

Christ

The Sufferings and Death Of Our Lord

I find it interesting that unconsciously with the passing of years, the cross of our Lord becomes more precious to me. The shadows of twilight rival the light of life and priorities change with the weakening of the body and mind. The preciousness of the cross changed from intellectual knowledge to the longing for it to become more real, and as it does, the more magnificent the Lord becomes.

In musing on the blessedness of Calvary and not its historicity, one appreciates that the cross of our Lord was and is:

- a) The greatest miscarriage of justice the world will ever know but it was answered by God in righteousness.
- b) The most infamous murder the world has ever known but was answered by God and the resurrection.
- c) The most visible manifestation of the human heart and rebellion and hatred against divine persons but was answered by God's exaltation of Christ.
 - i) In contrast to man's savagery is the sympathy of Christ and the salvation of God.
 - ii) In contrast to man's might is the meekness of Christ and the mercy of God.

The sufferings of the Lord on the cross is the greatest act of love, mercy, and grace (Rom. 5:5-8) and the resurrection is the greatest manifestation of divine power (Eph. 1:20).

- a) The greatest evidence of the righteousness of God. There was a humanity anointed cohesion due to the tension between the love of God and His justice. How could this tension be resolved, and resolved righteously?

The cross of our Lord manifests the greatest contrast between sin blinded satan energized men and God.

- a) God took the wickedness of man and his hatred to manifest the riches of His mercy, love and grace.
- b) Against man's cruelty, God manifested goodness, kindness and compassion.
- c) Man smote the face of God and He returned with the kiss of affection.

The Blood of the Lord

The Blood indicates the completeness of the life given, nothing held back, indicating fulness of devotion. "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood" (Heb. 12:4).

- a) The proof of the death of the Lord (Jn. 19:33)
- b) The purchasing price for the flock (Acts 20:28)
- c) The center point of saints on earth (1 Cor. 10:16)
- d) The delivering power from the kingdom of Satan (Col. 1:20)
- e) The grounds for securing our entrance before God (Heb. 9:7-12)
- f) The grounds for our perfecting before God (Heb. 13:21)
- g) The theme of Heaven's and earth's thrones (Rev. 5:5-14)
- h) The assurance of the better things to come (Heb. 12:24-25)
- i) The foundation for our sanctification (Heb. 13:12)
- j) The evidence of the providing for the fulfilling of our election (1 Pet. 1:2)
- k) The cost of our redemption (1 Pet. 1:18-21)
- l) The process by which we can be cleaned (1 Jn. 1:7)

1) Aspects of the cross of the Lord

- a) It is:
 - i) The measurement of our devotion and obedience (Heb. 12:1-4)
 - ii) It is the only way to true service (Matt. 10:38)
 - iii) The epitome of the fullness of the Lord emptying Himself (Phil. 2:2; 2 Cor. 13:4)
 - iv) It was the pathway to glory (Heb. 2:7-9)
 - v) It is set in contrast to His glory (Acts 2:23-28)
 - vi) It is the sentence of God in death to the old man in us (Rom. 6:5-7)
 - vii) The epitome of the fullness of the Lord humbling Himself (Phil. 2:6-10; 2 Cor. 13:4)
 - viii) The cross utterly condemns anyone who presents another way of salvation (Gal. 2:20)

