

Series: 1st Corinthians

Sunday, April 12. Read our daily sermon reflections on GCC's app (under Devotionals) or at gardiner.church/devotions

1. THE CROSS D..... THE WORLD

(1 Corinthians 1:18-23; See also Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13)

- The cross was Rome's most degrading instrument of execution. To Jews a crucified Messiah was a theological impossibility; to Greeks it was an insult to everything their wisdom tradition valued. Yet Paul preaches it without apology — the same message that sounds like madness to those who are perishing is the living power of God to those being saved. God chose the cross not because it made sense to human eyes, but because it was the only thing that could deal with the root of our problem. No sign, no philosophy, and no human system could do what the cross alone accomplished.
- Have you fully let go of the need for God to meet you on your terms — through signs, impressive experiences, or arguments that satisfy your own reasoning?

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2. THE CROSS A..... EVERYTHING

(1 Corinthians 1:8,18, 30-31; see also 2 Corinthians 5:21; 3:18; Philippians 1:6; Jude 1:24; Galatians 6:14)

- Our **righteousness** means the verdict is in and we stand before God clothed in the righteousness of his Son. Our **holiness** means the Spirit is genuinely at work in us day by day, making us more like Jesus. Our **redemption** means we have been bought back, adopted as beloved children, and will one day stand before his glorious presence with great joy. Three gifts, none achieved, all received in a person. The only boast left is boasting in the Lord.
- Which of the three gifts do you find hardest to receive as a gift rather than something you must earn or maintain?

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3. THE CROSS IS CARRIED THROUGH W

(1 Corinthians 1:27-31, 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 10:10)

- Paul arrived in Corinth trembling and unimpressive. The Corinthian Church unkindly noted that his presence was weak and his speaking amounted to nothing. Yet Paul resolved to know nothing except Christ crucified and trusted the Spirit to do what no eloquence could. The church was born not through an impressive messenger but through a willing one. God still works this way — through ordinary, unlikely people who have nothing to offer but the message itself. The cross does not need our strength. It needs our surrender.
- Is there an area of your life where you are relying on your own capability rather than trusting the Spirit's power to work through your weakness?

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Application For This Week: Carry this question into each day: *Where am I managing my life in my own wisdom and strength rather than trusting the power of the cross?* The message of this passage is not to try harder but to trust deeper. Let the cross reshape how you see your failures, because you are already declared righteous. Let it encourage you in your slow growth, because the Spirit has not stopped working. And let it steady you in uncertainty, because the God who called you is faithful and he will complete what he has begun.

Prayer: *Father, thank you that Christ has become our righteousness, our holiness, and our redemption — gifts we could never earn, received entirely in him. Where we are tempted to boast in our own wisdom or strength, bring us back to the foot of the cross. Teach us to know nothing except Jesus Christ and him crucified, and to trust your Spirit to do in us and through us what we could never do for ourselves. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

Verses To Meditate On This Week:

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

“Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.” – 1 Corinthians 1:31

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