

First and Second Corinthians

The Message of the Cross

Lesson #2 for July 11, 2026

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 1:17-31; 2:1-5; Colossians 1:20; 1 Peter 2:24; Acts 13:16-47.

1. What is “the message of the cross”? Why should we consider the message of a cross?

[From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] Cicero, a pagan Roman writer and orator, had told the Roman people to not even think about the cross, so abhorrent was it as a means of death. Although Cicero died about a half century before Jesus was born, his statement illustrates the contempt with which the Romans had held the cross.... In contrast, Paul would write: “The message of the cross . . . is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18, NIV). For Paul, **the Cross is the instrument of reconciliation between God and man** (Eph. 2:16, Col. 1:20), **the supreme symbol of Jesus’ humility** (Phil. 2:8), and **the place where our immense debt was paid** (Col. 2:14), **[i.e., God demonstrated the deadly seriousness of sin!]**—BSG* for Sabbath Afternoon, July 4.^{†‡§} [To whom was our debt paid? Is that a “forensic” or “legal” term for what Jesus did by His life and death?][‡]

[From the *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=T-BSG:] This ... lesson highlights a number of important themes, including:

The Message of the Cross. The cross is God’s surprising, and all-encompassing, answer to the sin problem. It is the foundation of the gospel message preached by Paul and the other apostles to a world that had a radically different worldview....

The Cross: Folly or a Way Home. The cross becomes either a stumbling block or folly to those who hear about it without embracing the One who hung there. Jesus died on the cross in order to offer the world forgiveness, transformative grace, and a way home to the God who invests all to save His fallen creation.—T-BSG* 26-27.[‡] **[How do those things actually work?][‡]**

The Cross to the Greco-Roman World and “The Cross” to Us

2. Contrary to his approach in Athens, Paul did not try to impress the Corinthians with big words or fancy speeches. Instead, he preached the startling and amazing story of Jesus leading up to His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead.

[BSG:] **A crucified Messiah [Christ] was something completely unexpected by the Jews and the Greeks. What does this tell us about the fact that God does not always act the way we expect? Why is this an important concept to grasp, especially when things don’t go as we have expected?**—BSG* for Wednesday, July 8.[‡]

[T-BSG:] Paul’s exaltation of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross went against the sentiment of his day. In the introduction to his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul highlights the countercultural nature of the Christian message of the Cross, which is something that most of us living in Western, or Christian, contexts will struggle to understand. Most of us grew up in a world in which **crosses on churches or in other public spaces were shorthand**

for Christianity and the message of salvation.

But the cross meant cruel death, severe punishment, and absolute shame to most people living in the first-century A.D. Greco-Roman world. Yet, contrary to the popular thinking of that time, Paul taught that the gospel of Jesus Christ was the power of God to those who accepted it (1 Cor. 1:18, ESV).—T-BSG* 26.^{†‡§}

1 Corinthians 1:17-19: ¹⁷Christ did not send me to baptize. He sent me to tell the Good News, and to tell it without using the language of human wisdom, in order to make sure that Christ's death on the cross is not robbed of its power.

[Christ the Power and the Wisdom of God]

¹⁸For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power.

¹⁹The scripture says: [The power is in the One who died, not the cross!]

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise

and set aside the understanding of the scholars." [Paul reminded especially the Jews of what it says in Isaiah 29:14, LXX]—American Bible Society. (©1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation*^{®*} [GNT] (*Today's English Version*) [TEV], Second Edition (1 Corinthians 1:17-19). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible-TEV** or *GNB-TEV**].^{†‡}

Isaiah 29:14: "So I will startle them with one unexpected blow after another. Those who are wise will turn out to be fools, and all their cleverness will be useless."—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

[BSG:] The Greek text of 1 Corinthians 1:18 suggests that "those who are perishing" (NKJV) ["lost" in *GNB-TEV**] are receiving **the result of their actions**. The text can read like this: "**For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are destroying themselves.**" The Greek verb *apollymi* ("to perish") can also mean "to destroy" (*John 10:10*). In fact, *apollymi* is translated as "destroy" in 1 Corinthians 1:19.—BSG* for Tuesday, July 7.^{†‡§}

