

The Power and Preaching of THE CROSS

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Published by
NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC.
PO Box 403, Blackwood, South Australia, 5051

1985

First published 1984

© 1984 Geoffrey Bingham

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ISBN 0 86408 014 X

*Printed at New Creation Publications Inc.
Coromandel East, South Australia*

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*The Cross
in the Epistle
to the Romans*

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

The Cross in the Epistle to the Romans

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

INTRODUCTION: THE THEME AND THEMES OF THE CROSS

Paul's letter to the Romans was written without controversy or argument, as such. It is a letter which gives a warm, reasoned exposition of the righteousness of God and man.

Romans I: 16-5:21 covers man's sinfulness and God's justifying righteousness.

Romans 6: 1-8:39 covers the way in which justification outworks itself in the righteousness and holiness of the believer.

Romans chs. 9-11 cover the righteousness of God in history, with special reference to the nations, ie. Israel and the Gentiles.

Romans chs. 12-16 cover the practical righteousness of the new community, Christ's church.

In our five studies we will have to work thematically rather than spend time on particular exegesis. This means we will draw our subjects from the text of Romans, but limit ourselves to the first eight chapters. The reader (listener) will derive most profit from these studies if familiar with the text of these first 8 chapters. Hence it is best to read the notes in conjunction with the text.

STUDY ONE

The Cross and Forgiveness*GEOFFREY BINGHAM***1. INTRODUCTION: THE POWER OF THE CROSS**

Romans 1:16-17 shows the power of the Gospel. 1 Corinthians 1:17-23, 2:1-5 shows this to be the power of the Cross: Cross and Gospel are inseparable. With them is included the Resurrection.

2. THE CROSS AND FORGIVENESS

Main passage: Romans 4:1-8, 4:25. Forgiveness a state of blessedness.

3. THE SIN THAT NEEDS TO BE FORGIVEN

- (i) Sin's entrance into man's world. Romans 5:12ff., cf. Genesis 3: 1 - 6.
- (ii) Man's act of rebellion, Romans 1: 18- 25 (of. Gen. 3: 1-6) = rejection of God.
- (iii) Idolatry, Rom. 1: 23.
- (iv) Exchanging the truth of God for a lie, Rom. 1: 25.
- (v) Immorality and deviant sexuality, Rom. 1: 26-27.
- (vi) Different kinds of evil, Rom. 1: 28- 32.

4. MAN'S SINFUL STATE, GENERALLY

Romans 3:10-18 (cf. Jer. 17:9, Titus 3:3, Mark 7: 2 Off.).

5. MAN'S STATE OF GUILT

Romans 3: 19, cf. Galatians 2: 17, cf. Romans 1: 18, *1 Thessalonians* 1: 10, Romans 5: 10.

6. THE CROSS AND FORGIVENESS

- (i) Romans 4:25, cf. Galatians 2:20. Ephesians 5:2, Matthew 26: 28. 'He was delivered'. Romans 8: 32, 2 Corinthians 5: 21, Isaiah 53:4ff, 1 Peter 2: 24, Romans 8:3.
- (ii) Romans 4:7, cf. Leviticus 4. Psalm 32:1-4.

STUDY TWO

The Cross and Justification

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1. THE FACT OF JUSTIFICATION

Passage: Romans 3:19-31, especially verse 24. See also Romans 5: 12-21, especially verse 17.

2. THE NEED FOR JUSTIFICATION

- (i) Man's dreadful sinfulness, Romans 1:18-32, 3:9ff.
- (ii) The equal sinfulness of the Jew, Romans 2:1-3:23.
- (iii) The wrath of a holy God, Romans 1: 18, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, cf. Psalm 7:11.
- (iv) Man's inability to justify himself, Gal. 2: 16-21, Psalm 143: 2, 130: 3.

3. GOD'S WAY OF JUSTIFICATION - THE CROSS

- (i) Justifying righteousness, Romans 3: 21-31, Galatians 2: 16-21, Romans 4: 25.
- (ii) The power of propitiation, Romans 3:24f., 1 John 4: 10, cf. Leviticus 17:11
- (iii) Justification is by grace and faith, Romans 3:24, 5: 1, 5: 12-21, cf. Galatians 2: 16-21. It is the revelation of grace which brings faith to birth and action. For the freeness of grace, see Romans 4: 1-8, cf. Titus 2:11, 3:5.

4. THE FRUITS OF JUSTIFICATION

- (i) Romans 1: 1–5. Peace with God, hope and love in the midst of person-maturing and suffering.
- (ii) Romans 6: 7. Freedom from sin's guilt-penalty, and so from sin's power.
- (iii) Romans 7: 6. Freedom from law which now enables us to serve in the newness of the Spirit, and in our spirits.

5. FREEDOM FROM CONDEMNATION

- (i) Romans 8: 1-3. Our faith stand against sin's accusation (cf. Rev. 12: 10).
- (ii) God's insistence that He has justified us. Our security in Him (Rom. 8:30f.).

STUDY THREE

The Cross and Christian Victory

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

1. MAN'S GENERAL BONDAGE: GUILT AND ITS POWER

- (i) Sin's power. Romans 3:9, 'all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin'. Cf. John 8:34, Proverbs 5:22-23.
- (ii) The other bondages guilt brings: (a) To Satan, Hebrews 2:14-15, Jude 9 with John 14:30-31; (b) world, Gal. 1:4, 6:14; (c) world powers, Colossians 2:13-15; (d) flesh, Romans 8:11, 8:5-8, Ephesians 2:1-3; (e) death, 1 Corinthians 15: 55-56, Hebrews 2:14-15; (f) law, Galatians 3: 10, Romans 7: 1; (g) wrath, Romans 1:18, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, Romans 2:4-5.

2. THE CROSS FREES MAN FROM GUILT AND ITS PENALTY

- (i) Romans 6: 1-10. We died, penally to sin in the death of Christ. We rose after burial, and are acquitted from the charge of sin and guilt.
- (ii) The justified man is not under the power of sin by reason of guilt (Romans 6:7-11). He can now refuse the lordship of sin (Romans 6: 12-14).

3. SIN - WITH ALSO ALL ENEMIES - HAS LOST ITS POWER

- (i) Romans 6: 12-14, cf. 1 Corinthians 15: 55-56. Sin operates by law (Rom. '7:7-13). Sin loses its

law-manipulating power through grace.

- (ii) There is a new Lordship, i.e. that of Christ (Rom. 6:15ff.).

4. THE SLAVES OF CHRIST HAVE THEIR FRUIT IN THE LIFE OF HOLINESS

- (i) Romans 6: 15-23.
- (ii) Christ keeps them in triumph, 2 Corinthians 2: 14, 1 Corinthians 15: 55-58, Philippians 4: 13, Romans 8: 37f.

STUDY FOUR

The Cross and the Law

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

1. THE WAYS IN WHICH THE LAW WORKS: ITS NATURE

- (i) The law is good. Read Psalms 1, 19, 119. It is ‘holy, just, good, and spiritual’, Romans 7: 12, 14, 16.
- (ii) The law is for life, Romans 7:10, Leviticus 18:5, Galatians 3: 12, 21.
- (iii) The law is used by sin to incite sin, Romans 7:7-11, 3:20. (What does the latter verse mean?)
- (iv) Legally the law becomes ‘the law of sin and death’, Romans 7:9, Galatians 3: 13. (What do we mean by ‘the curse’?) Romans 8:2.
- (v) Sin has active power in life by virtue of the law as in Romans 6: 12-14.

2. JUSTIFICATION MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW

Romans 3: 24-31 shows that Christ’s death fulfilled the penalty demands of the law. Cf. Galatians 2: 16-21. Faith receives what grace has given and the law ceases to have any guilt-hold over the believer.

3. FREE FROM LAW, THE BELIEVER NOW OBEYS THE LAW

- (i) Obedience is active righteousness unto holiness, Romans 6: 15- 23.

- (ii) Obedience is the fulfilment of ‘the just requirements of the law’ (Rom. 8:4).
- (iii) The law is seen differently when guilt is cleansed. Note the connection between:
 - (a) Romans 7:6, Hebrews 9: 14, Romans 12: 1-2, Revelation
 - (b) John 14:15 (RSV), 15:14, 1 John 4:19/4:9/ 5:3.
 - (c) It is the law of Christ, the law of love, Romans 13: 8-10, Galatians 5:13, I Corinthians 9:21, Galatians 6:2, John 13:34, 15: 12. ‘

4. MAN OF HIMSELF TOO WEAK TO DO GOOD AND NOT TO DO EVIL IN THE FACE OF THE LAW

Romans 7:14-25. Note that in Romans 6:12-14 the believer has power over sin (cf. 1 John 2: 13, James 4: 7, 1 Peter 5:7-9). However, in Romans 7:14f., the believer *of himself* is weaker than sin, *of itself*.

