

CHAPTER 13

What Does the Cross Mean to a Saved Person?

1. The Cross Reveals the Wisdom and Power of God.

What does the cross mean to unsaved people (1 Corinthians 1:18)? _____ Do they understand the importance and value of the cross? What does the cross mean to saved people? Paul wrote, "but unto us which are saved it is the _____ of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). He also wrote, "but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the _____ of God, and the _____ of God" (1 Cor. 1:24).

Why is there this difference between saved and unsaved people? The key is found in 1 Corinthians 1:21--God saves "them that _____." There are those who believe and take God at His Word and there are those who "B _____ N _____" (2 Cor. 4:4), who are blinded by Satan. The key is not how intelligent a person might be. There are very intelligent people who think the message of the cross is foolishness! Faith is the key. Some people say, "If I could see, then I would believe." This statement is not true. Blind men will never see. The correct order is this: ***If a person believes, then he will see.*** This principle is illustrated by the children of Israel in 2 Corinthians 3:14-16. These people are blind (v.14), and they cannot see the truth of God's Word (they cannot see Christ in the Old Testament). The key is found in verse 16--"Nevertheless when it (the heart) shall turn to the Lord (in faith), the veil shall be taken away." Have you turned your heart to the Lord? Are you one who believes or are you one who refuses to believe? God is the only One who can open the eyes of those who are spiritually blind!

When a person is saved, he must understand that the cross represents our Saviour's substitutionary death. He died for me so that I can have eternal life. The cross a central part of the gospel message (1 Cor. 15:3-4). A newly saved person does not understand everything that he needs to know about the cross. As he grows in the Christian life he will learn more and more about the cross. Should the cross mean much more to him a year after he is saved than when he first believed? Should the cross mean even more ten years later?

The believer sees the cross in a totally different light from how he saw it before he was saved and from how unsaved people see it. The believer was once spiritually blind, and the cross meant nothing to him (1 Cor. 2:14). The cross was FOOLISHNESS to him, but as a saved person, he looks at the cross and sees the POWER and WISDOM of God! He sees in the cross God's *power* to save and change lives by His grace (Romans 1:16). He sees in the cross God's *wisdom* that devised this wonderful plan of salvation that makes it possible for a holy God to save a sinful man.

What does the cross mean to you? Are you thankful for the cross? Why?

In 1 Corinthians 1:18 two groups of people are mentioned (those who are perishing and those who are saved). To which group do you belong?

Has the cross made a difference in your life? Would it have made any difference if Christ had not died on the cross?

2. The Cross Means I Can Enjoy Life.

Out of Christ's death flows LIFE for every believer. The Lord Jesus said, "Verily, verily (truly, truly) I say unto you, He that _____ on Me hath _____" (John 6:47). The Saviour *died* so that I might *live*. This verse is speaking about spiritual life, God's life. It involves a personal relationship to God which begins the moment I believed on Christ and will last forever (John 17:3).

Apart from the CROSS, I could have NO LIFE at all. Before I was saved I was D _____ in _____ and _____ (Eph. 2:1) and I was _____ (separated) from the L _____ of God (Eph. 4:18).

What is LIFE? What is ETERNAL LIFE? Is it just life that never ends or is it more than this? Is it a special quality of life, a special kind of life?

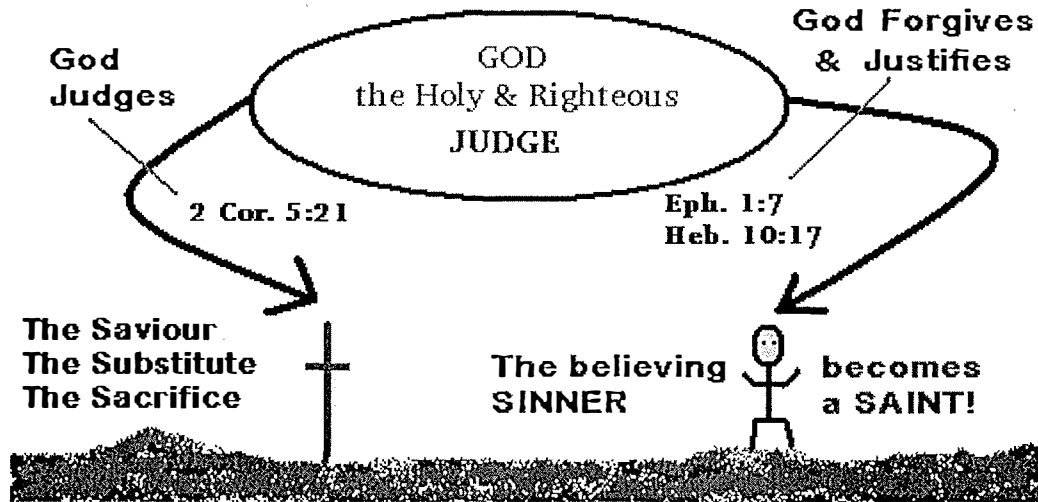
How did the Lord Jesus define LIFE? What did He say that LIFE really is (see John 17:3)?

