

#342 Kingdom: The Extended Cross

The mention of the cross brings a certain dread to the atmosphere. Every Easter we are confronted with the sufferings of Christ and the bloody and painful ordeal that He suffered. We see the weakness of Christ from the beatings and from the crown of thorns so that He was stumbling from the weight of the cross. Another was selected to carry the cross for Him. Then all the mocking by the crowd and the insults and the revelation of the inhumanity of the race of men towards another person unfolds. In all this He never answered back nor defended Himself.

This whole scene is so horrible that when we say “THE CROSS IS OUR FRIEND” it appears ridiculous. It seems that we should avoid the cross by any means we can find to escape. It is for this reason that the cross is only presented ‘as redemptive’ and it is seen only in the past tense. The present cross is to be avoided as much as the historic cross.

When Jesus warned that ALL His disciples MUST take up the cross, daily, and follow Him, it appears as redundant. If He took up His cross for us then there is the finished work of the cross that is past tense. From this viewpoint it is preached that nothing can be added to what He accomplished and nothing can be taken from what He did for us.

Since this doctrine appears clearly true, any other mention of the cross is considered as heresy because it detracts for the “finished work of Calvary.”

This is precisely why we must see the cross from before the foundation of the world. Until we understand the cross has many dimensions in this life, plus its eternal “dimensions”, the cross may just remain flat in our understanding. That means the height and the depth along with the width and the breadth of the cross can be misunderstood or neglected. Rather than just preaching the “flat cross” on Easter Sunday we should reveal how the “Historic Cross” demonstrates and reveals the Kingdom of God which explains something of the eternal purpose of God.

In the last study we tried to distinguish between these three crosses. That is the Eternal Cross, the Historic Cross of Calvary and the personal cross that Jesus warned would be required of all who aspires to be His disciples. His remarks about the personal cross indicates that for Him to personally teach us about eternal things and to reveal the mysteries, it is essential that we each take up the personal cross daily and follow Him.

IF THE CROSS OF CALVARY WAS ONLY REDEMPTIVE and represented a “finished work”, then the personal cross would be unnecessary. However, we can conclude that the Cross of Calvary WAS CERTAINLY REDEMPTIVE and was and is a finished work. It is because we ONLY see the Cross of Calvary as redemptive that we have this discussion.

If we haven’t yet seen the personal cross is our friend and not our enemy, this whole study of the cross will become confusing. In this study we will try to clarify that the personal cross reflects the Eternal Cross and is not redundant with the historic cross. What Jesus did on Calvary cannot be repeated by anyone, anywhere. There is ONLY one Lamb of God that was slain from the foundation of the world to take away the sins of the world. Then we should ask; by which cross was He slain? Was it by the Eternal Cross OR the Historic Cross? Obviously it must have been by the Eternal Cross when He agreed to become a man, suffer death as man and even the horrible death of Calvary. If this view is correct then the Eternal Cross preceded the Historic Cross and the Historic Cross is the reflection and the visible demonstration of the Eternal Cross.

The personal cross can never take the place of the Historic Cross or have any fellowship [sharing and participation] with it. It is for this reason that the personal cross must be related to the Eternal Cross rather than the historic Cross.

Then was the Historic Cross redemptive? Yes, it certainly was redemptive! Still, the Historic Cross demonstrated an absolute standard of heaven and an eternal principle in God. Heaven operates on the principle of the "Eternal Cross." If we only see heaven as one place, this statement will sound like heresy. Obviously, the thief on the physical cross didn't take up the personal cross but it is generally accepted that he "went to heaven." If we see the three heavens as New Earth, New Heaven and the New Jerusalem, we only need ask in which heaven he will reside. We don't, at this time, have enough evidence to make an application of the tree crosses to the three levels of heaven. To me it is obvious he went to the lowest heaven and not the highest heaven. He was a "forgiven thief" but not a transformed thief."

This leads us up to the statement that the personal cross is our friend and not our enemy.

