

# Lessons From The Cross

## Introduction

1. Wherever you go people associate the symbol of the cross with Christianity understanding that it was on the cross that Jesus, the teacher and founder of the religion, died.
2. However, many people, Christians as well as non-Christians, fail to grasp the significance of Christ's death and what it represents.
  - a. That Christ died for the sins of the world continues to past over the heads of both the religiously minded as well as the secular minded.
  - b. For the religiously minded it isn't taken into account in the formulation of their beliefs; for the non-Christian it is simply a sad and moving story but nothing else.
3. Are we also failing to understand the significance of the cross? Does it help in our understanding of the true gospel? Is it something we only think about at the Lord's Table?

## Main Body

### I. The Cross, the Central Message of the Gospel

- A. That Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world is the central message of the gospel or the "good news", or as described by one commentator as "the sum and substance of the gospel" (1 Corinthians 1:17, 23 cf. Acts 4:12; 15:11; 16:31).
  1. **Euangelion**; "a good message; that is, the gospel" (Strong's).
  2. It "originally denoted a reward for good tidings; later the idea of reward dropped, and the word stood for 'good news' itself. In the NT it denotes the 'good tidings' of the kingdom and of salvation through Christ, to be received by faith, on the basis of His expiatory death, burial, resurrection and ascension" (Vine's).
  3. The good news concerning Jesus is that He died for our sins, that He was raised from the dead and has ascended to heaven, and will return to take us to heaven, after judging the world (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; Acts 17:30-31).

### II. The Cross, God's Final Solution to Sin

- A. The sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross accomplished what the sacrifices commanded in the Law of Moses could not accomplish; total and complete cleansing from sin (Hebrews 10:1-10).
  1. The blood of the animal sacrifices were accepted by God in exchange for the lives of those that sinned against the Law, though the penalty of sin requires the death of the sinner (Lev. 17:11; Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23).
  2. It needed Jesus to bear our sins for us to escape our due punishment; a provision God has provided for every sinner that believes and obeys the gospel (Romans 5:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 5:9).
- B. This central and fundamental teaching of the gospel is, however, ignored by those teaching that Christ died for a selected few, to whom, it is alleged, the gospel makes a special call.
  1. Christ died as a ransom for *all*, since *all* will be held accountable for their sin (1 Timothy 2:3-6; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:10).
  2. The faith resulting in obedience is derived from hearing the gospel that is to be preached to all men (Mark 16:15-16; Romans 10:17).

### III. Cross, the Ending of the Law of Moses

- A. The crucifixion of Christ on Mount Calvary in Jerusalem in A.D. 33 that resulted in His death marks the moment in time that the Law of Moses was brought to its end (Ephesians 2:14-15; Colossians 2:14).
  1. **Katartego**; "to be (render) idle, useless, literally or figuratively" (Strong's). "To reduce to inactivity" (Vine's).
    - a. The ordinances given to Israel prevented them from intermingling with the Gentiles; who in the eyes of the Mosaic Law were viewed as unclean (Dt.7:6 cp. Leviticus 11:8; Acts 10:28).
    - b. To effect the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in one body to God it was necessary for the Law to be abolished (note word usage 1 Corinthians 13:10-11; Galatians 5:4, 11; Hebrews 2:14).
  2. **Exaleipho**; "signifies 'to wash, or to smear completely' Hence, metaphorically, in the sense of removal, 'to wipe away, wipe off, obliterate'" (Vine's).

- B. Those that accept this particular effect of Christ's death still, however, insist on justifying keeping aspects of the Mosaic Law - for example, the Sabbath and the use of mechanical instruments (Colossians 2:16-17).
1. When the New Testament speaks of the abolition of the Law it is speaking of the Law given by God to Moses at Mount Sinai and rehearsed in the plains of Moab (Dt. 29:1; Acts 13:38-9 cp. Rom. 7:6-7).
  2. Instrumental music, though included later, came through God's command and instruction to the Levites (2 Chronicles 29:25-28 cp. Ephesians 5:19).
  3. Christ is the head of the church and our only source of religious authority (Ephesians 1:20-23; 5:24 cf. Matthew 28:18-20).

### **Conclusion**

1. What we have considered in this lesson will, hopefully, increase our understanding and appreciation of the significance of Jesus' death that He suffered on our behalf.
2. In His great wisdom, God has set apart the first day of the week for us to partake of the Lord's Supper in which we remember and reflect on Christ's death, and look forward to His return (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
3. Remembering Christ and the life He gave for us each day will help us to remain focused and committed to serving our Lord, as well as thankful for what His death has achieved for us (Galatians 2:20-21).