

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

March 30, 2018

The Cross and the Resurrection

The cross Jesus died upon was just a piece of wood. It held no special power and it could never save a soul. It is very likely that his cross was used multiple times to execute men. The only thing different about this cross was who died on it that day. Christ, the eternal “WORD” by whom all things were made, became a man and was put to death on that piece of wood. The power of the cross is not about the cross itself. It is about what happened when “*the Lord from heaven*” died on that cross. The things accomplished through this event are what the apostle Paul called “*the preaching of the cross.*” 1 Corinthians 1:18.

If we set aside religious philosophy and look solely to the scripture, there is only one conclusion we can come to about the cross of Christ. “He did not die so that we would escape death. Christ died in order that we would DIE with him!” Paul tells us “*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*” Romans 6:6. The purpose of Christ’s crucifixion was to crucify something about us. Paul calls it “*our old man.*” This is the “Adamic man.” It is that person who was polluted with sin. If this “*old man*” were to die with Christ then the “*body of sin*” (the entire source of sin) would be destroyed and we would “*no longer serve sin.*” Romans 6:6.

The only answer the Law had for sin was to ultimately kill the sinner. Yet to God this was no answer at all. He did not want to kill the sinner; he wanted to kill the sin. Paul explains this, saying, *“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:”* Romans 8:3. The purpose of Jesus Christ’s death on the cross was so our sinful person would be put to death with Christ, thereby delivering us from both the power and presence of sin. This is why Paul boldly said *“I am crucified with Christ!”* Galatians 2:20.

The scripture never speaks of our crucifixion as an ongoing process. It always refers to it in the past tense. *“Ye are dead...”* Colossians 3:3. *“I am crucified...”* Galatians 2:20. *“Our old man is crucified...”* Romans 6:6. *“It is finished.”* John 19:30. This is the message of the cross. It is a message of death. There is no life in it at all. It is the death of sin! It is the death of the old! Everything that was joined to Christ on his cross is dead. It is in this death that we are made free from every work of darkness. Paul exhorts us to “recognize” this absolute fact. He says, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin...”* Romans 6:11. If you cannot “see” this truth, you will not believe this truth, and it will not be effectual in you.

The “*death of the cross*” with Christ gives us absolute deliverance from sin, but death is not the ultimate end, because “death” is not “life.” Being “*dead to sin*” reveals what we no longer are, but there is much more to being a child of God than not being what you once were. This “*much more*” is called “*eternal life.*” Life is not found in the cross. Life is found in resurrection.

Christ came out of the grave to raise us up in the *"newness of (his) life."* Romans 6:4. Paul says God has *"...quickened us together with Christ."* Ephesians 2:5. It is through this quickening with Christ that we are born of God's Spirit. Peter tells us God has *"...begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."* I Peter 1:3. The life we possess is directly connected to the person of Jesus Christ. Through his resurrection we receive *"a new heart and a new spirit"* Ezekiel 36:26 when the Spirit of God's Son is sent into our hearts. Galatians 4:6. Without his resurrection there would be no life at all. Paul reminds us, *"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."* I Corinthians 15:17.

If Christ had not been crucified there would have been no resurrection of Christ. Even so, no one is *"risen with Christ,"* who is not first *"crucified with Christ."* There is no such thing as being both a sinner and a child of God. One is the old and one is the new. One is dead and one is alive. If the sinner is alive there has not been a crucifixion. And, if there has been no crucifixion with Christ, there is no resurrection with Christ. Remember Paul's words: *"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:"* II Timothy 2:11.

Consider these words from the Apostle Paul in II Corinthians 5:17:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ..." Anyone! Everyone! Every single person who is in Christ!

"...he is a new creature..." They are new creations; born again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

“...old things ...” The old man! The body of sin!
The sinful nature!

“...are passed away...” Deceased! Dead! Gone!

“...behold, all things are become new.” A new heart! A new spirit! A new nature! A new person!

Many people are being taught to place their faith in the cross. This is misplaced faith, because our faith belongs in Christ, who died on the cross. The “cross” is not the source of anything to the believer, because it is the absolute “end” of the old man and everything that pertains to him. The resurrection is the birth of the “new creation,” and the source of everything new. Something to remember as we worship our risen savior on this “Resurrection Sunday” is, “His death is our death, His burial is our burial, His resurrection is our resurrection, and His victory is our victory.” Hallelujah! Christ is risen!