

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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1 Stretched on the cross, the Saviour dies;
Hark! His expiring groans arise!
See, from His hands, His feet, His side,
Runs down the sacred crimson tide!

2 But life attends the deathful sound,
And flows from every bleeding wound;
The vital stream, how free it flows
To save and cleanse His rebel foes!

3 To suffer in the traitor's place,
To die for man, surprising grace!
Yet pass rebellious angels by--
Oh why for man, dear Saviour, why?

4 Can I survey this scene of woe,
Where mingling grief and wonder flow;
And yet my heart unmoved remain,
Insensible to love or pain?

5 Come, dearest Lord! Thy grace impart,
To warn this cold, unfeeling heart;
Till all its powers and passions move
In melting grief and ardent love.

Anne Steele (1717-1778)

The Heart of Christianity

"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

1 Corinthians 1:23-24

The crucified Christ is the very heart of Christianity. The blood atonement is the central issue in Redemption—"the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The substitutionary atonement is the central fact of the Gospel. The crucifixion of Christ also demands the resurrection of Christ for our justification. Remember Paul's

words, “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved ... unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen...” (1 Cor. 15:1-5).

“The Crucifixion of Jesus overturned all human values and upset all accepted standards. With Calvary near at hand, Jesus had warned His disciples: ‘All ye shall be offended because of me this night’ (Matt. 26:31); and following Him in any age demands acceptance of this offence of the Cross.... Because of the centrality of the Cross, Christians have to remember that in the Church success often comes through defeat; life is given through death; gain is born in the hour of loss” [R. Stuart Loudon]. The world looked at the cross as Christ’s defeat but in reality, it was Satan’s defeat and the defeat of the world system that God intends to replace.

Our habitual practice should be to preach Christ crucified. The submission of Christ to crucifixion was not effective only at a moment in time, but the results of it are effectual even now! Please consider that Paul did not perform signs and neither did he give rationalistic proofs, but *He preached Christ’s cross* which was not the acceptable norm for two groups: it was a cause of stumbling for the Jews, and it was a matter of foolishness for the Gentiles.

The Lord’s work is not accomplished by the world’s methods or according to the world’s standards. The arm of flesh is always a failure, but the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God will have the ultimate victory!

J. C. Hiden a Confederate Chaplain said, “When two men are talking about Christianity, and one of them utters reverently the words, ‘Christ crucified,’ I know that he holds the New Testament view of Christian doctrine that he is an evangelical Christian. ‘Christ crucified’ is Christianity. *It is our religion.*”

The effectual working of God the Holy Spirit is essential in preaching Christ Crucified! Evangelist Rolfe Barnard noted, “We must be done with preaching a gospel that can be understood apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. We must be done with preaching a gospel that man can accept with no loss to his pride or his high self-esteem. We must be done with preaching a gospel that man can receive apart from dying. What supreme foolishness it is to preach that a Babe born in Bethlehem, who lived in Nazareth (from which no good thing ever came), who lived all His days in a small country called Palestine, who wound up on a tree outside the Holy City of Jerusalem, who was buried in another man’s grave ... what foolishness it is to preach, I repeat, this One as eternal, exalted Lord

of all, before whom all must bow! No one but an idiot or a born-again one could possibly so believe! To expect the carnal mind (Rom. 7:8), the seat of hostility to God, to accept this is silly—apart from the work of God the Holy Spirit, it cannot be done.”

“Oh! what is that cross on the back of Christ? My sins; oh! what is that crown on the head of Christ? My sins; oh! what is the nail in the right hand and that other in the left hand of Christ? My sins; oh! what is that spear in the side of Christ? My sins” [Isaac Ambrose]. Only the blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son can cleanse me from all sin as the five bleeding wounds attest.

Now, here we are in a world full of wickedness. We Christians are struggling against the power of darkness, and striving hard to point the world to the crucified Christ. We are in a hand-to-hand fight with the world, the flesh and the devil. Some are criticizing God’s plan for the campaign, which is preaching Christ crucified! Yes, some find such preaching offensive, some find such preaching a stumbling-block and some find such preaching foolishness. What is new? We have already been told, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18).

’Tis done—the precious ransom’s paid
‘Receive my soul,’ He cries;
See how He bows His sacred head,
He bows His head and dies.

But soon He’ll break death’s iron chain
And in full glory shine;
O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine?

C. H. Spurgeon proclaimed, “So, in preaching Christ crucified, we preach the glory of heaven conjoined with the beauty of earth, the perfection of humanity united with the glory and dignity of Deity.”