

The Word of The Cross
(The path to godliness)

In I Corinthians 1:18 Paul abruptly states that the word of the cross "is the power of God." The power that comes from God, the power that belongs to God, the power that makes God God. All the creative, redemptive, justifying, sanctifying, glorifying power of God is contained in the word of the cross. It has a timeless, ongoing, inexhaustible effect on those who "are being saved." Other "words" may be interesting yet without the power of God.

Yet, how tempted we are to reduce the message of the cross because, at times, it seems so weak, even foolish. And, how tempted we are to try and enlarge our subject matter beyond the cross, perhaps in order to be popular and play to the crowds. We do have a hard time believing that ALL the power of God is in the cross, don't we? Most evangelicals would say it has enough power to save us, but not enough to live the Christian Life. "Surely we also need _____!" (You fill in the blank.)

However, Paul makes it clear in that same chapter that all righteousness, all rightness - getting right, staying right, living right - is "by His doing" in the cross. That would make the cross a "crucifying form of knowledge." It would shatter and cut us off from most of the fads, additives, and programs that contribute to the pop theologies of any given age. It would put to death all our spiritual steroids, religious formulas, and man made methods we keep trying to develop and use for "rightness." It would judge and crucify all "un-truth" about God, about ourselves, about wisdom. It would make known once and for all that self-preservation, self-help, an self-consciousness are no routes, no ways to the life pleasing to God. The word of the cross shouts to us that we are so far beyond help, so damaged at the core, so absent of life even God can't fix us - we can only be put to death and buried - making the word of the cross an evaluation and judgment of humanity that we do not want to accept!

All self-activation, self-improvement and self-help dies at the cross. All sinners, trying to be good, to get on God's good side by self-cleansing and self-effort will never be saved - God only justifies the god-less by the word of the cross. All saints, trying to be good, conform themselves to Christ by self-effort will be doomed as well - God only sanctifies the saints by the word of the cross. The cross-ified life, alone, is the path to godliness!

✂ _____

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GREETINGS

As I listen to more and more people (including many of you), the consensus is that "things" are busier, more chaotic, and less predictable than ever. People are anxious, confused, angry and mostly, just plain old tired! The pace of life, the rate of change, and even the general noise levels all seem to be ramped up quite a bit.

What are we to do? Join in the cultural neurosis and hang on until we die? Abstain from the world and retreat to a mountain refuge? (All in favor, say "I"!) Pile up rocks and spend the day throwing them at a godless culture?

Here's what we are to do, what God's people have always done in every generation. We listen for His voice and respond accordingly! This busy, noisy, restless world and its attending anxiety, frustration, and fatigue could be the sound that God's voice is making calling us to abide in Him. To descend from our minds to our hearts, from our souls to our spirits, from man-made to God-made kingdoms and dwell in the rhythms and renewals and reserves of our refuge in Christ. Who knows, He may just cause it all to work for our good - He is that kind of God!

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

1,8,15,22	CCF
10	Alachua Study
13-15	Florida Retreat
24	Ocala Study
27 - <u>MARCH</u> 1	San Antonio/Boerne, TX (210-478-0618)
20-22	Titusville, FL (772-563-0430)

APRIL

17-19 Monticello, UT (859-393-4104)

MAY

1-3 Dalton, PA (607-239-5006)

ALACHUA, FLORIDA WINTER RETREAT

"In Christ: Our Living Oneness"



Feb 13-15, 2015



\$280 couple (all inclusive)	Includes: lodging, conference fee & 5 meals
\$155 single (2 to a room)	
\$240 single (1 to a room)	
<u>Or</u>	
\$65 person conference fee & 3 meals	(no lodging or breakfast)
<u>Or</u>	
\$20 person conference fee	

RESERVATIONS:

\$50 per person **DUE BY JANUARY 30th**

No reservation fee necessary to attend meetings only

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