

Adult
Sabbath School
Bible Study Guide
July | Aug | Sept 2026

FIRST AND SECOND CORINTHIANS

THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS

Lesson 2 Study Notes[ABSG-3-2026]

July 4-10



Disclaimer

These notes are prepared to support personal and group Bible study. While written with care and in harmony with Scripture, the Sabbath School Quarterly Guide, and the Spirit of Prophecy, they are not an official publication of the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Reader is encouraged to rely first on the Bible, together with the Sabbath School Quarterly Guide and the Spirit of Prophecy writings.

Lesson 2 [July 4-10]: Understanding the Memory Text

"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 (NIV)

- The cross looked like a place of defeat, shame, and death.
- But God turned it into the greatest victory in history.
- This week's lesson reminds us that the cross is more than an event of the past.
- It is the foundation of our faith and the answer to every problem caused by sin.

"For the message of the cross..."

- The "message of the cross" is the good news that Jesus died in our place so we could be forgiven and receive eternal life.
- The cross shows both the seriousness of sin and the greatness of God's love.
- Paul made the cross the center of his preaching because only Jesus can change hearts and bring people together.
- When we keep the cross at the center of our lives, pride begins to disappear and Christ becomes our focus.

"...is foolishness to those who are perishing..."

- Many people see no need for a Savior because they depend on their own wisdom, strength, or achievements.
- To them, the idea that salvation comes through a crucified Savior does not make sense.
- The problem is not that God's plan is foolish.
- It is that a heart far from God cannot understand spiritual things.
- This reminds us to pray for humble hearts that are willing to accept God's truth instead of trusting ourselves.

"...but to us who are being saved..."

- Those who **believe in Jesus** see the **cross** very differently.
- We know we **cannot save ourselves**.
- Every day we depend on **Christ's grace** to **forgive** us, **strengthen** us, and make us more like Him.
- **Salvation** is not something we earn.
- It is **God's gift**, received by **faith** and lived out through a **daily walk with Jesus**.

"...it is the power of God."

- The **power of the cross** is more than the power to **forgive sin**.
- It is also the power to **change lives**.
- The same **Jesus** who died for us also gives us **victory over sin**, **heals broken relationships**, and gives us **hope** for His **soon return**.
- That is why the **cross** remains the **heart of the gospel** and the **center** of the Christian life.

What This Means for You

- Maybe you are carrying **guilt**, **fear**, or **disappointment** today.
- **Bring it all** to the **cross**.
- **Jesus** has already **paid the price** for your sins, and He **invites** you to **trust Him completely**.
- As you keep your eyes on **Christ** and His **sacrifice**, your **faith** will grow stronger, your **love for Him** will deepen, and His **power** will help you live each day for His **glory**.

A Closing Thought

- The world may never understand the **cross**.
- But for everyone who **believes**, it is the **clearest proof** of **God's love** and the **strongest source** of **hope**.
- **Stay close** to **Jesus**, keep the **cross** before your eyes, and let His **saving power** **shape** your life every day.

July 4: Sabbath Afternoon - Overview

Summary

- The **message of the cross** is the **heart of the Christian faith** and the **foundation of our salvation**.
- The **cross** reveals **God's love**, **wisdom**, and **power**, even though many people see it as **weakness** or **foolishness**.
- Human wisdom can never solve the problem of **sin**, but **God's plan** through **Jesus** provides **complete salvation**.
- **Jesus** died on the **cross** to **reconcile** us with **God**, **forgive** our sins, and give us **eternal life**.
- **Paul** placed **Christ crucified** at the center of his preaching because only **the gospel** has power to **transform lives**.
- The **message of the cross** is **God's answer** to the divisions and problems that troubled the church in **Corinth**.
- **Nothing**—not human wisdom, eloquence, philosophy, or personal pride—should **take the place** of **Christ** and His **sacrifice**.
- **God's ways** often **surprise** us, but they are always **wiser** and **better** than human thinking.
- Everyone who **accepts** the **message of the cross** receives **God's power**, **grace**, and **hope**.
- As we keep the **cross** at the center of our lives, our **faith** grows stronger and our **relationship with Jesus** becomes deeper.

Main Points to Learn This Week

Sunday: We will discover why **Paul** made the **message of the cross** the center of his preaching and why it must remain the **center of our faith**.

Monday: We will learn why the **cross** seems **foolish** to those who reject **God** but becomes the **power of salvation** to those who believe.

Tuesday: We will see what **Jesus** accomplished through His death on the **cross** and why **salvation** is completely **God's gift** of grace.

Wednesday: We will understand why a **crucified Messiah** shocked both **Jews** and **Gentiles** and what this teaches us about **trusting God's ways**.

