

Introduction:

- Generational Sunday, D-Day, Communion
 - I got the idea for today's message from a Reinhard Bonnke message years ago.
- I want to talk about the cross of Christ this morning. My text for today:
 - *"The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God."* (1 Corinthians 1:18, NLT)
 - The cross is a big plus in the lives of those who trust in Jesus for their salvation. A BIG plus: body, soul and spirit.
 - The cross will never lose its significance to us who are being saved! My sins were nailed to the cross! My guilt was nailed to the cross! My sickness and disease was nailed to the cross. And the punishment that I deserved was nailed to the cross. The cross is a big plus in my life. I want it to be a big plus in your life.
 - When you get older many of you will have teachers in high school and college who do not believe in God. They think what we believe is foolish, because they do not understand.
 - There are people who are socialist, marxist, "woke" who think Christianity is foolishness. But not us. We have experienced His love!
- Why is the cross important? Because it deals with our sin and the sin's effect on us.

I. What is Sin?

- A. Let me just start by saying that sin is not good. Avoid it!
 1. What do you think sin is?
- B. Definition:
 1. Sin is a failure to do what is right. *"Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it."* (James 4:17, NLT)
 - a) Not following God's ways.
 - b) His moral law. (Ten Commandments OT and 2 Commands in NT) Love God and Love others.
 2. Sin is not following God's word. God's teaching. Love, serve, stay pure.
 3. Sin is Violence or doing wrong to others. *"Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets."* (Matthew 7:12, NLT)
 4. Sin is rebellion against God. *"Do not rebel against the Lord, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the Lord is with us! Don't be afraid of them!"* (Numbers 14:9, NLT)
- C. Adam and Eve - disobedience.
 1. They ate the forbidden fruit.
 2. Cain's sin - killed his brother.
 3. Some people say that to sin means to miss the mark. IE. Bow, arrow, apple. What

if I miss the mark?

a) Someone gets hurt.

b) Someone may die.

4. Sin creates...Minuses in our lives.

II. Sin Creates A Great Big Minus

A. Sin creates a great big minus in our lives. le. Draw me a minus sign.

1. What does minus mean? It means that something is taken away.

2. When I have a minus in my life that is not good! le. Which is better: A+ or A-?

3. le. I need six strong children to help me out. When I tell you, hold this minus up.

B. Sin causes separation from God and from each other. **That is a great big minus!**

1. Sin causes separation. le. As a child-my cousins and I found a rifle in the basement of our aunts house. I proceeded to unload it. We got caught and we all got a severe spanking. I did not feel close to my parents at that time. le. I broke a basement window with a croquet ball. I did not tell my parents. When they found out -I got a spanking and I did not feel close to my parents at that time. le. at age four I went out and climbed up on a tractor and started it. It went through the crib doors. I was really spanked for that. And I did not feel close to my parents at the time. Sin separates us from God and from our parents and each other.

2. Sin separated Adam and Eve from God.

C. Sin has consequences: Adam and Eve's sin brought consequences.

1. Sin makes me guilty (A big minus)

2. Sin fills me with shame (A big minus) Have you ever felt bad for doing something wrong?

3. Sin must be punished (A big minus!) Have you ever been punished? What if that punishment lasted forever?

D. Sin has a negative (minus/take away effects)

1. Sin makes me fall short of God's glory/heaven.

2. Because of Adam and Eve's sin we are all born with a big minus.

3. Sickness is a result of Adam's sin. It made our health suffer a minus.

4. Poverty is a result of Adam's sin. It made our wealth suffer a minus.

5. Depression is a result of Adam's sin. It made our joy suffer a minus.

6. Hatred is a result of Adam's sin. It made our love suffer a minus.

7. War is a result of Adam's sin. It made our peace suffer a minus.

8. The essence of sin is opposition to God and all that is good!

a) Sin opposes God and His created beings.(A big Minus)

b) Sin hates rather than loves

c) Sin doubts rather than trusts.

d) Sin lies rather than affirms.

- e) Sin harms and abuses rather than helps and respects.
- E. Without Jesus life is a great big MINUS! But with Jesus!

III. Jesus Creates A Great Big Plus

- A. Jesus creates a great big Plus in our lives!
 1. He came from heaven to earth...to show the way. From the cross to the grave my debt to pay. From the grave to the sky, Lord I lift your name on high!
 2. Jesus did not come to define sin but to destroy its power over those who believe!
 3. At Golgotha Jesus crossed our minus and turned it into a plus!
 4. The cross is God's 'logo of love' for us! If God is for us who can be against us! He made our minus' a plus and our negatives a positive!
- B. Jesus brought us together!
 1. Where sin had caused a separation between God and us. Jesus brought us together. That is a great big plus!
 2. Where relationships was broken God brought restoration!
 3. Where guilt and shame caused us to hide for fear of punishment, Jesus came and took my guilt and shame and He took my punishment. So God and I can be together.
- C. Jesus brought deliverance from the consequences of sin!
 1. Sin made me guilty and ashamed.
- D. Jesus gave back what sin took away! He made our negatives a plus!
 1. The took my value away. But Jesus gave me value back.
 2. The devil said I was not worthy but Jesus gave me worth!
- E. Jesus brings us 'plus affects' in powerful positive ways.
 1. God saw my agony and heard my cries and came to aid. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16, ESV)
 - a) His one and only son! Why didn't He use gold? Because he could always make more. But He only had one Son!
 2. At Golgotha Jesus crossed our minus and turned it into a plus!
 3. Sickness was turned into healing.
 4. Sin into salvation
 5. Hate into love
 6. Brokenness into wholeness
 7. Rottenness into beauty
 8. Death into life
 9. Hell into Heaven! Only Jesus can make your minus a plus.
 10. I alone am lost but with Jesus I become a child of God.
- F. Jesus gave his precious blood that we might live.

1. Do you know that His blood is the only blood the Bible calls precious!
2. Jesus did not come to shame sinner but to save sinners.
3. Jesus did not point at us and call us rotten. He ran to us like the Father of the prodigal!
4. He made the prodigal's minus' a plus: hugs (accepted), son (identity) new robe, shoes, ring, fatted calf. The Father did not point at his past, it was all behind him.

Conclusion:

- Is your life a minus today? Why not let Jesus turn your minus into a plus!