5. IN ROMANS 8, THE LAW HIGHLY REGARDED, OBEDIENCE ENJOINED AND MAN ENABLED TO OBEY

- (i) The law highly regarded, Romans 8:4. Note 8:5-8 shows the flesh will not obey it. Inference is that man in the Spirit does obey. Cf. 7:22 - ‘the delight of law’.
- (ii) Obedience comes from walking/living in the Spirit, seeing there is no obligation to the flesh, 8: t1-t3.
- (iii) Obedience springs from sonship of the Father, and the presence of the Spirit in the heart.

6. THE REALITY OF OBEDIENCE BRINGS HOLINESS, LOVE, FRUITFULNESS, ETERNAL LIFE

- (i) Romans 6: 15-23. Mortification brings life (Rom. 8:13, cf. Col. 3:5ff.).
- (it) Holiness and love work fruitfulness, Philippians 2: 9-11, 1 Thessalonians 3: 12-13.
- (iii) Note Revelation 1:2, 9, 6:9, 12:11, 17, 20:4; the true witnesses keep the word and the commandments of Jesus. Cf. Matthew 28:20, 1 John 2:3-6, 5:3-5.

STUDY FIVE

The Cross and the Spirit

GEOFFREY BINGHAM

1. THE SPIRIT BRINGS THE CROSS AND ITS TRUTH TO US

The Spirit's law (in Christ Jesus). Romans 8: 2, cf. 2 Corinthians 3: 17. The love of the Cross is brought into our hearts, Romans 5:5-10 (cf. 1 John 4: 9-10).

2. THE SPIRIT AND SANCTIFICATION

- (i) The Spirit brings purity, Romans 15: 16, cf. 2 Thessalonians 2: 13-14, Titus 3:5f., 1 Peter 1: 2, 1 Corinthians 6: 11.
- (ii) The Spirit causes us to, and helps us to, walk in obedience, Romans 8:4. Note from 8:5-11 that the fleshly are against the law, the people of the Spirit obey it.
- (iii) The Spirit helps us to serve, Romans 7:6.
- (iv) The Spirit helps us in prayer, Romans 8:26f.

3. THE SPIRIT'S LOVE AND FRUITFULNESS

- (i) Love shown and given to us, Romans 5: 5, 15:30.
- (ii) The 'first fruits', Romans 8:23, cf. Galatians 5:22-23. (Note in Galatians 5 and Romans 8 there are clear parallels, eg. 'walking in the Spirit', 'fruit', etc.).
- (iii) The life of the Kingdom is through the Spirit, Romans 14:17.

- (iv) Fruitfulness in use of gifts. Romans 12, cf. 12:11 as a principle for the use of all gifts.

4. THE SPIRIT AND PROCLAMATION

- (i) Paul's burden for Israel, Romans 9: 1-3, cf. 2: 9.
- (ii) Paul's burden for the Gentiles, Romans 1: 14, cf. 10:8ff,
- (iii) His ministry of the Gospel through the Spirit, Romans 15:16-20. Cf. I Corinthians 2:4, I Thessalonians 1:5 (I Peter 1:12).

5. ABOUNDING BY THE SPIRIT

In this is all that we have mentioned-above - it is all part of 'abounding': So (a) Romans 12:11; (b) 8:13; (c) 8:26 *passim*; (d) 15:13.

*The Theories
of the Atonement*

IAN PENNICOOK

The Theories of the Atonement

IAN PENNICOOK

How can we *understand* what God did at the Cross? That God has done something is not in dispute, but what was it precisely that he did, and how does it affect us? Supposing we were to ask a believer the question, ‘Has God done something in your life?’; it is reasonably certain that we would get a firm ‘Yes!’ for an answer. But *were* we then to press for an explanation of what exactly that something is, the likelihood is that we would begin to get a variety of answers. Now this variety does not *necessarily* indicate a vast amount of uncertainty. On the contrary, it may equally indicate that the *action* of the atonement cannot be reduced to one simple definition.

To begin with, there may be a considerable degree of difference in experience among the believers. For example, not all will have come out of a background of demon possession. But for those who have, their description of the work of Christ will almost certainly reflect it.

But we may go further. Paul says that ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world [Gk. *kosmos*] to himself’ (2 Cor. 5: 19, cf. Col. 1: 20). It is clear from this that the atonement was far more than just the reconciliation of men and women to God. It was the world which was being reconciled, and the Greek word *kosmos* indicates that the whole universe is included. When man sinned, it was the whole of creation which suffered (Gen. 3:17b-19, Rom. 8:19-23), and it is the whole of creation which will finally be renewed (Gen. 1:1, cf. Isa. 65:17-25, 66:22, 2 Pet. 3:13, Rev. 21:1, 7). With

such *cosmic* effects, it is hardly surprising that there will be a number of ways of looking at them. So also, the apostle Peter speaks of ‘the varied [many faceted] grace of God’ (1 Pet. 4:10). So then, we will find in the following ‘theories’ of the atonement many features we can agree with and which draw our attention to the vast dimensions of what God has done.

There is, however, another fact which must be taken into consideration, and that is the constant tendency of sinful men and women to suppress the truth. If we are honest, we will surely admit that the Scriptures are not really so hard to understand. Certainly there are some passages which, for all sorts of reasons (eg. differences in culture and language, as well as the mere passing of time), we find difficult. But the main thrust of the Scriptures is clear; all too clear at times. Even we, who delight in the Word of God, sometimes wish (sinfully) that it did not speak as clearly as it does. Now, were we to indulge that self-protecting response and to persist in suppressing the truth, it would follow that we must, of necessity, construct a ‘theory’ of the atonement which did not put us in the position where our guilt is seen as the issue requiring the action of the Cross. Certainly, then, human sin, as well as the vastness of grace, may also account for some of the variety. And we must also accept the fact that all of these theories have at some time or other been taught, not only in universities and colleges, but also in pulpits. They, therefore, represent the way in which ordinary men and women have understood the action of God for us.

THE THEORIES

(The following summaries have been taken, with slight modification, from *The Things We Firmly Believe* by Geoffrey Bingham [NCPI, Blackwood, 1981], pp. 90-92.)

1. The Ransom Theory:

The earliest of all, originating with the Early Church Fathers, this theory claims that Christ offered himself as a ransom (Mark 10: 45), which of course he did. Where it was not clear was in its understanding of exactly to whom the ransom was paid. Indeed some of the views were quite bizarre.

2. The Victory Theory:

Christus Victor, by Bishop Gustaf Aulen, propounds this view, which was held to a great degree by Luther and some Reformed theologians. In it, man is seen as held in bondage to tyrants because of his guilt and the action of the Cross as releasing man from that bondage. This is a far richer view than that of the Fathers.

3. The Satisfaction Theory:

The main proponent of this theory was the medieval theologian Anselm, who wrote the book *Cur Deus Homo* ('Why God Became Man'). He says that God's offended honour and dignity was restored or rehabilitated. Later theories incorporate the idea of *satisfaction*. This satisfaction was given by Christ in his suffering.

4. The Moral Theory:

This theory has been expounded by such people as Origen, Abelard, Schliermacher and others. It insists that no satisfaction for sin (or God's dignity) was required. The death of the Cross identified God with man in his grief and suffering. Such an example inspires a great responsive love in man.

5. The Governmental Theory:

God is Governor. He is able to determine what he

requires. He can abrogate the law, or rather the penalties the law lays down. Christ on the Cross bears a nominal punishment, thus showing that God views sin seriously. However, he forgives, having put this safeguard around his law.

6. The Example Theory:

Man as well as God needs to be reconciled. Expiation is pagan and not Christian. Christ dies, not effectively as a propitiatory sacrifice, but as a noble martyr, and thus provides an example for us. We are inspired to repent and to reform by the act of the (inspired) will. Propounded by Socinus in the sixteenth century, it has a unitarian background.

7. The Mystical Theory:

(Gradual Extirpation of Depravity). Christ entered the world in the flesh of fallen humanity, but brought a new factor, a new kind of life, which destroys original depravity on the Cross, so that a new humanity emerges through Christ. By Christ's identification with us, and ours with him, man is gradually sanctified, and his sanctification becomes, in effect, his justification.

8. Vicarious Repentance Theory:

This was evolved by Macleod Campbell and claimed that perfect repentance is all that is required for forgiveness. This Christ effects on the Cross, where he identifies with man under condemnation. Man, thus being forgiven, has an impetus to holiness.

9. The Substitutionary Theory:

This view was generally expounded by the Reform era, and is held by Evangelicals, though with various modifications. It says simply that Christ died for man, in man's place, taking his sins and bearing them, for him.

The bearing of the sins takes the punishment for them and sets the believer free from the penal demands of the law: The righteousness of the law and the holiness of God are satisfied by this substitution.

