

The Power of the Cross

Series: First Corinthians

Bible Text(s) Used / Referenced:

1 Corinthians 1:18–25ⁱ; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Kings 6:1–7ⁱⁱ; Numbers 6:24–26ⁱⁱⁱ

Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing

Pastor Mike introduces the series in 1 Corinthians, pointing the congregation toward the book's ultimate destination in the teaching on the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15). He explains that the Corinthian believers had become distracted by culture and human preferences, and Paul redirects them to the message of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:18–25^{iv}). The cross, described as foolishness to those who are perishing but the power of God to those who are saved, calls believers to refocus their priorities on Christ rather than worldly success or intellectual pride.

Reflection Question: What areas of my life might be distracting me from keeping Christ and His cross at the center?

God Speaks and Calls Through the Cross

Drawing from Paul's teaching that Jews seek signs and Greeks seek wisdom, yet Christ crucified reveals God's wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:22–24^v), Pastor Mike explains that God communicates His love and truth through the sacrifice of Jesus. This message calls individuals to repentance — a turning away from sin — and faith in Christ. The cross demonstrates that God's strength is revealed in what appears weak according to worldly measures (1 Corinthians 1:25).

Reflection Question: How have I responded to God's call in my life, and where might He be inviting me to deeper trust today?

God Saves and Transforms Through the Cross

To illustrate divine intervention and salvation, Pastor Mike references the story of the floating axe head (2 Kings 6:1-7), showing how God rescues what has sunk beyond recovery. He parallels this with the saving power of Christ's cross — transforming identity and purpose through spiritual renewal described in Paul's teaching (1 Corinthians 1:18). Believers are encouraged to carry this message into the world, living as transformed people.

Reflection Question: In what ways is the transforming power of the cross shaping my daily decisions and relationships?

Closing Thought

The sermon closes with a blessing echoing the priestly benediction of Scripture (Numbers 6:24-26), reminding believers that the cross speaks of God's love, calls humanity to faith, and transforms those who receive it. Christians are sent out with gratitude and purpose, carrying the hope of Christ into everyday life.

i

Christ the Wisdom and Power of God

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach^a to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

ii

The Axe Head Recovered

⁶ Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See, the place where we dwell under your charge is too small for us. ² Let us go to the Jordan and each of us get there a log, and let us make a place for us to dwell there." And he answered, "Go." ³ Then one of them said, "Be pleased to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go." ⁴ So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. ⁵ But as one was felling a log, his axe head fell into the water, and he cried out, "Alas, my master! It was borrowed." ⁶ Then the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and threw it in there and made the iron float. ⁷ And he said, "Take it up." So he reached out his hand and took it.

iii

²⁴The Lord bless you and keep you;
²⁵the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
²⁶the Lord lift up his countenance^[a] upon you and give you peace.

iv

Christ the Wisdom and Power of God

¹⁸For 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. ¹⁹For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach^[a] to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

v

²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.