

**THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CROSS
FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Afternoon Message Two

**Solving All the Problems in the Church Life
by the Crucified Christ**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2, 7, 9-13, 17-25; 2:1-2

I. Christ as the unique center in God's economy is everything to all the believers—Col. 3:11; 1:12; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; 2:7, 10-11; 5:7-8; 10:3-4; 11:3; 12:12; 15:20, 45, 47:

- A. As the all-inclusive One, Christ belongs to all the believers as their portion for their fellowship and enjoyment—1 Cor. 1:2, 9.
- B. In an actual and typical church, problems exist when believers are distracted from this Christ—Gal. 1:6; Col. 2:8, 18-19:
 - 1. Division—Resulting from forsaking the unique name of Christ to have other names—1 Cor. 1:10.
 - 2. Preferences—Preferring one brother over another or one church over another church—1 Cor. 1:12-13.
 - 3. Opinions—Different ways of speaking, opening the door for many evil things to come into the church life, including strife, quarrels, fornication, and lawsuits—1 Cor. 1:10-11; 5:1; 6:1.
 - 4. Philosophy and culture—Boasting about matters of race or nationality or certain national or cultural backgrounds—Col. 3:10-11.
 - 5. Remaining as babes in the stage of infancy—Not developing the initial gifts of eternal life and the Holy Spirit, and not growing to maturity—1 Cor. 1:7, note 1.

II. To bring distracted believers back to Christ, there is the need to emphasize the crucified Christ—1 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 3:1:

- A. The focus of the preaching in Acts is on the resurrection of Christ—2:33, 36.
- B. In 1 Corinthians Paul does not refer to the Lord's resurrection in glory and His ascension in exaltation, but to "Jesus Christ, and this One crucified"—2:2.
- C. Nothing can silence the distracted and philosophical Christians except the simplicity and silence of the crucified Christ—1 Cor. 1:17; Matt. 26:63.
- D. God's way is not the way of negotiation, but of termination—Col. 3:11.

III. The crucified Christ:

- A. A Christ who is despised, rejected, and defeated—1 Cor. 1:23; Isa. 53:3:
 - 1. This is contrary to the "excellence of speech or of wisdom," which implies elevation or superiority—1 Cor. 2:1.
 - 2. It is folly to many professors and educated people today to speak about such a Christ.
- B. A Christ who was killed without reacting in His own defense—Matt. 26:63; Isa. 53:7-8:
 - 1. We react against anyone who despises us.

- 2. We always try to protect ourselves and strike down others first.
- C. A Christ in weakness and foolishness—1 Cor. 1:25; 2:3:
 - 1. He did not react to the mocking of the Jews and the challenge of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders to come down from the cross—Matt. 26:62-63; 27:12.
 - 2. He did not do anything to save Himself—Matt. 27:41-43.
- D. A Christ who accepts the death of the cross instead of fighting for Himself:
 - 1. He laid down His own life willingly—John 10:11, 18.
 - 2. He was willing to be crucified in order to accomplish redemption and solve all the problems in the universe—Col. 1:20.

IV. This crucified Christ is God’s power and God’s wisdom—1 Cor. 1:24:

- A. According to the New Testament, God has no way to save anyone apart from the cross of Christ—Acts 4:10-12:
 - 1. The cross of Christ saves us from all the problems related to Satan, the world, sin, man, the flesh, and the natural life—John 12:31; Gal. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:3; Rom. 6:6; Gal. 5:24, 20.
 - 2. The cross also saves us from all forms of oldness, corruption, ruin and, death—Heb. 10:20; 2:14; Rom. 6:4.
 - 3. Through the cross, we are freed from all ordinances and regulations—Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14.
- B. The crucifixion of Christ has silenced the entire universe and simplified the extremely complicated situation in the universe—Rom. 8:33-34; Rev. 12:10.
- C. Only the crucified Christ as God’s power and wisdom can deal with our temper.
- D. We may also apply the crucified Christ to our need for patience.
- E. The crucified Christ heals all our bitter situations and even heals our very being—Exo. 15:23-25; 1 Pet. 2:24.
- F. Crucifixion is the threshold and gateway into all the riches of Christ, including His resurrection and ascension—Phil. 3:10; Col. 3:3.
- G. The crucified Christ as God’s wisdom is also related to God’s plan according to His good pleasure and also according to God’s way to fulfill His will—Eph. 1:9; 3:11; Matt. 26:39; Heb. 10:9-10:
 - 1. Seeking and doing God’s will is not a matter of praying or making up our mind to do something.
 - 2. As long as we experience the crucified Christ, Christ will become to us God’s wisdom to fulfill His plan.

V. “The word of the cross” is the unique subject, the center, the content, and the substance of the apostle’s ministry—1 Cor. 2:2:

- A. It is the center of God’s salvation (1 Cor. 1:18, note 1) and the center of God’s operation in His economy (Gal. 3:1 note 1; 1 Cor. 1:17, note 3).
- B. It is an instrument to cut through the bothersome and puzzling entanglement and complications we face in the church life and especially in our married life—Eph. 4:1-2; 5:2, 24-25.
- C. It attunes us in the same mind and in the same opinion—1 Cor. 1:10.
- D. It is the apostle’s boast—Gal. 6:14.

E. It is foolishness and an offense to those who are perishing—1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 9:33.

VI. By the power of Christ's resurrection we are enabled to participate in Christ's sufferings and live a crucified life in conformity to His death for the producing and building up of the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:10, note 3; Col. 1:24.