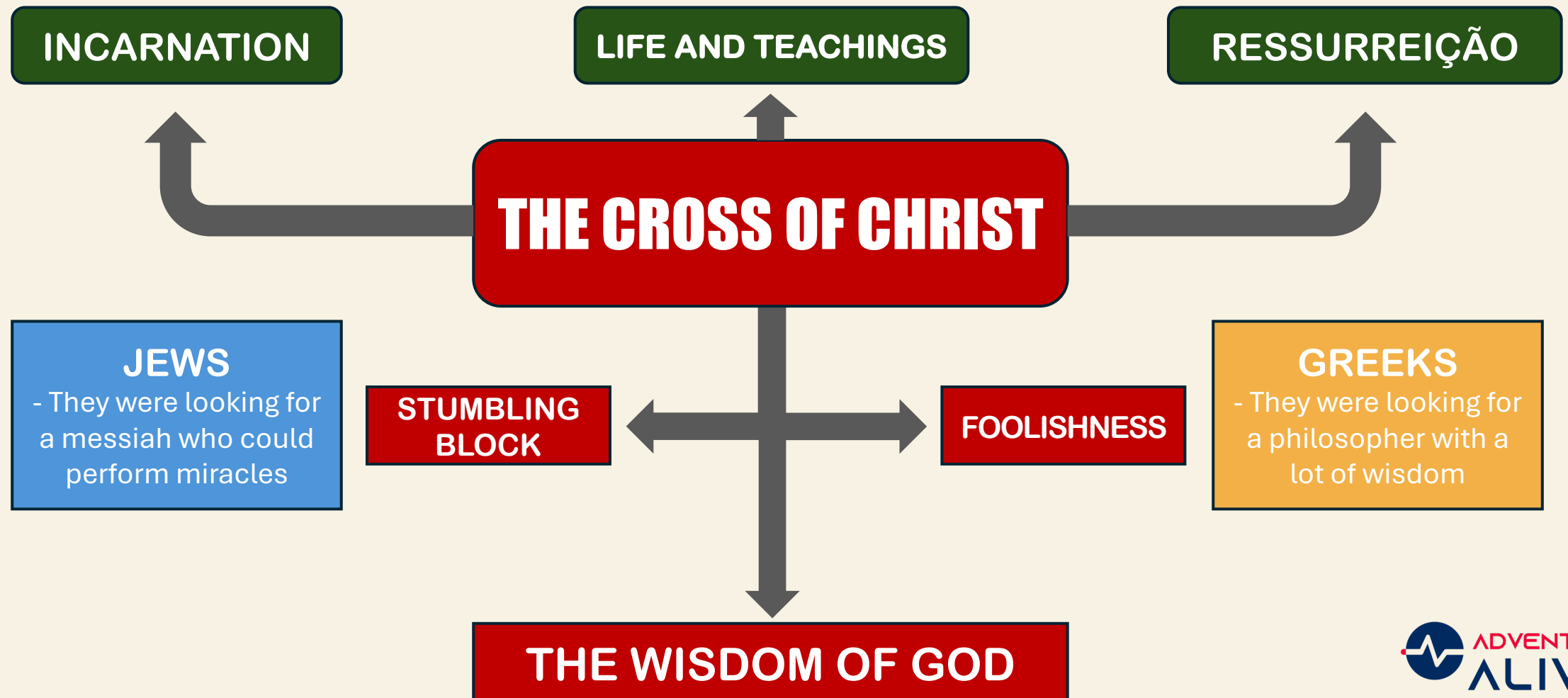


LESSON
02

THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS

SUNDAY – The Gospel of the Cross

1. Read 1 Corinthians 1:17-31. What important point is Paul making here?



MONDAY – Foolishness to Those Who are Perishing (greeks)

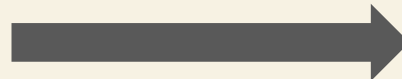
2. Read 1 Corinthians 1:20, 21, 23, 25, and 27. How do these references to “foolishness” help us understand what Paul meant when saying that the message of the Cross is “foolishness to those who are perishing”?

1 Corinthians 1:20, 21, 23, 25, and 27

²⁰Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made ***foolish** the wisdom of this world?* ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the ***foolishness** of the message preached* to save those who believe. [...] ²³but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and *to the Greeks foolishness*, [...] ²⁵Because the ***foolishness of God is wiser*** than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. ²⁷But *God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise*, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

