to the Gentiles.

And it is perhaps just as scandalous and foolish today as it was then. I mean, after all, what is the word of the cross?

[8:29] Let's be really clear this morning. The message of the cross is that mankind was in bondage to sin, right? Unable to do anything to free himself from it.

And his sin against a holy God deserved and demanded punishment for justice to be upheld. But God, in unthinkable love, in unthinkable compassion, did not leave humanity in this helpless estate, did he?

He came down in the person of Jesus Christ, clothed himself in human flesh, and he endured humiliation and agony. He endured the forsakenness of his father.

And he went to the cross that he might offer himself as the once for all sacrifice to pay for the sins of the world. This is the message of the cross, the word of the cross.

And therefore, it is by faith in the name of Jesus and him alone that sinners are forgiven of their sin, eternally united to God in Christ. And this includes every person of every race, of every ethnicity, of each gender, of every strata of society, who are all sinners before a holy God, but who may all

receive life in Jesus' name.

[9:47] This is the word of the cross. It's not a message cleverly devised by brilliant philosophers. It's not a message of upward mobility and the promise of worldly wealth and acclaim.

It's not a message that coheres with the power structures of this world. It's backwards and upside down and utter foolishness to the world. The cross is folly to the world and yet the wisdom and power of God.

Do you remember the start to the suffering and servant song in Isaiah 52, 13? We talked about it only a few months ago. Behold, my servant, Isaiah prophesied, the Lord prophesied through Isaiah, behold, my servant shall act wisely.

And we said that wisely there connotes success. He will act with effective wisdom. The cross of Christ was God acting with effective wisdom in Jesus to successfully bring about the eternal salvation of sinners.

See, what is foolish to the world is the power of God. It is effective. And because God acted in this way so utterly different from how the world would have expected, He has, look at verse 19, destroyed the wisdom of the wise.

[11:11] He has thwarted the discernment of the discerning. Paul is quoting there from Isaiah 29, verse 14. God has rendered ineffective and foolish all sources of human wisdom.

Paul says in verse 21 that in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom. See, in God's all-wise plan, mankind could never solve the problem of sin and be reconciled to God through their own wisdom and efforts.

Where is the one who is wise, Paul says? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Their wisdom is short-lived.

It's temporary. It endures only for a few fleeting years in this age and it's worthless. Forgiveness of sin, reconciliation to God, it only comes, friends, listen to this, it only comes when one renounces all worldly means of status, when one acknowledges a total inability to make oneself righteous before God, and when one casts oneself at the foot of the cross, repenting of sin, and trusting in Christ alone to save.

This is the only effective means of salvation, namely Christ and Him crucified. He is the power and the wisdom of God.

[12:43] God, you know, Noah's ark seemed really foolish to those in his day, but it was God's ordained means of saving his family, and not just his family, but all of humanity.

In the same way, the cross appears weak and foolish to the world, but in God's good pleasure, it is actually his wisdom, his power on display to eternally save sinners.

And this confounds the wisdom of this world. So if you're here this morning, and you've never put your faith and your trust in Christ alone, won't you consider this morning the unthinkable love and compassion of God for sinful humanity?

Can you even begin to imagine a human leader who would take the path of lowliness? That seems harder and harder to imagine these days. Can you imagine a leader who would take the lowest path possible, denying offers of power and riches, and sacrificing his very life for sinners, for others, for his enemies?

That's what God in Christ has done for you. It confounds the wisdom of this world, but it is God's effective wisdom and power to save sinners.

[14:03] So won't you receive that offer by grace through faith this morning? So these are the two conflicting perspectives of the cross. And after clearing the one perspective, true and right, that the cross is the wisdom and power of God, Paul now moves to show this principle in the Corinthians' own personal testimony.

So here we have next the personal testimony of the saints in verses 26 to 31. So look at verse 26. Verse 26. For consider your calling, brothers.

Not many of you were wise according to worldly standards. Not many were powerful. Not many were of noble birth. So Paul is asking the Corinthians here, consider your own social status when you came to faith in Christ.

And apparently not many of them were of any social significance by worldly standards. Christians. Apparently most of them were not wise or powerful or wealthy. They were the social nothings of society.

