

Why the Cross Offends

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.

1 Corinthians 1:18

Why is the cross offensive?

Because the world has

1. A Distorted View of Christ's Divinity

Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles"

1 Corinthians 1:22-23

Objection 1

The message of the cross says in effect that God sent his son into the world to die on the cross for our sins and many would say that makes God out to be a monster, an ogre, anything but a God of love.

Objection 2

What kind of Father would forsake his Son in the moment of his greatest need?

Objection 3

Why does God create us the way He did and then, when we mess up, He condemns us. If He made me the way I am, how can He then get upset with me when I mess up?

Objection 4

Why, if God is so loving, is He so ticked off all the time by my sin?

"Suppose you could reverse the question and ask, "why, if God is so holy, is he so incredibly patient with all the evil we do."

All of God's attributes converge in the cross!

2. A Delusional View of Humanity

“But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God’s promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 3:22 (NLT)

“And that’s the way it was with us before Christ came. We were like children; we were slaves to the basic spiritual principles of this world.”

Galatians 4.3 (NLT)

“All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own.”

Isaiah 53.6

“We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3.23

“Herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yes, fighting with all my might under the law ... but then I sometimes, if not very often conquered; now I was always the conqueror.” John Wesley

“I don’t really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can’t. I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don’t want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God’s law with all my heart. But there is another power^l within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am!”

Romans 7:15-24

“Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law.”

Galatians 2:16

“But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written in God’s Book of the Law.”

Galatians 3:10-11

“But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

Galatians 3:13

3. A Dismissive View of Salvation

“For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

Galatians 5:13

When Christ appeared in his advent of mercy he came in such a way that those who do not want God’s mercy would not see him for what he was. After all, if people don’t want mercy it would not have been right for Christ to appear in such an overwhelming way but that they could only accept it. Yet he would not appear in so hidden a manner that he could not be known by those who should sincerely seek him. He wanted to be recognizable as the Saviour to those who seek him with all their heart and to be hidden from those who flee from him with all their heart. Those who seek a Saviour have enough light to see that Jesus is that Saviour, and those who have no interest in the mercy of God will be able to look at Jesus and not see who he is or what he’s done. Blaise Pascal

“In terms of human wisdom, Jesus was a perfect fool. And if you think you can follow him without making something like the same kind of fool of yourself, you are labouring not under the cross, but a delusion.” Frederick Buechner

If you remove the offence of the cross you remove the message of the cross.