

The Cross as a present Experience - Sermon at ASCK 19/04/2017

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Philippians 3: 10 -11

“ I want to know Christ and the power of His Resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like him in His death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead”. Phil.3: 10-11

Robert Stevens describes the Cross Experience as a believer's personal acceptance of the fullness of Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

Hymn: *When I survey the wondrous Cross.....*

The Concept of the Cross Experience

- It includes salvation but it expresses more than that. (Salvation by Jesus Christ was once for All and is for all who believe (Acts 10:34 -48).
- Mark this; To be saved is not just being sincere, being good people, helping others and not hurting anyone but a combination of all that together with belief that Jesus died for you. We are saved by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ not by our good works or efforts (Ephesians 2: 8 -9).
- What does being saved once for all mean? Ref to Hebrews 9: 23- 28 “*So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and He will appear a second time not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him*”. By one sacrifice, Jesus Christ has destroyed the works of the devil that believers may be righteous, Holy and happy.

On the Cross

Jesus Christ

- reconciled us to God – 2 Cor. 5:18
- Forgave our trespasses – Mathew 6:14-15
- Abolished the demands of the law – Romans 10:4
- Defeated principalities and powers – Colossians 2:15
- Perfected those who are sanctified- Hebrews 10:14
- Brought us to fullness of life (Col.1:19 -22, Eph. 2:11-16, Col.2:13-15, Hebrews 10:8-14, John 3:16).

The Cross is the gate way to heaven

- Jesus Christ's complete salvation does not stop at forgiveness but in sanctification and transformation.
- The Cross was not just where Christ died but the place where the victory of the Lord was made complete.
- Christ's victory on the cross is not some mystical hocus – pocus (magic or tricks by a magician) but real. Not only are we required to identify with the cross but we must experience it..... We must walk in the spirit of the Lord, and live it (experience it).
- In John 14:6 Jesus Christ declared “ I am the way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the father except through me”. He is the gate to heaven through this reconciliatory action on the cross!

On the Cross our old self was crucified

- It is important that the believer be aggressive in appropriating the fullness of what Christ did for each of us and not to resist, refuse, or reject the power of the cross. Reminder song: *I have decided to follow Jesus. The Cross before me, the world behind me.* Not the world before me, the cross behind me as the practice is today in our Christian life!!!!
- Righteousness cannot be worked up in the flesh but rather for the believer to take initiative to bring the sinful nature to the cross of Christ and nail it there. Golotha X 2 song
- Through Christ we are crucified to the world and the world to us (Galatians 6:4 - 10 “ Each one should test his/ her own actions.” Verse 7 “*Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his/ her sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction. The one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*”

On the Cross our old self was crucified

- Romans 6:2 “ By no means! How can we who died to sin live in it any longer? Verse 6 “ Old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless that we should no longer be slaves of sin”
- 2nd Stanza: *Forbid it Lord, that I should boast save in the death of Christ my God! All the vain things that charm me most I sacrifice through His blood.*

Benefits of the Cross

- The Cross of Jesus is central to the Christian faith.
- His love for sinners and His perfect justice meet at the cross. “It is finished” was equal to Mission Accomplished.
- If we want to grow in our love for God, we must understand and appreciate the cross which shows us His great love.
- The Cross is a place where all wounds of sin are healed. Look to the cross to go through the waves of this world including false doctrine promoted by some of our churches today; Holy water, Rice, Giving a seed as a condition for becoming wealthy, getting a visa to go abroad, getting a good job, a car and the like..
- **The Solutions to all our problems come from the Cross of Christ.**
- All the benefits of Jesus Christ’s death became ours! Therefore, experience the cross from the words in 1 Peter 2:25 which point to a turning from the self-willed life that seeks our own way to a life yielded to the shepherding and oversight of Jesus Christ.

God bless you as you allow your life to experience the cross of Jesus Christ!