That's the first thing. We are the nothings is their testimony. Now we do know that some of the Corinthians were of significant social status. Remember last week there were several people that were mentioned.

[15:24] Chloe was likely wealthy for she had people, probably servants, to send to Paul. And we learn in Acts 18, verse 8, that Crispus was the former ruler of the synagogue.

So he was a man of social prominence. We also learn in Romans 16, verse 23, because Paul was in Corinth when he wrote the book of Romans, that Gaius was host to Paul.

And he also hosted the entire gathering of the Corinthian church. So he was a man of considerable means. And the point is, the gospel is for everyone. The gospel's for everyone. Everyone, including the rich and famous.

It may be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God, as Jesus says in Matthew 19, 24. But it is also true, as he says next, that with man, this is impossible, but with God, all things are possible.

Amen? But what makes it so difficult for the rich to come to Christ is the reality that they must come to accept and believe that those who are wealthy by worldly standards are equally bankrupt spiritually as the poor and the social outcasts.

[16:40] And that's a hard thing to believe. Every class, every strata of society is in equal need of the saving death of Christ upon the cross. Rich and poor alike are in desperate need of the cleansing, forgiving fountain that is the blood of Christ.

We are all the nothings, aren't we? We are all. This is our testimony. We are the nothings. And so it seems that God far more often works in this world not through the rich and the famous, but through the lowly.

And that's what Paul is saying he has done in the Corinthian church. But God chose, verse 27, but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. He's talking about the Corinthian believers.

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not. The nothings of society.

Even things that are not. To bring to nothing the somethings, the haves, right? The bring to nothing things that are. In the world system, it's by human wisdom and strength that one attains the good life.

[17:49] But the true good life, friends, the true good life, which begins now and endures forever, it's found in knowing Jesus.

That is the good life. And so God has chosen those the world sees as foolish and weak and low and despised, the social nothings, to manifest his saving power in the cross of Jesus Christ.

And this was God's plan all along, his wise plan. It's because of God, Paul says in verse 30, that you are in Christ Jesus who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

In Jesus, we have been made right with God. We're righteous. In Jesus, we have been forever made holy, sanctified. In Jesus, and by the cost of his own life, we have been freed from the bondage of sin.

We've been redeemed. We are the nothings, but Christ is everything. Christ is everything. To the shoreline, let's admit for a second that we're a real motley crew of characters here.

[19:04] Aren't we? Like, we're really not all that impressive of a group of people by worldly standards. The encouragement here for us is that this matters not in God's upside down gospel economy.

We may be the nothings, but we've been given Jesus, and Jesus is everything. Somebody say amen. Jesus is everything.

And why has God chosen to act in this upside down way? Paul gives us two so that statements in this text. Verse 29, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

So that, verse 31, as it is written, let the one who boasts boast in the Lord. What is the purpose of God choosing to act for the salvation of mankind in this way that so confounds the wise and the powerful?

for the glory of his name. For the glory of his name. To silence the boasting of prideful men and their petty achievements and to amplify the joyful boasting of saved sinners in the Lord and in the cross of Jesus Christ.

[20:28] We are the nothings, but Christ is everything. And therefore, church, our only boast is in Christ. our only boast. In verse 31, Paul is quoting again from the prophets.

You see why it's so helpful to be in the prophets from time to time. This time, he's quoting from Jeremiah. Let me read Jeremiah 9, verse 23 through 24.

You'll see how much it matches what Paul just said in this whole paragraph. Thus says the Lord, let not the wise man boast in his wisdom. Let not the mighty man boast in his might.

Let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these things I delight, declares the Lord. Israel, as we saw in Isaiah, Israel was called to renounce their worldly idolatrous pursuits, right?

[21:34] They were called to renounce their self-made means of finding purpose and satisfaction and to wholly turn to the Lord, to boast in him alone. And now Paul, applying the same truth through the lens of the gospel, he's beckoning the Corinthians, he's beckoning us to the same thing.

He's saying, forsake your human pride. Boast in nothing and no one but God alone. So saints, I want to ask you to search your hearts this morning.

