

Abiding in the Cross

(The Missing Truth of the Cross)

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Introduction

Mike Mason

“While Christians today have little trouble accepting the fact of their Lord’s death on a cross, it remains a tall order for us to let the full impact of that death be felt in our daily lives. This part of the good news we really do not want to hear, In fact we do everything we can to shut our minds against it, and of all our sophisticated defenses, probably the subtlest and most effective is the pretense that we already know all about the cross, when really we have barely glimpsed it.

How else to explain the appalling casualness with which the cross of Christ is treated today? Theologies of all shapes and sizes file reverently before the cross, tipping their hats and paying it lip-service, only to go running on ahead to deal with what they claim to be the ‘real’ issues. Paul wrote, As I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18). Here he was speaking not of blatant unbelievers but of church people. He was warning the church against the very real danger of ‘the cross of Christ becoming empty of its power’” (1 Cor. 1:17). [The Gospel According to Job, Crossway Books, 1994, Mike Mason, pg. 209]

➤ Ad-ons

- Favorite doctrines or practices

➤ How We Get Ahead of Ourselves: We want the

- Resurrected life, (the power of the resurrection)
- Ascended life, (living in the heavenly realms)
- Enthroned life, (the authority of Christ)
 - but you cannot live there without living in the cross

Text: John 15:4 “Abide in Me and I in You”



- **SPIRIT** is where we primarily related to God
- This is true today
- This will be true forever

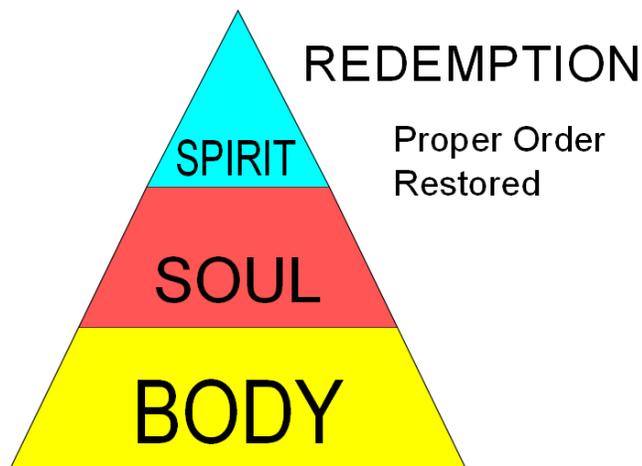


- **SOUL** is the seat of our emotions . . . our thoughts
- **SOUL** is where we are impacted (both good and bad) by our external environment



- The Vehicle





1) Abiding in the Disposition of the Cross

a. Separation from a Worldly Disposition

Romans 6:6 “We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing.”

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”

Notes:

- The world thinks that sinful attitudes and actions are normal—just being human
 - **Example:** Some educators teach condoms over abstinence
- When behavior becomes intolerable the world either imprisons or drugs it

- The gospel sends the source of the problem (the sin nature) to a co-crucifixion with Christ so that each person may live in a new disposition driven by a new nature
 - **Romans 6:5-6** “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, **so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.**”

b. Separation from Worldly Deception

Gal. 6:14 “But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

Notes

- Paul saw the cross as a **lifelong disposition**
 - The cross was **Paul’s line in the sand**
 - It divided him from the world and the world from him
- Jesus bore the death of the cross that we may live in the disposition
- The disposition is a sentence of death written across the selfish sin nature so that the resurrected Christ may live in and through you
- Strife between believers is an indication that someone, or both parties, refuse to abide in the disposition of the cross
- Signs that the disposition of the cross is rejected
 - Bouts of temper, even rage
 - Self-pity . . . pouting . . . sulking
 - Accusative spirit—blame others for our attitudes and actions
 - Impatience
 - Possessiveness
 - Controlling
 - Demanding
- People who refuse the disposition of the cross produce death, while those who live in the self-death disposition of the cross produce life

2) Abiding in the Discipleship of the Cross

Matt 16:24-28 "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?

27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Notes:

- Both abiding and discipleship begin with "IF"
- God will not force us to abide or obey
- Taking up the cross is to surrender of all **rights** to God
- Taking up the cross is to engage in God's **purpose** for your life
- Taking up the cross is to have no **goals** but God's goals
- Taking up the cross is to have no **ambitions** but God's for your life
- Taking up the cross is to engage in God's **battles**, not you own

3) Abiding in the Destiny of the Cross

"Theologies of all shapes and sizes file reverently before the cross, tipping their hats and paying it lip-service, only to go running on ahead to deal with what they claim to be the 'real' issues."

The cross and the throne are inseparable. The cross is the eternal disposition of the throne

Notes:

- **God the Father** will eternally have the same heart of self-sacrifice that Jesus displayed on the cross.
- **God the Son** will eternally have the same selfless love that he demonstrated on the cross

- **The Holy Spirit** will have the same disposition of selfless service both the Father and the Son displayed on the cross.
- The cross was a one-time act but an eternal disposition

Call to Action

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Hymn

Must Jesus bear the cross alone
 And all the world go free
 No there’s a cross for everyone
 And there’s a cross for me

The Choice of Two Men:

Peter: Over powered by Satan’s sifting

- **Luke 22:31-34** "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat,
32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

33 Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."

34 Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."

- The trial and crucifixion went beyond Peter's control
- Peter denied Christ, then repented with bitter tears—died to his own life
- Peter became one of the twelve whose names are in the foundation of the New Jerusalem

Judas: Wanted Jesus to set up God's kingdom now

- Tried to impose his plan upon Jesus . . . tried to force Jesus into a confrontation with Rome
- Would not die to his own life
- Hung himself

Vital: Situations force all of us to face the same choice as Peter and Judas. Both were confronted with the same "IF." One has his name etched on the foundation of the New Jerusalem, the other hung himself.

We all face a similar choice