

The Cross in the Christian's Life

by Henry Blackaby

The cross is God's decisive deed in history, where He dealt with sin once for all and completely, and we can experience the fullness of God's victory in our lives by identifying with and participating in the cross.

Scripture: Romans 3:24, Romans 6:5, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 2:11

Topics: "The Cross", "Sanctification"

Description

Henry Blackaby emphasizes the significance of the cross as God's decisive act in history, where sin was dealt with once and for all. Through the cross, God not only dealt with sin but also provided a way for believers to be identified with Christ's death and resurrection, enabling them to live a new life free from sin's dominion. This union with Christ in His death and resurrection empowers believers to reign with Him and experience the victory over sin and death daily.

Transcript

The cross is God's decisive deed in history! It is in the cross that God dealt with sin, once for all, and completely! Not only did God deal with sin on the cross, but He also dealt with sin for us!

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"(2 Cor. 5:21).

Paul was always emphatic in what the cross did for us.

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God sets forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness" (Rom. 3:24-25).

But a crucial truth concerning the cross is our identification with and participation in the cross. Paul insists that we are crucified with Christ:

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

"For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin" (Rom. 6:5-6).

"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the un-circumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of 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. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:11-15).

We are buried with Christ:

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death" (Rom. 6:3)?

We are risen with Christ:

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

We reign with Christ:

"For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17).

"If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us" (2 Tim. 2:12).

Our whole identity with Christ is found in the cross! There it was that God dealt totally with sin. And it is there that God intends that we would be so united with Christ in His death that we would forever hate sin, abhor sin, and forsake sin. In our intimate relationship with Christ in His crucifixion, God intends that we would see sin, as He does; feel the horrors of sin, as Christ does, and let God deal with sin in our lives (put sin to death in our lives) as God did in the crucifixion of His Son. We, in Christ's death, would literally die to sin:

"But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things" (Rom. 2:2).

"Who 'will render to each one according to his deeds'" (Rom. 2:6).

Sin would never again "have dominion over Him" (Rom. 6:9).

We would no longer be slaves to sin; we would never again give our bodies as "instruments of unrighteousness to sin" (Rom. 6:13).

We would literally die to sin, never again to live in it as a way of life.

But that is not all! The cross created an opportunity for us to be buried with Christ. That is, we can experience in our lives all God did when He defeated--forever and totally--sin, death, and hell. That incredible power of God that dealt with sin, and defeated it, is the same power that is at work in us to radically defeat sin in us.

"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:20-21).

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

But that is not all! We are united with Christ in His resurrection!

"Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the un-circumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col.2:12-13).

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead, defeating sin, is the same power given to us who believe.

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come" Eph. 1:17-21).

The victory accomplished through Christ's death and resurrection is the very same victory we may experience daily in our lives.

But that is not all! We not only are crucified, buried, and raised with Him, but we are also privileged to reign with Him! Paul spoke of God's power this way:

". . . even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:5-6).

The total work of God in the cross is that we might be united with Christ and experience daily the fullness of God's victory in our lives.

Would you, right now, yield your life to God's provision in His cross? Would you ask Him to grant you the opening of the eyes of your heart to believe Him, and receive from Him His presence and power in your life, in Christ Jesus your Lord? This is revival: God fully active in and through your life, dealing radically with sin, through His cross. You die to sin, are buried and raised again in Christ to walk in newness of life--His life in you. You are a new creation. It is no longer you, but Christ living out His life in and through you. This will be to His glory, and the salvation of a lost world. May God grant that this will be real and personal in your life, and in your church.

I have been made a New Creation,

With Christ I have been crucified;

And what I was I am no longer,

Because I died when Jesus died.
I have been made a New Creation,
Though I was part of Adam's tree;
I now am grafted into Jesus,
I am in Him and He's in me.
I can't explain, it is a mystery.
I don't know how it can be true!
I just accept what He's accomplished:
I've been born again, all things are new!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/henry-blackaby/the-cross-in-the-christians-life/>

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