10. The Vicarious Theory:

This view is an extension of the substitutionary theory. It sees the work of Christ on the Cross as achieving all that the substitutionary theory has expounded. But it goes further in that it sees that the substitutionary theory leaves the work of the atonement as apart from man and his need. In effect, the substitution of Christ for man *need* have no result in man. However, the principle of the atonement was that when Christ died on the Cross, the sinner himself died. Christ's death was the sinner's death. In this way, not only is the conscience of God satisfied, but also the conscience of the believer.

The Cross and Holiness

*Calvary and Pentecost:
Pentecost and Calvary*

GRANT THORPE

Cross and Holiness

GRANT THORPE

1. Righteousness and holiness are clearly related, but are not synonymous. The former has to do with rightness of action, keeping the law, and approved. The latter has to do with the character of God and his people, and the relationship between them. Righteousness is with a view to holiness (Rom. 6: 19).

As with righteousness, none can truly profess disinterest in holiness. In one way or another, it is the great preoccupation of all humanity (Rom. 2: 15).

2. In the Old Testament the holiness of God is frequently mentioned, and refers to his separateness from man as a sinner, his greatness in wisdom and power, his perfection, but remarkably, also, to his determination to have a holy people and to save them and keep them in holiness.

He observes and tests each person from his holy temple (Psa. 11:4), and sends judgements when his holiness is offended (Isa. 30: 12-16, Micah 1:2-3). But he is the redeemer of his people, Israel's 'Holy One' (Isa. 41:14, and often in chs. 40-66), and so cleanses his people with a view to a restored relationship (Ezek. 36:22-32, 39: 7, Hosea 11:8-9, Joel 3:16-17). Because the death of Christ is the way in which these promises have been fulfilled, one may say that the Cross arose from God's holiness.

3. The coming and crucifixion of Christ had as its great objective the making of a holy people (Eph.

1:3-4, Heb. 13:12). Jesus gave effect to this by offering himself up in death for our sins (John 17: 17, Eph. 5:25-27, Col. 1:22, Heb. 10:10, 14, 19, 13: 12).

4. Paul understood that through his proclamation of the gospel, the Gentiles would be sanctified (Acts 20:32, 26:17-18, Rom. 15:16), or that Christ would be revealed as the 'sanctification' of the people of God (1 Cor. 1:2, 23, 30). To spurn the blood of the covenant' whereby one is sanctified is to invite judgement (Heb. 10: 29). Paul's objective was the purifying of the hearts of men and women by the gospel (1 Tim. 1: 5).

5. In one sense, sanctification precedes the believer's receiving of the benefits of the Cross, but has in view the cleansing, so obviously necessary to the relationship implied by sanctification (1 Peter 1: 2, cf. 2 Thess. 2:13-14). This cleansing could not be merely ceremonial as though it had nothing to do with the actual life of the Christian (1 Cor. 1: 9-11, Heb. 9:9, 14, 10:22). The Cross needed to, and has, radically changed the whole life of the believer.

6. Many discussions try to decipher the sanctity of the Christians with differing, and, at times, divisive, results. One cannot readily use psychological terms, and certainly not static concepts, to define what has changed. What is important is that God has related us to himself (Col. 3:3-10). His wrath against us is propitiated. Our fear of him is dispelled. We love (1 John 4:17-19). Our consciences are clear (Heb. 9: 14). The hold of the world, the flesh, and the devil over our lives is destroyed, unless, of course, we refuse to reckon things to be the way they are in Christ (Gal. 5:24, 6:14, 1 John 3:7-10). We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, 'every spiritual blessing', or 'his precious and very great promises' to become 'partakers of the divine nature' (Eph. 1:3,

13, 4:21-24, 2 Peter 1:3-4).

All these things are valid and dynamic because of the Cross, as the contexts show. And they are dynamic in the sense that the sinner has been rehabilitated so as to perform works which give pleasure to his Maker (Titus 2:11-14, 1 Peter 1:13-19).

The fact that these works are performed deliberately and persistently does not alter the fact that they are simply the fruit of the Cross, a living consistently with the fact of our holiness which was received gift-wise. Any preoccupation with the measure of our own performance is certainly not holiness (Rom. 6: 19-23).

Calvary and Pentecost: Pentecost and Calvary

GRANT THORPE

The events of Calvary and of Pentecost were clearly of one *piece* for the apostles and the early church. This fact would not simply have been because they experienced both events, but because, essentially, they were part of the same saving action. Where, for any reason, a Christian or the church sees them separately, it must be because they have lost the essential content of each of them.

CALVARY ANTICIPATED PENTECOST

1. References to the Cross and the coming of the Spirit do not occur together frequently in the Gospels, but when they do, they make it clear that both are essential to the accomplishment of Messiah's task.

John the Baptist announced the presence of Messiah as the one who would baptise in the Holy Spirit, and also as the Lamb of God who would bear, and carry away, the sin, of the world (John 1: 29-34, Luke 3: 16).

Jesus, seems to have the same association in his mind when talking to Nicodemus. 'He would need to be born of the Spirit, and the Son of men would have to be 'lifted up' (John 3: 5,

When Jesus called for thirsty people to come to him, the water was later identified as the Holy Spirit, not given as yet because Jesus was not yet glori-

fled. In John's terms, this would certainly include, if not mean primarily, his death (John 7: 37-39. See also 16:7, 20:22, cf. 6:53, 63).

On another occasion, Jesus said he longed to eat fire (most readily explained as the Spirit) on the earth, but was constrained until his baptism (his death) was accomplished (Luke 12: 49- 50, with 3:16 and Acts 2:3).

These associations, together with the teaching of Jesus on the Holy Spirit in John chs. 14-16 and Acts 1:4, 5, 8, indicate that the fruits of Christ's death would be available through the coming of the Spirit. Apart from his coming, the death would be not only inexplicable, but unapplied (John 16:8-15. See also 1 Cor. 2:2-5, 10-12).

The apostles saw that our renewal had come by the Cross and by the Spirit, not as two things, but as one (1 Cor. 6:11, 2 Thess. 2:13, Titus 3:5-7).

2. The Holy Spirit is the source or spring of true life (John 7: 37-39, cf. 4: 7-14) but a polluted person would resist or reject that flow. In some sense, OT writers knew this (Psa. 51:10-11, Ezek. 36: 26-27, 39:29).

Jesus did all his works, as man, by the Holy Spirit, and particularly the giving up of his life (Luke 4:18-21, Acts 10:38, Heb. 9:14, 10:29). He was not defiled, and did not quench the Spirit (Luke 3:22, 4:1, 14, 10:21). He anticipated the day when this liberty would be given to those who were cleansed (Luke 11:13, 12:10, 12).

The Holy Spirit is not a passive party awaiting that cleansing, however. He comes in power to convict of sin, righteousness and judgement, and to effect cleansing by uniting us with the crucified and risen Christ.

PENTECOST PROCLAIMED CALVARY

1. On the day of Pentecost, the apostles explained the phenomenon of the Spirit's coming in terms of 'this Jesus whom you crucified' (Acts 2:22-23, 36), but whom God had raised up (v. 32). On the grounds of these 'mighty works of God' (v. 11), the promise of the Spirit was extended to those who heard (vs. 38-39).

Both Jesus' prophecies of the Spirit (John 16: 14-16) and the terminology of the apostles suggest that Pentecost was the launching of the truth of the Cross into history and experience of sinful man and woman. That is, it was not an end in itself; the coming of the Spirit subserved the victory of Christ and his Father. It is certainly the glory of the Cross which occupies the Spirit-filled church with praise (1 Cor. 2:2-5, 16-12), Rev. 5:9-10, 22: 16-17). The great end of all things is not the renewal of ourselves but the glory of the Father as revealed at the Cross.

2. The experience of Pentecost must always remain an experience of the Cross because it is here that God did what could not otherwise be done in and for sinners (Rom. 8:2-4, 9-11). This is not to say that the Spirit does not enlighten and enliven us with regard to the resurrection, the unity of the body, sonship, holiness, the gifts, and so on, but we can never see or enjoy any of these things in isolation from the Cross.

The Cross and the Sacraments

MARTIN BLEBY

The Cross and the Sacraments

MARTIN BLEBY

1. THE SACRAMENTS ARE A PROCLAMATION OF THE CROSS

- ❑ Holy Communion - 1 Corinthians 11: 26.
- ❑ Also Baptism - Romans 6:3.
- ❑ With the same dynamic effects as the proclaimed Word - 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:27-32, Acts 8:4-24 (cf. John 9, 3: 14-21).
- ❑ Cannot ever be neutral - Acts 5: 1-16.

2. THE WORLD INTO WHICH THE SACRAMENTS COME

- ❑ One world, all of God- Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 8:6.
- ❑ The false spirit/matter dichotomy. Misunderstanding of John 6: 63, 4: 24.
- ❑ The so-called 'sacramental principle'.
- ❑ The Bible not interested in spiritual/material distinction. More interested in obedient/disobedient, rebellious/reconciled, enemies/sons, empty/fulfilled, thirsty/quenched, dead/living.
- ❑ The true understanding of 'flesh' and 'Spirit' Romans 8: 5-11, Galatians 5:16-26.

