

Intro.

- A. Much has been made over Paul’s statement (text).
 - 1. Then in chpt. 2, Paul wrote **2 Cor. 2:2**
 - 2. Many have taken the phrase, *Christ sent me not to baptize* to mean that baptism is not necessary.
- B. Is that really a fair conclusion to draw from this text?
 - 1. The fact of the matter is, Paul did baptize some (**1 Cor. 1:14-16**) & he was faithful, **2 Tim. 4**.
 - 2. Like us, he was laboring under the Gt. Commission (**Mt. 28:19**—*Go make disciples...baptizing...*)
- C. The statement recorded by the Spirit of God is an *elliptical sentence*, & is similar to **Jn. 12:44**
 - 1. *He that believes on me, believes not one me [only], but [also] on Him that sent me.*
 - 2. Paul actually expressed: *Christ sent me not to baptize [only], but [also] to preach the gospel.*
 - a. Paul usually did the preaching while others present did the baptizing, **Ac. 18:8** (c. **Jn. 4:1-2**).
 - b. Paul preached *the cross, the gospel*, not the wood beams, but what the cross stands for.
 - 3. Focus of our study: Knowing the cross = God’s supreme declaration of His dealing with man, we want to see just what message the cross declares to us.

Discuss.**I. Cross Declares THE FULFILLMENT & REMOVAL OF THE LAW OF MOSES, Col. 2:14-16**

- A. A great deal of confusion in religion results when people miss this very significant declaration of the cross.
 - 1. The burning of incense, tithing, Sabbath keeping, infant baptism, use of instrumental music in worship are a few of the things people try to justify using the Old Testament (i.e., Law of Moses).
 - 2. We need to help others to understand Paul’s words in **Gal. 5:4**, even though they are really quite plain.
 - a. Don’t forget to whom the law of Moses was given (**Jer. 31:31-33**)
 - b. Remember how long that covenant was to last, **Gal. 3:16, 19, 24-25**.
- B. The purpose of the Law was to keep the seed of Abraham a separate people.
 - 1. Christ death put all men on equal footing, **Eph. 2:14-16**
 - 2. Moses Law could identify sin, but it could not justify sinful man, **Rom. 7:7 & Heb. 10:4**
 - 3. Removal of Moses’ Law does not mean that we can lie, steal, kill, etc. with impunity, because Christ’s law forbids these things today.

II. Cross Declares THE ENORMITY OF SIN, 1 Cor. 15:3

- A. If you want to get a clear picture of how God feels about sin, study the Old Testament.
 - 1. Read about the flood, Sodom & Gomorrah, Nadab & Abihu, Jonah & Ninevah.
 - 2. The cross of Christ declares the magnitude of the problem of sin.
 - 3. Atoning sacrifice was not an animal sacrifice, or a mere human, but the very Son of God.
 - a. The sacrifice required was that of *the only begotten Son*, **Jn. 3:16**.
 - b. All Christ ever did was good (**Ac. 10:38**); He was sinless, **Heb. 4:15**
- B. Yet, He paid the wages of our sins, **Rom. 6:23 & 1 Pet. 2:24**.
 - 1. Christ pleaded with the Father to spare Him the agony of the cross. **Mt. 26:39**
 - 2. Darkness prevailed for 3 hours as Christ hung on Calvary, forsaken by Jehovah.
 - 3. That was the price paid for all the wrong things you and I have ever done!!!

III. Cross Declares GOD’S LOVE FOR THE SINNER, 1 Jn. 3:16

- A. What would motivate God to sacrifice His Son for the likes of sinful men?
 - 1. *Only His great eternal love* (**1 Jn. 3:16**)
 - 2. There is no other way God could have accomplished the task of redeeming us from sin. **Rom. 3:25-26**
- B. What do you think of the cross of Christ?
 - 1. Surely you do not dismiss it as foolish.
 - 2. God said that in the preaching of the cross God’s power & wisdom can be seen, **1 Cor. 1:18, 24**.

Concl.

A. If you notice **1 Cor. 1:17(b)**, Paul said the Cross can be made of none effect.

1. The intended effect of the cross -- to redeem man from sin – becomes powerless whenever one fails to obey God's commands in His plan of salvation, and vainly attempts to substitute another plan devised by man.
2. Whenever we do not live our lives as we should, we have become...*an enemy of the cross*, **Phil. 3:18**

B. I can imagine nothing worse than to be an enemy of the cross of Christ, & being found guilty at Judgment of making the cross of Christ of no effect because of my negligence & sin.

C. As we sing (the invitation song), I want to encourage each of you to examine your life & make certain you are not living as an enemy of the cross.