

***“What Do You See When You Look At The Cross”***

Romans 3:21 - 26; John 3: 16 – 21; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5: 11 – 21; **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11: 23 – 32 (Sermon)**

Throughout Jesus’ ministry Jesus was looking ahead to the cross.

On several occasions Jesus told His disciples that He would be betrayed, arrested, and crucified.

Jesus wanted to make sure His disciples knew why His death was necessary and Jesus wanted to make sure His disciples knew that He was going to willingly lay down His life for the sins of the world.

On the night Jesus instituted The Lord’s Supper Jesus taught His disciples the meaning of this sacrament and Jesus said, ***“Do this in remembrance of me.”*** (Luke 22:19)

This morning we have the privilege of celebrating The Sacrament of The Lord’s Supper.

What we do **or** the way we do this sacrament is not nearly as important as what we remember, what we feel in our heart, and what we believe when we receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

So I want to ask each of you a question: *What do you see when you look at the cross?*

I want to suggest five things that you should see every time you look at the cross.

First, when we look at the cross each one of us should see ourselves nailed to the cross.

You see, Jesus took our place. Jesus suffered and died for our sins.

The Bible is crystal clear.

We are all sinners and the penalty for sin is death. (Romans 3:23 & 6:23)

We are the ones who are guilty and we all deserve to die.

Sin separates us from our holy God.

But the good news of Jesus is that Jesus loves you so much and Jesus wants you to be with Him so much that Jesus willingly took your place on the cross and Jesus suffered and died in your place.

Today many people have a tendency to ignore God’s laws and / or consider God’s commandments out-dated.

People also want to do their own thing so they have a natural tendency to excuse or rationalize their own sin.

But God is not mocked.

If we honestly look at ourselves and if we will compare ourselves with Jesus and Jesus’ teachings we will quickly conclude that we all fall short of God’s standard of righteousness.

When we take an honest look at the cross we should picture ourselves suffering the consequences of our sinful attitude and being punished for our sinful acts.

However, the good news of Jesus is that Jesus took our place and Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us.

So the second thing we should see when we look at the cross is Jesus' unconditional and Jesus' sacrificial love.

The holiness and justice of God demands punishment for sin.

But, God in His infinite love for mankind chose to die on the cross and rise from the grave so that we could be in The Lord's presence and so we could enjoy fellowship with Him both now and throughout eternity.

Since Jesus is God in the flesh, God and God alone, could provide the only perfect and complete sacrifice for the sins of all mankind.

Which is the third thing you should see when you look at the cross.

Jesus is our only hope of being saved.

In John 1:29 we read that Jesus was The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Jesus said, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father except through me."*** (John 14:6)

Christianity is the **only** religion where a loving God reaches down to pull mankind up to Him.

All other religions are based on people doing good works in an attempt to earn God's favor.

4:12 is crystal clear. ***"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we are saved."***

And in 1st Timothy 2:5 we read, ***"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men."***

We have an empty cross because Jesus rose from the grave.

Jesus is alive and Jesus will come to earth again.

When Jesus comes again He will destroy all evil and Jesus will establish His eternal kingdom.

So the fourth thing we should see when we look at the cross is Jesus as King.

Revelation 19:16 tells us Jesus is The King of Kings and The Lord of Lords.

We should also visualize Jesus' promise of a place where there is no more sorrow, no more tears, no more evil, no more pain, and no more death.

A place where everyone loves The Lord and everyone loves each other.

A place where everyone is anxious to worship The Lord and is constantly singing praises to The Lord. We call that place heaven.

This morning we have the privilege of celebrating the Sacrament of The Lord's Supper.

In the elements of bread and grape juice we are vividly reminded of how completely and how freely Jesus gave His very life for us.

Jesus' example of obedience and dedication to His Father and to all mankind should inspire us to serve Jesus Christ with all that we are.

So the fifth thing we should see when we look at the cross is a personal call to be totally committed to the cause of Jesus Christ.

Jesus calls us to be His disciples, to learn from Him, to be like Him, to act like Him, to obey Him, and to carry on His work of reconciling mankind to God and reconciling mankind to each other.

Jesus calls us to be His ambassadors and to be His witnesses.

Jesus said; ***“anyone who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.”*** (Matthew 10:38)

The cross is not just decoration in a church nor is the cross just a pretty piece of jewelry you wear.

The cross is a constant reminder of the total sacrifice Jesus made to defeat the power of sin and death so that you would be free to enjoy the abundant life that God planned for you while you are on this earth and so you could be with Him in heaven throughout eternity.

Jesus willingly died for you. Jesus volunteered to take your place on the cross.

Jesus offers you the gift of life. So the question is *have you accepted the gift of life by asking Jesus to be your Savior?*

God does not send anyone to hell.

The only people who will end up in hell are the ones who refuse or the people who neglect to accept Jesus as their personal savior.

If you have never publicly asked Jesus to be your Savior I beg you to see me or one of the Elders before you leave here today.

Tomorrow maybe too late for you because The Lord may call you home today.

If you have already asked Jesus to be your Savior have you made Jesus The Lord of your life?

You see if you are truly thankful for what Jesus has done for you would make a commitment to live your life for Jesus.

*“Are you living each day for Jesus” or “Are you living each day for yourself?”*

So I ask you again:

- When you look at the cross do you see your sinful attitude and are you really ashamed of your sinful acts?
- When you look at the cross do you see Jesus’ unconditional and sacrificial love for you?
- When you look at the cross are you reminded that Jesus is your only hope of being saved from your sin?
- When you look at the cross do you long for the day when Jesus will return, to destroy evil, and to establish His eternal kingdom?
- When you look at the cross are you reminded of your duty to tell the people around you what Jesus has done for you and eager to tell them the difference Jesus is making in your life?
- When you look at the cross are you reminded of your commitment to live your life for Jesus?

When you remember that Jesus voluntarily took your place on the cross, shouldn’t you constantly thank Jesus for sparing you the pain and misery of spending eternity in hell?

If you are truly thankful for Jesus saving your soul you will be totally committed to serving The Lord each and every day.

Every time you look at a cross you should remember these five things.

**AMEN**