3. ANYTHING TO OFFER ?

- ❑ All creation is dependent on God - Genesis 2: 7.

Psalm 104: 27-30.

- For everything, including *goodness* - Mark 10: 18, Romans 7: 18, 25, Philippians 3:9.
- Sacraments are plagued by our desire to do something *of ourselves*, often to prove our standing before God. For example:
 - the rite itself - Amos 5:21-24, 4:4-5, Matthew 6:7.
 - our faith, commitment, decision for Christ. But see John 1:12-13. Repentance, faith, obedience are gifts from God: Acts 5:31, 11:18, Ephesians 2:8-10, Philippians 1:29, Acts 5:32 (note tenses). See John 3: 27, 1 Corinthians 4: 7.
 - our offering, sacrifice. But see Leviticus 17: 11. P. T. Forsyth: 'It is given by God before it is given *to* God.' The sacrifices and sacraments are gifts *from* God. Both relate to the Gift of God the Son on the Cross.
- King David had it right - I Chronicles 29: 10-19.
- 'The sacrifice of praise' (Heb. 13:15), i.e. for what God has done.
- The sacraments are not 'of us', nor 'of themselves'. They are of God, of the Cross.

4. THE STARTING POINT

- The action of the Cross - I Peter 2: 24, Hebrews 1:3. The forgiveness
- Applied to us - Acts 10:43-44, 1 Corinthians 6:11
- The sacraments relate to this reality - Matthew 26: 28, Acts 2:38 (see also Acts 22:16, 9:17-20).
- All this is an action of the Spirit - Galatians 5:25 Baptism relates to *coming to life* by-the Spirit (John 3: 5), Holy Communion to *continuing to walk* by the Spirit (John 6: 48, 63).

- Both look towards the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the new creation - 1 Corinthians 11:26, John 6:54, Romans 6:5-8.

5.HOLY COMMUNION

- Matthew 26: 26- 29. What did Jesus mean by this?
 - (a) ‘Body’ and ‘blood’ separated, body ‘broken’ (1 Cor. 11:24), blood ‘poured out’ - his *suffering and death* on the Cross.
 - (b) ‘Eat...drink’. Not for himself (v. 29). He is without sin (John 8:46, 1 Peter 1:19, 2:22, 1 John 3:5, 2 Cor. 5:21, Heb. 7:26, 4: 15). ‘This is my body which is [given, broken] *for you*’ (Luke 22:19, 1 Cor. 11:24, Isa. 53:5-6).
 - (c) With a view to ‘when I drink it new *with you in my Father’s kingdom*’ (v. 29). Isaiah 25:6-9, Revelation 21: 1-4. But note Revelation 21: 27, Isaiah 25: 7-8.
 - (d) So it is ‘*for the forgiveness of sins*’ (v. 28); ‘new covenant’’ Jeremiah 31:31-34.
- Hence I Corinthians 11:26.
- Why bread and wine?

Melchizedek - Genesis 14:18 (Psa. 37, Heb. 4: 14-5.: 10, 6: 19-7: 28).

110, Mark 12:35-37, Heb 4:14-5:10, 6:19-7:28).

Wisdom - Proverbs 9:1-6 (4: 17, Matt. 12: 42,’ 1 Cor. 1: 17-2: 16, .esp. 1:30).

‘...*the bread of affliction*’ - Deuteronomy 16:3 (Isa. 30: 18-21, 1 Cor. 5:6-8).

‘...*the wine of God’s wrath*’ - Psalm 75:8 (Jer. 25:15-29, Mark 10:38, 14:32-36, Luke 22:43-44, Rev.14:9-10, 16:19) which becomes for us the cup of salvation’. ‘blessing’. - Psalm 116: 13, 1 Corinthians 10:16.

- ‘Do this in remembrance of me’ - 1 Corinthians 11: 24-25. ‘Remembrance’ actual and dynamic - 1 Kings 17:18, Hebrews 10:31, Psalm 111:4, 1 Corinthians 4: 17. P. T. Forsyth: ‘How can we have a memorial of One who is still alive, still our life?’ Especially in context of Passover (Ex. 13: 3) is participatory - 1 Corinthians 10: 14-22.
- The meaning of Holy Communion - John 6:25o71.

6. BAPTISM

- Matthew 28: 16-20. Note ‘the name’, ‘all nations’. Contrast Ezekiel 36: 16-21.
- Holy Father requires holy children - Leviticus 19: 2. Hence Ephesians 1:5, 4.
- So God acts to show the holiness of his Fatherhood Ezekiel 36:22-37 (NB Isa. 6:3, 57:15).
- There is only one Son who is holy and blameless Hebrews 7: 26. God sets through him.
- Matthew 3: 13-17. Encapsulates the entire career of Christ - Ephesians 4:8-10, Acts 2:33, John 7:39. Romans 1:4.
- Particularly the Cross - Luke 12:50, Mark 10:38. So Acts 2: 23:-
- God’s name glorified - Holy Father of Holy Son John 12: 28, John
- In order to constitute Holy Family - Isaiah 53:10-54: 17, John 12:30-33.
- Which is the Body of the Holy Son - John 2:19-21, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:21-22, 1 Corinthians 1:16-17.
- The reality for individuals - Galatians 2:20. Baptism is into this reality Colossians 2:12.
- Romans 6: 1-14. We *have* died - a once-for-all thing

not a daily process.

- John 3: 1 - 16: the meaning of baptism. Do not stop at v. 8; v. 14 is crucial. V. 3 'born anew' or 'from above', i.e. of God (John 1: 13). V. 5 'of water' (John 1:26, 31, 2:6-7, 3:23, 4:1-2, Mark 1:4, Acts 19: 1-7). New birth cannot come simply by infusion of the Spirit into sinful flesh (impossible anyway). There must be *repentance* and *cleansing* (a *death* to sin, the flesh, the world, the idols, the evil powers, through the Cross), which is what baptism in water was all about. The Spirit effects that, and supplies the fullness of life as God's sons.

7. THE CHURCH IN WHICH THE SACRAMENTS HAPPEN

- Ephesians 2: 11-22. Forgiveness is for all, therefore all live together in forgiveness. Hence Ephesians 4: 1-6.
- We also appreciate, honour and benefit from the different gifts of God in one another - Ephesians 4: 7-16, I Corinthians 12:4-14:40.
- So we will not be partial or party-spirited - I Corinthians 1: 10-13, 3:21-23. Hence 1 Corinthians 11: 17-34.

8. RITUAL AND CEREMONIAL

- Obedience to Christ with regard to the sacraments involves saying certain words and doing certain actions. This is a necessary good. Part of the gift.
- Ritualism - when the form becomes a thing in itself, *of itself* (see section 3 above) - not of the Cross.
- Most important is the knowledge of a *pure conscience* (i.e. purified by the Cross) - 1 Peter 3:21, Hebrews 10:22, 1 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 2:22. Without it we will get hung up, even screwed up, over details.

- Eg. infant's or believer's baptism, immersion or wetting, open or closed communion, formal or informal services, etc.
- To be considered in the spirit of Acts 15: 1-35, Romans 14: 1-15:7.

The Cross and History
The Indispensability of the Cross
The Cross and the Resurrection
The Scandal of the Cross

DEANE MEATHERINGHAM

The Cross and History

Deane Meatheringham

1. GOD TESTIFIES TO THE TRUTH OF THE CROSS

Acts 2: 23. Like Peter's hearers, people make a variety of interpretations of the historical event of Christ's shameful death. It is always misinterpreted, eg. Mark 15:34-35, Luke 24:21. An event in history can be viewed from our position and scheme of interpretation so that the Jews observing the event took it to mean the rightful end of a blasphemer. By the Spirit and the prophets Peter shows that Jesus' death was the fulfilling of what had been planned by God before history. This brings conviction (Acts 2:36-37).

Peter looks to a verdict beyond history to give the historical event its meaning (cf. Acts 3: 18, 4:28, 17:3, Luke 22:22, 24:26, 46).

2. THE CROSS IS PLANNED BEFORE HISTORY

1 Peter 1:20, 1:2, Revelation 13:8, 2 Timothy 1:9, Ephesians 1:3ff., Titus 1:2, Romans 16:25.

The Cross has its source and origin in the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 2: 7), which is repugnant to the wisdom of the world system (1 Cor. 1:18ff.)

Therefore the Cross is not 'Plan B' which God devises because of the failure of 'Plan A'.

Creation and history is planned by God in Christ with a view to the Cross. History can only be fulfilled

through the Cross. History has meaning only through the-Cross (Col. 1: 15-20).

