

I. The current cultural condition

A. Evidence

1. News stories
 - a. Charlie Gard
 - b. MN Board of Education “Toolkit”
 - (1) The 11-page "toolkit" includes guidelines for the use of proper pronouns and preferred names —
 - (a) suggesting that teachers stop using the term "boys and girls," and instead use "students" and "scholars"
 - (b) — and tackles the hot-button issue of access to restrooms and locker rooms that correspond with a student's gender identity.
 - (c) Authors propose single-user restrooms be available for any students who do not want to share a restroom with transgender and gender-nonconforming students.
 - (2) “Schools that want to develop policies for transgender and gender-nonconforming students now have a resource to work with their local stakeholders to create safe learning environments for all students free from discrimination and harassment," Lindsey said.
 - (3) "Predominantly, the toolkit considers only the perspective of gender-nonconforming students, and dismisses and ignores [the] concerns of other students and parents, and includes veiled threats," Liesmaki said.
2. Statistics
 - a. Marriage/divorce
 - (1) Fewer divorces
 - (2) Fewer marriages
 - b. Pornography
 - c. Social Violence

B. Explanation

1. Work of the Dragon (Devil) to deceive
2. Work of the Dragon (Devil) to destroy
 - a. **Revelation 12:17 (ESV)** ¹⁷ *Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.*
 - b. **Revelation 13:7 (ESV)** ⁷ *Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.*

C. Exclamation

1. **Now, as much as ever in the history of the church, Christians need to resist the dividing effect of sin and selfishness and embrace the cross together.**
2. Why?
 - a. Why isn't this an “every man for himself” moment?
 - b. Why is the cross the church's answer to the devil's actions?

II. The Corinthian communication 1:18-2:5

A. Because the cross saves!

1. 1:18 Two kinds of people in the world: perishing/saved
2. God saves through Christ's death on the cross
 - a. Sinners deserve judgment and death
 - b. Sinless Christ takes judgment and death upon Himself
 - c. Satisfies the righteous demand for judgment and punishment
3. Christ's death on the cross provides freedom
 - a. Freedom from guilt and shame
 - (1) **Romans 10:11-13 (ESV)** ¹¹ *For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."* ¹² *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.* ¹³ *For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*
 - (2) No shame with God or man for God forgives and all men share the same guilt
 - b. Freedom from slavery to sin
 - (1) **Genesis 6:5 (ESV)** *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*
 - (2) Where once we had no choice but sin in Christ we have the choice to refuse sin.
 - c. Freedom from fear of death
 - (1) **1 John 4:18 (ESV)** ¹⁸ *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.*
 - (2) Punishment is satisfied in Christ, therefore no fear no more!
 - d. Freedom to live eternally in joy and love

B. Because the cross saves YOU!

1. Salvation is not a matter of personal social merit
 - a. **1 Corinthians 1:26-27 (ESV)** ²⁶ *For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.* ²⁷ *But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;*
 - b. **Ephesians 2:1-5 (ESV)** ¹ *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.* ⁴ *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses made us alive together with Christ.*
1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (ESV) ⁹ *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.* ¹¹ *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our*

God.

2. God works through the cross to save you and through the message of the cross to bring you to salvation, to bring you into an eternal relationship of love and joy with Himself.

C. Because the Holy Spirit, God Himself, empowers the message of the cross to save you.

1. Paul: *not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*
2. **Romans 1:16-17 (ESV)** ¹⁶ *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* ¹⁷ *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."*
3. Salvation comes by faith in Christ and His death on the cross on your behalf.
4. Faith is the work of God's Holy Spirit in you.
 - a. We are not persuaded by fancy words and charismatic personalities.
 - b. We are persuaded by God the Holy Spirit working powerfully in us to believe the message of the cross and desire Christ as Savior and an eternal relationship with God our Father.
 - (1) Dead to life
 - (2) Rebellion to surrender
 - (3) Condemned to freed
 - (4) Carousing to the cross

III. What now?

A. Embrace the cross

1. For salvation
2. For life

B. Embrace the cross