Christ

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- ix) The cross alone has the power to make Jew and Gentile one (Eph. 2:16)
 - x) It is the measure of the Lord's obedience to God (Phil. 2:8-11)
 - xi) It is the measurement of His endurance despite the shame (Heb. 12:2)
 - xii) The degree of the world's hatred and its estimation of the Son of God (Matt. 20:19; 27:31)
- 2) Aspects of the death of the Lord
- a) It was a manifestation of not only the rejection of the truth, but also the rejecting of God (Lk. 10:16)
 - b) It was the intention of man but not the act of man, the Lord gave His own life (Lk. 23:26; Jn. 10:17-18)
 - c) It was the planned determination of "spiritual" leaders of Israel (Matt. 27:3, 20)
 - d) In its spirit or soul level, it brought immeasurable grief to the Lord (Matt. 26:38)
 - e) His death found its groundwork in His fidelity and truthfulness (Mk. 14:55-65)
 - f) The cross was the pre-determined by God method for His death but not the cause of it (Psa. 22:16; Jn. 10:17-18)
- 3) Aspects of the Blood of the Lord:
- a) By it:
 - 1. The believer is linked to the covenant (1 Cor. 11:25)
 - 2. There is the assurance of eternal life (Jn. 6:32-40)
 - 3. There is propitiation for humanity (1 Jn. 2:2)
 - 4. Justification is secured (Rom. 5:9)
 - 5. There is freedom from guilt (Heb. 10:2)
 - 6. The redeemed are brought near to God (Eph. 2:13)
 - 7. There is redemption and forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14)
 - 8. There is forever the witness on earth of the death of the Lord and man's hatred (1 Jn. 5:8)
 - 9. There is the impetus to overcome life itself by being a martyr for the Lord (Rev. 12:11)
 - b) It is:
 - 1. The proof of the death of the Lord (Jn. 19:33)
 - 2. The purchasing price for the flock (Acts 20:28)
 - 3. The center point of saints on earth (1 Cor. 10:16)
 - 4. The delivering power from the kingdom of Satan (Col. 1:20)
 - 5. The grounds for securing our entrance before God (Heb. 9:7-12)
 - 6. The grounds for our perfecting before God (Heb. 13:21)
 - 7. The theme of Heaven's throngs (Rev. 5:9-14)
 - 8. The assurance of the better things to come (Heb. 12:24-25)
 - 9. The foundation for our sanctification (Heb. 13:12)
 - 10. The evidence of the providing for the fulfilling of our election (1 Pet. 1:2)
 - 11. The cost of our redemption (1 Pet. 1:18-21)
 - 12. The process by which we can be cleaned (1 Jn. 1:7)

As far as I can determine, there are six distinct references to the individuals for whom the Lord suffered and died. They are:

- a) Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6)
- b) Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8)
- c) Him, for whom Christ died (Rom. 14:15)
- d) Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3)
- e) He died for all (2 Cor. 5:15)
- f) Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us (1 Thess. 5:9-10)
 - i) As we observe these six references we observe that there is a distinction in the way they are used:
 - 1. In the first reference the emphasis is on the kind of people for whom Christ died.
 - 2. In the second reference the emphasis is on the the vicarious aspect of His death.

Christ The Sufferings and Death Of Our Lord

3. In the third reference we have the individual value before God. Every saint is precious in the eyes of God and we must never look down on any saint because their gift is different from ours. Every saint is saved with the same precious blood, have new life by the same power of the Holy Spirit, will be in the same Heaven, and will praise the same Lord.
4. The fourth reference indicates the sacrifice of the Lord was not an accident or foolhardiness but in full accord with the scriptures.
5. The fifth reference indicates the reach of his death, Christ died for all. He is the propitiation for our sin and His sacrifice is sufficient for all, but efficient only for those who obey.
6. The sixth reference indicates the substitutionary aspect of the sacrifice of the Lord.

Christ Died

When we read “Christ died for the ungodly” or “The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me”, several questions come to mind:

- a) The death of the Lord must be considered not only physically but spiritually.
- b) When did He bear my sins penalty or when did He suffer to be my Propitiator and Redeemer?
 - i) When He died or before He died?
 - ii) When was His blood shed for sins, before He died or after He died?
- c) The Old Testament pre-figured the forsaking of the Lord by the type of the scapegoat (Lev. 16:8, 10, 26), however, the New Testament conveyed its reality (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13).

Approaching God

The possibility is that the sacred has never been a reality or by freedom of approach it has become common. God is holy but what does that mean? If I do not appreciate, even in a small degree, the holiness of the Lord, my entire life will be affected.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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