We conclude that the redemption of the Cross has always been the nature of God and that it took the events of history to reveal not what God became in the Cross, but to show what God has always been.

3. OVER ALL HISTORY STANDS THE WILL OF GOD

Isaiah 14:24:27, 31:2, 46:8-11, 48:3, 6-7.

The will of God has to do with his purpose in creation which he will bring to pass (2 Tim. 1:9, Eph . 1:3ff.).

Acts 2:23 sees the Cross as the ‘definite plan and foreknowledge of God’ (cf. Rom. 8: 29f.). This is for God to fore-ordain and to set the destination beforehand. What God foreknows he brings to pass (Gen. 18:19, Amos 3:2, Hosea 13:5, 1 Cor. 8:3, Gal. 4:9).

God is sovereign over his creation. He is free in his rule (Isa. 57:15, 45:9-13, 64:8, Psa. 115:3, Acts 17: 24f.) His gracious will is exercised and fulfilled in, through and above the evil actions of men (Acts 2: 23, Isa. 45:7, 54:16, Prov. 16:4, 1, 9, etc. Acts 4:10, 27f.). This is the will of the Cross which brings evil to judgment and establishes the Kingdom of God.

It has been the quest of man through the ages to find an interpretation of history. He tries to make a ‘fact’ by his own ultimate definitive power of mind (Rom. 1:18ff.). God reveals his purpose through the prophets (Amos 3:7, Eph. 3:4ff.).

4.THE ETERNAL CROSS IS EFFECTIVE FOR ALL TIME

Hebrews 5: 9, 9: 12. To help comprehend this we need to step back and observe:

(a) The People of Faith Believed the Prophetic Word

Eg. Abel knew the will of God (Luke 11:49-51), offered his sacrifice in faith (Heb. 11:4, cf. 1 John 3: 11), which means he believed in the God who both demands and provides propitiation. The OT sacrifices were a shadow of the true sacrifice (Heb. 9: 23, 10: 1). Abraham offered Isaac in faith, knowing it is the Lord who provides (Gen. 22:8, 14, of. Rom. 4:3, 8: 32). Abraham saw Christ's glory and rejoiced (John 8:56).

The sacrifice of the Cross was the basis of the faith offerings given in history.

(b) The Sending of the Son in the Fulness of Time is a Unique and Decisive Event

Gal. 4: 4. Incarnations in some religions happen often and lose any decisive value. The coming of the Son is the coming of the 'eternal' into history and time, and as it belongs to fulfilled time it happens only once. From a human point of view it is an alien element which will not fit the 'common' of history. The one who comes is 'before' all history.

(N .B . In the study of history one discovers that we cannot find the decisive *in* history. 'An epoch in world history or great event has immense, but not final, significance for us...' 'In all history what should happen never happens. This is what keeps history in existence. If what ought to take place should actually take place, then history would cease, the end of the ages, the time of fulfilment would have come' - E. Brunner.)

History has its meaning in the Cross.

(c) The Cross Brings. to Judgment and Reconciliation the Whole of History

Romans 3:21-26, cf. John 12:31, Colossians 1: 19-20,

2:15. Christ, in John 17:4f., is asking the Father for all of his glory to accomplish the work of the Cross, and the glory which Christ had in eternity was the holy glory of the Cross. What God freely plans in his eternal purpose is accomplished in history.

5. THE CROSS DETERMINES THE OUTWORKING OF HISTORY

Revelation 5: 1-14. It is the Lamb who has conquered at the Cross and who has authority to open the seals of history. The Revelation tells us what is going on now in history as the people of the Cross do battle with the powers of evil. The judgments in history are under the authority of the Lamb. The Acts shows us the Lord at work, *adding* to his people by the preaching of the Word of God, the word of the Cross (Acts 1:1, 2:36, 2:47, 3:16, 4:12, 4:24-33, etc.).

The gospel proclaimed is an 'eternal gospel' (Rev. 14:6) which the church proclaims to the whole creation (Eph. 3:8-11, Ray. 10:1-7).

Psalms 2 and 110 tell us the course and end of Christ's reign.

Acts 2:23 confronts us with the true meaning of history which is salvation history, and as a unique decisive event demands repentance and the obedience of faith.

The Indispensability of the Cross

Deane Meatheringham

1. THE INDISPENSABILITY OF CHRIST'S SUFFERING IS THE NECESSITY OF GOD'S WILL

Following the revelation of Jesus as the Christ, Jesus teaches the disciples the outrageous nature of his Messianic work (Mark 8:31, cf. Luke 9:22, Matt. 16: 21). While these texts do not give the *reason* for this 'must', it is evident that it refers to God's plan and counsel. Therefore the necessity originates in God's will.

God's will has been revealed by the prophetic witness to Christ (Luke 24:44-46, 26-27). As the focus and essential substance of all prophecy (Rev. 19: 10), Christ's suffering and death would have no validity unless prophesied (1 Peter 1: 10-12, cf. Acts 3:20ff., 4:24-28, 10:43, 26:22f., Rom. 1:2, etc.).

The Cross, then, is not a fate awaiting Christ in the future. Christ is born for the Cross (Luke 17: 25, John 3:14, Luke 22:37, Acts 9:16, Matt. 26:54, 26: 56). At first glance, man's activity is so emphasised that we might see this as the *primary* cause of Christ's suffering, eg. John 19:11, Luke 23:33, Acts 2:-36, 4: 10, 27. The way to the Cross is paved by men, and man's sinful co-operation in this does not eliminate his full responsibility, but ultimately Christ's suffering is not the consequence of fathomless enmity. God's action penetrates the darkness of man's action, as it is his will (Acts 13:27-33). God's action does not begin with the resurrection; the Cross is already God's work, which he accomplishes through his enemies,

Like Israel and the disciples, we ‘filter out’ the necessity of the Cross (Acts 13: 27, Mark 8: 32, 9:31-32, 10:32-34). The ‘Clayton’s gospel’ keeps it for antiquarian emotional persuasion on ‘Bad Friday’. There is a compulsion to avoid it or turn it into ‘Lotus-land Christianity’.

The indispensability of the Cross originates in the being of God himself and in his eternal purpose. It is his will to show his true being in the redemptive suffering of the Cross.

2. ONLY HOLY POWER CAN ESTABLISH THE GOSPEL

(Grant Thorpe’s study deals with the Cross and Holiness.)

God’s purpose in the creation could only be fulfilled, not by natural evolution, divine fiat, or moral persuasion, but by that holiness of the moral Godhead.

God is ‘the holy One’ (Ex. 15: 11, 3: 2, Isa. 6:1ff., 40:25, 57:15, Hosea 11:9b, Matt. 6:9, John 17:11, Rev. 4:8, 15:4, 16:5).

God’s purpose is that there be nothing in the creation which is not holy (Eph. 1:4, 5:25-26, Rev. 21:5-8, 27, 22:3-4, Matt. 5:8, Heb. 12:15, Psa. 24: 3-6).

God’s holiness works righteousness (Num. 20: 12, Isa. 5: 16), cannot be trifled with, is beyond social convention, is not genial in love, and must pursue evil - not so much to punish it as to purify it from the creation and the heart of man. There is stark antagonism in God to all that is wicked and vile (Hab. 1: 13, Isa. 4:4, Mal. 3:1-5, Isa. 24:1-6, Jer. 3:1f., 23:10, 2 Peter 3:8-13).

The truth embodied in the law can only be vindicated in the judgment of holy love. Holy love is the movement of light and life which cannot abolish the judgment bound up with it. In the Cross, God provides the indispensable propitiation (1 John 4: 10, Rom. 3: 25, Isa. 49: 7).

3. THE RADICAL NATURE OF SIN CAN ONLY BE CURED BY THE CROSS

Hebrews 9: 22. Sin's deceit is that no man can know what sin is (Jer. 17:9, 9:6, Heb. 3:13, Mark 7: 22, Col. 2:8, Rev. 12:9, 18:23). It is beyond man, made impotent by sin 'to shake off' the seduction of evil (Jer. 9:5, John 8:34). Sin is ingrained in man and cannot be wiped away (Jer. 17:1, 13:23). It is an incurable, lethal sickness (Jer. 30: 12f., 15).

This is warning not to view sin in merely psychological terms, or to delude ourselves that it can be healed lightly (Jer. 6: 14).

There can be no new life until the old is exposed, brought to account, taken responsibility for, rightly condemned, and not only taken the penalty justice demands, but satisfied the demand of holiness for holiness. There can be no new obedience without purification of sins, no liberty without justification, no peace without judgment.

The prophets looked to the judgment which saves. Isa. 51:4-6, 63:1b, 1:18, 27, 26:8-9, 33:22, 24, Jer. 31:34, 30:17, 33:6-9, Ezek. 36:25-27, Zech. 13:1.