Consider, what is it that you find yourself boasting in most often? Are you boasting in your career achievements? Are you boasting in your musical or athletic prowess?

Are you boasting in your expertise in parenting or your knowledge of scripture? A million other things that we find to boast in. Now listen, there's a good chance that this boasting is not mostly external.

That'd be too obvious, right? Now we certainly do that at times but it's more likely that this just subtly rules your heart. Affecting the way you think.

[22:48] Affecting how you spend your time. Affecting how you spend your money. Here's a question to help you pinpoint your areas of boasting. This is for me too. I'm not just saying you. This is you all.

This would be *ustedes* in Spanish. Including me. So I guess *nosotros*. Sorry. My Spanish is weak. Here's a question to help us pinpoint our boasting.

What area of our lives when it doesn't go our way or maybe when it's suggested by someone that we have a deficiency in that area leads to a rising tide of pride and defensiveness from our hearts. See that just might be an area of boasting that we need to bring to the foot of the cross. Now on the other side of the same pride coin from boasting is wallowing in failure.

It looks different but it's still pride. It's still self-focus. And this is a word for those who are beating themselves up who are mired in self-loathing and in self-doubt.

[23:55] Brothers and sisters if you are in Christ you were chosen by God. And let me tell you something. He has accounted before the foundation of the world for all of your weakness and all of your failure.

So you don't need to wallow in it. Look, human power is of one degree of glory but divine power is of a degree of glory orders of magnitude greater and that is the power on display through you if you are in Jesus Christ.

You don't need to wallow in your failure. God, he already knew. He already accounted for it and he already chose you from before the foundations of the world. Our boast is in Christ and him crucified. The wisdom and power of God. And now Paul moves to show the Corinthian church how he himself has applied this to his own personal ministry. This is the third section, the third thing that we see, the personal example of Paul's ministry.

Look at chapter two, verse one. And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom.

[25:17] Now we've talked already about how first century Greco-Roman culture prized those who could woo and dazzle a crowd with their oratory prowess.

So these speakers would put on lavish displays of eloquent rhetoric to gain audience appeal resulting in fame and power. And to the embarrassment of the Corinthian church, Paul, however, refused to assimilate this cultural value into his preaching of the gospel simply because it was in vogue, right?

Simply because it would appeal to more people. To do so, Paul is saying, would subvert the message, the very message of the gospel. It would empty the cross of its power.

Why? Because it would take the spotlight that's supposed to be on Jesus and on the cross and it would shift it over to Paul and how amazing Paul is and how eloquent Paul is with his words. Paul wanted nothing of that.

It wasn't about his human wisdom and skill. So Paul resolved to forsake this worldly method of using lofty speech or wisdom and instead, verse 2, he decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

[26:33] In other words, Paul's presentation of the gospel was stripped of any theatrical display and offered clearly and simply. He wanted nothing to obscure the message of the cross.

And he says, and I was with you, verse 3, in weakness and fear and much trembling. Psalm chapter 2, verse 11, says, to serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

So Paul picks up on this language here and elsewhere in his letters. followers. Now, Paul is not saying that he was fearful of the opposition. That's not what Paul is saying.

Paul is saying that he came not with self-reliant, self-confident pride, but in humility before the Lord. Paul came feeling the weight, the responsibility of being Christ's apostle.

He trembled in God's presence, desiring to steward the task entrusted to him of bearing the message of the cross to the lost. Paul understood that the eternity of souls was at stake, the glory of God was at stake, and so he trembled at this task, not afraid of the opposition.

[27:50] And my speech and my message, verse 4, were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. The word plausible, it's perhaps better translated as clever, enticing, persuasive.

Now Paul is not saying that he was intentionally boring, okay? He's not saying that he didn't attempt to persuade, or that he didn't speak with logic and reason.

This letter itself is a logical attempt to persuade the Corinthians, okay? And this is in fact what Paul did in every city in his missionary journeys, including Corinth.

You can see this all over the book of Acts, these kinds of verbs, as in Acts 18, verse 4, when Paul arrived in Corinth, it says that he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and he tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Okay, so what's going on here? The emphasis here, the distinction between Paul and these cultural orders is in the way that he tempted to persuade, and that was by renouncing human wisdom, right?

