

What The Cross of Christ Shows [concluded]

by Bill Crews

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...common criminal, and that in the night. He was struck in the face, blindfolded and taunted as they struck Him repeatedly, spat upon, clothed in bright apparel and ridiculed, scourged, arrayed in “royal” apparel and paid mock homage even as they struck Him and spat upon Him, forced to carry the heavy cross for awhile, deprived of nearly all His clothes, crucified and then laughed at, taunted and ridiculed as He slowly died on a Roman cross. The fate of the Jewish nation in Palestine was sealed when they rejected Jesus and crucified Him, and then rejected the good news of salvation from sin and persecuted the bearers of that news. The horrors of the Roman invasion that ended with the destruction of the whole city of Jerusalem is an indication of how God viewed their wickedness.

5. **It shows how much God loves us.** From that standpoint the cross is the brightest day in human history, the day that declared once and for all how much God loves mankind, even in their sins. *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). *“But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8). *“Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins”* (1 John 4:9-10). God could have stopped the crucifixion of His Son, but, out of love, for your sake and mine and that of the whole human race, He did not.
6. **It shows how much Christ loves us.** *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”* (John 15:13). Jesus was talking to His apostles whom He had called His friends, but He also died for His enemies. *“For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son...”* (Romans 5:10). *“And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world”* (1 John 2:2). *“Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us...”* (1 John 3:16). Jesus was not compelled or forced to die on the cross. He had the power and the resources to stop the proceeding at any time (John 10:18; Matthew 26:53), but the grand eternal purpose of the Father, the Scriptures that foretold it, and His great love for us moved Him to see it through.
7. **It shows how important the church is.** *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish”* (Ephesians 5:25-27). The church of our Lord is the saved; therefore, they and it are sanctified as the result of having been cleansed by the washing of water with the word. This was made possible by Christ who loved the church and gave Himself up for it. Paul said to the elders of the church in Ephesus, *“Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood”* (Acts 20:28). The greatest price ever paid for anything is the price paid by Christ for the church; it is the price of our salvation.

Let us keep the message of the cross pure. Let us never make it void by injecting our wisdom and ourselves into its proclamation (1 Corinthians 1:17b). Let us never view it as foolishness, but rather as the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18). Let us never become enemies of the cross by professing to be His followers while we walk in sin (Philippians 3:18-19). The cross of Christ surely shows that we can be saved and live like saved people.