Thursday: We will discover why **Christ** is **God's wisdom** and **power** and how the **cross** provides the only true solution to the problem of **sin**.

This week we will discover why the **message of the cross** is **God's answer** to our greatest need and the **only hope** for every sinner.

July 5: Sunday - The Gospel of the Cross

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:17–31; 1 Corinthians 2:2

Summary

- Paul made the **message of the Cross** the **center** of his preaching because **God** had **called** him to **proclaim** the **gospel of Jesus Christ**.
- He **reminded** believers to keep their **focus** on **Jesus** instead of the people **God** uses in His work.
- **Human wisdom** cannot do what the **Cross** does.
- The **Cross** reveals the **seriousness of sin**, the **greatness of God's love**, and the **price Jesus** paid to **save** us.
- Many people **rejected** this message because they **trusted** their own **wisdom** instead of **God's wisdom**.
- **Paul** learned that **clever arguments** could not **change hearts**.
- In **Athens**, few **accepted** the gospel through **logic** and **philosophy**.
- In **Corinth**, many **believed** because Paul **lifted up Jesus Christ** and Him **crucified**.
- **Knowledge** and good **reasoning** are useful, but they should never **replace** the **message of the Cross**.
- As we **share our faith**, our greatest message should always be **Jesus** and His **saving grace**.

Question

- Why did **Paul** make the **Cross** the **center** of his preaching?

Answer

- Because only the **message of the Cross** reveals **God's wisdom** and has the **power** to **save** and **change lives**.

Reflection

- Is my **faith** resting on **human wisdom**, or on **Jesus Christ** and His **sacrifice** for me?

Takeaway

- **Keep Jesus** and His **Cross** at the **center** of your life, because only **He** can **save**, **transform**, and give **eternal life**.

July 6: Monday - Foolishness to Those Who Are Perishing

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:20–21, 23, 25, 27

Summary

- Many people **rejected** the **message of the Cross** because it did not **match** their own ideas about **wisdom** and **success**.
- The same **danger** exists today because it is easy to **trust** our own **thinking** instead of **trusting God's Word**.
- The **Cross** reminds us that **God's way** of **saving** people is **different** from the world's way of **solving problems**.
- Many **Jews** expected a **powerful Messiah**, while many **Gentiles** **laughed** at the idea of a **crucified Savior**.
- Even so, **Paul** did not **change** the **gospel** to make it **easier** for people to **accept**.
- He **trusted** that **God's power**, not **human wisdom**, is what **changes hearts**.
- You may sometimes **wonder** whether **sharing your faith** is making any **difference**.
- **Remember** that **God** always has people whose **hearts** are **ready** to **receive** His **truth**, even when many others **reject** it.
- Do not **lose courage** when your **faith** is **questioned** or **ignored** because **God** can use your **faithful witness** to **lead** someone to **Jesus**.

Question

- Why did many people **reject** the **message of the Cross**?

Answer

- Because they **trusted human wisdom** instead of **believing God's plan** of **salvation** through **Jesus Christ**.

Reflection

- When **God's way** is **different** from my own **thinking**, do I **choose** to **trust** His **wisdom**?

Takeaway

- **Keep trusting** the **power of the Cross** and **faithfully share Jesus**, because **God** is still **preparing hearts** to **receive** His **truth**.

July 7: Tuesday - Power to Those Who Are Being Saved

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:18–21; Colossians 1:20; 1 Peter 2:24

Summary

- The **Cross** has a **different meaning** for every person because our **response** to **Jesus** **determines** how we see it.
- Those who **reject God's gift** see the **Cross** as **foolishness**, but those who **believe** see it as **God's power** to **save**.
- **Jesus** died on the **Cross** to **forgive** our sins, **bring us peace** with **God**, and give us the **hope of eternal life**.
- **Paul** reminds us that **no one** can **save themselves** because **salvation** is **God's gift** of **grace**.
- When people **reject Jesus**, they **choose** a path that **leads away** from life and toward **destruction**.
- When we **accept Jesus** by **faith**, **God** begins His **saving work** in our lives and **changes** us from the **inside**.
- It is easy to **depend** on our own ideas, abilities, or efforts, but none of these can **take the place** of what **Jesus** has already **done** for us.
- Every day we are **invited** to **choose God's way** instead of our own and to **trust completely** in the **saving power** of the **Cross**.

Question

- Why is the **Cross** **God's power** to those who **believe**?

Answer

- Because **Jesus** died for our sins, **offers** us **salvation** as a **free gift**, and **gives new life** to everyone who **trusts** in Him.