LIFE is nothing less than KNOWING and having a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP with the one true God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Just as marriage is a love-relationship between two people (husband and wife), so the believer has a love-relationship with his Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Out of this relationship with Christ there should come forth FRUIT (Romans 7:4). Do you have a real and personal relationship with the Saviour? Do you have life? Would any of this have been possible if Christ had not died on the cross? If you are not saved, why don't you have life (John 5:40)? If you are saved, are you enjoying the life that you have? See Galatians 2:20 and compare 1 Timothy 6:12. Are you fruitful? Compare Galatians 5:22-23.

3. The Cross Means That I Can Enjoy Forgiveness.

Can a holy God overlook sin and pretend it is not there? Can a righteous God ignore sin and fail to deal with it? Can the Judge of all the universe "close His eyes" and not punish those who have sinned and done wrong? What would you think of an earthly judge who let a criminal go free without any punishment? Would his judgment be fair? Would his judgment be right? Even if the judge's own son were to stand before him as a guilty criminal, would justice still need to be carried out? Would the guilty one still need to be punished even though he were the son of the judge?

How can God remain righteous and holy and completely forgive and pardon the guilty sinner? How is this possible? *The cross made this possible.* God provided a SAVIOUR for me (Luke 2:10-11). This SAVIOUR became my SUBSTITUTE and took my place. My SUBSTITUTE became a SACRIFICE when He died on the cross for me. Because of the SAVIOUR, the SUBSTITUTE, and the SACRIFICE, I can become a SAINT (a set apart and saved person)! Instead of judging me, God can forgive me because He already judged His Son when Christ died on the cross for my sins. The cross makes it possible for God to *judge sin* and at the same time *justify the sinner*:



Can all your sins be forgiven (Col. 2:13; Acts 10:43)? _____ What has God done to make this possible? What must you do to make this forgiveness a reality in your life? Have you done this? Do you know your sins are forgiven? How do you know? Is 1 John 2:12 true of you? Are you enjoying God's forgiveness?

4. The Cross Makes It Possible for God to Accept Me in Christ Jesus and to Make Me Acceptable (Ephesians 1:6).

Apart from the cross God could never accept me or allow me to enter His holy presence. God's standards are high, and His requirements are very demanding. God will accept nothing less than **perfect righteousness!** In and of yourself, do you have perfect righteousness (Romans 3:10; Isaiah 64:6)? _____ In and of yourself you are totally unacceptable to God!

What did God do for you to make it possible for you to have perfect righteousness? "For He (God the Father) hath made Him (Jesus Christ the Saviour) to be _____ for us (He became the sinner's Substitute), who knew no sin (Christ had no sin Himself but He died for our sins), that we might be made the _____ of _____ in Him (Christ)" (2 Corinthians 5:21). When a person believes on Christ, the righteousness of God is put to his account (Romans 4:5).

In ourselves, we lack God's righteousness, but God's righteousness has been provided for us in Jesus Christ. God's righteousness also protects the believer because it clothes him and makes him acceptable before God. Do you have the righteousness that you need to come before a holy God? Where did you get this righteousness? How did you get this righteousness? Will the unrighteous enter the kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9-10)? _____ Will you? _____ Why?

God *accepts* the believer (receives him, takes him into His presence), and God also makes the believer *acceptable* in Christ Jesus (highly favored). See Ephesians 1:6--"wherein He hath made us *accepted* (highly favored) in the Beloved (in Christ)."