4. CHRIST'S CALLING AND VOCATION IS THE CROSS

John 10:17f. He sees its 'must' (Mark 8:31), and regards Peter's option as satanic (Mark 8:32f.). His birth is to save his people from their sins (Matt. 1: 21). At his baptism Jesus identifies with the sinful race and is anointed for his great Messianic work (Matt. 3: 15). He is resolute in coming to judgment in Jerusalem (Luke 9:51, 13:33, 18:31ff.). The Cross is Christ's

baptism of fire (Luke 12:49f.), and in the garden it is the will of the Father that Jesus obeys in taking the cup of wrath (Matt. 26:39).

Christ takes the judgment of sin in bearing the sin (2 Cor. 5: 14, 21). He becomes the defiled one (Gal. 3:13, Rom. 8:3, Isa. 52:14, 53:2). In him, sin is exposed, abhorred, damned. The world is brought to account and judged. Holiness flames in wrath to burn up all pollution. It is the will of the Lord to bruise him. Christ finishes his course and sin (John 19:30, Heb. 1: 3). The pardon we have in Christ has the awful virtue of God's condemnation in it, as well as his tender mercy to the sinful.

5. BY THE NECESSITY OF THE CROSS THERE IS NO SALVATION OUTSIDE OF IT

Acts 4: 12, 1 Timothy 2:5f., Matthew 21:42-44.

The Cross and the Resurrection

Deane Meatheringham

1. THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION ARE BOUND TOGETHER IN INDISSOLUBLE UNITY

Romans 4:25, 6:3-11, 8:34, 1 Corinthians 15:3ff., I Thessalonians 4: 14.

The proclamation of the Risen Lord is at the forefront of the early preaching in Acts. Acts 2:24,36, 3:15, 4:2,10,33, 5:30f., 10:39f., 11:20, 13:29ff., 17:2f.,18,31, 23:6, 24:t5,21. The risen One is Lord because he was crucified, and he is the Saviour because he is the exalted Lord.

Therefore the resurrection makes no sense without the cross, and the cross would be a dismal failure without the resurrection. The proclamation of ‘Christ crucified’ in I Corinthians 1:18ff., 2: If., Galatians 3: If., does not mean proclamation of the cross in abstraction from the resurrection, but is the proclamation of the Lord whose saving power derives from his death on the cross. Without the resurrection of Christ, the cross would be empty (I Corinthians 15:14ff).

The pre-eminent interest is in the crucified One being alive (II Corinthians 13:4, Romans 5: 17, 8:34).

2. THE RESURRECTION IS THE INTEGRAL GOAL OF SALVATION HISTORY

Acts 24: 15,21, 26:22-23, I Corinthians 15:3f. God’s purpose in history is the regeneration and reharmonising of all things, eg. Isaiah 65: 17, 66: 22, Matthew 19: 28, Ephesians 1: 9-10, Revelation 21:lff.

The resurrection is the working out of the Kingdom of God, i.e. the dynamic reign of God over all history. Hence the prophets look forward to the securing of the Kingdom against rebellion, sin, the curse, death and the powers of evil. Daniel 4: 3, 17, 25,34,7: 18,22,27. The prophets look to new life and resurrection, eg. Isaiah 32:15ff., 44: 1-5, 35: 1-10, 49:1-13, Ezekiel 18, Joel 2:28-32. The expectation of the Kingdom was for the forgiveness of sins, the outpouring of the Spirit, the reign of God by His Messiah, or the final eternal age breaking in on the old in judgement.

Therefore the election of the Patriarchs and of God's people is in a resurrection perspective, and the prophets are bearers of the message of life. Death will be no more, and the nations shall share in it (Isaiah 25:6-9).

The advent of Jesus as Messiah is the advent of the Kingdom and prelude to resurrection (Mark 1:14f. Luke 11: 20). Jesus' miracles point to the resurrection (Matthew 11:2-6). The establishing of the Kingdom is opposed by world powers, demonic and satanic forces, sin, disease and death, which all are part of the one anti-God system. Miracles are a partial overcoming of these powers.

Christ's destination is the cross where he must defeat the powers and the world.

3. THE POWER OF THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION LIFE

Here we will attempt to look at the intrinsic action of the resurrection. Christ is put to death for our trespasses (Romans 4:25). Acts 2:22-31 describes the experience of Jesus (cf. Psalm 16:8-11). In I Peter 3: 18, Christ's death for sins is his 'being put to death in the flesh', i.e. he was killed on the cross (cf. Romans 6: 10). Before he dies, Jesus defeats sin and

the powers (John 19: 30). He commits himself to the Father in the grave (Luke 23: 45f). All this is by the power of the Spirit (Hebrews 9: 14). I Peter 3:18 seems to say that at the time the power of death was exhausted in Christ, life surged forward so that he was quickened to fresh energies in spirit by the conquest of his death.

Acts 2: 22-31 shows that no corruption touched Jesus, and because it was not possible for death to hold him (having 'abolished death' - II Timothy I: 10), God loosed the 'pangs of death'. The 'Spirit of holiness' makes it possible for Christ to rise and impossible not to rise (I Timothy 3: 16). Hebrews 7:16 speaks of 'the power of an indestructible life'.

4. THE RESURRECTION ASSERTS THE VICTORY OF CHRIST'S CROSS

Acts 2: 36, Romans 4: 25, Philippians 2: 8-11, Colossians 2: 13-15, Hebrews 2: 14-15.

Jesus is Lord over all the enemies of God and man. Romans 1:1ff., 14:9, 4:24, 10:9, Acts 10:42, 16:31, 15: 11, Philippians 3:8f., I Corinthians 12:3, II Timothy 2: 8. God has given Jesus cosmic Lordship.

The resurrection realises our justification, salvation and reconciliation. Jesus' entry into death marks his position before God as a sinner, and his death remits the guilt, so liberating believers from their bondage. Sin has been judged, a new relationship is opened between God and man. The risen Lord shows the abolition of guilt and wrath.

As mediator, Christ now intervenes for his people (I Timothy 2:5f., Romans 8:34, I John 2:1f). In Christ, the old death-ridden life is cancelled and we are united in a new resurrection which is free from sin and superior to death, which makes possible Christ's mediatory function. We are now saved by his resurrection life (Romans 5: 10).

The Lamb that was slain is the Lord of glory (Revelation 5:1ff., Romans 8: 32f., I Corinthians 15: 24-28, Psalm 2,45, 110). He is now active in the defeat of his enemies, and as the Acts demonstrates, Christ reigns now by the preaching of the Gospel to bring the captives out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son (of. Colossians 1:13f). It is the power of the cross which is given to the Church (Ephesians 1: 15-23), and which is the guarantee of final glory. I Corinthians 15:20, Philippians 3: 20f.. I Thessalonians 4: 13-17, I Corinthians 15:51-54, I Peter 1:3, Hebrews 13:10.

Faith in him who died and was raised is unconditionally identical with having *life* in his name (John 20: 31, Romans 10: 9f).

The Scandal of the Cross

Deane Meatheringham

1. THE CROSS IS A GROTESQUE OFFENCE

I Corinthians 1:23 cf. Galatians 5: 11.

(1) *Crucifixion was the supreme Roman penalty.* The *crux* was put at the top of the three *summa supplicia*, followed by burning and decapitation. It was nearly always inflicted on the lower classes.

'It was certainly the case that the Roman world was largely unanimous that crucifixion was a horrific, disgusting business' (M. Heugel).

(2) *For the Jews crucifixion was a sign of God's curse.* Deuteronomy 21:23, Galatians 3:13, Hebrews 12:2. Because of the excessive use of crucifixion by Rome, the cross was taboo as a form of Jewish death penalty. Therefore a crucified Messiah was a contradiction in terms.

(3) *A crucified Son of God was madness to Greeks.* Their gods were 'immortal'. Intellectually it was stupid. Politically it was at best only for 'evil-doers', and symbolised dishonour and ignominy. Therefore, that the crucified Jew, Jesus, was the incarnate Son of God and Lord of all, was utter presumption.

(4) *The gospel of the cross is ludicrously incongruous in man's world.* It runs counter to our whole system. To accomplish PR. it must be camouflaged at worst with truthful information. It is offensive because it rules out the last vestige of human egotism (Galatians 5:11, I Corinthians 1:28f). It is an *exposé* of sin's true nature and a judgement upon the worship of our hands.

2. THE FOUNDATION OF THE OFFENCE IS BY GOD'S DECREE

Romans 9:33, 11:9, I Peter 2:8 cf. Isaiah 8:14, 28: 16.

(1) *The 'offence' is a metaphorical expression for causing to sin, i.e. a snare. (Originally a piece of wood that kept open a trap for animals) Amos 3: 5, Psalm 141:9.*

(2) Jesus himself was a cause for stumbling to unbelievers. Luke 2:34, Matthew 11:6, 13:57, 15:12, 26:31,33.

