



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

5 Ways The Cross Is Relevant In Our Generation

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Today is Good Friday. Therefore what greater message can be proclaimed than Christ crucified!

I wanted to remind you of a few ways the cross of Christ speaks to our generation.

1. The cross proclaims to our generation that God is faithful to keep all of His promises.

The cross fulfills numerous prophecies foretold about the messiah, including how he must suffer and die in order to pay for our iniquities, or sins against God (Cf. Isaiah 53).

Isaiah 53:1-10 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. ³ He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? ⁹ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence,

Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,

This passage, written over 700 years before the birth of the messiah like so many passages proclaims to all that God is faithful to keep every single one of His promises.

2. The cross proclaims God's standard of holiness in our generation.

Scripture declares the penalty for sin is death (Cf. Romans 6: 23). God spared not His own Son, to satisfy His righteous penalty against all who have sinned against Him and His holy Law.

God's, not man's standard of holiness is what is on display upon the cross. The cross reminds our generation that God is holy. The cross reminds our generation that God is just and true and impartial. The cross will annoy the self righteous, because there is no one who is righteous beside God. The cross removes all spiritual smugness. No one can feel comfortable by comparing themselves to another, or by looking down at another, when God's own Son hung upon the cross. Therefore the cross testifies of God's objective righteousness.

3. The cross speaks to our generation's greatest need.

Why would God allow His own Son to come to earth and be treated with such disdain, and such disrespect, and allow Him to be lied about, mocked, spat upon, beaten with fists, flogged, publicly stripped, ridiculed, taunted, and basically made to suffer in every possible physical, emotional and spiritual way upon the cross, if there was some other way that people might be forgiven, and cleansed from their sin, and be utterly redeemed—even finding peace with God, and having an opportunity to know Him in a personal and meaningful way, finding too that it is not only possible to fully delight in God, but that He can now fully delight in you?

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The cross reminds us that if God went to such great lengths to take care of our greatest need, than our great need, the need to be fully reconciled to God must be truly great.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 3:10-28 10 as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; 11 There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; 12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one." 13 "Their throat is an open grave, With their tongues they keep deceiving, " "The poison of asps is under their lips"; 14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness"; 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood, 16 Destruction and misery are in their paths, 17 And the path of peace have they not known." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes." 19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. 21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. 27 Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. 28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

4. The cross proclaims to our generation God's great love and mercy, and desire for people to be saved.

John 3:14-16 14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. 16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

5. The cross places a fork in the road before our generation, which urges people to make a decision to place their faith in Christ.

Yogi Berra said, "If you see a fork in the road, take it." The Scripture says, Today, if you hear God's voice, do not harden your hearts. The cross call out for men to decide this day who they will follow. If you are not reconciled to God, I urge you to come to Him through faith in Christ. He not only died to forgive sinners who trust in Him, He also rose to be the believer's Savior and Lord.

There are only two responses to the cross—wisdom or foolishness; or put another way love or hatred.

1 Corinthians 1:19-24 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And the cleverness of the clever I will set aside." 20 Where is the wise man? 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 through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles

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foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

The Apostle Paul in the above passage is not making the case that the gospel actually is foolish. He is using the skeptics rhetoric to emphasize the point that there are two responses to the gospel—the good news that for the believer Christ's death burial and resurrection means forgiveness of sins, and the penalty for sin is removed and a new and glorious relationship with God begins, where God, and pleasing Him, rather than sin, becomes increasingly consistent and central, and joyful in the believer's life. Thus the gospel is wisdom and is powerful!

John 3:17-21 17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. 18 "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. 20 "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

While one may not hate God with all the emotions this typically conveys, the idea is more of a decided preference for one way of life over and against another.

The cross warns us that there is only One way to the Father

John 14:1-6 "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. 4 "And you know the way where I am going." 5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.

Acts 4:12 12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."

Of course skeptics will remain, but the gospel is incredibly relevant to our generation, and in fact to every generation. The gospel remains both the wisdom and power of God unto salvation.

A Possible Prayer

Father God, I know I have sinned against you. Thank you for your great love and mercy demonstrated by sending your Son Jesus Christ, Who died and rose again! Please show me your wisdom and power and glory by making Yourself known to me in ways I can understand. Please forgive me. Please be my Savior, and Lord, lead my life in ways that are pleasing to you. Teach me your ways each day, and help me to remember and apply the truth that I am learning each day from You, in your Word.

Thank you for sending your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die in my place, so that I too can become a true child of God. Please help me to honor and obey You, in every area of my life, and please place around me mature believers who can assist me with living for you, and help me connect with a local church that help strengthen the faith, and hope and love I have in You!

In Jesus Name AMEN!