John 10:10: "The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness."—*GNB-TEV*.*

[BSG:] **In verse 19, God is the one behind the destruction, which seems to contradict the self-destroying pride mentioned right before. However, there is no contradiction. The idea is that God will destroy that which already is destroying itself. [God does this to cleanse the world of sin, disease, and death at/after the third coming.]**

In contrast to those being destroyed, the phrase "to us who are being saved" (1 Cor. 1:18, NKJV) indicates that salvation comes only from God. Paul is saying that we are being saved; that is, we are not saving ourselves. We, of course, can't. Our salvation has an external source. **While destruction is self-caused, salvation can only be granted, a gift of grace to sinners.** As is clear in 1 Corinthians 1:21, it is God who saves those who believe. **Foolishness, in this sense, is the act of rejecting what God has offered**

humanity through the cross of Christ (*1 Cor. 1:30*), thus bringing destruction upon oneself.—BSG* for Tuesday, July 7.^{†§} [If our only hope of salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ, would it not be completely foolish to ignore that gift?][‡]

3. One does not have to have a lot of education to believe, or have faith. One just needs to realize that God the Father and Christ the Son were willing to go to such incredible lengths of love to convince us of their love. We need to respond to that love by living the kind of lives which They have recommended! That is real love!
4. No human wisdom could ever come up with the idea that God would come to this earth and live the life Christ lived and then be crucified and, thus, provide “power” for salvation!
5. ***Why would anyone choose the cross, an instrument of Roman torture, as a symbol of salvation?***
6. One thing is very clear: What the cross means depends on how one looks at it.
7. Read **Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 1:7-10; 3:7-11; and 1 Peter 2:24. *What did Jesus accomplish for the entire universe on the cross? All three of Them were involved!***
8. Peter suggests in 1 Peter 2:24 that we are supposed to die to sin and live for righteousness. What does that mean?
9. **God’s plan includes much more than forgiveness of sins.** That plan was for the whole universe, and none of the sinless angels needed their sins forgiven! Jesus died to show us the final results of our sinful ways so that with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can learn to stop sinning and, thus, avoid those results! Jesus did not become a sinner; **Jesus just took upon Himself the results of sin to demonstrate to the entire universe how serious sin is!**
10. Jesus lived and died to teach us the truth about God and the truth about Satan. Satan did everything he could to destroy the Son of God forever! And the entire universe, except for us humans, watched the whole process! They saw how sin had changed Satan from being the covering cherub, Lucifer the light-bearer, standing beside the throne of God as the chief angel. Lucifer had been given one of the names of God, Lucifer, because he was supposed to be bearing the truth about God to the rest of the universe. And yet, Lucifer changed into being so evil that he tried to kill Christ. Sin is self-destructive.
11. Through Jeremiah, God taught us how He deals with sin and what it means to be forgiven.
Jeremiah 31:34: “None of them will have to teach a neighbor to know the LORD, because all will know me, from the least to the greatest. **I will forgive their sins and I will no longer remember their wrongs.** I, the LORD, have spoken.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*†} [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.][‡]
12. Let us be very clear, there is nothing wrong with God’s memory! He just chooses to ignore or overlook our past sins if we are willing to stop committing them! That is what it means by the term *to repent and turn away from our sins*! That is what Paul was talking about in Romans 3.

Romans 3:25-26: ²⁵⁻²⁶ God offered him, so that by his blood he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this in order to demonstrate that he is righteous. In the past he was patient and overlooked people's sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, in order to demonstrate his righteousness. In this way God shows that he himself is righteous and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*†} [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.][‡]

13. Notice that God forgave past sins by overlooking them! However, the real message is the truth about God! Romans 3:25-26 is the only passage in Scripture in which the death of Jesus is directly explained!
14. God's righteousness was revealed by the life of Jesus Christ from His birth until His death. The life and death of Jesus give us a choice: We can choose to live lives as close as possible to the example of Jesus and, by faith, live forever; or, we will die of sin as Jesus died, separated from His Father, the only Source of life. Remember that Jesus did not die of crucifixion or beatings; He died of sin!

