

Foundations of the Faith 103
Systematic Theology
“Christology”
The Achievement and Influence of The Cross
Pt. 24

Introduction - “Moved by the perfection of his holy love, God in Christ substituted himself for us sinners on the cross.” That is the heart of the cross of Christ! But, what did Christ accomplish by his self-sacrifice, his self-substitution?

I. The Achievement of the Cross

Summed up in three words:

1. Salvation
2. Revelation
3. Conquest

What God in Christ has done through the cross is to:

1. Rescue us
2. Disclose himself
3. Overcome evil

First, Salvation - God rescued us.

- a. Propitiation
- b. Redemption
- c. Justification
- d. Reconciliation

So four New Testament images of what God has done through the cross!

- e. Substitution - is not another image; it is the reality which lies beneath them all.

II. The Influence of the Cross

The cross must influence every area of our thinking and living! This is seen in Paul’s letter to the Galatians. Paul defends the Gospel. In Galatians we have a comprehensive grasp of the pervasive influence of the cross.

1. The Cross and Salvation, 1:3-5

- a. His death was both determined and voluntary. “According to the will of God and our Father,” (vs. 4). “Who gave himself,” (vs. 4).
- b. His death was for our sins - “For our sins,” (vs. 4). Our sins, but His death!
- c. The purpose of His death was to rescue us - “That purpose of His death was to rescue us.” “That he might deliver us from...,” (vs. 4).
- d. The present results of His death. “Grace and peace,” vs. 3.
- e. The eternal results of His death is the glory of God (vs. 5).

Here, then, in one pregnant sentence, is Paul’s first statement in Galatians about the cross. Although it was determined eternally by the Father’s will, Jesus gave himself voluntarily for us. The nature of his death was the penalty for our sins, and its purpose was to rescue us from the old age and transfer us to the new, in which we receive grace and peace now, and God receives glory for ever. - John R. W. Stott

2. The Cross and Experience, vs. 2:19-21

What does Paul mean in verse 19? Study the context (vs. 16) -(vs. 19).

To sum up, Christ died for me, and I died with him, meeting the law’s demands and paying sin’s just penalty. Then Christ rose again and lives, and I live through him, sharing in his resurrection life. Justification by faith, then, does not set aside God’s grace (vs. 21). Nor (as in Rom. 6) does it presume on it, saying ‘where sin abounds much more’. No, justification by faith magnifies the grace of God, declaring that it is by his grace alone. It is the notion of justification by law which sets aside the grace of God, for if a righteous status before God were attainable by law-obedience, then Christ’s death was superfluous. - John R. W. Stott

3. The Cross and Preaching, 3:1-3

The cross in Paul’s preaching:

1. Gospel-preaching is proclaiming the cross.
2. Gospel-preaching is proclaiming the cross visually.
3. Gospel-preaching proclaims the cross visually as a present reality.
4. Gospel-preaching proclaims the cross as a visual present and permanent reality (Rom. 1:16).
5. Gospel-preaching proclaims the cross also as the object of personal faith (Gal. 3:2).

4. The Cross and Substitution, 3:10-14

1. "All who rely on the law are under a curse."
2. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us."
3. "Christ died in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by faith (vs. 14).

5. The Cross and Persecution, 5:11 & 6:12

6. The Cross and Holiness, 5:24

7. The Cross and Boasting, 6:14

1. It's to see it as the way of salvation and acceptance with God.
2. To see it as the pattern self-denial.