(3) The principle of the cross has its being in God Himself. John 12:24-26 cf. Philippians 2: 3- 11.

It is the truth of giving love, which Christ demonstrates contrary to the politics of man - yet it is only in dying that true fruit is produced (Isaiah 53: 10).

(4) The cross which brings stumbling and judgement, also thwarts human wisdom and works salvation in believers. I Corinthians 1: 17-25.

3. THE PEOPLE OF THE CROSS CARRY THEIR CROSS

9:23-26 cf. Matthew 10:34-39, 16:24-27, Mark 8: 34-38.

(1) The way of the Son is the way of the sons,

i.e. we wear Christ's yoke of sonship (Matthew 11: 28-30). It is to have the Father's mind. It is dying to a self-seeking, ambitious life. It is the person with self-control who does not accede to the deeds of the body (Romans 8: 13). It is not the rubbing out of self, but it is being jealous for God against our selves (Philippians 3: 10, Colossians 1: 24).

(2) Only those who know themselves to have died and been raised In Christ's cross can do this. II Cor.

5: 14f., Romans 6: 1-14. The cross cuts us down to size, and Christ's love is the motivation for taking up the cross with joy.

4. TO PROCLAIM THE CROSS IS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SCANDAL OF CHRIST'S CROSS

(1) It means *identifying with Christ and his cross*. Luke 9: 26, Mark 10: 29f., 38f. The world has no *more power over* the one who has come under the judgement of the cross (Galatians 6: 14).

(2) *It means sharing in its offence and privations*. John 17:18ff. For the sake of the cross, Paul endures hardship, hostility, rejection, loneliness, etc. (II Corinthians 4:7-12, 6:3-10, 11:23-33). It is being exposed to death, and carrying the consequences of his preaching (I Corinthians 15:31, II Corinthians 4: 10).

(3) *We must not sanitise the gospel* (I Corinthians 4:8ff), i.e. remove its offence, as the Church at Corinth moved into the enthusiastic life of the Spirit, the enjoyment of revelations, etc.. The gospel is sanitised when it is reduced to ethics, politics, legalism, meeting human need, sacramentalism, recruitment etc.

(4) *The preaching of the cross captures the mighty*. Paul says he becomes scapegoat for the world (I Cor. 4: 13). The indignation man has for God and which falls on Christ, the propitiation (Romans 15:3, 3:25), falls upon the prophets (Revelation 11:4-13, Luke 11:49-51). As Christ suffered the indignities of man, he has left us an example (I Peter 2:18-24). The power of the cross *overcomes* the world (John 16: 33, I Corinthians 1:23-25, 2: 1-5, II Corinthians 2:14-17, 10:3-6) •

CONCLUSION

What is a scandal to the world is the salvation of the elect, and the only glory of God's people (6: 14).

Cross Events Survey

EVENT	MARK	MATTHEW	LUKE	JOHN
Lazarus				11:1-44
Caiaphas				11:45-57, 18:14
Triumphal Entry	11:1-11	21:1-11	19:28-44	12:12-19
House of Prayer	11:12-19	21:12-17	19:45-48	
Voice from Heaven				12:19-50
The end times	11:20-13:37	21:18-25:46	20:1-21:38	
The Plot thickens	14:1-2	26:1-5	22:1-2	
Anointing	14:3-9	26:6-13		12:1-11
Judas to betray	14:10-11	26:14-16	22:3-6	13:2
Lord's Supper	14:12-26	26:17-30	22:7-30	13:1-30
Sifted as Wheat	14:28-31	26:31-35	22:31-38	13:31-38
The Discourse				14:1-16:33
At Gethsemane	14:32-42	26:36-46	22:39-46	17:1-26
Arrest and Trial	14:43-65	26:47-68	22:47-53	18:1-27
Judas' death		27:1-10		
The cock crow	14:66-72	26:69-75	22:54-62	18:1-27
	15:1-15	27:11-26	22:63-23:25	18:28-19:15
Soldiers mock	15:16-20	27:27-31		
To Golgotha	15:21-22	27:32-33	23:26-31	
Glorified King	15:23-32	27:34-44	23:32-43	19:16-27
Deep Darkness	15:33	27:45	23:44-45	
Victorious Death	15:34-41	27:46-56	23:46-49	19:28-39
Royal Burial	15:42-47	27:57-61	23:50-56	19:28-37
Tomb guard		27:62-66		
Resurrection	16:1-11	28:1-10	24:1-12	20:1-18
Guard's report		28:11-15		
Road to Emmaus	16:12-13		24:13-35	

Risen Lord	16:14		24:36-49	20:19-21:25
Ascension	16:15-20	28:16-20	24:50-Acts 1:11	
Gall wine	15:23	27:34		
Clothes	15:24	27:35-36	23:34	19:23-24
Sign	15:26	27:37	23:38	19:19-22
Abuse: passers	15:29-30	27:39-40	23:35	
Abuse: elders	15:31-32	27:41-43	23:35	
Abuse: soldiers			23:36-37	
Father forgive			23:34	
Robbers	15:27-28, 32	27:38, 44	23:39-43	19:18
Dear woman				19:25-27
Darkness	15:33	27:45	23:44-45	
My God, why?	15:34-36	27:46-47		
I thirst				19:28
Sponge		27:48-49		19:29
It is finished				19:30
Into thy hands	(15:37)	(27:50)	23:46	(19:30)
Curtain	15:38	27:51	23:45	
Tombs		27:52-53		
Centurion	15:39	27:54	23:47	
Crowd			23:48	
Women	15:40-41	27:55-56	23:49	
Joseph	15:42-47	27:57-61	23:50-56	19:38-42

- o Deep darkness. Forsaken, thirsty humanity.
- o "O death, where is your victory?."
- o Royal Burial. Joseph and Nicodemus.
- o Messengers of resurrection:
- o Mary Magdalene,
- o Joanna, Salome,
- o James' mother...
- o Peter and John.
- o The guards.
- o Emmaus: Burning hearts and broken bread.
- o Witnesses of these things.

ELECTIVES

The Cross and Medical Practice

IAN MURDOCH

The Cross and Ethics

IAN PENNICOOK

The Cross and Counselling

MARJORIE WELLBY

The Cross and the Local Church

DON PRIEST

The Cross and Human Experience

MARTIN BLEBY

The Cross and Medical Practice

IAN MURDOCH

Medical practice is the application of knowledge and physical intervention for the welfare of the patient as a total person and in all cases where a dysfunction is or could be occurring.

So where does the Cross fit into all of this? If we understand that the Cross is the expression of God's love for us and the means of obtaining grace, then the fusion of the Cross and work-in any sphere is what I call . 'experimental theology'.

In medical practice especially, we see men stripped not only of their clothes but also of their carefully constructed layers hiding the deep guilt that all patients have. This colours all their actions. Of particular note are patients who are Christians and whose behaviour is totally at variance to what they say with their lips. Why?

We need to understand how a personality is developed, and the consequences of real-development. Why is it that some Christians have difficulty in handling sickness and death? Is it that they don't understand the total dynamic of the Cross? (1 John 3:8, Heb. 9:26.)

Christians should have goals in life and not just ramble on. We should all be aware of the hope that we have. What then of Medical Practice? The day after day frustrations of the daily parade of patients; what does the Cross have to say in that situation? I believe that the Lord of all creation is about the

completed work of the Cross (Gal 4:5) and that although I only see glimpses of it, this alone helps me and sustains me to see and understand people. I am plagued constantly by doubts and fears in the episodic style of urban general practice, and constantly need to renew myself in the truth of Romans 8:1 in order to continue. Patients too should be realistic managers of their physical bodies, as well as constantly availing themselves of the means of grace.

Should sickness of affliction occur — and all too often associated anger - then this can cause a conscience to be a judge and condemn. The message of the Cross should free and liberate. Acts 24:16 speaks of a clear conscience. Christians should understand the dynamic of a purged conscience (Heb. 9:14). There is also to be understood the right use of affliction which can destroy the corruption that we have and revive decayed graces. All afflictions are from the love of God, because affliction in the way of holiness is far better than affliction in the way of wickedness.

Even in death, as Christians we should not fear because we have the hope of glory (1 Cor. 15:42f.).

Where does yoga, hypnotherapy, iridology and chiropractors fit into all of this? What of alternative medicine?

In trying to effect an answer to all of this, I would like to outline how you can help your doctor.

- (1) Pray for the doctor you are going to see. If he is not a Christian then do not expect that doctor to solve the problems of the faith. This is the function of the congregation of the righteous.
- (2) Live a sober, decent, and upright life.
- (3) Develop a proper understanding of grace daily applied in your life.

Many disease patterns are the result of continuing year-after-year malfunctioning of the community—even, sad to say, in the community of grace. No true counselling can take place outside the congregation of the righteous, as any attempts to counsel in isolation betrays a defective understanding of the nature of man and the Cross.