The distinction between these two words ("accept" and "acceptable") is important. A person can go into someone's presence (be accepted) and yet not be highly favored (not be acceptable). Think of a king. A king may allow someone to come into his presence, but this does not

necessarily mean that the person is acceptable to the king. The person may not enjoy the king's favor even though he is in the king's presence. A coach may accept someone to be part of a team, but the person may not be favored by the coach (the coach may ignore him, may make him sit on the bench, may yell at him frequently, etc.). He is accepted on the team but he is not highly favored by the coach. Some believers think this way about the Lord. They believe that God has accepted them (received them) but that God has not highly favored them. They understand that the virgin Mary was highly favored (see Luke 1:30), but they do not believe that God has favored them in that way. How wrong they are! In Christ Jesus every believer is highly favored and acceptable (Ephesians 1:6). God not only receives the believer, but He delights in him!

5. The Cross Means that I Can Stop Working and Start Resting.

What was the victory cry that sounded forth from the cross (John 19:30)?

_____ The work of salvation is finished! It is done! It is accomplished! Do you have a Saviour who has done all, paid all, accomplished all, finished all, and performed all that is necessary for your salvation?

Consider a finished piece of furniture. Suppose you have a beautifully finished piano or wooden cabinet. If it is finished, does it need any more work? Should you try to sand it? Should you try to drive any nails into it? No, these things would only ruin it. If you were to head toward your finished furniture with your saw and sandpaper, your mother would no doubt seek to stop you. If a piece of furniture is unfinished, then it would require work, but a finished piece is **finished!** The work has been done!

Many people are trying in vain to work their way to heaven, and they do not realize that the work has already been done by Christ! God does not want us to work; He wants us to believe that the work has already been done by Christ the Saviour. Does salvation involve working, or does it involve resting upon the work of another (Romans 4: 4-5)?

_____ Christ said, "IT IS FINISHED"!

Every believer should answer by saying, "IT IS ENOUGH!" "It is enough that Jesus died and that He died for me." Is the work which was done by Christ enough for you?

The same principle is true in the Christian life. What really counts is God working in and through the believer, not the believer working for God. In Hebrews 4:10, we learn that the victorious believer has "ceased from his _____". If the believer stops working, then who will do the work? The answer is found in Hebrews 13:20-21 and Philippians 2:13. Who is the One who does the work? _____ Are you letting Him do His work in your life?

6. The Cross Can Teach Me How to Love.

The greatest lesson on love was taught to man at the cross of Calvary: "Hereby perceive we the _____ of God, because He laid down His _____ for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the _____" (1 John 3:16). "Herein is love, not that we _____ God, but that _____ us, and sent His _____ to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so _____ us, we ought also to _____ one another" (1 John 4:10-11).

The best place to see love in action is to look at Calvary's cross. Does love involve giving? How does the cross show His love (Eph. 5:2)? Does love involve sacrifice? How does the cross show His sacrifice (Romans 8:32)? Did God just **SAY** that He loves us or did He **SHOW** that He loves us? _____ Are we to just **SAY** we love, or are we to **SHOW** we love (1 John 3:18)? _____ Did Christ show us and give us a lesson on how to love those who are unlovely (Romans 5:6,8)? Did Christ show us and give us a lesson on how to love those who are our enemies (Romans 5:10)?

The world has many *wrong* definitions of what **love** is. God has given us a careful definition of what **love** really is. This definition is found at Calvary's cross. How would you define "CALVARY LOVE"?

7. The Cross Should Teach Me to Hate Sin.

At the cross we not only learn about the great love of God, but we also learn about the great hatred God has for sin. What is sin? Why is sin so awful? Why does God hate sin? Why should we hate sin?

God hated sin so much that He had to deal severely with it. God had to judge sin, and God had to severely punish the sinner's Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:18). We sing "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know," but we could also sing these words:

**Jesus hates sin; this I know, for Mt. Calvary tells me so.
Holiness to Him belongs; we are weak but He is strong.
Jesus hates sin; He who died, Heaven's gate to open wide.
Jesus bore my load of sin; let His little child come in.**

**YES JESUS HATES SIN! YES JESUS HATES SIN!
YES JESUS HATES SIN! THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO!**

--Stephen Thorpe

What is your attitude towards sin? Are you fond of it? Do you minimize it and fool with it? Do you play with it and tolerate it and allow it? Do you smile at it and laugh at it and make jokes about it? Do you put up with it? Do you justify it and excuse it ("I'm not really so bad", "Others do it" etc.)? Do you live with it? Do you whitewash it? Do you hide it, cover it up or ignore it? Are you concerned about sin? Are you convicted about sin? Do you take sin seriously or lightly? Does it disturb you when you see sin in yourself? In others?