While the blood of the historic cross is absolutely necessary for our justification, and for saving us from the wrath of God, for our forgiveness of sins and the other failures of man to respond to God and to His purpose, it provides us much more. While we may make the correct application of the blood, it is still necessary to answer the reason for the Historic Cross. If we fail to also see His Resurrection as redemptive, we miss much of the purpose of the historic cross.

Rom 5:1 Therefore, **having been justified by faith**, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rom 5: 9] Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be **saved from the wrath of God** through Him.

Rom 5: 10] For, if while we were enemies, we were **reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more**, having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life.**

While there is much preaching about the "death of His Son" we hear very little about our being **"saved by His Life."** We generally hear about being saved by His blood.

We could ask; by which LIFE are we saved? Is it by His earthly life or by His resurrection Life? Obviously, in Romans 5: 10 we are saved by His Resurrection Life. This particular "kind" of Life could not be found anywhere in the universe until there was a "death, burial and resurrection."

The difference can be seen when we understand that the blood is effective for the forgiveness of sins **WHEN** the life is poured out with the blood.

Lev 17: 11] `For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; **for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.**'

It was Jesus LIFE with His Blood that makes atonement for sin. Therefore, we assume it was His Resurrection Life that "saves us."

John 11:24] Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." [25] Jesus said to her, "**I am the resurrection and the life**; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, [26] and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Rom 6: 5] For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, [6] knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; [7] for he who has died is freed from sin. [8] Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him

The “life” that we have following our “death with Christ” is His resurrection Life. It is essential that we have “this particular Life” because it **is in this resurrection Life** that we can be in union with Christ, the True Vine.

Phil 3:10] that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; [11] **in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead**. [12] Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

There may still be some confusion between our “present resurrection” and the “future resurrection!” Our “present resurrection” is by His Resurrection Life in us.” Our future resurrection is the resurrection of all the dead. Some, who are resurrected, are in Christ and others who are NOT in Christ.

The resurrection that Paul had not yet attained to was **not the general resurrection** but the “Out-resurrection.” [exanastasis] This is the only time this word is used in scripture. This word has a prefix of EX with means “out.” Paul had certainly attained to the general resurrection of the righteous but he was not sure about the “out- resurrection.” This “resurrection” is the snatching away of the perfected saints, or what some refer to as the “rapture.” Paul was certainly sure about receiving the resurrection Life of Christ as witnessed to by several scriptures. He was not sure about his own perfection. I believe that God hides our maturity from us for obvious reasons.

Heb 11: 35] Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, **in order that they might obtain a better resurrection;**

In other words when it comes to the general resurrection there are different degrees. Some are better than others. Some only see one resurrection.

It should be obvious that we are NOT saved by that general resurrection but by the Life of Resurrection.

1 Pet 3:21] And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you--not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience--**through the resurrection of Jesus Christ**.

If we ignore what Paul said in Romans 6 concerning resurrection Life and what he said in Romans 5 concerning our salvation being by His Life, we will misunderstand what Peter says here. Our conscience functions out of His Resurrection Life in us. That is why we cannot trust our conscience before there has been an “exchange” of our life for His Life.

Then we can conclude that **there is a resurrection Life now** AND a resurrection of a new body in the future. We can also conclude that there are **“better resurrections”** to be achieved. We can also conclude that there is a “crisis salvation that delivers us from the wrath of God” and there is a process of salvation by His resurrection Life in us. **The conclusion of this process is referred to by Peter as the “Final Salvation”** in 1 Peter 1:5. We can conclude that there is a “crisis

cleansing” and a “continual cleansing” through the washing of water with the word of God. If our “salvation” was “final” at our first “crisis experience” of forgiveness of sins, there would be no need of further cleansing. If “salvation” was complete at the “crisis experience” of forgiveness of sins, there would be no need for another process of being “saved” by His Life. We can also conclude that if the Cross of Calvary was the “finished work” of all things for all time, there would be no need for a personal cross.

The balance between these two crosses is seen in the first cross which is the Eternal Cross which precedes both other crosses.