GREEKS

- They were looking for a philosopher with a lot of wisdom

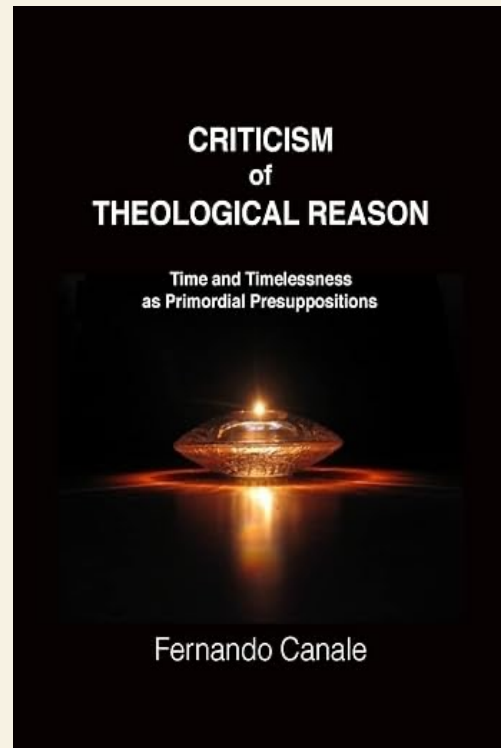


FOOLISHNESS

MONDAY – The Influence of Philosophy on Theology

Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, p. 70

The two Christian doctrines that are perhaps the most reliable indications of the continuing influence of Greek philosophy on Christian theology are these: the doctrine of the *immortality of the soul* and the doctrine of the *absolute character of God*.



Fernando Canale
Adventist theologian

Professor of
theology and author
of several books.

WEDNESDAY – A Messiah Crucified (Jews)

4. Read Acts 13:16-47 (especially verses 26, 38, and 47). What does this passage teach us about the meaning of the Cross?

Acts 13:26, 38, and 47

²⁶Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

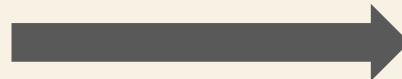
³⁸Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.

⁴⁷For so the Lord has commanded us:

I have placed you as a light for the gentiles,
that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth (*cf.* Isa. 42:6; 49:6).

JEWS

- They were looking for a messiah
who could perform miracles



**STUMBLING
BLOCK**

TUESDAY – Power to Those Who Are Being Saved (believers)

3. Read Colossians 1:20 and 1 Peter 2:24. What did Jesus accomplish for us on the cross?

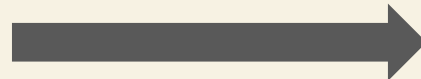
Colossians 1:20

And by Him **to reconcile** all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

1 Peter 2:24

Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were **healed**.

BELIEVERS
THOSE WHO ARE BEING
SAVED



POWER OF GOD
WISDOM OF GOD

THURSDAY – Power to Those Who Are Being Saved (believers)

5. Read 1 Corinthians 1:24-29. Notice words like “foolishness,” “weak,” “power,” and “wise.” What point is Paul making?

1 Corinthians 1:24-29

²⁴But **to those who are called**, both Jews and Greeks, we preach Christ, the **power of God and the wisdom of God**. ²⁵Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. ²⁶For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. ²⁷But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹that no flesh should glory in His presence.

THURSDAY – Cautions During Preaching

A CHRISTIANITY
BASED ONLY ON
EMOTION, DEPENDENT ON
SIGNS AND MIRACLES

A RATIONALISTIC, MERELY
ARGUMENTATIVE CHRISTIANITY THAT
SEEKS THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD
TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

1. “Preach the Word” (2 Tim. 4:2). The purpose of the sermon is not to lead to emotion, but to lead to decision. Preaching should be based on the Bible, not on thrilling tricks.
2. Controversy and display oratory often do not convert. In addition, in general, they leave the heart untouched.
3. Beware of speculation. We must not go beyond what has been revealed (1 Cor. 4:6).
4. Do not place human philosophy and reasoning above or against the Bible.

THURSDAY - How preaching should be

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 71.

One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments.

Evangelism, p. 71.

Avoid lengthy sermons. The people cannot retain one half of the discourses which they hear. Give short talks and more Bible readings. This is the time to make every point as plain as mileposts.

Gospel Workers (ed. 1915), p. 407

There should be less preaching and more teaching. [...] It has been shown me that our camp-meetings are to increase in interest and success. As we approach the end, I have seen that in these meetings there will be **less preaching, and more Bible study**. There will be little groups all over the grounds, with their Bibles in their hands, and different ones leading out in a free, conversational study of the Scriptures.

THURSDAY - How preaching should be

Gospel Workers (ed. 1915), p. 408

This was the method that Christ taught His disciples. When the great throngs gathered about the Saviour, He would give instruction to the disciples and to the multitude. **Then after the discourse, the disciples would mingle with the people, and repeat to them what Christ had said.** Often the hearers had misapplied Christ's words, and the disciples would tell them what the Scriptures said, and what Christ had taught that they said.

Evangelism, p. 71.

Many of our ministers have merely sermonized, presenting subjects in an argumentative way, and **scarcely mentioning the saving power of the Redeemer.** Their testimony was destitute of the saving blood of Christ. Their offering resembled the offering of Cain. He brought to the Lord the fruit of the ground, which in itself was acceptable in God's sight. Very good indeed was the fruit; but the virtue of the offering—the blood of the slain lamb, representing the blood of Christ—was lacking. So it is with Christless sermons. By them men are not pricked to the heart; they are not led to inquire, What must I do to be saved?