

Three Crosses

5-31-23

1 died In sin. 1 died To sin. 1 died For sin.

I. Announce:

A. Slide1,2 Food Drive. Moving Up.

B. Prayer: *They say it was love not nails that held your Son to the cross.* TY.

II. Slide3a Intro: Three Crosses *1 died In sin. 1 died To sin. 1 died For sin.*

A. This evening instead of picturing, *a hill far away where stood an old rugged cross*, I'd like all of us to go to Israel, drop into Jerusalem, walk down the Via Dolorosa, go out the Damascus Gate, go about 2 blocks turn right, & see a hill called The Skull/Golgotha.

1. Slide3b Paul declared, *For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.* 1 Cor.2:2
2. But I want to look at, not 1, but all 3 Crosses, this evening. I want to go to that place where God drew *His line in the sand*.
 - a) On one side *salvation*, on the other *damnation*.
3. Though these man hung a few yards from each other, they were soon to be *an eternity apart* ... *literally*.
 - a) Special credit to *Herbert Lockyer* in a pamphlet he did back in 1936 called *The Three Crosses*. (his outline)

B. Slide4 At the crucifixion a statement was made by the leaders standing around that was *truer* than they knew, *He saved others, Himself He cannot save*.

1. Here we have a dying Savior, a dying Saint, & a dying Sinner.
2. 2 thieves with sin in them. Christ w/sin on Him.

III. Slide5 FIRST A PEAK AT REMBRANDTS THREE CROSSES

A. He worked in diff types of Media = *Etching & Drypoint*. (1653) [over 300 bible inspired]

B. Process: put wax all over the metal. Sketch away wax. Dip in acid. All exposed gets "etched". Then strip off wax. Drypoint is taking a metal "nail" and scratching

directly into the metal. These progressive changes, making it darker & more chaotic, are the more dramatic-dark places you see.

- C. Your attention is drawn **1st to the center cross** on which Jesus died.
1. **Next** note the contrast of light & darkness depicted by the **2 thieves**.
 2. **Slide6** He worked for 10 years. Each work is a *state*. This was 1st & 5th state.
- D. **Slide7** Let's read Lk.23:39-43 **READ**
1. Out of the 4 gospels their only discussion comes out here.
- E. **Outline:** we have on the center cross, *The Cross of Redemption*. To one side, *The Cross of Reception*. To the other side, *The Cross of Rejection*.

IV. **Slide8a THE CROSS OF REDEMPTION**

- A. We'll take the most important cross 1st - *The Center Cross*.
1. Spurgeon said, *Down, down, down, w/everything else; but Up, Up, Up with the Cross of Christ*.
- B. **Slide8b** Looking back in history we will find **3 great focal points of history:**
[1] The Creation **[2]** The Crucifixion **[3]** The 2nd Coming.
1. Yet, we see *the cross* as **the greatest** focal point in all history.
 - a) "The Cross of Jesus was the ultimate culmination of the revelation of God's Love toward man; but also the culmination of man's hatred for God!"
- C. **Slide8c** Upon the center cross - *Love was Exemplified*.
1. God loved us w/o reservation. So clearly branded on the cross, are the letters, *God is Love*.
 2. **Where else, or when else, in the universe has God's love been better manifested?**
 - a) Calvary is the main school in which one can learn of God's love.
 - b) **Are you doubting His Love today?** *Bow down at His blood stained cross & look up into His Love filled eyes.*
 - c) He literally was *dying to save us*. **Let Him melt your heart of stone.**

D. Slide8d Upon the center cross - The Law was fully Satisfied.

1. His death met the requirements of, & dismissed *the demands of the Law*.

E. Slide8e Upon the center cross - The saint reckons himself *Crucified*.

1. Gal.2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

2. It's one thing to believe in a crucified Christ. *It is a different thing altogether to live the crucified life.*

3. We are to reckon ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God.

a) Are you dead to sin? Or, is it alive & well on planet earth?

(1) Some are happy w/sinning a little less. *That's like* the soldier going into battle w/the aim of not getting hit very much.

(2) The cross is "I" crossed out! I ← [It is a *minus* turned into a *plus*] +

V. Slide9a THE CROSS OF RECEPTION

A. Here is Jn.12:32 getting kicked off, *But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.*

1. Here is the 1st man **drawn** to Him, when He was lifted up.

2. A magnet causes another metal to have 1 of 2 forces, *Attraction or Repulsion*.

3. *Like a giant magnet* being raised up. That 1st metal shaving felt the draw & let go of *self, the world, sin, flesh, & stopped refusing* the magnetic pull.