One of the struggles we see within people is the confusion between the “new cross” that is being preached and the “original cross” that both Jesus and Paul preached. The “new cross” is an abstract cross that is presented as a place to rejoice and have a good time and to dance and a place to “come and get.” This “cross” is centered in “man’s need” and is just seen as another provision to satisfy man’s desire for more things.

With the “new cross,” Adam can live, be happy and prosper and be an example of how God blesses those who have accepted Jesus as personal Savior. **Adam may not only live on but be the object of God’s affection, care and protection.**

The “original cross” is designed to do away completely with Adam and begin a whole new race of people in Jesus Christ whose only desire is to serve God and to do His will.

The “new cross” is not interested in the doing the will of God but to get God to serve us and to do our will. **The “new cross” is to benefit Adam and not to eradicate Adam.** This “new cross” is designed to **fill the pews with Adam and his genealogy and to be careful not to offend Adam** but to use Adam to build bigger buildings and be an example of God’s provision. To suggest that Adam must die and be buried will offend Adam. Therefore, **the church pews are filled with Adam and his offspring** and we look on that as success in ministry. We spend our time teaching Adam how to act like Christians.

Our “union with Christ” in His death must result in our “union in Life with Christ” in His resurrection or the Christian life will be attempted by human effort which is impossible.

The historic fact is that we all had our “beginnings” in first Adam and we all have lived by his life. The “new beginning” (or our new Genesis) must be “in Christ.” The problem is that we can ONLY be in one or the other. Therefore, to be “in Christ” we must be “out of Adam.” Our death to Adam is very important because it precedes our “Life in Christ.”

We might say that we all were **in a vine-branch union with Adam** but now we must escape from that union and **be joined to Christ by a completely new Vine- branch union.** This “union” is by His Resurrection Life. Still, death to Adam precedes our resurrection into Jesus Christ. When we omit our death to Adam we eliminate our Life in Christ. This is probably our greatest mistake in the evangelism of souls when **we imply that salvation is one experience and baptism is optional.**

The fact is that forgiveness of sins is a separate experience than our death to old Adam or the old self. Christ being crucified for us is one thing but we being crucified with Christ is quite another. Christ dying for us is one thing but our being dead to sin and to Adam is quite another. The patterns of **the evangelical doctrines blend all these separate experiences together** and call it

“accepting Jesus as personal Savior.” Because of that concept, **baptism is treated as optional and Adam is not dealt with.** Then we attempt to make Adam comfortable in the church and we call Adam “a believer” because he has agreed to our formula for “salvation” or said certain words as his confession of faith. IF we had to be removed from Adam before we could consider salvation “in Christ”, the whole evangelical gospel would need to be adjusted. The scripture seems clear that we CANNOT be “in Adam” AND “in Christ” at the same time.

Adam can enjoy Christian fellowship if it doesn't try to do away with him. Instead of singing bar room songs, Adam can sing Christian songs and feel good about either one. He can enjoy fellowship with the world OR fellowship in the church because to Adam it is just fellowship. Adam can even sing songs about the cross and the blood and attend deeper life conferences. **He can be comfortable anywhere he is not threatened with extinction.**

Many assume they can be “Christian” and still be grafted into the old root of Adam. Some never make the transition to the new Vine of Christ. Then, whose fault is it that the full gospel of removal from the old vine of Adam and being grafted into the New Vine of Christ IS NOT taught as Salvation? We can only lay this responsibility upon the “ministry” that has been entrusted with the gospel of the Kingdom. Those who are still “in Adam” are living by his life and subject to his failures. Those who have made the transition to Christ are living by His Life and are subject to His overcoming attributes.

We could sum this up by saying that God has designed both the blood and the Historic Cross to act in a remedial way and to use **both** in our salvation, **but the blood is NOT the cross and the cross is NOT the blood.**

The blood deals with sins and the cross deals with the sinner. The cross is used to remove us from the old life source of Adam and to crucify the old self. It is really our **“union in Life with Christ” that is our final deliverance from the life of Adam.** However, **being delivered from Adam without being joined to Christ by His Life is not real salvation.** Baptism without a union of resurrection Life with Christ is just getting wet.

