

At The Cross

The cross is, without dispute, the center of the Christian religion. The worship of the Church centers around the cross. The songs of the cross are often hymned. The beautiful hymns such as "At The Cross" written by Isaac Watts tells the story. "At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light, and the burden of my heart rolled away, it was there by faith I received my sight, and now I am happy all the day!" The Lord's Supper takes us to the cross each Lord's day as we assemble to remember the death and resurrection of the Lord. The Cross is the focal point of our preaching, the apostle Paul wrote, "But we preach Christ crucified," (1 Corinthians 1:23).

At the cross the love of God was made known. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). Paul expressed this love to the Roman church in this manner, *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

It was "at the cross" where Jesus tasted death for all men, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). And in death, Jesus freed men from the bondage of sin. The debt of sin was paid as is expressed so beautifully in one of my favorite songs. "Gone is all my debt of sin, a great change is wrought within, and to live I now begin risen from the fall; yet the debt I did not pay, some one died for me one day, sweeping all the debt away Jesus paid it all" (written by M.S. Shaffer).

It was the cross where the old law was taken away and the new was established, "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second" (Hebrews 10:9).

At the cross the forgiveness of sins was proffered, however, all men are not saved. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," (Titus 2:11). Even though Jesus died for the salvation of all souls, some will not be saved. Only those who receive this grace, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

Bill Dedmon
Oct. 12, 2003