Romans 6:23: For sin pays its wage—death; but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*†}

15. Sin kills, but God saves! Look what sin has done to Lucifer/Satan!

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation.... Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, **He cannot see the Father's reconciling face**. [See Isaiah 59:2.] **The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour** [*sic*-British spelling] **in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.**

Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour [*sic*-British spelling] could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. **Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race [at the third coming of Jesus]. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.**

With amazement angels witnessed the Saviour's [*sic*-British spelling] despairing agony. The hosts of heaven veiled their faces from the fearful sight.... **Complete darkness, like a funeral pall, enveloped the cross.** "There was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."...

In that thick darkness **God's presence was hidden**. He makes darkness His pavilion, and conceals His glory from human eyes. **God and His holy angels were beside the cross. The Father was with His Son. Yet His**

presence was not revealed.... And in that dreadful hour Christ was not to be comforted with the Father's presence.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 753.1-4.^{††} [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.][†]
[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3718&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3718&index=0)[†]

16. **When Jesus was born to Mary, Satan claimed that he would get Jesus to sin!** No other human being had lived a completely righteous life on this earth, and he was sure that he could get Jesus to sin. As the end of Jesus's life approached, Satan became very worried and **tried to make Christ's life so difficult that Christ would just give up on the plan of salvation, go back to heaven, and leave us to our sins!** When that failed and Jesus remained faithful to God's plan all the way to the cross and His death, **Satan claimed that the body of Jesus belonged to him since Jesus was dead.** So, Satan and all of his angels, and also those one hundred Roman soldiers, did everything they could to **keep that grave shut.** However, when those two angels came down from heaven, rolled back the stone, and called Jesus, He came forth from the grave by the power that was in Himself since He was God. (John 10:17-18) And none of Satan's forces could keep Him in that grave! **At that point, Satan knew that he had lost the great controversy!** Christ thus proved that He has the power to raise the dead.

John 10:17-18: ¹⁷ "The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. ¹⁸No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. **I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do.**"—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*†}

17. The Jews were excited to hear about the Messiah. They were sure that the Messiah was going to help them conquer the Romans; they were shocked to think that the Messiah that Paul was preaching about was actually killed by the Romans! And there was nothing about the life and death of Jesus Christ that appealed to the Greeks who wanted philosophical wisdom!
18. To get an idea of how unbelievable the idea was that the Messiah would be crucified, read **Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31-32; 9:30-32; 10:32-34; and Luke 18:31-34.**

[BSG:] For centuries, the cross has been, for Christians, a symbol of faith. It is hard for twenty-first-century Christians to understand how crazy the idea of a crucified God was for the first-century mindset. [Shocking things get attention!]

However, it is precisely because this was such a shocking message that makes it worthy of our most profound reflections. **The portrait of a crucified Messiah makes it entirely clear to the whole universe how far God was willing to go to complete the plan of redemption. The idea of the cross itself, and of the Lord's dying on the cross, is astonishing enough to us, sinners here on earth. (Imagine, though, what it must have meant to the sinless beings who knew, and worshiped, the Lord Jesus [Christ] in heaven!)**—BSG* for Wednesday, July 8.^{††}

19. ***Today, what does the world think is important? Is it to live a humble life like that of Jesus? The world seeks money, fame, power, even entertainment!***

[EGW:] To the minds of multitudes living at the present time, the cross of

Calvary is surrounded by sacred memories. Hallowed associations are connected with the scenes of the crucifixion. **But in Paul's day the cross was regarded with feelings of repulsion and horror. To uphold as the Saviour [sic-British spelling] of mankind one who had met death on the cross, would naturally call forth ridicule and opposition.**

