

## Outline: Lift High the Cross: Hearing God's Word in the Crucifixion

*Genesis 2:8–9, 15–17 | John 1:1–5, 14 | 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45 | Romans 5:14–15*

### Introduction — The Question Everyone Asks

- “Why did Jesus have to die on the cross?”
- Even the disciples struggled to understand it.
- The cross challenges our views of **power, safety, and suffering**.
- Jesus calls us to take up **our cross**—choosing:
  - forgiveness
  - generosity
  - service
  - courage
  - costly discipleship
- The cross is a paradox: death becomes life; cruelty becomes mercy.

### 1. The Crucifixion as God's Word

- Jesus is the **Word (Logos)**—God's message in human form.
- The cross is not just a mechanism; it is a **message**.
- God speaks through the cross:
  - “This is the seriousness of sin.”
  - “This is the depth of my mercy.”
  - “This is how far I will go to love you.”
- The cross is God's **living, bleeding sermon**.
- The question shifts from:  
**“How does it work?”**  
to **“What is God saying to me through it?”**

### 2. When Suffering Speaks Louder Than Words

- Story of “Whipped Peter,” whose scarred back awoke a nation.
- Some suffering communicates more powerfully than words.
- The cross is **God's photograph**—His visual declaration of love and sacrifice.
- It demands a response: “Look at the cost of redeeming the world.”

### 3. Recapitulation — Jesus as the New Adam

- Eden's story: beauty, abundance, trust... then sin, shame, death.
- Jesus re-writes the human story:
  - Where Adam disobeyed, Jesus obeys.

- Tempted—yet faithful.
- In Gethsemane: “Not my will but Yours.”
- Jesus is crucified, buried, and raised in a **garden**—the new Gardener.
- Recapitulation = Jesus sums up humanity and gives us a new beginning.
- The cross says:  
**“Your story is not stuck. In Christ, you can begin again.”**

#### 4. Between Two Trees — A Choice

- The **tree in Eden**: “Not Your will, but mine.”
- The **tree of life** in Revelation: healing and restoration.
- **The tree of Calvary** stands in between.
- Jesus invites each of us to choose:
  - Will you follow Adam... or Christ?
  - Whose story will define your life?

#### Conclusion — Lift High the Cross

- The cross is the sign Christians follow—not a flag, nation, or ideology.
- We lift up *the love of Christ*, not ourselves.
- Through the cross, the restoration of Eden has begun.
- Our calling:
  - healing
  - reconciliation
  - forgiveness
  - resurrection hope
- Final question:  
**What will you do with the Word spoken on the cross?**

**“Lift high the cross. Lift high the love of Christ. Lift high the hope He brings.”**