

WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT THE CROSS ?

Blood and gore are popular on T.V. and in the movies now-days

but often disapproved in the pulpits

and removed from the hymnbooks.

The Lord Jesus Christ suffered crucifixion on a cross a blood sacrifice:

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Jesus Christ was both God AND man in a flesh-and-blood body:

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Col 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

His mission, in coming to Earth, was to DIE for sinners:

Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

The cross was shameful to Christ, the Lord of Glory:

Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The law curses the sinner, and demands death as payment::

Ezek 18:20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father,
neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son:
the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him,
and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Jesus was cursed in our place to deliver us from the law's curse:

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

On the cross, sin's wages were PAID IN FULL,

and God offers life to anyone who believes:

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death;
but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus had no sin of His own He paid for OUR sin:

2 Cor 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Sin gets its power from the law:

1 Cor 15:56 The sting of death is sin;
and the strength of sin is the law.

Yet Jesus broke the law's strong-hold from off of us:

Col 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

It's by the blood Jesus shed on the cross that we have peace with God:

Col 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Jesus paid our ransom from the penalty of sin by His death on the cross:

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

We're going to read 6 verses in Romans chapter 3.

HOLD your place there, while we also turn to the references,

so you can easily get back to Rom. 3:

Rom 3:21-26 But now (that is, through Paul's revelation) the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Up until 'now' God's righteousness required obedience to the law:

Deut 6:25 And it shall be our righteousness,
IF we observe to DO all these commandments
before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

'But now' God's righteousness is available SOLELY by faith

that is --- both • the faith of Christ (His faithfulness in paying for our sins)
and • our faith in what He did on our behalf:

Turn to Romans chapter 3 again:

Rom 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ
unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

To 'believe' means to trust to put confidence in to have faith in:

Rom 4:4,5 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace,
but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the un-
godly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

That's how we're saved ---

by believing the good news about what Jesus did for us on the cross.

Now, back to Romans chapter 3, picking up with verse 23:

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Every person is justly charged:

Rom 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to
them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the
world may become guilty before God.

Whether it's alot or a little --- just one sin condemns:

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in
one point, he is guilty of all.

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace
through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

'Redemption' is freedom by payment of a price.

Through His death, Christ secured freedom for us ---

- freedom • from the penalty of sin
- freedom • from the power (or control) of sin:

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood,
the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Get Romans 3 once more:

Rom 3:25-26 Whom (that's Christ-from vs. 24) God hath set forth to be a propitiation
(that is, a satisfaction of God's just requirement that sin be paid for by death)
through faith in his blood,

to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past,
through the forbearance of God; (God remitted sins in 'Times Past'
waiting - forbearing - and knowing that Christ would die for them in 'due time.')

26 To declare, I say, at this time (that's Paul's 'But Now' declaration -- without the law)
his righteousness:
that he might be just, (God is fair and right to demand sin be paid for)
and the justifier of him which **believeth** in Jesus.

(The death of Christ met the just demands of the law -
therefore, when a guilty sinner trusts in Christ's sacrifice on the cross in his behalf -
God is also right to declare the guilty sinner 'righteous'.)

When we want to see the love of God

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| we DON'T look at | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circumstances of life • physical health or sickness • financial status • personal happiness or sorrow |
|------------------|--|

Instead --- we look where the BIBLE says we find God's love exhibited ---

- | | |
|------------|--|
| we look to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calvary's cross: |
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Now we're going to read through a passage in Romans chapter 5, while we run references so KEEP your finger in Rom. 5 until we get through verses 8-11:

Rom 5:8-11 But **God commendeth** (that is, God 'showed') **his love toward us,**
(How did God show us He loved us? Where do we see God's love for us?)
in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

(Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

When we place our faith in that God declares us completely righteous.)

Eph 2:4-10 But God, who is rich in mercy,

for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 **Even when we were dead in sins,** hath quickened us (that's made us **alive**) together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

(Look what awaits us when we get to Heaven):

7 That **in the ages to come** he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

(How should our **thankful heart** respond? We **should** serve the Lord.):

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Rom 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood,
To be 'justified' means to be declared right.

Let's look at some other ways we are justified also:

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith (that's OUR faith in what Christ did for us) without the deeds of the law.