The Vine-broach union of John 15 is not a suggestion but a requirement to make the transition from Adam to Christ. The Christian must be experiencing an exchange of life. If we save the old life with its old life source we cannot find the eternal Life with its New Life source.

Trying to adjust the old life of Adam to look and act Christian is very popular but is a total waste of time. **Just living “a changed life” is not Christian.** Living by an exchange of life is the basis for the Christian life.

The older I get the more I am aware that the natural life will not take me any further. However, **if I live by His Life I may be able to finish my course with strength.** This requires “union” and not another prophetic utterance or another doctrine to teach. His Resurrection Life is what I require now. **I find that I cannot use His life for my benefit but that He is the one that must use me for His benefit.** Then His Life is available to do His will. If we finally discover His Life we soon recognize that His Life carries His authority and His Word. Trying to cast out evil spirits with “our word” has been our past experience but even then we suspected there must be a better way.

Trying to use His Life for our benefit will always fail. His Life lives for and unto His Father and to

accomplish His will. Adam could have exercised His authority over the principalities and powers IF he had eaten from His Life by taking the fruit from the Tree of Life. The fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil has no authority over created things. Therefore, **learning how** to pull down principalities and powers is an exercise in futility.

We must understand that **Christ's resurrection Life is His Reigning Life.** This Life not only raised Him from the dead but also raised Him up to the right hand of God and He is now reigning until every enemy is put under His feet. This is the **same Life we must use to begin to reign with Him.** If we are raised up and seated with Him in heavenly places it must be by His Life because our body is still on earth. If we are to taste of the power of the age yet to come it must be by His Life. Since all these things are revealed in scripture, how long can we sit in denial and give the excuse that IF we knew the will of God we would do it! When there is **a genuine exchange of Life** it should contain the conviction of His will.

All this is just more theory if we cannot experience the reality of His Life in us. It is not enough just to acknowledge that we have His Life or that we live by His Life. There **must be evidence that is a practical demonstration of His Life that is in us.** The ministry that is accomplished "with His Life" is a practical sharing in that **present reality "of His Life."**

This next level of ministry must be on a much higher level than we have experienced in the past. **In this next restoration the ministry will be done "by His Life."** That "Life" is defined and supported by the ingesting of the Showbread. It is "His Resurrection Life" that we have considered from John 6 that is the result of eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood.

The Lord's Table is "the picture" but the actual experience is far beyond the Lord's Table. Multitudes, that have taken the bread and the cup, have no experience with eating His flesh and drinking His blood that Jesus spoke about in John 6. The shallow way John 6 is presented at what people call "communion" is the attempt to understand spiritual things with the natural mind.

The "indwelling Spirit" should be making the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus a progressing reality in our lives daily. He will when we surrender, ask Him and permit Him to do it. The operation of the "Seven Spirits of God" on the Lampstand becomes the sole illumination for the priesthood ministry in the Holy Place. That is the "sanctuary of the inner life." Our theology must soon yield to the cry of the inner man for more of Christ and less of the old "I."

It will be a sad and pitiful day when we realize that we didn't achieve ALL that God had predestined for us to become. Likewise, it will be a blessed and great day if we achieve ALL that God has predestined us to become. The word "predestined" implies that God will do everything in His power to push us along toward that end, if we permit Him to push. Being passive and neutral towards God's predestined plan is not the Kingdom revelation that will sustain us in the full operation of the "internal cross."

Attempting to establish an "outward standard" for Christianity is ignorant and redundant because Christ, the living and the abiding Word of God, is the "inward standard" that is already established by God. The actual "experience of Christianity" is an apprehension and appropriation of Divine Truth and Divine Life.