We have many wrong attitudes about sin. The cross of Christ should always remind us of what God thinks of sin!

8. The Cross is the Good News I Can Share with Others.

Without the cross I would have no good news to share with others. I would have no message of salvation. Missionaries would have nothing to say that could help lost men. The cross is at the very heart of the gospel (see 1 Cor. 15:3--"Christ died for our sins"). What message did Paul know (1 Cor. 2:2)?

The cross is one thing that the devil does not want us to talk to people about. We can talk about prophecy or many other subjects, but the devil does not want us talk about THE CROSS--God's only way of salvation.

When we share with unsaved people, we need to bring them face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ so that they will consider the cross. We need to explain what Christ did for them and why His death is so important. Do you know any good salvation verses which speak of Christ and what He did on the cross?

How would you explain these verses to an unsaved person?

9. The Cross Teaches Me About God's Concern for All Men.

Did Jesus Christ die for some men or for all men (1 Timothy 2:6)? _____ Did Jesus Christ die for some people in the world or for the whole world (1 John 2:2)? _____ Did Jesus Christ die for certain men or did He die for every man (Hebrews 2:9)? _____ Did God lay on Christ the iniquities (sins) of some of us or for the iniquities of all of us (see Isaiah 53:6)? _____

The cross shows us God's genuine concern for all men. God has a concern for all men. God desires that all men be S _____ and come to a knowledge of the _____ (1 Timothy 2:4). May the cross teach us to have a concern for all men. God so loved the world (John 3:16)!

Are you concerned for your classmates in school? For your neighbors who live around you? Are you concerned for the people whom you know and with whom you come in contact? Do you desire their salvation? Do you want them to end up in hell? Are they headed that way? Do you have good news for them? Do you desire to share this good news? Why? Why not?

If you were to look out at night and see your neighbor's house on fire, would you do anything? Would you say anything to anyone? Those who are unsaved are headed for a much worse fire--an unquenchable fire. As believers, are we concerned? What can we do about it? What should we do about it? May God give us His concern for lost people!

10. The Cross is the Basis For My Daily Cleansing.

Do believers still have a problem with sin (1 John 1:8)? _____ Can a believer truthfully say, "I have not sinned"! (1 John 1:10)? _____ In order to maintain fellowship with God

believers need CLEANSING and FORGIVENESS. What keeps on cleansing us from all sin (1 John 1:7)? _____ (When you think of His blood, you should think about the work that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished when He died on the cross.) How can God "justly" forgive us when we sin (see 1 John 1:9)? Has the penalty already been paid? Did Christ already die for that sin?

See 1 John chapter 2, verses:1-2. The devil accuses the believer before God. Suppose the devil were to say, "That believer has sinned, and sin demands and deserves death; therefore, that believer must die and go to hell." How can Christ the Righteous Advocate answer this question? Does the cross have anything to do with His answer? Without the cross, the devil would have a real case against the believer. Because of the cross, the Saviour comes to our defense and has a real answer for the devil.

Remember, the real issue in 1 John chapter 1 is loss of fellowship, not loss of salvation. When it comes to salvation, all of the believer's sins were forgiven (past, present and future) the moment he believed on Christ (Acts 10:43). When it comes to fellowship with God, the believer needs to confess His sins and be cleansed because God cannot have fellowship with the believer until his known sins are confessed and cleansed. Our salvation is settled forever the moment we believe; our fellowship is restored the moment we confess. How should a believer handle sin in his life?