Paul well knew how his message would be regarded by both the Jews and the Greeks of Corinth. "We preach Christ crucified," he admitted, "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." 1 Corinthians 1:23. Among his Jewish hearers there were many who would be angered by the message he was about to proclaim. In the estimation of the Greeks his words would be absurd folly. **He would be looked upon as weak-minded for attempting to show how the cross could have any connection with the elevation of the race or the salvation of mankind.**

But to Paul the cross was the one object of supreme interest. Ever since he had been arrested in his career of persecution against the followers of the crucified Nazarene he had never ceased to glory in the cross. At that time there had been given him a **revelation of the infinite love of God, as revealed in the [life and] death of Christ**; and a marvelous transformation had been wrought in his life, bringing all his plans and purposes into harmony with heaven. From that hour he had been a new man in Christ. **He knew by personal experience that when a sinner once beholds the love of the Father, as seen in the sacrifice of His Son, and yields to the divine influence, a change of heart takes place, and henceforth Christ is all and in all.**—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles** 245.1-3.^{†‡}

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p127.1085&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p127.1085&index=0)[‡]

20. **To the Corinthians, the cross and resurrection were a shock; but, it got their attention. If you could document, even today, that Someone had risen from the grave in their own power, it would get attention!**

[T-BSG:] What aspect, or aspects, of the good news of the Cross would appeal to people in your community, outside the church? What would make accepting the gospel more difficult for them?—*T-BSG** 30.[‡]

21. In a self-centered world seeking fame, money, or position in society, the humble Jesus who died 2000 years ago as a traitor to the Roman government seems completely out of touch. However, the fact that He might be able to offer eternal life in a perfect environment would certainly appeal to many!

The Gospel of the Cross

22. ***What did Paul mean by saying, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2, NKJV*) would be the center of his preaching? What point was Paul making?***

1 Corinthians 2:2: For while I was with you, I made up my mind to forget everything except Jesus Christ and especially his death on the cross.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

23. ***Didn't Paul teach the Corinthians that in order for the church to succeed, the members needed to love each other? How would that contrast with the beliefs and behaviors of the Corinthians?***

24. Surely, we would agree that the cross of Christ represents the very worst of human behavior but the best of God's behavior.
25. Paul recognized that the message of the cross would not appeal naturally to Greco-Roman rhetoric and wisdom. Paul had tried appealing to the Greco-Romans in Athens using logic, science, and philosophy; but, the results were not significant.
26. ***Why do you think Paul's approach in Corinth was more effective than his approach in Athens? Was there ever a time in Corinth when Paul used logic, philosophy, and science? Remember that, at first, Paul thought that his work in Corinth would be a waste of time and effort. But, he ended up staying there one and one-half years! He preached in Athens for only a few weeks!***

[EGW:] In preaching the gospel in Corinth, the apostle followed a course different from that which had marked his labors at Athens. While in the latter place, he had sought to adapt his style to the character of his audience; he had met logic with logic, science with science, philosophy with philosophy. As he thought of the time thus spent and realized that his teaching in Athens had been productive of but little fruit, he decided to follow another plan of labor in Corinth in his efforts to arrest the attention of the careless and the indifferent. He determined to avoid elaborate arguments and discussions, and "not to know anything" among the Corinthians "save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." He would preach to them "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." 1 Corinthians 2:2, 4.—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles** 244.1.†

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27. Elaborate discourses tend to cause people to focus on the speaker rather than the message. However, the gospel must be based on adequate evidence, and it is evidence that appeals to our reason. (See *Steps to Christ* page 105 as quoted just below.)

