
The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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Listen to PROVE ALL THINGS on 730 AM WKRE, Sunday mornings from 8:15 to 8:30

Marvels of the Cross

by Dempsey Collins

Scripture reading – I Corinthians 1:26 – 2:2; Galatians 6:14

INTRODUCTION - Psalm 118:22,23

This Psalm is a prophecy of Jesus. He is the chief cornerstone of the New Covenant which the builders (the Jews) rejected. Its fulfillment in Christ is shown in Matt. 21:42 and I Peter 2:6. Notice that even in prophecy the things concerning Jesus and what He would accomplish are spoken of as marvelous.

A thousand years later when Jesus left His Heavenly abode and came to earth, the people of that day also bear witness of the marvel of His words and actions. (e.g., Matt. 8:23-27; 9:6-8; 32-33; John 7:14, 15 as Peter stated “you know all things” John 21:17. Because Jesus knew all things men marveled). Everything about Jesus is marvelous. Perhaps the most outstanding marvel of Jesus is His death on the cross and the significance of that event.

Marvel is defined “something that causes wonder or astonishment” (Webster). The cross of Jesus was certainly an event of wonder and astonishment in many ways. Let us note some of the marvels of the cross.

- I. The marvel of its paradoxes. (A paradox is something which is seemingly contradictory but somehow true. Jesus often used the paradox, Luke 9:48; Matt. 16:25; also Paul in II Cor. 6:8-10).
 - A. It was the most tragic event in history, yet the most wonderful thing in history.
 - B. It was the saddest spectacle man ever beheld, yet out of it came the greatest joy.
 - C. It was Satan’s greatest victory, yet Christ’s greatest victory. Gen. 3:15, Christ won by losing; He conquered by surrendering.
 - D. It was God’s greatest manifestation of hatred for sin, yet His supreme proof of love for the sinner.
 - E. It was the darkest hour in history, yet the time of greatest light.

In view of such paradoxes, we sing “when I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory dies, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.”

- II. Another marvel of the cross is seen in its sacrifice.
 - A. Christ was and is man’s best friend (John 15:13).
 - B. In life and in death, Christ was the perfect demonstration of unselfishness. His entire life was one of concern for others.
 1. Acts 10:38 - This goodness was for enemies as well as friends.
 2. Even on the cross, He thought of others: thief (Luke 23:43); Mother (John 19:26-27); executioners (Luke 23:34). Not asking God to forgive them without repentance. But Jesus knew as Peter in Acts 3:17, that they were ignorant of their crime, thus asking that even they have the same chance of forgiveness as any man. Jesus’ prayer was answered (Acts 2:36-38; 3:14-19).

3. Christ left us an example (I Peter 2:20-25).
4. What kept Jesus on the cross?
 - a. Came to do Father's will (Luke 22:42)
 - b. Jesus knew there was no other way to save you!

III. The marvel of its necessity

- A. It is difficult to comprehend Deity being under necessity, but the cross was a Divine "must" Jesus said (John 3:14).
- B. Why was the cross necessary? When sin was committed, the cross became necessary (Gen. 3:15). Justice is the fundamental principle of Divine authority. The Psalmist said, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of the throne" (Psalm 89:14). Because man, the creation of God, sinned or transgressed the law of His creator he deserved to die. But his death alone could not atone for his sins. (Rom. 3:23). The justice of God demands that propitiation (to appease, to regain the favor) be made. Only Jesus the "son of man" who was a perfect unblemished sacrifice, could atone for the sins of mankind. All the animals sacrificed in the Old Testament which had to be perfect and unblemished foreshadowed the perfect sacrifice of Christ to satisfy the righteousness and justice of God against man's sin. Thus "Jesus died once for all" (II Cor. 5:14,15) and "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed" (I Cor. 5:7). Peter wrote "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (I Pet. 2:24), (Cp. Isa. 53:4-6).

The justice and righteousness of God demanded it.

1. God is just, therefore He would not be indifferent to sin.
2. God is love, therefore He could not be indifferent to the sinner.
3. Through the cross, God was both "just and justifier of those who believe" (Rom. 3:26).

The Old Testament demanded it.

1. The antitypes are meaningless without the cross. (e.g. animal sacrifices, Moses lifting up serpent, John 3:14). Prophecy would be fictitious, (Isa. 53).

The cross was necessary to fulfill the law (Col. 2:14).

IV. The marvel of what it demonstrated

- A. Jesus said (John 8:28); Jesus claimed to be God's son. The cross and resurrection substantiated every claim (Rom. 1:4).
- B. The cross demonstrated that what he had proclaimed in life He would exemplify in death.
 1. Matt. 5:18, 19; Col. 2:14 – At death, the Temple veil rent from top to bottom, signifying the end of Judaism.
 2. John 8:28 – Matt. 27:54
 3. Christ said "it is finished"; at death God said "Amen" when He raised Him from the dead showing His approval of Christ' redemptive work.

CONCLUSION

The cross of Jesus is the central theme of chronology, history, prophecy, humanity and eternity.

Christ' death on the cross was no accident, but was according to God's eternal plan. Some say His blood was "spilled" for us. It was no accident (Gen. 3:15; John 3:14). Sir Robert Anderson said, "An eternal past knew no other future, and an eternal future shall know no other past, save the cross of Christ." The cross was and must continue to be the central theme of our preaching (I Cor. 2:2; Gal. 6:14). We must preach the word exactly as it was delivered lest the cross of Christ be made void (I Cor. 1:17).

Will you come to Christ today by way of the cross, there is no other way. Because Christ died, you can die to sin.

News and Notes:

Reminder: Bible Study – Every Tuesday @ 10 a.m. (Exodus) and @ 7 p.m. (Romans)

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

