

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS

INTRODUCTION:

1. New Testament Preaching Had Two Major Themes:
 - a. The Cross of Christ
 - b. The Resurrection And Ascension

I. IF THE CROSS IS TAKEN OUT OF CHRISTIANITY, OUR RELIGION BECOMES EMPTY.

- A. 1 Tim. 3:16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.
- B. 1 Peter 1:9-12: "receiving the end of your faith -- the salvation of your souls. Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven -- things which angels desire to look into."
- C. 1 Cor. 1:21-24: "For 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. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."
- D. 1 Cor. 2:2: "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
- E. 1 Cor. 9:16: "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!"
- F. Gal. 6:14: "But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

II. THE CONCEPT OF SALVATION WAS OFFENSIVE TO SOME OF ROMAN WORLD.

A. The Cross Was Offensive:

1. Because It Reveals The Fact Of Sin.

a. The Roman World Was Freighted Down With Sin.

2. Because It Reveals The MALIGNITY of Sin.

3. Because It Reveals The Depravity of Human Nature.

4. Because It Reveals The WAGES Of Sin.

5. Because It Reveals Man's Helplessness.

- a. Isa. 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Heb. 10:26-31: "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine; I will repay,' says the Lord.' And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

6. Because To The Jews It Was A Stumblingblock.

- a. II Cor. 3:12-16: "Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech -- unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. But their minds were hardened. For until this day the same veil remains

unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away."

The Jews were looking for a conquering Messiah, not suffering for sins that Israel might be saved.

7. Because To The Gentile World It Was Foolishness.

a. The Greek Philosophers Had No Place In Their Philosophy.

III. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST AND SALVATION FROM SINS ARE INSEPARABLE.

- A. I Peter 1:3-4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."
- B. Hebrews 12:1-2: "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."
- C. I Pet. 1:18-21: "knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."
- D. Eph. 1:7: "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."
- E. 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."
- F. Rom. 5:8: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that

while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- G. Phil. 2:5-8: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."
- H. I Cor. 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you -- unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

Conclusion:

- A. A NUMBER OF IMPLICATIONS CAN BE DRAWN FROM THESE SCRIPTURES.
1. Man Became Lost Because He Disobeyed God.
 2. He Could Not Pay The Penalty And Live.
 3. Out Of Love For Man, God Sent His Son To Die.
 4. He Was Not To Be The Worldly Conqueror For Which The Jews Were Waiting.
 - a. They Still Are.
 5. He Was To Be A Suffering Messiah To Save The Lost.
 6. He Died For The Sins Of The World On Calvary.
 7. He Was Buried.
 8. On The Third Day, He Arose From The Dead.
 9. He Ascended Up Into Heaven.
 10. Someday He Will Return.
 11. This GOSPEL Is To Be Preached To The Whole World.

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12. Those Accepting It Will Be Saved In Heaven.

13. Those Rejecting It Will Be Lost In Hell.

B. God Forbid That The Church Should Preach Another Gospel.