Even IF it begins by some confession of faith, the process is not complete until each of us experience Christ as our inward Life. Galatians 2:20 is not another Christian cliché but an insight

into God's predestined plan. For example; trying to exercise compassion for people without first experiencing the Love of Christ, personally, is an exercise in futility. This just demonstrates a "human compassion" and is the very best that Adam can demonstrate. Many movie stars and singers now are demonstrating this "human compassion" for Africa and other projects but it is difficult to discover if they are just seeking more publicity. Human compassion is certainly not wrong but is less than should be demonstrated by Christians who are manifesting the indwelling Christ.

We could say that everything begins with the "God of Power" and then the demonstration of Him is the "Power of God." Trying to demonstrate the "Power of God" out of human effort is ignorant. Still, most of us are guilty of trying. Why is this popular? Because the big "I" has NOT been crucified with Christ and "I" still live.

Over the years we have shared the truth of Hebrews 6 about "laying the foundations" and going on. However, we have failed to see any Divine Structure emerging, which makes the foundation pointless. Our complaint is that foundations are laid everywhere but we were not able to build anything that looks "divine."

Luke 14:29] "Otherwise, **when he has laid a foundation**, and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, [30] saying, '**This man began to build and was not able to finish.**'

Luke 14: 28] "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it?"

We discover that laying a foundation is inexpensive in comparison to building a tower. We were so involved in laying foundations that we didn't consider the real cost of the tower. If no tower is built, all our work of laying the foundation is irrelevant!

1Cor 3:10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder **I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it.** But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. [11] For no man can lay **a foundation** other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Even if a good and proper foundation IS laid, if the next builder builds with junk both the building and the foundation are destroyed. It appears that both the foundation layer's and the builder's works are destroyed. If the city of God can only be built with Gold and Precious stones, there must be some cooperation between all the builders if we are going to produce something permanent.

If the Divine Structure is the "Divine State within the Divine Order" then the inward cross is necessary to discipline ourselves to be "careful how we build." Building with wood, hay and straw because they are fast, cheap and easy to find will be a big waste of precious time. It seems that the mega churches are not concerned about quality [gold, silver and precious stones] but just quantity [wood, hay and straw]. This might represent 6 kinds of church structures with which only three will survive.

The cross then is "extended" to every area of ministry AND the Christian life. The internal discipline of the internal cross will be the deciding factor between the ministries that preach the Kingdom and offend people with its demands and those that preach feel good messages and build big assemblies that ignore the quality of people demanded by the King for His Kingdom.

If there really are only three kinds of churches that survive the fire of God's torch, then there must be three different values represented. In the Tabernacle the silver was found in the Outer Court, and the sockets for the Sanctuary, the Gold in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place but the precious stones are revealed in the City of God, Mount Zion, and the New Jerusalem. If "silver" represents redemption and separation from this world [sockets], as the commentaries suggest, then "redemption churches" may survive on the New Earth or possibly in the New Heaven. The Kingdom church should be dressed for the New Jerusalem as a bride adorned for her husband.

We all have the "high calling of God" which is to God's Ideal Son, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is obvious that most Christians are content to live on a much lower level than "God's Ideal." However, they will have no excuse before God because God has made provision for everyone to become partakers of the Divine Nature.

2 Pet 1: 4] For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might **become partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Too many assume that because God has granted us the opportunity "to become partakers of the divine nature" that it will happen automatically because we believe something about Jesus. If we read the whole chapter it is evident that this is not true. There is a lot of change that must take place before an abundant entrance will be made for us into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

All this seems like a strange doctrine now because the "gospel of the half-priced sale" has dominated the minds of believers.

The popular "gospel" today is; "Sign up for 16 weeks of training on how to release the power of God" when there is no power within to release. The 16 weeks is spent learning how to release the "old nature and call it ministry."

If we advertised for believers to sign up for 16 weeks of experiencing the inner cross and getting rid of the garbage within, it will be a very small meeting. When the inner cross is extended to every area of the Christian life, the message will change and the Kingdom demands will seem like a reasonable requirement to participate in His Kingdom Government.

This is what we are calling "GOING ON TO EMPLOYMENT."