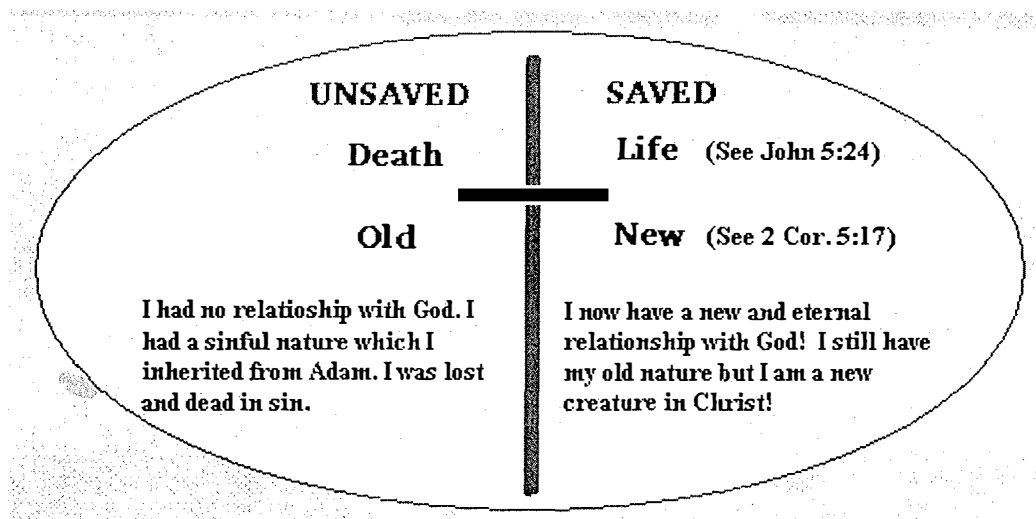
When we sin as believers, we have set God aside as our Controller and have allowed the flesh to control us rather than the Spirit. The result is that God is not able to manifest Himself through us since we are holding onto sin and allowing the flesh to control us. We are not in harmony with Him; we are not enjoying our oneness with Him. Therefore we are hindering His power which frees us from sin, and we are quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit and keeping Him from doing His wondrous work. He is the Vine; we are the branches. When we have unconfessed sin, it is as though the sap cannot flow from the Vine into the branch. How does 1 John 1:9 help us with this?

11. The Cross is the Basis for Daily Victory.

When Christ died, I died! The Bible teaches us this truth in 2 Corinthians 5:14.. This verse teaches that "if one died for all, then all died"! Put your own name in this verse: "if Christ died for _____ (your name), then _____ (your name) died!" As far as your old, sinful, selfish life apart from God is concerned, **you died!** The Bible says that the believer is "dead to S _____" (Romans 6:2) and that "our old man is _____ with Him" (Romans 6:6). As far as your old life is concerned (your old ways, your old ways of thinking, your old habits, your old ways of living, etc.), you died and you are now "alive unto _____" (Romans 6:11). God has given you a brand new life with God at the very center (2 Cor. 5:15-17; Romans 6:4--"newness of life").

How does water baptism picture these great facts? When a believer is baptized in water, what message is he or she seeking to present and picture? See our **study on water baptism**.

Every day the believer needs to reckon that he died with Christ and that he is alive unto God (Romans 6:11). The word reckon means "to count it as fact, to believe it." By faith, the believer needs to see himself as God sees him. How does God see you according to 2 Corinthians 5:17? _____ Is this how you see yourself? How does God see you according to Romans 6:11? _____ Is this really true about you? (If you are a believer it really is true of you!) Count on it! Believe it! Live accordingly! Be what God says you are!



12. The Cross Means I am Dead to the World.

The world has many charms and attractions which draw people toward a life that leaves God out. The world has its fun, its entertainment, its possessions, and many other things to which people get attached.

Use your imagination and consider yourself as a criminal carrying your cross to the appointed place of execution. You are about to die! You are about to say GOODBYE to this world. Suddenly the things of this world do not mean so much to you anymore! The world and the things of the world have little pull on you.

As you are about to be crucified, suppose that remember that you have a million dollars in the bank. Would this money mean very much to you at this point in your life, facing death? If someone offered to give you \$50,000.00, would you really care about this money? Suppose your favorite sports team were playing somewhere in the city. Would this sporting event be much of an attraction to you at this time? Would all your plans be very valuable to you now? No, the cross severs a person from the world with all its charms and attractions.

This severance from the world is what Paul meant when he wrote the words found in Galatians 6:14: "But God forbid that I should glory (boast), save (except) in the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the _____ is _____ unto me, and I unto the _____." When it comes to the world and all its charms, the believer has been crucified! When Christ died, I died (Romans 6:6-8)! The world does not mean very much to a dead man! Isaac Watts wrote these words: "All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood."

Do you consider yourself *dead to the world*, or are you very much alive to the world and all its charms and attractions? By His death on the cross, what has Christ delivered you from (Galatians 1:4)? _____ Are you letting the world conform you, or are you letting Christ transform you (Romans 12:2)?

