

March 1, 2020

Reflecting on the Cross

By Michael Hickox

Olney Church of Christ

220 North Van Street
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Services

Sunday

Bible Study	9:30 am
A.M. Worship	10:20 am
P.M. Worship	2:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Class	7:00 pm
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Elders: Mike Gerber, Travis Hall

Deacons: John Frost, Dave Goff,
Roger Sholders

Visitors are welcome

We offer Bible classes for all ages

We also offer in-home Bible studies

We have Bible lessons on the radio
(92.9 FM) Sundays from 8:00-8:30 a.m.

As we study the Scripture's teachings related to the cross of Christ, we can learn much about God, the depth of His blessings, and how we should respond.

For instance, the cross of Christ helps us understand the *depth of God's love*.

The One sin is foremost *against* planned a means by which sinners could be *forgiven*, and He carried out this plan by giving His Son to die. There has never been a greater demonstration of love.

A key word to not miss in **John 3:16** is the word "**so**." The fact that God gave His only begotten Son not only shows that God loves us, but it shows the *extent* of His love for us.

The depth of *Christ's* love is likewise shown through His death. Jesus went to the cross *willingly* (**John 10:17-18**). While the Father *commanded* Him to go the cross, Jesus had free will, and thus had to *choose* to do so. His choice shows His genuine love for the souls of mankind.

Jesus' willingness to go to the cross also perfectly exemplifies what it means to *obey* (cf. **Phil. 2:8**).

It is easy to obey God when doing so fits in one's comfort zone, yet seek to be *excused* from obedience when God's will is more challenging.

Any time we are tempted to "excuse" ourselves from something that God commands, we might ask, "what if Christ had excused Himself from going to the

Reflecting on the Cross

(Continued)

cross?” He obeyed the Father’s will for Him at all costs, and so must we (**Matt. 16:24**).

Christ’s obedience to this part of the Father’s will for Him also exemplifies *endurance* (**Heb. 12:2-3**).

When Jesus faced severe trials, He did not compromise His integrity. He did what was right even through suffering (**1 Pet. 2:21-23**), and thus showed what it means to have a commitment to God that does not waver.

The severe beatings, ridicules, and crucifixion endured by Jesus demonstrate the *seriousness of sin*. When we consider the extent God was willing to go to so our sins could be forgiven, we see just how great a *problem* sin is.

Had God *not* allowed His Son to go to the cross, we would all be doomed to eternal death in hell (**Rom. 6:23**).

Through the cross, though, Jesus made it possible for us to be saved from sin and its consequences (**Rom. 5:9**).

Through His crucifixion, Jesus made *redemption* possible (**Eph. 1:7**).

Any time a person sins, he or she becomes enslaved to sin (**John 8:34**). The debt that is owed to be released from the bondage of sin is too high for any one of us to pay. Through His death on the cross, *Jesus* paid the ransom price to free His followers from the bondage of sin (**Matt. 20:28**).

Christ’s crucifixion has also made *reconciliation* possible (**Rom. 5:10**). When a person chooses to sin, he or she chooses

to separate him or herself from God. Were it not for the cross of Christ, that separation would exist eternally. Through Christ, though, a “bridge” has been created that we can cross to return to fellowship and harmony with God.

If we understand and appreciate these blessings, it helps us see the *folly* of *arrogance* and *boasting in self*. Without Christ’s crucifixion, we would be nothing but hopeless sinners doomed for eternal condemnation in hell. It is thus fitting for all to have the mindset, “***far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ***” (**Gal. 6:14**).

Moreover, as we reflect on the cross, it should *motivate* us to *surrender* our lives to the One who gave His life for us. As **2 Corinthians 5:15** says, “***He died for all, that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to Him who for their sakes died and rose again.***”

If we appreciate the crucifixion of Christ, how could we respond any other way? We cannot fully repay God and His Son for the love He’s shown us, but we *can* devote our lives to bringing Him glory.

As the hymn *I Gave My Life for Thee* says, “I gave, I gave My life for thee, What hast thou giv’n for Me?”

Love, endurance, humility, gratitude, and joy should naturally result from a heart that understands and appreciates the cross of Christ.

Area Gospel Meetings

Mattoon Southside Church of Christ:

March 9-15 (with Michael Hickox)
M-Sat: 7:00; Sun: 9:30, 10:30, 6:00

Walnut Chapel Church of Christ:

March 15-20 (with J F Dancer)
Sun: 9:30, 10:20, 6:00; M-F: 7:00

Hazel Dell Church of Christ:

March 22-27 (with Chuck Richardson)
Sun: 9:30, 10:30, 6:00; M-F: 7:00

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God's Plan for Saving Man

God's Grace	Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood	Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit's Gospel	Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith	Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance	Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession	Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism	1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Work	James 2:24
Christian's Hope	Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance	Revelation 2:10

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Words to Consider

"Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, 'Rejoice!'" – Philippians 4:4

Prayer List

Holly G
Sandy S
Betty P
Mabel H
Cheryl S
Norma C
Allen S (Cancer)
Raymond & Maxine
Randy & Kim S
Ken & Chris F
Brandon O's Grandmother (Lung Cancer)
Jeanette's Mother, Fontella
Jerry S (Prostate Cancer)
Larry S

Daily Bible Reading

March 1 – Numbers 12-14; Mark 5:21-43
 March 2 – Numbers 15-16; Mark 6:1-29
 March 3 – Numbers 17-19; Mark 6:30-56
 March 4 – Numbers 20-22; Mark 7:1-13
 March 5 – Numbers 23-25; Mark 7:14-37
 March 6 – Numbers 26-28; Mark 8
 March 7 – Numbers 29-31; Mark 9:1-29

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

– Psalm 119:105

Prayer Leaders

Sunday, March 1, 2020

Bible Study: Carlyle

Worship: John

Evening: Harold

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Larry

Clean Building

Misty

Prepare Communion

Misty

Upcoming Reminders

March 28: Ladies' Bible Class @ 9:30 a.m.

Study: Women of the NT (Lessons 4-5)

April 19-24: Gospel Meeting with J F Dancer

Assignments

Sunday, March 8, 2020

Reading: Dave

Announcements: Roger

Table: Travis

Serve: Steve

Dave

Dan H

Mike

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

Invitation: Jeff

Anniversaries

March 22 – Raymond & Maxine

March 28 – John & Cynde

Birthdays

March 13 – Harold

March 15 – Anna

March 23 – Patty