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INDEPENDENT

MISSIONARY

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

THE CROSS

C. D. Cole

Introduction: The cross is the world's greatest amazement. The cross stands in the center of Divine revelation. Every book of the Old Testament points with prophetic finger to the coming cross; every book of the New Testament is the finger of history pointing backward to the cross.

As a means of expiation there is but one cross--Christ's cross. The only place where sin has been adequately dealt with was at Calvary. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission and the only blood ever shed that can guarantee remission was shed at Calvary. Every believer has his cross but no believer is saved by the cross he bears. The way of the cross leads home, but the cross that leads to glory is Christ's cross. And every believer glories in nothing save the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The greatest unifying force is the cross. The cross does away with social, racial, and class distinctions. Charles E. Hughes and a Chinese laundry woman stood side by side seeking admis-

sion into a Baptist church. In receiving them the pastor said, "The ground is level at the cross." This may shock you, but I'm in sympathy with those who say that our churches ought to be open to all races and colors.

The greatest power of consecration is the cross. II Corinthians 5:14, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." The cross calls for consecration. Christ's cross calls for us to take up our cross.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.

"The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till death shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me."

The greatest power for a separated life is the cross.

Galatians 6:14, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The world crucified Christ and we ought to crucify the world--we ought to be dead to the ways of the world. The world that crucified Christ ought to be dead to us and if we glory in the cross this will be true.

The cross is an emblem and speaks of the death of Christ. And this is what we mean by the cross. We must not confound the emblem with what it signifies. We must not trust the emblem, but what the emblem says. The emblem says Christ died for our sins. You may wear the emblem around your neck all your life without being saved. It is the death of Christ for our sins that is saving truth. The actual cross of wood on which He died has no saving power. If it could be found you might sit at the foot of it and yet be lost. It is what the cross stands for that is important.

I. In the cross we see that God is. We see,

A. His love. John 3:16, "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."

B. His justice. The cross is a place of justice as well as of love. Romans 8:32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" I Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

II. In the cross we see what man is. We see,

A. The awful depravity of human nature--the carnal mind exemplified. We see,

1. Human hatred of God. Romans 8:7, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

2. Human ignorance. I Corinthians 2:8, "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

III. The cross is God's answer to man's need. Men are needy creatures--needy as creatures and more needy as sinners. Sin has created the need of salvation--man's direst need. The need of salvation includes many needs:

A. The need of forgiveness. Man has insulted God and God's justice will not take it. There is no hope in justice. If salvation were a matter of justice there would be no need of forgiveness. The cross is

the way of forgiveness. Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." God forgives for Christ's sake.

B. The need of peace. Man's insult of God has brought on war between God and man. War is usually dangerous to all parties involved, but here is a war in which man only is in danger. God is in no danger. The basis of peace is the cross--the death of Christ. Colossians 1:20, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

C. The need of righteousness. God is the Lawgiver; man is the lawbreaker--he is unrighteous. The penalty of the broken law is hell. Man must become righteous or be punished. The sinner is too weak and sinful to make himself righteous, so God sent His Son to provide righteousness for the unrighteous. I Corinthians 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

IV. Man's attitude towards the cross determines his eternal destiny. If the cross is God's gracious answer to man's need, then man must respond to God's gracious act or be damned. He must trust the Christ of the cross or be lost. He must hide behind the blood or the hounds of justice will suck his blood. He must trust the blood or be damned. There

are two attitudes towards the cross: natural and supernatural.

A. The natural attitude is the attitude of man left to himself. The same mind that insults God will scorn the cross. The man who is an enemy to his law will also be an enemy to His cross. Philippians 3:18, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." The cross is not a universal magnet but a thing universally repulsive. The cross is not an attraction to everybody; it is attractive to nobody apart from inwrought grace. If the cross is an universal magnet--universally attractive, everyone who hears the cross preached would be saved. The carnal mind hates the cross as a means of expiation. To be carnally minded is death because the carnal mind has other ways of salvation. Some natural men are merely ignorant of the cross, while others, particularly the so-called intellectuals hate it and ridicule it. They call it butcher-house religion. They hate the blood, typified by Abel's lamb, and bring their own character, typified by Cain's fruit and flowers, to God for salvation.

B. The attitude of the man moved by the grace of God--the Spirit-born man--the supernatural man. To him the cross is a magnet. To him the cross is attractive. He glories in the cross as his only hope.

Paul preached Christ crucified as the way of salvation; the carnally minded Jew thought it a scandal; the carnally minded Greek thought it foolishness. But those called with the life-giving call of the Holy Spirit saw in the cross the wisdom and power of God in human redemption.

Conclusion: Hear me, sinner friend, you seal your doom by rejecting the cross, by refusing to trust your alvation to the work of Christ on the cross. He put away sin by the sacrificing of Himself. Will you believe it and trust in it? Reject blood and take the fire.

Hear me, dear believer, you have said--you have gone on record as having trusted the cross--Now what is your response to such love? The church stands on the cross, will you stand with us. The church preaches the cross, will you help us preach it? The cross is a burden for the back, will you help us bear it? Will you take up your cross--the cross of consecration--and follow Him?

SLOW ME DOWN, LORD

Slow me down, Lord.

Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind.

Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time.

Give me, amid the confusion of the day, the calmness of the everlasting hills.

Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory.

Teach me the art of taking minute vacations -- of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to smile at a child, to read a few lines from a good book.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values, that I may grow toward my greater destiny.

Remind me each day that the race is not always to the swift; that there is more to life than increasing its speed.

Let me look upward to the towering oak and know that it grew great and strong because it grew slowly and well.

Orin L. Crain

THE SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST BEACON

THE ASSURANCE OF BLESSINGS

Ephesians 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Notice, "He hath blessed us." The apostle is not speaking of something that may be ours when we get to heaven, but right here and now I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. People often ask me if I have obtained the second blessing yet, and I generally say, "Second blessing? Why, I am somewhere up in the hundreds of thousands as far as that goes, if you refer to experience; but actually I obtained every blessing that God has for a re-deemed sinner when I put my trust in the Lord Jesus Christ." He does not just give us a little now and a little later, but gives us everything in Christ. It is all yours. Enter into it and enjoy it. It is one thing to have the blessings and another thing to make them yours.

--H. A. Ironside

"Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine!

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!

Heir of salvation, purchase of God

Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood."

--Fanny J. Crosby

PLANNING A
MOVE?
Please let us know
your NEW address

A BLESSING FROM SPURGEON

Isaiah 41:10-20, "Yea, I will help thee." --Isaiah 41:10b

The Lord says, "I will help thee." Strength within is supplemented by help without. God can raise us up allies in our warfare if so it seems good in His sight; and even if He does not send us human assistance, He Himself will be at our side, and this is better still. "Our August Ally" is better than legions of mortal helpers.

His help is timely: He is a very present help in time of trouble. His help is very wise: He knows how to give each man help meet and fit for him. His help is most effectual, though vain is the help of man. His help is more than help, for He bears all the burden, and supplies all the need. "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me."

Because He has already been our help, we feel confidence in Him for the present and the future. Our prayer is, "Lord, be thou my helper;" our experience is, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities;" our expectation is, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help;" and our song soon will be, "Thou, Lord, hast holpen me."

--C. H. Spurgeon



"Whatsoever A Man Soweth That Shall He Also Reap"