

At The Cross

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INTRODUCTION

The Cross is one of the most controversial, offensive or divisive subjects among the early theologians in the early centuries.

Different views were advanced that the cross should be a symbol of the church, sign to wear, sign to make and what have you?

The physical cross has no religious significance but the intention of God for and what happened at the cross in relation to man's salvation.

The cross is so significant to Christianity that you cannot divorce the church from the cross and the church without the cross is nothing.

Death by crucifixion originated from the Persian Empire and was perfected by the Romans who did not crucify her citizens. It was a gradual slow painful death.

To the Jews, it was a curse to die by hanging (**Deuteronomy 21:22-23; Galatians 3:13**).

The cross has a lot of lessons but we shall admonish ourselves with the following:

A Symbol of Suffering and Shame:

No tongue can tell exactly the agony Christ went through on the cross of Calvary. He was on the cross for six hours (**Mark 15:25; Matthe 27:42-ff**). When He was praying in the garden of Gethsemane, He sweated blood. **Luke 22:44** *And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

On the cross, He was stripped half-naked, crown of thorns on His head, His palms and feet were pierced with nails and He suffered shamefully for our sins.

Thus, we are called to partake in His suffering through our various trials in order to share in His glory.

Philippians 1:29 - *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on*

him, but also to suffer for his sake.

1 Peter 4:1,13 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

God's Holiness and Dislike for Sin: Jesus cried out, *My God, my God why has thou forsaken me?* (**Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34**).

At this point on the cross, the sin of the whole world was on Christ; God the Father maintains His holiness and backed Christ for the first time, from eternity, God the Father and Christ the Son were separated.

That sin separated the Father (God) and the Son (Christ), Christians should be rest assured that if they continue in sin, they will be separated from the Godhead.

That Christ suffered severely for sin means that sinners and erring Christians will be severely punished at the end of time (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**). We

must live a holy life (**1 Peter 1:15,16**).

Real Forgiveness Attained:

The complete removal of sin was made possible at the cross when Christ shed His blood for without the shedding of blood no remission (**John 19:34, Hebrews 9:22**). His blood removed past and present sins (**Hebrews 9:15, Romans 3:25**).

The only meritorious work of salvation is in the cross. Christ paid it all and there is no other sacrifice for sin (**Hebrews 10:26**).

Access to the Throne of God:

When Christ died on the cross, the curtains (veil) of the temple tore into two (*Holy Place and Holy of Holies*) as He entered the Holiest, Heavenly Throne of God, once and for all (**Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Hebrews 9:7,8,17**).

Hebrews 9:8 *The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.*

That we are adopted Children of God to call Him, Abba Father, in prayer and to offer acceptable worship etc. were made possible at the cross, no cross, no Christianity.

Victory: Before Christ finally died on the cross, He said, *It is finished (John 19:30).*

What is finished? The work of restoration of man's glory, victory over sin and Satan.

The Devil tempted Christ even on the cross so that **Genesis 3:15** would not be fulfilled but Christ yielded not.

He died sinless and obtained victory for all who obey Him through the gospel. **Revelation 12:11** *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

CONCLUSION

At the cross, both the Father and the Son were glorified **(John 17:1,5).**

God made human public execution the greatest motivation in the scheme of redemption. Thus, Christians must glory in the cross as it makes the throne of God two - *highest heaven and lowest heart of man (Galatians 6:14).*