

## THE CROSS WHICH OFFENDS RELIGION

By "the cross", Paul did not mean the material cross. That is offensive to no one. It is a piece of jewelry. It is a universal symbol of religious sentimentalism at best, and outright idolatry at worst. Nor does he mean the mere historic fact of the cross. The fact of the crucifixion is (mostly) undisputed history. When Paul talks about the cross, he is talking about the *doctrine* of the cross - the doctrine of substitutionary redemption - the doctrine of blood atonement - the doctrine of free justification - the doctrine of complete pardon in Christ. He is talking about the preaching of the cross. By the preaching of the cross I mean the proclamation of its necessity, its nature, and its efficacy.

The preaching of the cross was an offence to the religious: self-righteous Jew, and to the proud intellectual Greek. If Paul had been willing to allow that man had any part in the work of salvation, both the Jew and the Gentile would have accepted his doctrine. But he would not allow any space for man. He declared that salvation was altogether the work of the triune God. It is a work of the grace of God, through the mediation of Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not a co-operative effort of God and man. It is a co-operative act of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The preaching of the cross offends the pride and dignity of man. It is a vivid reminder of man's sin and hatred of God. In its profound simplicity, it offends the wisdom of man. The inventions of man's religion are declared to be vanity. It is offensive, because it puts all men upon one level. Princes and paupers, moralists and harlots, scholars and drunkards are all the same in the eyes of God. All are sinners. And if they enter into glory, they must all stoop down and enter in at the

door of the cross, elbow to elbow; indeed, God is no respecter of persons.

But there are some to whom the cross is no offence. To those who are called, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God! Has God removed from your heart the offence of the cross? Do you now see its wisdom and beauty? Have you entered in by faith through the door of the cross? If so, give thanks to God alone! *Don Fortner*

## THE SUBTLETY OF ANOTHER GOSPEL - GAL1:6

The religious folk who 'troubled' the Galatian Christians would have been clear that they were Christians too. They professed to have believed the gospel; their sins, they said, were paid for by Christ bearing them and paying for them as their Substitute at Calvary. So why did Paul have such a serious problem with these people? It was because they insisted that in order to be the 'finished article' fit for God's heaven, the one believing in Christ had to perform works of obedience to the law of Moses including the rite of circumcision. So you might think that doesn't present a problem to most professing Christians in our day. But it does; exactly the same principle applies to anything added to the work of Christ. This includes presumed holiness attained by conformance to denominational standards and practices; it may be elevating the writings of learned men to equivalence with scripture for 'godliness'. But scripture itself says believers are not to be judged by these 'godly standards' of religious folk (Col2:16-23). *Sola Scriptura*, the Word of God alone, was the motto of the Reformation. Let it be ours too. Christ alone is the believer's wisdom from God, righteousness before God, sanctification for heaven and full redemption of sin-debt (1Cor1:30). Requiring anything more is '*another gospel*' which is no gospel at all. *AJ*

# Biblical Gospel Church

*Preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ - Ephesians 3:8*

[www.biblicalgospelchurch.org](http://www.biblicalgospelchurch.org)

Meeting at:

Burton Community Centre  
93 Sandy Plot  
BH23 7NH

**If you are not able to meet with us at the hall, watch us LIVE via the internet at:**  
[YouTube.com/@biblicalgospelchurch](https://www.youtube.com/@biblicalgospelchurch)

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2026**  
**10:30 am (GMT) Service**

*Galatians 5:7-15*

*"The Offence of the Cross"*

Traditional worship with hymns, prayer, Bible readings and a sermon based on a passage of the Bible

**Listen to sermons by sovereign grace preachers at**

[www.freegraceradio.com](http://www.freegraceradio.com)

## 1 Peter 2:1-10

165 to 231

*I Watts*

1 Christ and his cross is all our theme;  
The mysteries that we speak  
Are scandal in the Jew's<sup>1</sup> esteem,  
And folly to the Greek.

2 But souls enlightened from above  
With joy receive the word;  
They see what wisdom, power, and love  
Shine in their dying Lord.

3 The vital savour of his name  
Restores their fainting breath;  
Believing, they rejoice in him,  
The Antidote of death.

### Prayer

### Romans 9:30-10:13

### Prayer

52 to 834

*Gospel Mag. 1777*

1  
The gospel brings tidings to each wounded  
soul,  
That Jesus the Saviour can make it quite  
whole;  
And what makes this gospel most precious to  
me,  
It holds forth salvation so perfectly free!

2  
The gospel declares that God, sending his Son  
To die for poor sinners, gave all things in one;  
This, too, makes the gospel most precious to  
me;

Because 'tis a gospel as full as 'tis free!

3  
Since Jesus has saved me, and that freely too,  
I fain would in all things my gratitude show;  
But as to man's merit, 'tis hateful to me!  
The gospel – I love it; 'tis perfectly free!

### Sermon

521 to 807

*W Gadsby*

Thanks be to my Head, the great King of  
kings,  
My life from the dead, the death of my sins;  
Who took all my woes, and was made sin for  
me;  
Who died, and who rose, and from sin set me  
free.

2  
His Spirit he sent, to soften my heart;  
The old veil to rend, and life to impart;  
To bring me from darkness to light in the Lord,  
And kill me to Moses, to sin, and the world.

3  
Thus I, through the law, dead to the law am,  
Yet married am I to Jesus the Lamb!  
This union is sealèd, all heaven's agreed;  
From sin and from Moses I henceforth am  
freed.

4  
My soul, then, rejoice; let Christ be thy song;  
With heart and with voice, with lip and with  
tongue,  
Before men or angels, sing, Worthy's the  
Lamb  
Of unceasing praises, for ever. Amen.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jew's - i.e. in the religion of Judaism and, by implication, in all works-based religion