

# The True Cross Is A Radical Thing

The cross of old Roman times knew no compromise, it never made concessions. It won all its arguments by painfully killing its opponent and silencing him for good.

The cross, when applied to a Christian, in effect ends, by destroying an established lifestyle, the victims and creates another pattern of life, its own.

After Jesus Christ was risen from the dead the apostles went out to preach His message.

The central part of this message was the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the cross and how it could atone for the sins of all human beings.

This message was revolutionary and it gained its power from what Jesus Christ had done for all humanity, on the cross.

**1 Corinthians 1:17-18** [NIV] *“For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the gospel, not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. 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.”*

To everyone who is still blinded by Satan to the gospel message [**2 Corinthians 4:4**], for your God or leader to die in pain and humiliation as a criminal on a Roman cross was foolishness.

But to all who are being called by God at this time, peace of mind by having past sins forgiven and a wonderful future of eternal life.

**1 Corinthians 1:19-25** [NIV] *“For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.’ Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength.”*

Paul summarises **Isaiah 29:14** to emphasise a point Jesus Christ often made, God’s way of thinking is **not** like the world’s way, nor human wisdom.

We can spend a lifetime accumulating human wisdom and yet never learn how to have a personal relationship with our Creator God.

We have to come to the crucified and risen Jesus Christ to receive forgiveness and eternal life.

Many Jews considered the Good News of Jesus Christ to be foolish because they thought the Messiah, that Jesus Christ claimed to be, would be a conquering king.

Jesus Christ had **not** restored King David’s throne as they expected, although Jesus Christ claimed to be a king.

Also, Jesus Christ had been executed as a criminal and how could a criminal be a Messiah [Saviour]?

The Greeks also considered the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ crucified foolish. They did **not** believe in a bodily resurrection, they did **not** see in Jesus Christ the powerful characteristics of their mythological gods and **no** reputable person would be crucified.

To the Greeks, death was defeat **not** victory.

**The Good News of Jesus Christ and Him crucified still sounds foolish to the vast majority of people today.**

Our society worships power, influence and wealth, **not** humility of a servant. [Matthew 20:28]

**The radical message of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the cross showed its power when it transformed Saul of Tarsus and changed him from a persecutor of Christians to a believer and a powerful apostle of Christianity.**

The radical message of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ shook off the long-time bondage of paganism and altered completely the whole moral and mental outlook of the western world.

All this radical change continued as long as the cross was permitted to remain what it was originally, a means of a painful death.

**The cross and Jesus Christ's death on it lost its power when it was changed from a thing of death to a thing of beauty.**

**When human beings made the cross a symbol, hung it around their necks as an ornament or made its outline before their faces as a magic sign to ward off evil, then it became at best a weak emblem, at worst a positive fetish.**

As such the cross is revered today by millions of people who know **nothing** about its power.

**Romans 6:3-13** [NIV] *“Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that **our old self was crucified with him** so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin, because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. **Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.** For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.”*

**This is what Jesus Christ meant when he told people that they must “take up their cross” and follow Him and crucify their old way of life. [Matthew 10:38; Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23-24]**

To show the value we place on the crucifixion of our Saviour Jesus Christ, we have to do at least three things.

**Deny** ourselves of those things that are sin or lead to sin.

**Take up** our cross, by crucifying our old lifestyle and beginning a new life directed by the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit.

**Follow** Jesus Christ by becoming a disciple of His learning how to conduct our new life from His example and instructions.

The cross not only brought to an end Christ's physical life, it also ends our first life, our old life to become one of His true followers.

**This, and nothing less, is true Christianity.**

Yet we see a sharp divergence of this conception of the cross of Jesus Christ from that held by rank and file of Christians today.

We all have to do something about the cross and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, there is only two things we can choose to do.

**We flee from** the power of the cross and let it remain a symbol of beauty on a chain about our neck or an outline looking on it as a magic sign or weak emblem.

**Or we die on** our cross. Even though it will cut into our lives where it hurts worst, the defeat of our selfish lives, in total surrender to the will of Jesus Christ for our lives.

**So far has the Church and Christianity moved away from the standards of the New Testament and the original message it preached, that it will take a new reformation to restore the power of the cross and Jesus Christ crucified, to its right place in the theology and life of the Church.**