[29:03] Forsaking any self-promoting means, and in reliance on the Spirit, presenting the clear and simple gospel of Jesus Christ, putting it up for the world to see in all its beauty, and all its power.

And why did Paul do this? Another so that statement. It's good to look in your Bible, maybe even box them in, so that here is a purpose, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

What you win them with is what you win them to. Let me say that again. What you win them with is what you win them to. If Paul succeeded in attracting more so-called converts using worldly techniques, I have a question.

Would they have believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ or in the gospel of Jesus plus worldly wisdom and power? Now, friends, the gospel of Jesus plus something else is no gospel at all, because that something else will inevitably fail you.

If 99% of my salvation rests on Jesus and only 1% on my own wisdom or on that of the world, then let me tell you, I am going to hell, because that 1% cannot bear up under the weight.

[30:26] But the gospel of Jesus Christ is that my salvation is 100% secure, because he went to the cross and he bore 100% of my sin upon himself.

For by a single offering, he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. Hebrews 10 14. That's the gospel.

So what did Paul do? He went low. Paul chose the low path of Christ-like humility and weakness so that the gospel of Jesus Christ, the word of the cross, would be made all the more clear through him.

Now I want to press this here into four different points of application, and then I'm going to close with a story. Okay, four points of application here. Now the first and most direct application of this text here is in the preaching of the word here at Shoreline, right?

Now church, I want you to know that my desire, that the elders desire, that I know the desire of so many of you is that the preaching coming from this, I was going to say pulpit, but it's music stand, would match, that it would match the cruciform pattern that's been passed down to us through Christ and through the apostolic teaching.

[31:44] We want the gospel ever every single week on full and clear display. Now members of Shoreline, when we entered into covenant with one another, here's one of the things that we have committed to.

Okay, this is from a membership affirmation. I am a steward of Shoreline's gospel witness. If any leader begins to teach a false gospel, I will act. I will examine the scriptures and consult that leader in the spirit of reconciliation found in Matthew 18.

If further intervention is necessary, I will bring it to the elders. Church, all of us, all of us, not just me as the preacher, all of us are entrusted with the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

All of us have a responsibility to guard that message. So if you, if God forbid, if you hear me saying something that obscures the message of the gospel, I want to know about that. And if you're too scared to talk to me for some reason, then talk to one of the other elders so that we can address that.

This is also true in our evangelism. So first preaching, second evangelism, and this ought to be a great encouragement, this principle here. Listen, we don't need to be brilliant apologists, okay?

[33:00] There are some out there, and I praise God for them, okay? John Lennox is a brilliant man. You can listen to him and find amazing encouragements to your faith. We don't need to be brilliant apologists.

Having compelling answers to every unbeliever, or every question an unbeliever throws at us.

Listen, we simply need to be faithful in presenting the clear gospel message.

Our call is faithfulness. Faithfulness to evangelize with a clear message of the gospel, and guess what? God's word does the work through the power of the spirit.

God's word does the work. The message of the cross is powerful, gospel, and by his spirit, he brings the dead to life. That's something we can't do. So we lay out the message, and we pray for the spirit to work through that message.

So who might the Lord be calling you this week to share the gospel with? Clearly, simply, without frills, here's the gospel of Jesus Christ. Preaching evangelism.

[34:02] Third, the path of lowliness. Consider how Paul chose to walk this path of lowliness and humility.

So he forsook these worldly schemes to present a clear gospel of Christ, and in so doing, so he chose to go low just by doing that, and in so doing, he then became the object of scorn, the object of ridicule, not only from culture, but from those within the church.

So he was brought even lower, even lower, right? The path of humility inevitably leads to more humility. And let's remember for a second that this is the path that our Savior walked.

He forsook all worldly approval to save us, and he's calling us in love, in devotion to his name, to walk that same path for the glory of the Father.

To deny ourselves, to take up our cross, and to follow him. And saints, that is where the power of God resides. In our weakness, in our humility.

