Bryan Station Baptist Church
INDEPENDENT MISSIONARY
THE PIONEER BAPTIST
ORGANIZED 1786
VOL. 14, NO. 5
FEBRUARY, 1983
"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

THE UPLIFTED AND UPLIFTING CHRIST

C. D. Cole

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32.

The first time I ever preached from this text, I was about to follow McLaren, who called the cross of Christ, the universal magnet. But truth compelled me to change my theme and call it the drawing power of Christ. He does not speak of the power of the cross to convert men, but of His own power.

The cross apart from Christ's power is not attractive, but repulsive to men. Paul preached the cross and it was a scandal toward the Jew and foolishness to the Greek. Apart from the effectual call, the cross is an offence. There is no power in the gospel story to convert sinners; the power of conversion is in Christ. Of course, He converts by the Holy Spirit. It is by the Holy Spirit He makes the cross attractive. The cross is attractive to some. Some of us glory in nothing but the cross. Others speak of the cross as butcher-house religion, and abhor salvation by blood.

1. Christ himself makes His death effective in salvation. The uplifted Christ is the uplifting Christ. He who was lifted up centuries ago, has been, through the centuries, lifting men to Himself. The death of Christ, in its results, is not contingent upon human nature, but the results are assured by the power of Christ to draw men to Himself.

A. Sinners are saved by coming to Christ. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40.

B. They will not come of themselves. No man can come unless he is drawn. If he could come of himself, he would not have to be drawn. Human nature is such that the sinner readily rejects Christ. A bad nature rejects the good Saviour. A bad heart does not love good things. A darkened understanding does not see the beauties of grace just as a blind man cannot see the beauties of nature. "For he shall grow up before him like a tender plant, and like a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Isaiah 53:2, 3. Human nature is bad and its evil is best seen in its attitude towards Christ.

C. Christ does not draw men against their wills, but gives them a new mind and new heart, which makes them gladly come to Him. The drawing is not physical but spiritual. The work is not done on the body but on the mind and the heart.

2. This text does not support universalism. It may seem to do so to the superficial reader. It says that Christ will draw all men to himself, and if men in the absolute sense are drawn to Christ, of course, all men

will be saved. But when the text is carefully examined, it is discovered that in the Greek, there is no word for man. Christ said, "I will draw all unto me." He means all who are under consideration. The words all and every are hardly ever to be taken in the absolute sense. You can take such words and give them universal application and teach false doctrines. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God." I Corinthians 4:5. Christ means to say that He will draw all His people unto Him. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. "And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27.

3. This text does not give support to Arminianism. The Arminian gives the text universal application but interprets the drawing as being towards and not to Christ. They claim that the cross has a drawing effect on all men--every human being--but that some refuse to be drawn to Christ. It is only an effort Christ makes to draw men to Him. All men are drawn but not saved. Here is our reply:

A. The word "men" is not in the original text.

B. Are men drawn towards Christ apart from the gospel? Are heathen who never hear of Christ drawn towards Him? Are the heathen being drawn towards Christ when they fall down before idols? Is Christ and an idol the one and same thing?

CONCLUSION: When Christ draws men to Himself, He draws them into fellowship with one another. To love Christ is to love His people, of whatever class or color. The ground is level at the cross.

A LASTING REVIVAL

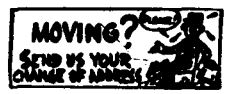
Thou hast revived thy people, Lord,
In the glorious days just past!
We have felt thy wondrous power,
And our hearts ask, "Will it last?"

It will last if we continue
As did thy disciples of old,
Steadfast in prayer and service,
Winning others to thy fold.

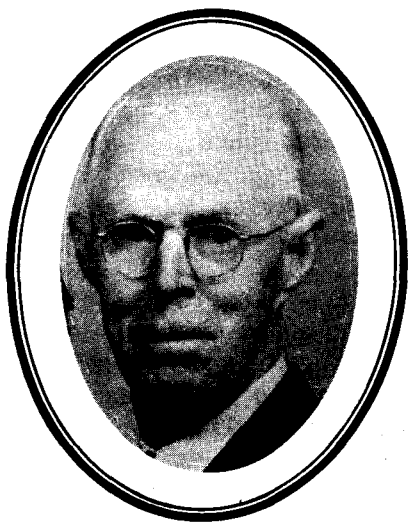
Studying daily thy blessed Word,
Having fellowship deep and sweet,
Exalting Jesus, our blessed Lord,
Laying our gifts at his feet.

Heaven's revival glow will stay
If we continue in his way!

--Author unknown



THE WAYS OF DEATH



Claude D. Cole

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 14:12.

