

## THE CROSS

What is the purpose of Jesus' death on the cross?

- **1 Cor 2:2** – nothing but Jesus and Him crucified!
  - **1 Cor 1:18** – the cross is the power of God!
1. The cross *for me*.
    1. The death of Jesus brings reconciliation (atonement) between God and man – **Rom 5:10**
      - Atonement is "at one ment"
    2. The shed blood of Jesus on the cross is our only grounds for justification.
      - **Eph 1:7** and **Rom 5:9**
        - *Justification* – declared righteous (of value or worth)
        - My right to approach a holy God is on His grounds, never what I have done or not done. (**Isa 64:6**)

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2. The cross *in me*.
  1. I must take up my cross.
    - **John 10:27** – "My sheep ... follow Me"
    - **Luke 9:23** – "take up his cross daily"
  2. Why must I take up my cross to follow Jesus?
    1. Following Jesus isn't additional to me life, it is core
      - **Luke 14:26,27** – everything must come second to truly follow Jesus.
    2. Life always follows death.
      - **1 Cor 15:36** – life always follows death!
      - **John 12:24** – death is the key to life!
  3. I must be constantly reminded that it is not about me!
    - **2 Cor 4:7** – I am the jar, He is everything. (**Rom 7:18**)
    - **Luke 22:19,20** – the bread and the cup

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Often we hear about the cross. Perhaps we are too familiar with the term. But what is the cross after all? When we really understand the cross we shall see it means the breaking of the outward man. The cross reduces the outward man to death; it splits open the human shell. The cross must break all that belongs to our outward man, our opinions, our ways, our cleverness, our self-love, our all. The way is clear, in fact crystal clear.

As soon as our outward man is broken, our spirit can easily come forth.

(Watchman Nee)

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The cross is the symbol of death. It stands for the abrupt, violent end of the human being. The man in Roman times who took up his cross and started down the road had already said goodbye to his friends. He was not coming back. He was not going out to have his life redirected. He was going out to have it ended. The cross made no compromise, modified nothing, spared nothing. It slew all of the man completely and for good. It did not try to keep on good terms with its victim. It struck swift and hard and when it had finished its work the man was no more. ... In coming to Christ we do not bring our life up on to a higher plane. We leave it at a cross. The grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die. That is the beginning of the gospel. (A.W. Tozer)

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The Christian life is different: harder, and easier. Christ says, 'Give me all. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work. I want you. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires, which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked-the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself, my own will shall become yours.' (C.S. Lewis)

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3. The reality of the cross.
  1. I was actually crucified with Jesus.
    - **Rom 6:5-7** – "our old self was crucified with Him"
      - "But how am I united to Christ? In what sense have I actually died with Him?"
      - **Eph 5:32** – "Christ and the church"
      - Marriage is a union of love involving a harmony of minds, souls, and wills.
        1. A name change. (Sinner Tim to Saint Tim)
        2. Legal ownership of property.
        3. Social changes:
          - No longer single looking for other relationships.
          - We are thought of as one: "The Anstines are coming over..."
    - **2 Cor 5:14** – "one died for all, therefore all died"

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2. How was I actually crucified with Christ?
  - By His doing, I was placed "in Christ"
  - **1 Cor 1:30** – "but by His doing"
3. The "oneness" of humanity!
  - **1 Cor 15:45-47**
1. The cross *for me*.
  - Acts of sin – dealt with by His blood – **Rev 1:5b**
2. The cross *in me*.
  - Sin nature – dealt with by His death – **Gal 2:20,21**
  - I came into the sin nature by birth, I can only get out by death.

I stand on this as fact, not because I understand it or feel it, but because I *faith* it as true.