[35:13] The Lord told Paul in 2 Corinthians 12, verse 9, my grace, you all know this verse, my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.

Therefore, Paul says, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities, for when I am weak, then I am strong.

How is that for confounding the principles of this world? This is the gospel. Saints, if you live by the wisdom of this world, it's not that you will then lose your salvation, but you are missing out on the power of God in your life.

And this is true in every era of our lives. We can apply this principle in how we view our singleness, in the workplace, in how we treat other people and respond to criticism, in marriage, in the home, in how we view sports and sex and money.

And as this is the context of Paul's writing, when it comes to the unity of the church. That's the fourth thing here. Cross-centered unity, or maybe cross-shaped unity.

[36:32] See, Paul is seeking to impress the principle of Christ's power and human weakness for the sake of the unity of the Corinthian church. That's the problem he's addressing right now.

So, Shoreline, when we renounce all forms of pride and self-centeredness, when we recognize our own lack of wisdom, our own lack of power, and boast in Jesus Christ and him crucified alone, this produces in us Christ-like humility, Christ-like sacrificial love.

And if that is multiplied among the saints, that will draw us together in radical, cross-centered, gospel-displaying unity. unity. Our love and our unity, it makes the gospel visible.

Right? That's what this book is all about. It's making the gospel visible in the church. And it puts on display, as we talked about a few weeks ago, the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

It puts God's power and glory on display to the universe. the cosmic composer and conductor of the most beautiful symphony ever written.

[37:46] He receives all the glory. Right? As each individual member is playing their part in love and humility, then he gets the glory. I want to close by telling you about my grandma, my mom's mom, Nadine.

I want to boast about God's power through her weakness. Now, please don't tell her about this, because she'd be upset with me for putting her in the spotlight. I actually did get her permission. But you won't meet her anytime soon. Because, yeah. Now, you won't find my grandma on Facebook or Instagram. Okay? You're not going to find her on a Gospel Coalition article.

You're not going to find her in a blog. But her name is engraved on the hands of God. Her name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And she knows it. Now, for decades, she has faithfully served, quietly, humbly, people in her church, neighbors, especially her kids and her grandkids and her great-grandkids.

And she's done so with the humble, self-giving love of Jesus. Year after year, at great cost to herself, she has hosted family, even for months on end, even in her 70s and 80s, even with all sorts of impediments physically.

[39:00] With Christian hospitality, my grandma will make anybody who comes into her home feel welcome. So give them a place to sleep, the best spaghetti in Chicago, bottomless coffee or tea.

Now, my grandparents are going to be moving in just a few months into a senior living facility. So this past Christmas Eve was the last gathering that we had at their house in Chicago that they've been at for decades.

And so my aunts, my uncles, my cousins all took turns thanking and praising my grandparents, especially my sweet grandmother, for their years of love and hospitality.

And the theme of the room, even though my unsaved cousins did not have the eyes to see this, the theme of the room was my grandmother's selfless, sacrificial Christ-likeness towards each of us, putting on display the word of the cross.

And in a beautiful simplicity, when everyone had finished giving her thanks and praise, she clearly, simply, with no frills, shared the gospel with all of my family in that room.

[40:06] And she expressed her longing that every one of her grandkids and her great-grandkids would come to have the same faith in Jesus that she has. So my grandma is a living, walking testimony of the power of Jesus in human weakness, in a human vessel of clay, of lowliness, of a faith-filled woman whose only boast is in the Lord.

Now, church, I want to become more like my grandma. I want to become more like Jesus. I want for my life to proclaim in every moment that my only boast is Him.

It's only Christ and Him crucified, the wisdom, the power of God. And I hope you want that same thing. Please join me in prayer. Father, this word is so unlike the world.

It's so unlike the world. It makes no sense to the world. But it is power. The cross of Christ is power for salvation. It's power for life, now and forever.

Father, would you strip us of human pride? Would you strip us of our self-suttered, goodness, our clinging to human means of wisdom and satisfaction-seeking?

[41:28] And let us rely solely on you. And let us boast, oh God, solely in you and in Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

We pray this in His name. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[43:50] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[46:20] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[48:50] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[51:20] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.