

Come By the Way of the Cross

By Dr. David H. McKinley

Every day, we encounter a variety of emblems, logos, and symbols used to create interest, identity, and importance. The most significant symbol of the Christian faith is the cross. With the prominence of the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, we have a new awareness of the cross and its role in the Christian faith.

WHY WE MUST COME BY THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Condemnation

Without question, the cross was a tool of punishment and execution. Crucifixion was preceded by condemnation. Jesus Christ went to the cross to bear the condemnation of *our* sin.

For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

ROMANS 3:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. ROMANS 6:23

"The great conclusion to the suffering and death of Christ is that, 'There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).' To be 'in Christ' means to be in relationship to Him by faith . . . Christ becomes our punishment (which we don't have to bear) and our perfection (which we cannot perform)." —JOHN PIPER

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ISAIAH 53:6

Reconciliation

While we are condemned, separated, and without hope apart from Christ, God sent His Son to reconcile us—to provide the bridge between God and us by way of the cross.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation, now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:19-21

Obligation

God established a moral law to demonstrate the sinfulness of all mankind. Jesus satisfied the righteous requirement of a holy God.

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. ROMANS 3:20

. . . having wiped out the handwriting of the requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. COLOSSIANS 2:14

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

GALATIANS 4:4

Substitution

Because of who Jesus is, He was able to become the one sacrifice for all the sin of mankind. He died on our behalf; He died in our very place.

But God demonstrated His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. ROMANS 5:8

And the priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. HEBREWS 10:11-14

And as it is appointed unto men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear the second time, apart from sin, for salvation. HEBREWS 9:27-28

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. 1 TIMOTHY 2:5-6

Salvation

Jesus died for you to give you the gift of life. There is no more condemnation, no more obligation—all is settled in Christ. What will you do with this gift? Receive? Refuse? Ignore?

For by grace you have been saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. EPHESIANS 2:8-9

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