

THE OFFENSE OF THE CROSS 1 Cor. 1:18

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

Gal. 5:11

"And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased."

INTRODUCTION:

1. Paul asked the Galatians why it was, if he preached "works," that he was being persecuted. If that were true he said, "then the offence of the cross is ceased."

1. If Paul had preached that men could be saved by conformity to Jewish rites (because that was what they wanted to hear) that would have saved him all the persecution that he suffered because he preached the necessity of salvation by the cross of Christ.

2. 1 Cor. 1:23;

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

2. The "offence of the cross" may seem strange to the modern mind.

1. Many church buildings are decorated with crosses.

2. We have some of our Bibles embossed with the cross and we wear them as pendants swinging from our necks.

3. The cross is an emblem of art to the poets.

4. There may not be anything especially wrong with this sentimentality but the New Testament tells a far different story about the cross. IF IS CALLED: 1. A stumbling block; 2. An offence; 3. Foolishness, a scandal to men.

3. Jesus said, "Come, take up the cross and follow me." Mark 10:21.

Paul said, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal. 5:24

Jesus said:

1. If you are going to follow me, you have to take up a cross. Or:

1. Jesus did not have a beautiful gold cross in mind...the cross on the church steeple, or the cross on your Bible, But:

2. Bring your electric chair, you gas chamber

FOUR REASONS WHY THE CROSS IS AN OFFENCE TO MAN

FIRST

1. The Cross condemns the world.
 1. Salvation is not by our pride, or by some good only that we may do.
 2. Men filled with pride do ^{Not} like to be told today that that they must become as little children to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Matt. 18:3
 1. Are you telling us?
 1. Men who have developed guided missiles.
 2. Men who have guided rockets to the moon.
 3. Men of great financial power so much so as to almost control the world that we have to become as little children.
 4. We do not like that. That offends us. Let me say; THAT IS THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS.

SECOND

1. The Cross is an offence because blood was shed there
 1. From Genesis to Malachi you read of the blood of Christ.
 2. The shedding of the blood of Christ is offensive to some.
 1. It seems not in the least offensive to them that our highways have been literally paved with blood of slain men.
 2. They forget the fact that "The life of the flesh is in the blood. Lev. 17:11; "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the alter to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for your soul". Heb. 9:22

THIRD

1. The Cross of Christ is an offence because it sets forth an imperative ideal life.
 1. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34.
 2. We are busy today in our churches building astronomical figures; reports; how many members. If the crowd gets to big and you want to thin them out just repeat what Jesus said: "Deny yourself, take up the cross. We like the crown but not the cross."

FOURTH

1. The Cross is offensive because of its ^{claim} as the power of God to salvation, we do not like that. We think there are other roads. Matt. 7:13,14