[EGW:] **God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith.** His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that **appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant.** Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence [which God has provided in more than adequate quantity], not demonstration [that is, not upon irrefutable or overwhelming evidence which leaves a person no opportunity for choice]. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith.—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ** 105.2.†

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p108.424&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p108.424&index=0)†

28. ***If you were a citizen of ancient Corinth, what would it take to convince you that a Person who had been crucified by the Romans as a traitor/criminal could be the key to eternal life? How did Paul prove that Christ had actually risen from the dead? Did the Corinthian Christians finally stand out because they loved each other instead of fighting with each other?***

Wisdom in the Old Testament Contrasted with Wisdom in Greek Thinking

29. In 1 Corinthians 1&2, Paul also wrote about wisdom.

[T-BSG:] 1. Background: **The Hellenistic concept of wisdom (*sofia*) in the New Testament period emphasized intelligence and theoretical knowledge over practical skills.** A philosopher was a “lover of wisdom,” someone who understood and disseminated knowledge about the natural world and the human experience. Truth could be ordered into a general system that could help explain the world. **Quite a number of differing Greek philosophical schools, with distinct emphases, existed during the time, but they all focused on observation, reason, logic, and intellectual arguments, even though they were not devoid of ethical concerns.**—*T-BSG** 27.^{†‡§} [At least six different Greek “schools” or systems of “wisdom” were in constant conflict with each other. There was no love lost among them!][‡]

[T-BSG:] In the Old Testament, **wisdom is not limited to knowledge, or the integration of knowledge into a coherent system; rather, it describes the ability of a person to make right use of knowledge that is relationally connected to God. This knowledge is, thus, God-given and results in making ethical** (i.e., “good,” echoing Creation language [loving]) **decisions.** Exodus 31:1–5 uses three key terms of wisdom language (*hokmah*, “wisdom;” *binah*, “intelligence;” and *da`at*, “knowledge”) to describe the divinely given skill that the artist Bezalel needed to create the tabernacle and its utensils. The use of these terms in this particular context helps us to understand that **wisdom in the Old Testament is practical and goes beyond a mere intellectual endeavor.**—*T-BSG** 27.^{†‡§}

30. **Read Exodus 31:1-5.**

31. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars discovered that discussions about wisdom were an important element of intellectual and philosophical deliberation among the Essenes.

[T-BSG:] Wisdom and folly are found closely linked in Paul’s opening chapter to the church in Corinth. He helps his readers understand that “human wisdom cannot lead to a true saving knowledge of God, which is only available through the foolishness of the gospel (v. 21).”—“1 Corinthians,” in *Andrews Bible Commentary*, ed. Ángel Manuel Rodríguez et al. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2022), p. 1620.—*T-BSG** 29.^{‡§}

[T-BSG:] **What could be a stumbling block to our faith, though we have the advantage of being able to look back on nearly two thousand years of church history and the history of biblical interpretation?...**

What would be the best argument to make to those who consider the gospel message foolish or just a “sedative for the ignorant”?—*T-BSG 29-30.[‡]**

32. Contrast the response of the scribes and Pharisees in Jerusalem with the people in Corinth. **Read Matthew 12:38-39 and Mark 8:11-12.**
33. Paul did not seek to win only those in Corinth who were of high status or wealthy or considered to be wise. He approached anyone who was willing to think seriously about the gospel. (See 1 Corinthians 1:26-31.)

34. **Paul talked about a kind of wisdom that is lived out in the lives of Christians.** That kind of wisdom was discussed even in the Old Testament in Jeremiah 9:23-24 and in Proverbs 8. None of man's great thinking will ever accomplish salvation! However, God offers salvation to those who are willing to accept it and live by faith.
35. Why do you suppose Paul felt that the gospel of Jesus Christ was foolishness to those who are perishing?
36. **Read 1 Corinthians 1:20-31.**
37. None of the wisdom that the Greeks loved to talk about could offer eternal life! So, to focus on that wisdom instead of turning to God and His message of salvation was terrible foolishness. It might have caused one to be looked down upon or even despised. However, it is salvation. Each person who accepts it can be put right with God and become one of God's holy people, set free from this world's foolishness.
38. If you had been one of the wise debaters of Athens or Corinth, what do you think there was to debate about concerning a death on the cross, or even a resurrection from the dead? It either happened, or it did not! What might that mean to each one of us? It is interesting to notice that the Greek word for foolishness *moria* occurs only in 1 Corinthians, and there it occurs five times. (1 Corinthians 1:18,21,23; 2:14; 3:19)
39. Surely, to a Greek so-called wise person or a Jew following traditional Jewish ideas, the idea that a crucified Person could be the key to eternal life and happiness seemed foolish and impossible. True happiness comes from living as Christians together in love. Nothing the world has to offer compares to that!

