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CP: The Cross and Christ

We are entering the time of year as Christians we celebrate Holy week, Good Friday and Easter; when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ died and was resurrected for mankind and the world.

His death paid a price we as mankind could not pay: the penalty of an independent soulish desire to be lord of our own lives, we as Christians call it sin, which leads to a separation from our creator, Father God. Christ, who is God, came as a human to pay the price to restore our relationship with God, endured the cross and died so we may have life, life abundantly.

The cross is the intersection where man and God meet to fulfill this. There is no greater power than the power of the cross: the cross represents a selfless act of love and compassion, and though we think of the cross as death it really represents mercy, love, compassion, victory and joy. The cross is our hope for a future in eternity with God through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing (those who don't believe), but to those who believe in Christ and what he did (those who are being saved), it is the power of God. The cross is hope, not destruction. It is only God himself and the cross and the blood of Christ that can lift men and women out of their sins, release them from shame, guilt and condemnation, give them new life, and set their feet in a new direction.

One might ask why Jesus had to die in the first place. This is a story of redemption, a love for mankind. God created the heavens and the earth, and he created man and woman in his image and placed them in a garden called Eden to be his stewards on the earth.

However, due to the temptations of Satan, Adam and Eve sinned and fell from God's grace. Furthermore, they have passed the curse of sin on to their children so that everyone inherits their sin and guilt. God the Father sent his one and only Son into the world to take on human flesh and to be the Saviour of his people.

Born of a virgin, Jesus avoided the curse of the fall that infects all other human beings. As a sinless Son of God, he could provide the unblemished sacrifice that God requires. God's justice demanded judgment and punishment for sin; God's love for mankind, allowed Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins. Because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross, those who place their faith and trust in him alone for salvation are guaranteed eternal life (John 3:16).

On the cross, Jesus said in John 19:30, ?It is Finished!? He meant that the penalty for sin had been fully paid. As Christians the power of the cross is a daily thing: we too must follow the example of our Saviour Jesus Christ by taking up our cross daily, through self-denial and self-sacrifice.

Matthew 16:24-26 says, ?Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.? ?We have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and you and gave himself, on the cross for me and you? (Galatians 2:20).

Let us live to honour Christ with our lives as living sacrifices, for his glory. Let the power of Jesus Christ and the cross empower you today and may his resurrection give you hope.

I am reminded of a hymn by Isaac Watts, ?When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small; love so amazing so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.?

May God richly bless you!

Rev. Gord Horsley,

Pastor of Abiding Place Fellowship.