

THE BIG IDEA: The cross crosses out dividing lines.

The Take-Off

I told you last week that this series is a timely word for our church, our city, and our culture.

We're facing a time when the only way people know how to come together is in a clash or a confrontation, and yet God has a much better plan for how the church can show that there is a better way.

We're calling it the Remix and we're talking through how messy it can be and yet how necessary it is.

If the Church can't get this right, the world has no hope, so let's get it right.

This morning, we're going to be in Ephesians and we're going to be talking about the cross and how it deals with dividing lines that often feel permanent.

Economic lines, racial and ethnic lines, political lines, generational lines.

You get the idea.

Now what we're going to address relates specifically to followers of Jesus - those who don't follow Jesus can find hope in these truths, but only when they bow their knee to the truth of the cross.

So basically, this morning we're going to remix the cross because it seems that the message of it has been lost.

When the church is known more for dividing lines more changing lives, we've forgotten the cross.

This morning, I want to help us remember the cross and see that **the cross crosses out dividing lines.**

Let's see how:

1. Jesus destroyed the wall

- a. Ephesians 2
- b. We'll spend the bulk of our time here because we need to understand what happened on the cross
- c. If we forget, we'll find ourselves singing the chorus or hymn of our choice without living out the message of the cross
- d. At the cross:
 - 2:14 / Jesus destroyed the wall between us
 - 2:14,17 / Jesus brought peace to us
 - 2:18 / Jesus gave us equal access
 - 2:19-22 / Jesus gave us equal value
 - 3:6 / Jesus gave us an equal inheritance and blessing
- e. Nothing that you and I ever do will negate the work of Jesus on the cross
- f. You don't have to receive it, trust it, or even believe it happened (that's foolish since it's a historical fact)
- g. When Jesus died on the cross, He accomplished the work He was sent to do
- h. **He appeased the wrath of God and destroyed the walls of men**
- i. The cross crosses out division, and when we stand before the cross, we can't hate people we don't like
- j. That happens when we lose sight of the cross

2. The church displays the wisdom

- a. Ephesians 3
- b. God's intent was that the cross would not only destroy something but also display something
- c. Let's keep reading to find out what that is
- d. In chapter 3, Paul talks a lot about a mystery
 - v. 3 / a mystery was revealed to him
 - v. 4 / the letter of Ephesians would help reveal that mystery
 - v. 6 / the mystery is revealed - one body from two people
 - v. 9 / Paul's preaching was to make the mystery plain
 - v. 10 / Paul reveals the purpose of the church in the revealing of the mystery
- e. When we accept that Jesus died for all men but aren't willing to live with all men, the wisdom of God's plan to hold up unity as a witness to the spiritual realm remains hidden
- f. When we live as one, the church displays the wisdom of God plan for bringing different people together
- g. Here is where I wish I could just pray a magic prayer and make everyone love each other
- h. But the world - and even followers of Jesus - know that it takes work.

- i. Rodney King's question during the LA riots - "Why can't we all just get along?" - is the question we've been asking since Cain killed Abel.
- j. **The answer? Trusting in the work of Jesus on the cross and then DOING THAT WORK!!**
- k. But what about after that? Are we suddenly singing campfire songs together? Of course not.
- l. Unity takes effort, and if we want to display the wisdom of God in bringing different people together, we're going to need to do the work.

3. Now, we do the work

- a. Ephesians 4:1-13
- b. **Not the work of salvation, but the work of the saved** - there's a HUGE difference
- c. One earns, the other repays
- d. After all Jesus did for me on the cross, I could never do enough in return - but I want to try
- e. What is the work of the saved?
 - v. 1 / a life worthy of the call (in other words, that matches the cross)
 - v. 2-6 / a life of community and unity
 - v. 7, 11 / a life of grace in diversity
 - v. 12 / a life of works that build up and don't tear down
 - v. 13 / a life full of Christ Himself

The Landing

We are called to live lives that point to the cross and that cross out division

We can't preach about the cross and live divided

That - as Paul alluded to in Ephesians 4:1 - is not a life worthy of the call

Homework this week: intentionally reach out beyond the invisible dividing lines

They aren't there - the cross destroyed the walls

Live accordingly. Be like Jesus in John 4:4 - He HAD to go through Samaria - He stepped into the hard place between Jews and Samaritans

I'm praying that you will, too

When we do that, we highlight the work of Jesus on the cross and we exalt Him to the highest place!