Reflection

- Am I **depending** on myself, or am I **trusting completely** in what **Jesus** has done for me on the **Cross**?

Takeaway

- **Choose** to **trust Jesus** every day, because only His **grace** can **save** you and **give you eternal life**.

July 8: Wednesday - A Messiah Crucified

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:22–25; Acts 13:16–47

Summary

- The message of a **crucified Messiah** **surprised** both the **Jews** and the **Greeks** because it was not what they **expected**.
- The **Jews** wanted a **powerful King** who would defeat Rome, while the **Greeks** admired **human wisdom** and **philosophy**.
- Instead, **God** chose the **Cross** to accomplish the work of **salvation**.
- The **Cross** shows how far **God** was willing to go to **save** us and how great His **love** is for every **sinner**.
- **Paul** remained **faithful** to his calling and **preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified** wherever he went.
- He **trusted** the **power of the Holy Spirit** instead of depending on **clever words** or **human wisdom**.
- There are times when **God** works in ways we do not **understand** or **expect**.
- When life does not go as planned, we can still **trust** that **God's way** is always **better** than our own.
- The **Cross** reminds us that **God's plans** may **surprise** us, but they always **lead** us closer to His **saving purpose**.

Question

- Why did many people **reject** the message of a **crucified Messiah**?

Answer

- Because they **expected** **God** to work in a **different way** and could not **accept** His plan of **salvation** through the **Cross**.

Reflection

- When **God's plans** are **different** from my **expectations**, do I still **choose** to **trust** His **wisdom** and **love**?

Takeaway

- **Trust God's way** even when you do not **understand** it, because His **plans** are always guided by **perfect wisdom** and **love**.

July 9: Thursday - Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God

Read: 1 Corinthians 1:24–31

Summary

- Many people **trust education, wealth, influence,** or **human ability** to **solve** life's **deepest problems**.
- **Paul reminds** us that **none** of these can **save** us from **sin** or bring us into a **right relationship** with **God**.
- **Only Jesus** has the **power** to **save** because He **gave** His **life** for us on the **Cross**.
- **Only Jesus** has the **wisdom** to **solve** the problem of **sin** because His **plan of salvation comes** from **God**.
- The world may see the **Cross** as **weakness**, but it **reveals God's greatest power** and **perfect wisdom**.
- **God** often **works** through people the world **considers ordinary** so that **everyone** will know the **glory belongs** to Him.
- This **reminds** us that **God** is **not** looking for the most **important** or most **talented** people.
- He is looking for **hearts** that are **willing** to **trust** Him and **follow** His **leading**.
- When we **depend** on **Christ** instead of ourselves, He **gives** us the **wisdom, strength,** and **grace** we **need** each day.

Question

- Why is **Christ** called the **power** and **wisdom** of **God**?

Answer

- Because **only Jesus** can **save** us from **sin** and **lead** us into a **new life** with **God**.

Reflection

- Am I **depending** on my own **strength**, or am I **trusting Jesus** to **guide** and **save** me each day?

Takeaway

- **True wisdom begins** by **trusting Jesus**, because His **power** is **greater** than anything this world can **offer**.

July 10: Friday - Further Thought

Read: The Desire of Ages, pp. 741–757

Summary

- The **Cross** meant different things to different people. Many **rejected** it because they did not **understand God's plan**.
- The **Jews** wanted a **powerful King**. The **Greeks** wanted **human wisdom**. **Jesus** gave them a **crucified Saviour**.
- **Paul** knew many people would **reject** this message. Yet he **never stopped preaching Christ** and **Him crucified**.
- Everything **changed** when **Paul** met **Jesus**. The **Cross** became the **center** of his life and his ministry.
- The **Cross reveals** the **great love** of **God**. It also **reveals** the **terrible cost** of **sin**.
- **Jesus accepted** the suffering of **Calvary** because He **chose** to **save** us. He was willing to **pay the full price** for our **salvation**.
- **God's wisdom** is **higher** than **human wisdom**. His **plans** are always **better** than our own.
- Many people still **reject** the **gospel** today. Others are **waiting** to hear the **good news**.
- Our words should **point** people to **Jesus**. Our lives should also **reflect** His **love** and **grace**.
- When people see **Christ** in us, the **Holy Spirit** can **touch** their hearts.

Question

- Why did **Paul** keep **preaching** the **Cross** even when people **rejected** it?

Answer

- Because he knew that **only Jesus** and His **sacrifice** can **save sinners** and **change lives**.

Reflection

- Has the **love Jesus** showed at the **Cross** changed the way I **live** and **treat** others?

Takeaway

- **Keep** the **Cross** at the **center** of your life. Let people **see Jesus** through your words and your daily life.