Will Rogers used to say that all he knew was what he read in the papers. His attitude towards the papers ought to be every man's attitude towards the Bible. He regarded the newspaper as the only source of information about world affairs. Now the Bible is the only book that gives information about the world to come. It is the only book that gives safe direction about how to get to the land of bliss and glory. It points the way to God and happiness. Men remain ignorant of the Bible at their eternal peril. There is no safe substitute for the Bible upon any question that relates to the world to come.

Our text seems to be ungrammatical. It changes the number of the noun, and the verb in the last clause does not agree with its subject. To be grammatical it should read the end is the way of death. I believe the sense of the passage is best secured by rendering it: "At the end thereof are the ways of death." It is the picture of the many roads that end in death, and whichever of these you take at the end of it there will be other roads converging at that point, and emptying into the realm of eternal death. There are many roads to hell, and they are all of human engineering and construction, and are opposed

to the Bible. There is one road to heaven. "I am the way." It used to be said: "All roads lead to Rome." So all human ways of salvation lead to hell and eternal misery. The Bible points the way to heaven and tells us the way is in a person. Let us look at some of the roads to hell.

Our text tells us that one may be sincere in his religion and yet end in death. Sincerity is no safe substitute for the truth. Sincerity cannot alter facts. If salvation is in one thing and I sincerely believe it to be some other way, my sincerity will not amount to anything. Sincerity, when out of the way of truth, is only a weight that sinks the soul in the pit of hell. Here is a bottle of poison; I believe it is grape juice or some other harmless drink; I am sincere; I drink it, but my sincerity will not save me from physical death.

Our text tells us that human reason will not be sufficient to put us on the right road. Human reason, apart from divine revelation, will not discover the true way to heaven. "The world by wisdom cannot know God." The Grecian philosophers were perhaps the greatest reasoners the world has ever had, but without the Bible all their efforts to find God and salvation went for naught. Every one of them reasoned that the way to be saved was by character and good works. Reason is a blessed faculty in man when it is guided by the word of God. When we let the train of reason run on the track of revelation the end will be salvation and happiness. But when it jumps the track of revelation it is a wild engine spreading death and destruction everywhere. Here is the danger in our colleges: Reason has run riot.

Some of the ways that lead to death.

1. Atheism. The no-God way. Propagated in the name of science and scholarship.

2. The way of salvation by character and good works. This way runs counter to all that the Bible has to say about the way of salvation. The saved person actually renounces such a belief and confesses that his character and good works do not save him. The man who imagines he will get to heaven becauses of his obedience to God is on the way to hell. " For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Romans 5:19.

3. The way of church membership. There are more people than you might think who believe the way to be saved is to join the church. The church is God's institution to tell sinners how to be saved, but it is not the Saviour. Unless it points to Jesus as the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, it is an antichrist and a liar.

4. The no-hell theories. Advocates of these theories would give peace to human hearts by making them believe there is no eternal punishment. The true servants of God would give peace by assuring sinners that salvation is in Jesus Christ.

The only way of salvation.

"I am the way," said Jesus.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS!

Dear Pastor and Church:

We are doing fine and are enjoying the many blessings of God. To the Lord, our Covenant-keeping God, be praise both now and forever.

I enjoyed much the Bible Conference that your church sponsored and appreciate the opportunity that I had to preach. The food was very good, the fellowship was refreshing, and the preaching was memorable.

I feel a little like Paul when he said in II Corinthians 11:8, "I robbed other churches..." Your church has done more than minister to our needs. You have taken it upon yourselves to help bear our burden, you have shared our concern for souls, you have helped us tremendously in strengthening our church, and you have provided us a New Testament example of what a church should do regarding missionary zeal, passion and vision.

Your cheerful generosity and love humbles us--truly your church is a Macedonian church. (II Corinthians 9:8) "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."

Pastor Gormley and dear Saints--thank you for the huge unexpected gift of love. We raised the money needed ($25,000) and thanks be to God we went over the amount by $3000 which will go towards our building program. Like Paul (Philippians 4:17) "I desire fruit that may abound to your account."

God bless you,
Brother Dan Ferrell
Wilmington, Ohio

THE GOD WHO KNOWS

I do not know the future,
But I know the God who knows,
And in his perfect wisdom,
Unknowing, I repose.

What good could come of knowing?
How little I could do
To meet the joys or sorrows
That I am coming to!

I do not know the future,
But I know the God who knows,
I make his love my study
And follow where he goes.

The path, its joys and sorrows
I do not care to trace;
Content to know his goodness,
His mercy, and his grace.

--Author unknown