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, (that is, Christ's faith HIS faith HE was faithful in paying the debt of sin on the cross) and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

We're justified

- by His blood
- by His grace
- by our faith
- by His faith.

Now flip back to finish the sentence in Romans chapter 5:

we shall be saved from wrath through him.

That's great, too! We can be sure that God will not pour His anger out on US:

1 Thess 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Thess 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (They know the truth but refuse it -- they don't want it.)

Look what awaits the unbelievers when Jesus returns.

This is where they'll be without the cross of Christ:

2 Thess 1:7-9 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,
8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Return to Romans chapter 5:

Rom 5:10-11 For if, when we were enemies,
we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,
much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

We'll contrast this next verse, where we already presently possess forgiveness
with Israel's program, where they have to WAIT to get theirs. Also get Acts 3:19-20:

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Israel won't fully receive their atonement until Jesus sets up His earthly kingdom:

Acts 3:19-20 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, WHEN the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;
20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

The first man, Adam, sinned, and brought death upon all men.

The 'second' man, Jesus, paid for all sin with His death on the cross, and

thereby, made righteousness available to anyone who trusts Him:

Rom 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one (that was Adam)
judgment came upon all men to condemnation;
even so by the righteousness of one (that was Jesus)
the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Remember we read in Romans 5:10 that WE used to be God's enemies?

There are actually ENEMIES of the cross:

Phil 3:18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

The cross offends 'legalistic' people:

Gal 5:11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

When religious activity is 'attached' to the cross,

(things like

- water baptism
- tithing
- church membership
- church attendance
- not working on Sunday --- as if that was 'Sabbath observance'
- following Jesus' earthly ministry --- bearing 'your cross'
- obeying the 10 Commandments etc.)

then the good news of the cross can be made void (or empty)

where, because of 'surrounding clutter' the cross brings no result of salvation:

1 Cor 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of NONE EFFECT.

The message of the cross is 'hidden' by confusion.

Satan largely achieves this through the use of religious organizations and

denominations that do not preach a plain, simple gospel of the CROSS:

2 Cor 4:3,4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world (**that's Satan**) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

That's what happens when people don't present a CLEAR gospel message:

1 Cor 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren,

I declare unto you the gospel (that's the good news)
which I preached unto you, (PAUL is the one who preached it)
which also ye have received, (the Corinthians got it)
and wherein ye stand; (they were standing for it)

2 By which also ye are saved, (they were SAVED by that gospel PAUL preached)

Watch this next part CAREFULLY:

IF ye keep in memory what I preached unto you,

What is your name? You remember it, don't you?

Where do you live? You do NOT forget where your home is, do you?

How are you saved? If you don't REMEMBER what the next 2 verses say

then you have done what the last part of this verse says:

unless ye have believed in vain.

Whatever you have believed - it can be religious about God about Jesus -

it is of 'none effect' --- it's in vain --- it's empty, useless, void

IF you don't remember this:

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, (again, Paul gave this gospel to the Corinthians and they believed it - and knew it)

HERE IS THE GOSPEL whereby we are saved:

how that **Christ died for our sins** (THAT IS IT)

according to the scriptures;

4 And that **he was buried,**

and that **he rose again the third day**

according to the scriptures:

We call that the D - B - R the Death, Burial, Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

THAT'S what you've got to believe to be SAVED.

And you've got to ALWAYS KNOW to REMEMBER THAT IS IT!

The cross is the only means of salvation:

1 Cor 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

That's what the gospel is: Jesus died on the cross for our sins.
He was buried.
He rose again on the 3rd day.

.... when we believe THAT God saves our soul:

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The only boasting we can do is in the cross - not about anything we did or do, but about what Jesus did for us --- He died for our sins:

Gal 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

So, let's talk about it all the time everywhere we go to everyone we meet:

- certainly, our FAMILY first - We naturally love them.
- certainly, our FRIENDS also - Friends don't let friends go to hell.

SURELY, you've given the gospel to everyone you know.

- certainly, STRANGERS - Don't leave their salvation to mere chance, and don't depend upon a so-called 'church' to tell them.

You'll have to endure cruelty and harassment from legalistic, religious people --- but don't let that stop you

from talking about the cross of Christ to anyone who will listen:

Gal 6:12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"