CONCLUSION

It is hope that this workshop will explore and develop further many of the points merely highlighted above, because as a medical practitioner I am concerned that Christians, when sick, often betray a faulty understanding of what the grace of God expressed in the Cross is all about.

The Cross and Ethics

Ian Pennicook

‘Ethics is the science of behaviour. Ethics is that bit of religion that tells us how we ought to behave.’ (Win. Barclay, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, Fontana 1971, p. 13.)

This definition may not be precise enough to satisfy everyone, but it does, nonetheless, capture the truth that there is an *ought* in faith, an inescapable obligation to grace. Paul, says to Timothy, ‘I am writing these instructions to you so that...you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God..., (1 Tim. 3:14-15), and to Titus, that ‘the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions and to live sober, upright and godly lives in this world’ (2:11-12).

The man or woman who knows the grace of God will, therefore, need to see that, both in the church and in the world, a new pattern of behaviour is required. This is not just a new legalism, as if one were joining a club with arbitrary rules; it is life in the truth. Again Paul writes: ‘Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual’ perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. and such *were* some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God’ (1 Cor. 6:9-11). The truth of the Cross is the dynamic for rich godliness, and

that godliness clearly affects the day-to-day aspects of living. It is not at all unrelated to the practical issues of life. And, of course, godliness is itself a powerful (and, for us, a re-enforcing) dynamic (James 1:25).

The Scriptures specify a number of areas which the man or woman under grace must carefully consider. Among these are:

- (i) *Sexual morality.* There are many issues facing us today in our society, to which the Scriptures speak directly, eg. promiscuity, adultery, homosexuality and lesbianism, etc. It is surely not the fear of AIDS which controls our behaviour?! How then does the man or woman of God react in a society which openly rejects the law of God?
- (ii) *Life morality.* This would include such issues as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment and war, especially with the ever-increasing threat of nuclear war.
- (iii) *Political morality.* Whilst not, apparently, an issue in our almost careless society, for many today the question of submission or resistance to the state is a highly volatile issue. Cf. for example, the widely reported issue of liberation theology and revolution in many Central and South American countries. Can we simply ignore political issues as being 'worldly'?
- (iv) *Financial morality.* Ancient Israel was forbidden to 'put out...money at interest' (Psa. 15:5). Yet our society would collapse if this principle was to be even partially applied. How can we survive in the cut-throat world of finance and business? When is it right for a person under-grace to use the methods of the world in business? And what of our obligation to the starving 'millions' against whom we seem so helpless? Should we ask governments to take more of our income in taxes

to aid those in need, wherever they may be? Should we opt for the simple life style, or are riches a blessing to be enjoyed?

The Cross and Counselling

Marjorie Wellby

THE COUNSEL OF GOD

Paul was able to tell the elders of the Ephesian church, Acts 20: 26-27, "I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God". Therefore it must be possible for us to (i) know and (ii) declare the whole counsel of God.

The word translated "counsel" means plan or purpose, and counsel may be given in accord with a plan or purpose. The counsellor in the OT is frequently one who gives advice as to a king, eg. II Sam. 15:12 (*sumboulos*). This is widely used in the N.T., but in John's gospel and letters the word "parakleiton" is translated counsellor, comforter or advocate. This also occurs in the Greek O.T. in Job 16: 2, his miserable comforters.

1. Counsellors to bring the counsel of God to His people are part of His plan for man. Is. 1: 26, Prov. 11:14, 15:22, 24:6.

Thus we see a multitude of counsellors:

- OT, prophets, priests, judges, kings, etc., i.e. all those with God-given authority to do this.
- The Wonderful Counsellor.
- The Holy Spirit working through the body of Christ.

2. Because he requires counsel, when man rejects God he turns to false counsellors, eg. II Sam. 16:20-17:23, I Kings 12:8, Isa. 30:9-11, Ps 1:1.

3. God expects his people to ask for counsel and he will give it, Is. 30:1-2, Ps. 32:8, 73:24.

4. Men and nations who reject God's counsel do so to their own detriment, Josh. 9: 14, Is. 3: 1-3, Prov. 1: 25-31.

5. The counsel of God is unchangeable (not negotiable, demands obedience) and unchanging, Ps. 33:10-11, Is. 46:10, Acts 5:38-39, Eph. 1: 11, Heb. 6: 17.

6. What is the counsel of God? It is coupled with such words as:

- wisdom Is. 28: 29, Job 12: 13, Prov. 8: 14, Is. 11: 2.
- might, strength Job 12: 13, Prov. 8: 14, Is. 11: 2, Jer. 32: 19.
- understanding, insight Job 12:13, Prov. 8:14, Is. 11: 2,
- knowledge Prov. 1:29-30, Is. 11:2.

I deduce that the counsel of God is the practical outworking of the wisdom of God. It encompasses his whole revelation of himself and is not confined to written and spoken word, but revealed by his acts and his Son. It is an incredibly loving and tender thing, Ps. 33: 11, 32: 8.

Jesus is the wisdom of God, I Cor. 1:24, in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. 2: 3, and it was the counsel of God to deliver him to be crucified, Acts 2: 23.

7. The Wonderful Counsellor foretold in Is. 9: 6, 11:2. Jesus, the skilled counsellor, by words and actions used all the attributes that we would look for in a counsellor today (Is. 50: 4). For example:

- wisdom, I Cor. 1:24, Mk. 6:2, Col. 2:3.

- knowledge of God, John. 1: 1, 1: 18.
of the scriptures cf. Luke 2: 47.
of the world John. 1:10.
of man Jn. 2: 25.
- love and practical compassion, Mark. 10:21, 5:43, 6: 34.
- authority, Isa. 9:6, Mark. 1:-22, 2:10, 4:41, Mat. 8: 16-17.
- experience of physical limitations, Mk. 4: 38.
temptation Heb. 4: 15.
suffering Heb. 2: 18, Luke. 19: 41.
prayer Mark. 1:35.
obedience John. 15:10 etc.

8. **The Cross.** A wise counsellor gives wise direction, but it is on the Cross that Jesus achieves what no other counsellor could do. He *becomes* our problems, II Cor. 5:21. He bears them to extinction, Isa. 53:4,6. It was the counsel of God that this should be so. Acts 2:23, Isa. 5-3:10. In this one act he releases man from all forms of bondage, Is. 53:5, Heb. 2:14,15.

9. **The Holy Spirit**, "another counsellor", promised by Jesus, John. 14:16, hears witness to the Wonderful Counsellor and applies the work of the Cross, Jn. 14:26, 16:8. For example, the Holy Spirit is God's appointed counsellor for these days.

10. Problems presenting for counselling today may be reduced to sin, "storms of life", and Satan. In the final analysis, the work of the Cross is the only answer to all man's problems

- Sin includes "primary" sin, a sinful response to another's sin, and/or the resultant wrath of God. Guilty man's mind is darkened, Rom. 1:21 so that it is impossible for him to make a correct appraisal of his situation until he is aware that his guilt is removed by the fact of the Cross.

- "Storms of life", eg. disciples, Mk. 4:35-41, sailors in Jonah's ship. Jesus has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Because he has taken the sting out of it we are free to grieve in hope (it is those who do not grieve who run into problems).
- Satan, eg. Job. Satan is vanquished at the Cross.

11. One who genuinely seeks counsel, seeks wisdom and power to deal with the problem and to stay free of it. I Cor. 1: 23-' 24, 'Christ crucified Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God'. I Cor. 2 compares the wisdom of the world with wisdom taught by the Spirit which is essential in counselling.

The Cross puts man's "needs" in proper perspective. The Christian dare not seek counsel or be involved in counselling which adds or detracts from the centrality of the Cross.

12. Job, an account of modern counselling?

The Cross and the Local Church

Don Priest

1. THE CROSS IS PRACTICAL

- The Cross expresses God's love, generosity and integrity. It establishes his forbearance, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Our personal relationships are to occur in this context. (Matt. 18:15-22, Eph. 4:22-5:9)

2. THE CROSS IS PROPHETIC

- The church witnesses to God's action in the Cross by drawing on the abundant resources that the Holy Spirit shows us are released there.
- Our serving and speaking are to demonstrate this. (Rev. 1:1-8, I Peter 4:7-11)

3. THE CROSS IS POWERFUL

- God's power is vividly seen in Jesus being crucified 'in weakness'.
- Likewise God's action in us is dynamic in our weaknesses.
- These powerful pains are evidence of the coming new creation. (2 Cor. 4:7-11, 8:9, 12:9-10, 13:4, 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5, Rom. 8: 18-27)

The Cross and Human Experience

Martin Bleby

1. The Cross and the Experience of P.T. Forysth (1848-1921)
 2. The Cross and the Experience of M. E. Bleby (1946-)
 3. The Cross and the Experience of
- (those present)*