

2 Corinthians

13:1-4

**The Word of the Cross
leads us to
the way of the Cross**



**Much of Christianity is
Counter intuitive**

“The Word of the Cross”

- ➔ **The Apostles are obsessed with Jesus.**
- ➔ **Their focus was not on his life but his death on the Cross and resurrection.**
- ➔ **Our worship (the Lord’s supper) is a memorial to the Word of the Cross.**
- ➔ **The Gospel finds its meaning in the Cross of Christ.**
- ➔ **The offense of the Gospel is the Cross.**
- ➔ **The Christian Life is the way of the Cross.**

1 Corinthians 1

“¹⁸ For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . . . ²² For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

Philippians 2

“⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

1 Peter 4

“¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³ but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.”

Take your baptism seriously.

The Wisdom of God

The wisdom of this world

God wants to mock the world through the Word of the Cross and the way of the Cross.

Atonement for sin

Reconciliation with God and man

New Life in Christ through death to self

The Word of the Cross

Living Counter intuitively

Living Graciously

Living Sacrificially

Living Humbly

The way of the Cross

2 Corinthians 13

“¹ This is the third time I am coming to you. *Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses.* ² I have previously said when present the second time, and though now absent I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again, I will not spare anyone, ³ since you are seeking for proof of the Christ who speaks in me, and who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. ⁴ For indeed **He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him,** yet we shall live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you.”

- Observations**
1. The Corinthians were impressed by a power that they did not see in Paul.
 2. Paul assured them that he could and would display power but they would not like it.
 3. Jesus modeled power through taking on a posture of weakness.
 4. Jesus’ disciples will follow his lead.
 5. Paul’s weakness did not preclude assertive, authoritative, action.

- Clarifications**
- ✓ The “weakness” of Christ is **not moral or character** but rather style, position, and power to control by force.
 - ✓ The “weakness” of Christ is **a voluntary “giving up”** of power and privilege.
 - ✓ Christ takes on the posture of a **servant** who washes the feet of his disciples and even dies for them.
 - ✓ Christ’s suffering role is for the duration of **this life** and temporarily limited to it.

Illustrations

1 Peter 2

“18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all **respect**, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are **unreasonable**.”

Jesus as example

“21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 *who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth*; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but **kept entrusting Himself to Him** who judges righteously;”

Lessons for all Disciples

1. **Recognize that the Word of the Cross is a call to the way of the Cross.**
2. **Be prepared in this life to share more of the suffering than the glory of Jesus.**
3. **Cultivate a counter intuitive lifestyle in relationships, response to hurts, etc.**
4. **Be counter intuitive rather than counter culture.**



Counter intuitive

Resist the fleshly impulses from both within and without.

Counter culture

Withdrawal from all outside culture.

Counter means

Employ spiritual means to gain worldly goals.



Intuitive beliefs & behaviors

The worldly impulses from both within and without.



In Matt.4 Christ was tempted to acquire temporal / material comfort, security, & dominion apart from the way of the Cross.



The Corinthians yielded to this temptation.

- ✓ Christ suffered in weakness **for us** so that we would not have to do so.
- ✓ We are now **called to claim by faith** our position in Christ and live out the power and glory he won for us.
- ✓ Those who are walking in the power of the Spirit of Christ are **now entitled** to position, wealth, health, power, and justice.
- ✓ Those “disciples” who lack this glory and power are not of Christ or are **not filled with his Spirit**.

Intuitive doctrines and behaviors

- ✓ **Merit** based acceptance.
- ✓ **Achievement** determined roles.
- ✓ **Pragmatic** guided decision making.
- ✓ **Market** dictated priorities.
- ✓ **Control** based leadership.
- ✓ **Consensus** generated morality.
- ✓ **Passion** governed behavior.
- ✓ **Temporally** orientated perspective.

How can the church model counter intuitive spirituality?

1. It can act and expect God to work in counter intuitive ways.
2. It can resist the temptation to make a superficial distinction between the Kingdom’s values and the world’s values.
3. It can be careful to avoid the lure of worldly power and pride.
4. It can take Christian baptism seriously.