13. The Cross Makes Prayer Possible.

Through the cross, the unsaved person must come to God (see **chapter 12** of these notes). It is also through the cross that the unsaved person must keep on coming to God. It is only by the _____ of Christ (Ephesians 2:13) that we are able to draw nigh or near to God. It is only through Christ and because of His work on the cross that we are able to have A _____ by one Spirit unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18). If Christ had not died on the cross, would we be able to come before a holy God in prayer (compare Isaiah 59:2)? _____

What happened when Christ died on the cross (Matthew 27:51)?

_____ God died on the cross for a reason. God wanted men to know that the way into God's presence was now open! There is only one way that believers can have boldness to enter into the holiest and that is "by the _____ of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19).

Are you taking advantage of your privilege to enter into God's presence? Do you come to God often in prayer? Do you thank God for the cross which makes it possible for you to pray and draw near to God every day? Apart from the cross, prayer would be impossible!

14. The Cross Should Motivate the Believer.

The cross should motivate believers to love and to good works. "The _____ of Christ (shown on the cross) constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5:14) and gives us the desire to live for the One who died for us (2 Cor. 5:15). As you think of the price that Christ paid to save you, does that inspire you and motivate you? If someone were to pull you out of a burning building and save your life at the cost of his own, would that mean anything to you? If someone were to push you out of the way of an approaching car and get run over to save your life, would that motivate you? Would that mean something to you? Would you be grateful?

Why do believers sometimes act as if Christ did not do anything for them? If Christ died for me, then what is one thing that I ought to do for Him (1 John 3:16)? _____

**But drops of grief can ne'er repay the debt of love I owe; Here,
Lord, I give myself away, 'Tis all that I can do! --Isaac Watts**

What are you doing to show Christ that you are thankful for what He did for you on the cross?

15. The Cross Teaches Me to Give.

"God so loved the world that He G _____" (John 3:16). "The Son of God who loved me and G _____ Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). The cross is the place where we learn about true giving!

Salvation is free, but salvation is not cheap. It cost God the very life of His beloved Son. God gave His very best! God's love gift involved a great price and sacrifice. God gave His all!

God's sacrifice of His beloved Son should teach us about giving. God gave Himself for us (Eph. 5:2)! Should not we give ourselves to Him? It is a good thing to put our money in the offering

plate, but true giving involves more than putting money in the offering plate. According to 2 Corinthians 8:5, what did the Macedonian believers give to the Lord?

_____ When God has **you**, then does He have your money also (compare 1 Cor. 6:19-20)? _____ When God has **you**, does He have your time also? _____ Many people are willing to give God a few dollars and an hour or two of their time here or there, but they are not willing to give Him their hearts and their lives and all that they are and have.

May God's giving at the cross teach us how to give!

16. The Cross Humbles Me.

There is a great lesson on humility found at the cross for every believer. The cross reminds believers that all that we are and all that we have done apart from Christ is not pleasing to God. All that pertained to my old life in Adam was put on the cross and God crucified it. God did not accept any of my deeds or accomplishments or achievements. The only thing God accepted is what His Son did on the cross. God crucified and put to death everything else (Romans 6:6).

This is a very humbling truth. We cannot boast or brag about anything that we have done. We can only boast and brag about Christ and what *He has done* (1 Cor. 1:29-31). Christ deserves and should get all the credit. The only thing we deserve is eternal death and hell.

If God were to ask you, "***WHY SHOULD I ALLOW YOU TO ENTER MY HOLY HEAVEN?***", then how would you answer Him? Would you boast about all you have done to deserve heaven? Would you brag about all of your qualifications which you think make you fit for heaven (see Ephesians 2:8-9)? Answer the following: ***I SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO ENTER GOD'S HOLY HEAVEN BECAUSE***

The cross teaches us a lesson on humility in another way. When we look at the cross, we see how ***God humbled Himself***, was willing to become a man, and was even willing to die a criminal's death on the cross (Phil. 2:7-8). If God who was so HIGH could stoop so LOW for us, should not His example teach us to walk humbly before God and men? If our Saviour was meek and lowly, do we dare be proud?