B. Oh, What a Day.

C. *This man found himself in the morning in a state of Condemnation, at noon in the state of Graces, and before dinner in the state of Glory.*

D. Here is where **Grace & Faith** are married.

E. Slide9b **Naked Faith** [best example of *naked faith* in all the bible]

1. Naked because it is stripped of any traditions, man made rules, any ordinances (as important as baptism & communion are) no witnessing, no church attendance ... *just Naked, Naked, Naked Faith*, SOLA FIDE!

2. He asks 1 request, he gets 1 response ... *and up he went*.

a) Not to unconsciousness, not to purgatory, *but* to *paradise*... *absent from the body, present w/the Lord*.

F. *Slide9c Great Grace*. *The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come."* *And let the one who hears say, "Come."* *And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.* Rev.22:17

1. This man a thief, a murderer, hand's stained with blood, *yet* he found a blood of *a deeper crimson red*, that would even cover his dark stains!

2. Rev.1:5b *To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.* [*like* the paint that's advertised as, *1 coat paint*]

3. Jesus says, *Give me your soul stained w/the darkest, blackest, ugliest spots & I will scrub it a glistening white ... today!*

4. (Lockyer) *While the lamp of mercy burns, the vilest sinners may return.*

G. *Slide9d Death Bed Conversion*. Here is a man not saved in the 11th hour, *but* at the stroke of midnight. [*like Cinderella trying to beat the clock*].

1. Jn.6:37 *All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.*

H. I stop to *warn* the person who sits there & thinks, *I will live for self until that last moment before I pass!* *3 warnings ...*

1. *He who is often reprov'd, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing.* Prov.29:1

2. God can withdrawal your breath from your nostrils at any given moment.

3. Don't give your best years to the devil, & only a few moments to God.

I. *Note*: Both guys speak a few words to Christ.

1. *Also note*: Christ only responds to the one.

2. Look at this brand new believers impeccable theology.

- a) He fears God (40). Acknowledges his sin & rightful judgment (41).
Recognizes the sinless perfection of Christ (41). Acknowledges Him as Lord (42)
 - b) **Jesus response?** He gives him a promise (assuredly). W/His own lips (I say).
To him specifically (to you). Tells him when this will transpire (today). What
will transpire (you w/me). And where (in paradise).
3. He is 1 of only 2 I know of that *prayed to Jesus* (didn't say our Father).
4. He 1st saw **Jesus**. Saw **himself**. Saw **hope**.

VI. Slide10a THE CROSS OF REJECTION

- A. Look at the crosses again & we focus on *the other one*. Oh, the darkness. What a tragedy ... dying w/o Christ.
- 1. *One saved that none would despair; only one that none would presume!*
 - 2. Clovis Chappell said, *These 2 thieves are as far apart as the spaces between the stars.*
- B. The Center Cross is again *that dividing line* between *Paradise* & *Perdition*.
- C. **1 Receives, 1 Rejects**. Both are led to the cross: 1 **receives it** as the power of God to salvation, **the other rejects it** and seals his fate.
- 1. *Slide10b As the sun melts the wax and hardens the clay.*
 - 2. *As your same breath* leaving your mouth can **warm** your hands on a cold winter day, **or cool** a spoonful of hot soup.
- D. This man wanted *a Christ w/o a Cross*. Look at his words (39). He wanted him to come down off the cross and save himself & save them.
- 1. Some can say, *We preach Christ* (but then stop there).
 - 2. Some preach an ethical Christ, a social Christ, a lovely Christ, or a warm fuzzy Christ. *Slide10c* But Paul said, *We preach Christ crucified!*
 - a) Many preach today *a Christ w/o a cross*, or *a bloodless gospel*.
- E. *Think of this man's accountability :(*

1. No man was ever nearer than this man, to seeing the blood-stained savior ... *just a few yards away ... a whisper away ... 1 prayer away!*
 - a) A picture probably now riveted in his mind that won't stop haunting him.
 - b) Once *so close* to Love incarnate ... Now drifting away, an eternity away.
 - c) This man was found, without excuse ... *although he met God, he did not glorify Him as God, nor was thankful, but became futile in his thoughts, and his foolish heart were darkened. Professing to be wise, he became a fool!*
(Rom.1:20-22 reworked)

F. Slide11 WRAP UP

G. Where do you hang today? On the cross of **Rejection**?

1. You still have an opportunity to do a *cross-transfer*. Run to the cross of **Redemption** and be found on the cross of **Reception**.
2. *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.* Gal.2:20

H. Keywords: cross, redemption, rejection, reception.