



THE FOLLY AND THE POWER
— of —
THE CROSS

PART 1

Sermon Overview

The rejection of the Cross stems from the refusal to recognize Jesus as the only Savior and Lord, as well as a minimizing of sin. Despite this rejection, the Cross of Christ remains powerful, an enduring symbol of redemption and forgiveness, and a reminder of God's plan of salvation since the beginning of Creation.

PART ONE

In the West, an entire generation has passed with a Christianity without the cross. This rejection of the Cross stems from the refusal to recognize Jesus as the only Savior and Lord, as well as a minimizing of sin. Despite this rejection, the Cross of Christ remains powerful, an enduring symbol of redemption and forgiveness. God's Word illustrates this dichotomy in 1 Corinthians 1:18:

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

AN UNLIKELY SYMBOL

The Holy Spirit could have directed the early church to embrace any iconography from Christ's ministry to represent Christianity. The symbol that The Holy Spirit chose, however, was the cross. It was a reminder that the price of sin had been paid, redemption was completed, and the perfect sacrifice had been offered.

GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION

From the beginning of creation, God instituted the shedding of blood as a substitutionary sacrifice for sin. The first sacrifice made was in response to Adam and Eve's original sin, and was a foreshadowing of the Cross. God wanted to teach Adam and Eve, and by extension the subsequent generations the enormity of sin, and to anticipate the greatest sacrifice to come.

WHY ANIMAL SACRIFICE

The book of Hebrews tells us that animal sacrifice could never

permanently remove sin. God instituted it in order to:

Remind His People That They Needed a Permanent, Not Temporary Sacrifice to Cover Their Sins.

Remind His People That They Worshipped a Holy and Righteous God Who Takes Sin Seriously.

Remind His People to Look Forward to the Coming Cross of Christ.

TWO RESPONSES

Adam and Eve communicated the need for blood sacrifice to their children, Cain and Abel:

³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord.

⁴ But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering,

⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

GENESIS 4:4-5

Cain and Abel are microcosms of all humanity—there are only two ways that mankind responds to God’s only plan of salvation:

Embrace It, Even At the Cost of Their Life – Abel

Abel’s sacrifice was looked at with favor because he was

worshipping God God's way.

Arrogantly Reject It – Cain

Cain was attempting to worship God in his own way.

A RICH HISTORY

All of human history points to the cross. Throughout the Bible sacrifice is emphasized through the actions of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Passover, the establishment of Yom Kippur as the Day of Atonement, and more— all pointing to the ultimate fulfillment in the Cross of Christ. Likewise, throughout secular history, pagans have continued to make sacrifices and conduct rituals to appease false gods while missing the original meaning.

The Cross represents permanent freedom from sin and guilt, and the sacrifice Christ made for all who believe.