17. The Cross Means That I Should Trust Christ to Take Care of Every Problem.

Man's biggest problem is this: ***HOW CAN A SINFUL MAN BE IN A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH A HOLY GOD?*** Apart from the cross there is no solution to this problem. The Lord Jesus Himself said that apart from God salvation is impossible (see Matthew 19:26). Many people today try to solve this problem apart from God's solution. They try religion and good works and many other human solutions. They try every way except God's way (John 14:6).

The cross is the only answer to man's biggest problem. The cross is the only place where sinful

man can meet a holy God. Only God has the solution and the answer to man's biggest problem. Have you found the answer to your sin problem? Have you come to the cross in simple faith? Has your biggest problem been solved? Are you right with God?

If God has solved your **BIGGEST PROBLEM**, is He not also able to solve all of the lesser problems that may come your way each day? Which is the biggest problem--the eternal salvation of your soul or passing the exam in your science class in school? If God can save your soul, do you think He can also help you with the school exam? The God who solved the greatest problem can certainly solve the lesser problems of life!

Consider this illustration: A high school boy is very athletic, and his favorite sport is basketball. He has a problem. He has no place at home to play basketball. His father solves this problem by spending thousands of dollars to pave the back yard and construct a beautiful basketball court. When all the work is completed, the son has another problem. He does not have a basketball. Which is the bigger problem--not having a basketball court or not having a basketball? If his father were willing to solve the bigger problem, do you think his father would also take care of the lesser problem? If he could provide a court, do you think he could provide a ball? So also, the God who provided His Son to be our Saviour can also with Him provide everything else that we need (Romans 8:32 and Philippians 4:19)!

18. The Cross Can Comfort Me in Every Trial.

As we live in this world, there are many difficult things that we must go through. There are trials, sufferings, heartaches, disappointments, sicknesses and sorrows. Is there a God who understands what I go through? Is God far-off, distant and unconcerned, or does God know what I go through here on earth? Does God understand and care about me?

Did God ever become a man like us (Heb. 2:14)? Was He "made like unto us" (Heb. 2:17)? Did He know suffering and temptation (Heb. 2:18)? Does He understand our trials and heartaches (Heb. 4:15-16)?

Not only does Christ understand what we go through, but He went through much more. The CROSS was much more than the physical suffering which Christ endured. Other men have been crucified on crosses also and have experienced this torturous death. The cross of Christ involved was much more than physical sufferings. On the cross of Calvary Christ bore the awful wrath and anger of a holy God because of our sins and the sins of the whole world. None of us will ever know the depths of the sufferings that the Saviour endured for us.

You may suffer greatly at some point in your life, but will you ever suffer as much as Christ did? _____ You may go through some very difficult times, but will you ever go through what Christ went through? _____ Our Saviour is not a distant God who knows nothing about our plight. Our Saviour is a "man of _____ and acquainted with _____" (Isaiah 53:3). He knows, He cares, and He can comfort me!

19. The Cross Can Teach Me How to React When Wronged by Others.

Have you ever been wronged by someone when you did not deserve it at all? Have you ever been mistreated even though you did nothing wrong? Have you ever been falsely accused (accused of doing something that you never did)? Have you ever been in trouble for something that was not your fault?

Does the cross teach us anything about experiencing mistreatment? Why was the Lord Jesus put on the cross? Was it for crimes that He had done? Was He innocent or guilty? Did He deserve the cross? Was He falsely accused?

The Lord Jesus Christ was perfectly innocent. He suffered for things which he had never done. He even suffered for our sins (1 Peter 2:24 and 1 Peter 3:18). How did the Lord react to this unfair treatment (see 1 Peter 2:23)? Did He fight back? Did He try to defend Himself? Did He seek to avenge and repay those who had wronged Him and "get back at them"?

There are many lessons we can learn from the way Christ treated His enemies when He died on the cross. Never forget that when you are treated unfairly, there is a Saviour in heaven who fully understands!

20. The Cross Means That I Do Not Need to Fear Death.

Death has been called the "king of fears" (compare Hebrews 2:15). Most people try not to think much about death, but when they do they have a great fear of it. Deep within their hearts they know that they are not prepared for death and for eternity. Deep within their being they are afraid to meet the Judge (compare Hebrews 9:27).

