

What Was the Cross of Christ?

Let me welcome you once again to "It's a Good Life." I'd like for you to have your Bible if you would and we're going to look at several different verses today. We're going to start in Mark Chapter 15. And we're going to look in Matthew and Luke through several verses, because we're going to look at "What Was the Cross," in other words, "What Was the Cross of Christ?"

Right now, let me have prayer with you. Father, I pray for that person listening today. You know who they are. And I pray, if they've never trusted You as Savior, that today would be that day that they would trust Jesus as their Savior. May he or she ask Jesus into their heart today. And for that person who is saved listening, may You remind them and just help them to understand what the cross of Christ is and bring it back to their memory of the importance of the cross. In Jesus' name, amen.

We sometimes forget some basic realities of the Bible. You know, we believe but we become careless in our belief. We need to really be aware of Jesus on the cross. Traditionally, we say there were three crosses, and, of course, we know this by reading the Word of God.

In Mark 15:27, it says, *And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.*

And then again we're reminded in Matthew 27:38 it says: *Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.*

Well, the one on the left, as we read, we find out the one on the left equals rejection, and the one on the right equals reception. One rejected

Christ and one received Christ. And the thief on the left, in Luke 23:39 it says, *And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.*

Well, there was a great contrast between the one on the left, the thief on the left and the thief on the right, because we continue reading in Luke 23:40-42. It says: ⁴⁰*But the other answering rebuked him... rebuked the one on the left; in other words, the thief on the left... saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?* ⁴¹*And we indeed justly... In other words, "We're getting what we deserve" ... for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man... speaking of Jesus now... this man hath done nothing amiss. "He has done nothing wrong."* ⁴²*And he said unto Jesus... this man on the right... Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*

Now, the one on the right went to Heaven. He went to Paradise, because... ⁴³*Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, **To day shalt thou be with me in paradise,*** Luke 23:43.

Well, the thief on the right went to Heaven. Notice, he never went to church. He didn't keep the Ten Commandments. He hadn't been a good person; he was a thief. And you know something, he wasn't even baptized. And I'm reminded that the way of the cross leads home, not the way of the creek. If you go down into the water to be saved, you simply go down dirty and you come up dirty if you're wanting to be saved by that water. In other words, the outside of your body might get clean as you go down into the water, but your soul is not cleansed. It takes the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, what was the cross? First, the cross was a meeting place. God met His Son there to transact business. The Son was buying sinners from the slave market of sin. In Romans 7:14 it says, *For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

Revelation 5:6 says, *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*

Revelation 5:9 goes on to say: *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

And then we continue reading in verse 12: *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Yes, God met His Son there to transact business. His Son came to seek and to save those who were lost. When God came there, He met His Son and He transacted that business because of love for mankind. God met the Son there. He was there and God also met the sinner there.

In John 3:14 it says: *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*

In John 12:32 it says: *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* This is Jesus speaking.

God met the sinner there. Jesus is God. Did you know that? Jesus is God of very God. In John

1:14, it says the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as the only begotten Son of God, and He is God. He put on flesh that He might reach flesh, the flesh of sinful man and make us fit for Heaven.

Well, God met the Son there on the cross to transact business, and God met the sinner there, and God also met the saint there. Luke 23:42... Remember this man who was on the right, he was a sinner and then he got saved, but he became a saint because it was said by him to Jesus, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.* He was saved, because he was trusting Jesus Christ to take Him.

When you pray, you come by the way of the middle cross. There is no other way. First, the cross was a meeting place. Second, the cross was an altar. You see, the innocent died for the guilty. There had to be a sacrifice for man's sin.

In Isaiah 53:4-7, it says: *⁴Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him... That's Jesus... the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed... That's Jesus... and he was afflicted... That's Jesus... yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* That's Jesus. He gave His life's blood on the cross of Calvary for you and I.

Well, the cross was an altar, and, third, the cross was a pulpit. Now, a pardon for sin and, you know, I have to say glory to God for this, because the pulpit, the word that went out from there, it gave a pardon from sin and it gives a

pardon from sin today. Glory to God! We're forgiven by Jesus Christ by receiving what He did on that cross.

Romans 8:33 says, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

First John 2:12 says, *I write unto you, little children... He's writing to us, the saved people... because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.*

Colossians 2:13: *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him... He's made us alive... having forgiven you all trespasses. We're forgiven.*

Colossians 1:14 says: *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*

Well, the cross also means peace with God. Second John 1:3 says: *Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.*

And Romans 5:1 says: *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The cross means not only peace with God, but it means the peace of God. First Thessalonians 5:23 says: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Colossians 3:15 says: *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*

And Hebrews 13:20-21: *²⁰Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Well, I see the cross also means power to live. You say, "I don't know how I'm gonna make it." Well, by the way of the cross. It's the power to live. First Corinthians 2:4-5 says: *⁴And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: ⁵That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

Philippians 4:13: *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* It's through the power of God that we're able to serve Him, that we're able to do the things that God wants us to do as saved people.

And you know something, the cross of Christ is empty. He's not there, but the cross of Christ is still a meeting place for saint and sinner. It's still an altar for repentance. We come to the cross for forgiveness of sin, and the cross of Christ is still a pulpit. Who's the preacher? It's the Spirit, the Holy Spirit and the bride.

Revelation 22:17: *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.* Who is the bride? That's us, folks, the ones who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior. We are the bride of Christ. It says, *Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*

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