

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Cross on which our Saviour hung was not a tragic incident in the earth-life of the Son of God, but was rather the climax of a deliberate PLAN made in the Counsels of Heaven before the creation of the world.
2. From the time Jesus first presented Himself to Israel until the hour when the fatal words of condemnation were spoken by Pilate, the Son of God had His Mind and His Heart set on the victory that could be won only on Golgotha.
 - a. The Cross Is Then The Center:
 - (1) Of Redemption
 - (2) Of History
 - (3) Of Worship
 - (4) Of Christian Experience

NOTE: The false teacher presents a Crossless Christ. Take out the cross and Christianity is robbed of its meaning.

I. WHY DID JESUS DIE?

A. That He Might Bring Us To God.

1. 1 Pet 3:18: "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,"

"Nothing in my hands I bring
Simply to the cross I Cling."

B. That We Might Become Sons of God.

1. John 1:11-13: "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

2. Gal. 4:4-5: “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”
3. Phil. 2:15: “that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”

C. That We Might Be Reconciled To God.

1. II Cor. 5:18-21: “Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For he hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

NOTE: The impact of the Cross bent human history out of the course in which it was flowing and directed mankind toward God.

D. Christ Died For Our Sins.

1. Gal. 1:4: “Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.”
2. Rom. 3:24-25: “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,”
3. Rom. 5:6-11: “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were

reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

4. I Cor. 15:1-4: “...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ...”
5. Rev. 13:8: “And all who dwell on the earth will worship Him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”
 - a. Twenty-seven times in the book of Revelation Christ is pictured as the LAMB slain for the sins of the world.
6. Titus 2:14: “Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”
7. Matt. 16:21: “From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”
8. Eph. 1:7: “In him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

E. That We Might Have A New Allegiance.

1. II Cor. 5:15: “And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”
2. Rom. 14:7-9: “For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.”

F. Jesus Died To Reveal God’s Love.

1. John 3:14-16: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal

life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

2. John 15:13: “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.”

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

CONCLUSION:

1. He Died For Our Sins.
2. The Just For The Unjust.
 - a. I 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.”
 - b. I John 1:7: “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”
3. In The Hour of Death We Then Can Truly Pray:

“Hold thou, thy Cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heaven’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.”