[BSG:] The reference to foolishness in 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23 is not denigrating [or making fun of] the Corinthians' intellectual capacity but directing attention to their unwillingness to consider the truth of the gospel. As a result, Paul also had to confront immoral behavior and thought, lack of discernment, and even rebellion against God.

Think about Paul's situation in this city. He comes to a place that prides itself on its own so-called knowledge and wisdom and cultural sophistication. And, in this context, he talks about a Galilean Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, who had been crucified by the Romans and then raised from the dead [actually rose in His own power]—all in order to ... ["do away with sin" while the BSG* says, "pay for"] not only their sins but [with] ... the sins of the world. [Romans 8:3] *Can this guy be serious? Who was he kidding?* This wasn't some deep new philosophical concept, either, that could be parsed and analyzed by philosophical tools; it seemed to be lunacy, nonsense, nothing that any smart and educated Corinthian could take seriously.

And, as foolish as Paul's message sounded to the pagans, for many of the Jews, the message of the Cross sounded worse. What Jew was expecting a Messiah to be executed by Rome? **The Messiah was supposed to overthrow the Romans, not be crucified by them.**

Thus, from the start, Paul had a lot going against him in Corinth. And yet, despite all this, souls—Jewish and Gentile—were won to the gospel. [Was it by being loved into the church by their brothers and sisters in the

church?)]—BSG* for Monday.^{†‡§} [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.][†]

40. How do you think Paul's preaching about the gospel appeared to those in Athens or Corinth who loved talking about different wisdom systems? As we know, the weakness of humanity is really an opportunity for God to display His strength and His love?

[T-BSG:] The remainder [of 1 Corinthians 1] ... offers a number of contrasts between wise and foolish, God and the world, strong and weak. The cross, an instrument of cruel Roman torture and death, has become the means by which God accomplished salvation. This argument, which underlies all the preaching of Paul and the early Christian church, must have felt countercultural and paradoxical to many newly converted Gentile believers. **The "word of the cross" (1 Cor. 1:18, ESV) is shorthand for the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, offering salvation for those who have heard and believed in that word.** We get a hint of the sense of the folly that any Greco-Roman audience would have perceived in this message: How could God save people (and the world [and even the entire universe]) through the death of a crucified convicted felon? Jews, on the other hand, would perceive this message as a "stumbling block" (ESV), or Greek *skandalon*, as noted in 1 Corinthians 1:23. This stumbling block, on the one hand, or foolishness, on the other hand, refers metaphorically to an obstacle to one's faith.—T-BSG* 28.^{†‡§}

Summary

41. ***Who could imagine suggesting that one could win the greatest war of all time by asking the chief Combatant to be viciously murdered on a cross?***
42. ***Wasn't Paul's plan that the church in Corinth would produce Christians who were to be like the disciples were supposed to have been as recorded in John 13:35?***
John 13:35: "If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."—Good News Bible-TEV.*
43. ***How would such a church with love for all stand out in the society of the Corinthians? Wouldn't everyone want to be a part of that group?***
44. ***It is amazing to think that the Father would send His Son to this earth to be born as the human Child, with the possibility that He might sin. If He sinned, the entire universe might be placed in peril! If Christ had sinned, Satan would have been proven right that no one living on earth could live without sinning. Then, God would have been proven wrong in the great controversy!***
45. Our world is all consumed with the latest and newest ideas, with money, with power, and with fame. So, how do we expect news from 2000 years ago to be the most important news, even in our time?

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