Bees are feared and respected because of their stingers. Without their stingers, they would be quite harmless. The Bible teaches that death has a very strong sting: "The _____ of _____ is sin; and the _____ of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56). Who won the victory over sin and death (1 Cor. 15:57)? _____ By His death on the cross Christ took care of the sin problem and He removed the stinger from death! Just as we need not fear a bee that has no stinger, so the believer need not fear death.

The New Testament teaches that a believer can actually look forward to death, without fear. In Philippians 1:21, Paul says, "to die is _____ (not loss)." What was Paul's desire according to Philippians 1:23? _____ What was Paul's desire according to 2 Corinthians 5:8? _____

If Christ had not died on the cross, could a person look forward to death? Why not?

Are you able to think about your own death without fear? Do you know for sure what will happen to you when you die? What message do you have to share with others who might be afraid to think about death?

21. The Cross Means the Devil is a Defeated Foe.

The cross proved that God was right and that the devil was wrong! It was at the cross that the Saviour gained a great victory over Satan:

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the _____ of this _____ be cast out" (John 12:31 and see verses 32-33).

"Of judgment, because the _____ of this _____ is judged" (John 16:11).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through _____ He might _____ him that had the power of death, that is, the _____" (Hebrews 2:14). "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might _____ the works of the _____" (1 John 3:8).

Satan is a defeated foe! When Christ died on the cross, the devil received a fatal blow to the head (Genesis 3:15). Every believer needs to know that Christ has won the victory and that we are on the victory side. Satan is still active in the world (1 Peter 5:8), but he is on the losing side! In fact, he has already lost!

On which side are you? Are you on the winning side? Do you serve Christ or do you serve Satan? Are you going to spend eternity with Christ (1 Thess. 4:17) or with Satan (Matthew 25:41)? Will you be an eternal loser or an eternal winner?

22. The Cross Means That I Can Enjoy Freedom!

Have you ever seen a slave? Perhaps you have never seen a man bound by chains, but the world is filled with slaves. Who is a slave? The Lord Jesus said "whosoever committeth sin is the _____ (slave) of _____" (John 8:34).

Today there are many examples of slavery to sin. Think of those who are chain-smokers. They do not control the cigarette, but the cigarette controls them. Think of those who repeatedly get drunk. Do they control the bottle, or does the bottle control them? The same is true in many other areas. There are many people who know that they are doing wrong and do not want to keep on doing wrong, but they have no power to stop and no power to do right. It would be as easy for a leopard to change his spots as it would be for a person accustomed to do evil (a slave to it) to do good (Jeremiah 13:23).

Is there any hope for those who are slaves to sin (see John 8:36)? _____ The birth of Christ does not set a person free from sin. The death of Christ on the cross that does this and a living, risen Saviour provides victory. Freedom was accomplished at the cross, but it must be personally received by faith. Has Christ set you free from sin (see Romans 6:18,22)? What does this freedom mean? Are you free to live as you please or are you free to serve Christ (Romans 6:18,22)? _____ Everyone is either a slave to sin or a slave to the Lord Jesus Christ! Sin is a terrible master. Christ is a wonderful Lord and Master!

We have discussed what the cross of Christ should mean to every believer. We have mentioned twenty-two things, but there are many more. As we grow in the Lord (2 Peter 3:18), the cross should mean more and more to us. May the Lord open our eyes and give us understanding of these things (2 Tim. 2:7). May the message of the cross become more and more precious to us!

* * * * *

This concludes our study of MAN, CHRIST, SIN and THE CROSS. We have learned about ourselves, our Saviour, our problem, and God's solution! Make sure that Jesus Christ is your Saviour from sin! May you boast in a crucified Saviour! May you enjoy God's abundant life! May you have God's highest and God's best always! May He have first place in your life. He deserves it!

THE THREE TREES

"AND THEY OVERCAME HIM (SATAN) BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB, AND BY THE WORD OF THEIR TESTIMONY."
 Revelation 12:11



①

"When the woman saw that the **tree** was - - - to be desired to make one wise, she - - did eat."
 Gen. 3:6

②

"But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman* "Jesus of Nazareth - - - whom they slew and **hanged** on a **tree**."†

‡ "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that **hangeth on a tree**."
 * Gal. 4:4 RV. † Acts 10:38 39 ‡ Gal. 3:13



GOLGOTHA



③

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the **tree** of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."
 Rev 2:7

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the **tree**,"

that we, being **dead** to sins, should **live** unto righteousness!"
 † Peter 2:24

J. P. A. S.