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— Our Pastors Speak —



FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

The Cross— Atonement of God

by Rev. B. C. Cochrane

No doctrine of the scriptures is more clearly and consistently set forth than that of redemption through the shedding of blood. According to the Word of God, the hope of man's salvation rests on One Who was "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities."

The Cross of Christ not only "towers o'er the wrecks of time", it also towers high above all mountain peaks of inspired truth, the central fact in the story of human redemption.

The Old and New Testaments united in perfect accord in proclaiming to all sinners who seek salvation: "Not without blood!" Redemption's crimson flow rises in pre-historic eternity, first appears in Eden's Paradise Lost, colours all ancient and God-accepted worship, is unflinching present in the religious ceremonies of Old Testament Jewry, appears distinctly in the prophetic announcements of a coming Messiah, and becomes a boundless ocean of merit and grace through Calvary's suffering Savior. Every bloodless substitute presented by the guilty and defiled is rejected, and a righteous God keeps before the people of every generation the unrelenting rule: ". . . without the shedding of blood, there is no remission . . ."

The Edenic pronouncement against sin and the sinner, and the declaration of a Divine plan for the redemption of fallen humanity, contained the prophecy of conflict unto death, and salvation by supreme sacrifice. Satan's successful assault against man was actually a challenge flung heavenward and God-ward, and the Almighty answered the challenge with a declaration of war that would be waged without compromise and without regard for cost. The battle would not be between the devil and man, for Satan had already won the victory there; the battle would be between Satan and Christ, and it would be a fight to the finish. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and it shall bruise his heel," was the word of promise and prophecy concerning the titanic struggle between spiritual forces, supremely powerful in their respective spheres. The Redeemer would suffer serious and painful wounds in the fray, but Satan would be mortally wounded.

At Calvary the dreadful conflict reached its last stage. All the forces of evil were marshalled in one last gigantic effort to frustrate and force back the One who had come "to seek and to save that which was lost." Every

previous effort designed to deter and defeat Him had ended in failure, and through the Cross and all that it represents, Satan made a supremely ruthless effort to conquer the spirit of the Saviour and retain his right to hold man in eternal captivity. But as we know full well, Satan lost and Jesus won! The Saviour was "wounded" and "bruised", 'tis true, but Satan was left prostrate in defeat.

"On that green hill, our Lord drew sin to battle-- and beat it," wrote Dr. W. E. Sangster. "It is finished" is a cry of victory that has been ringing down through the ages. The cross, long "the emblem of suffering and shame" still represents suffering, but a suffering for sin and the sinner that purchased the right of redemption for every one born under the curse. The bleeding wounds and "dyed garments" of the Saviour, are testimonials of both conflict and victory. From Calvary he comes, "a solitary warrior, striding forth with the look of a conqueror about him, his crimson robes streaming behind him . . ." (the word picture given us by Dr. Clarence Macartney) announcing as he comes ". . . the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

"The Son of God . . . loved me, and gave himself for me" is the testimony of the New Testament believer. "We preach Christ and him crucified" is the text of the New Testament preacher. Both the testimony and the text are the products of Calvary's sacrifice, and only as the preacher centres his message in Calvary and the sinner comes to the Cross, will the work of redemption continue in the world.

As the Sun in the heavens is central to the Solar System, drawing all related bodies toward it and providing them with light and life, so the Cross of Christ is central

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★ ★ ★ *Pure and Holy*

Pure and holy I would be;
Jesus, Saviour, dwell in me;
Seal Thine image on my heart,
Make me perfect as Thou art.
Fount of mercy, life, and rest,
King exalted, ever blest;
Thou on whom I cast my care,
Hear, oh, hear, and grant my prayer.
Pure and holy I would be,
Drawn by closer bonds to Thee;
Lord, my waiting heart inspire,
Kindle there devotion's fire.
While Thy goodness I proclaim,
And with rev'rence praise Thy name,
Thou on whom I cast my care,
Hear, oh, hear, and grant my prayer.

—Fanny J. Crosby