

# Six Miracles at Calvary

## I. THE WISDOM AND POWER OF GOD

### 1. Introduction

1. “Christ [is] the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24).
2. “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30).
3. 1 Corinthians 1:18—2:5.
4. Sin drains the gospel’s power out of our lives (1 Corinthians 1:17; NIV).
5. Christianity makes a person a new creation and gives him a new life and mind (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 3:1–7; Galatians 2:20, 21; Philippians 2:5–11).
6. The cross turns our normal way of thinking upside down—it is an “oxymoron.”
  1. A crucified God is an oxymoron—He is almighty, but He has allowed Himself to be human.
  2. A Christian also is an oxymoron—He or she has died, yet he is fully alive!
    1. *People want life—but the cross offers death as the way to life.*
    2. *People crave victory—but the cross is a defeat that leads to victory.*
    3. *People want comfort—but the cross is humiliation that opens the door to forgiveness.*
    4. *People want peace—but the cross brings us to a war that results in peace.*
    5. *People honor beauty—but the cross, crude and ugly, expresses a beauty that excels all other beauties.*
7. If we wish for the power and wisdom of God, we begin with Christ upon a cross.

### 2. Christ, the Power of God

1. Paul said that “the power of God for salvation” is in the gospel (Romans 1:16).
2. God created and upholds the world by His Word (Genesis 1; 2; Hebrews 1:3).
  1. He has providential power, for He works out all things for good for those who love Him (Romans 8:28).
  2. However, God’s greatest strength is revealed in the weakness of the cross.
  3. God “has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong” (1 Corinthians 1:27).
3. He is a God of infinite humility—He humbly stands at the door and knocks (Revelation 3:20).
4. Jesus is the source of our salvation; the cross was the means of our salvation.
  1. God’s power is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:6–10).
  2. Although crucified in weakness, Jesus exhibits the power of God (2 Cor 13:4).

### 3. Christ, the Wisdom of God

1. Paul said that Jesus “became to us wisdom from God” (1 Corinthians 1:30).
2. The sin that underlies all sin is presumption (Psalm 19:13; 2 Peter 2:10).
3. Dead men need life, not rehabilitation (Ephesians 2).
4. Man wants salvation from war, poverty, and disease but Christ on the cross saves us from sin.
5. To the intellectually proud, the cross is still folly because man wants power, not wisdom—enlightenment, not faith.
6. Paul determined to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:1–5).
7. Only God could take an instrument of execution (the cross) and make it into the greatest motivation upon earth.
  1. Apart from the cross, there is no power to die to self, and there is no wisdom with which to live life to the fullest.
  2. Jesus said, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself” (John 12:32).
  3. He was able to draw all men to Himself because the cross is invested with God’s wisdom and power.

## II. SIX MIRACLES CONNECTED WITH THE CROSS

### 1. Texts:

1. Matthew 27:45-54; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:44-47
2. “And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised” (Matthew 27:51, 52).

### 2. God warned the Jews time and time again.

1. There was no excuse for them not to become believers.
2. Jewish leaders knew that Jesus was divine; but, in their hate and blindness, they killed Him anyway.
3. Even Pilate knew who He was, and pronounced Him “not guilty” (Matthew 27:18).
4. Consider what took place before the crucifixion.
  1. During the **arrest in the garden**, when Jesus said, “I am He,” many in the mob drew back and fell on the ground (John 18:6).
  2. Then there was the **healing of Malchus’ ear!**
    1. Peter flicked off Malchus’ ear, but Jesus healed it.
    2. This was the last miracle for the Jews before Jesus went to the cross.
  3. We must not forget the **miracle that never happened!**
    1. Jesus said to Peter, “I could ask for legions of angels to help us, but I won’t.”
    2. Read and reread Matthew 26:50–56; Mark 14:46–50; Luke 22:50, 51; John 18:10–14.
  4. Jesus used this occasion to present Himself to God as our atoning sacrifice for sin.

### 3. Darkness

1. Those who do not want to believe, after a time, cannot believe.
2. Why have we neglected and overlooked the miracles?
3. Jesus was on the cross six hours-- The first three belonged to the crowd; the last three belonged to God!
4. The darkness was a preview of hell (Matthew 8:12; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6, 13).
5. This darkness was not an eclipse of the sun because an eclipse lasts only a few minutes and cannot happen during a full moon.
6. Passover came during a full moon.
7. The darkness was eerie, providing prevailing quietness, except for the moans of three dying men and the voices of those who were wondering out loud what was happening (Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44).

### 4. The Veil

1. At 3:00 p.m. the priests were on duty at the temple when Jesus cried out and before their startled eyes, the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45).
2. God had removed Himself from an earthly location and eliminated the law & priesthood.
3. No wonder many priests later obeyed the gospel (Acts 6:7).

### 5. The Earthquake

1. The earthquake brought a suspense that was surely terrifying.

2. Even Roman soldiers were awed at the earthquake (Matthew 27:51, 54).
3. Rocks, some of the hardest substances on earth, were split.
4. Everything shook except the cross!

## 6. The Opened Graves

1. The splitting of the rocks was brute force; the opening of the graves was brilliant design (Matthew 27:52, 53).
2. “And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, when they observed what had happened, began to return, beating their breasts” (Luke 23:48).
3. God was still teaching, warning, and reaching out to the Jews.
4. This also proves that the events on the Day of Pentecost (the beginning of the church in Acts 2) were no accident.
5. Peter began the first gospel sermon, testifying, “. . . as you yourselves know” (Acts 2:22).
6. Before that occasion, God had given them fifty days to think about the cross.
7. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter gave them the solution to their guilt—Christ.

## 7. The Grave Clothes

1. John outran Peter, yet he stopped at the tomb’s entrance and looked in.
2. He found only an empty tomb.
3. When he followed Peter into the tomb, he saw evidence of a resurrected Savior (John 20:1–9; Luke 24:1–12).
4. The last thing the enemies wanted was an empty tomb.
5. The disciples would have clothed Jesus; they would not have disrobed Him.
6. Enemies would not have taken the time to disrobe Him.
7. Grave clothes were enough evidence for John who was the first to believe!

## 8. The Resurrected Saints

1. The graves were opened on Friday (Matthew 27:50–53).
2. The resurrected saints did not walk in Jerusalem until Sunday.
3. To remain ceremonially clean, the Jews could not greet their loved ones.
4. These six miracles connected with the cross provide evidence that the One crucified was God’s dear Son.
5. Whoever believes the Source, that is, the New Testament writings, has to be convinced by these amazing wonders.

*The cross . . .  
there is no other way!*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Review the oxymorons given in the **Wisdom & Power of God** section of this lesson. Give other examples. How have you experienced these in your life?
2. Discuss the statement “God does heart transplants.” Give biblical and/or personal examples of radical change affected by Christianity.
3. Who was in control at the cross? How do the Scriptures make this clear?
4. What was the last miracle Jesus performed for the Jews? Describe it.
5. Name the six miracles at the time of Jesus' death. What was the significance of each one? Which do you find particularly intriguing?