

The Cross From Seven Different Viewpoints

(Main points given by Wade Webster, Sermon written by James Eaves)

Text: *And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. (Mat 10:38)*

Thesis: What is your viewpoint of the cross?

Introduction:

A) Having your own viewpoint today seems to be very popular.

- 1) It doesn't matter what the topic is.
- 2) If you have your own viewpoint then you are considered a "strong willed thinker" and often looked up to.
- 3) Having your own viewpoint isn't necessarily a bad thing, but when it comes to God's Word we ought to all have the same viewpoint.
God's Viewpoint.

B) John Maxwell has identified four levels of maturity for Christians. They are given in progressive order with the least mature viewpoint listed first:

- 1) I'm going to do what I want, regardless of any thought for God;
- 2) If God gives me what I want, then I will give him what he wants;
- 3) I will give God what he wants, with faith that he will give me what I want; and
- 4) I will give God what he wants, regardless of any thought for myself.
Many Christians spend the balance of their life at level two or three but the greatest joy is found at level four. (* "How to Get Commitment for Ministry," John Maxwell, The Pastor's Update, April 1991)

C) The Bible shows us at least seven viewpoints of the cross.

The Cross from the viewpoint of...

Discussion:

1) The Jewish Leaders

A) *John 11:48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.*

- 1) They were then subject to the Romans - tributary and dependent. Whatever privileges they had they held at the will of the Roman emperor. They believed, or feigned to believe, that Jesus was intending to set up a temporal kingdom. As he claimed to be the Messiah, so they supposed, of course, that he designed to be a temporal prince, and they professed to believe that this claim was, in

- 1) When we look at the cross do we see a life where nothing is expected of me?
- 2) Or do we see the difficulty of taking up our own cross?
- 3) Jesus saw the difficulty, but he pressed on.
- 4) *Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (1Co 15:58)*

VII) The Saints

- A) *1Pet 1:18-20; knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you*
- 1) *Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*
 - 2) When the saints of the first century looked at the cross they saw:
 - a) The blood of their savior.
 - b) Their redemption, reconciliation, and remission of their sins.
 - c) The precious Lamb of God.
 - d) The riches of the Grace of God.
- B) **What do you see when you look to the cross?**
- 1) Do you see your hope of salvation?
 - 2) *who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1Pe 1:21)*
 - 3) Or do you see the lack thereof?
 - 4) *remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (Eph 2:12)*

Conclusion:

- A) **There are many viewpoints of the cross found in the Bible.**
- 1) Many of them we should share and others we should not.
 - 2) *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. (1Th 5:21)*
- B) **If you don't see your salvation when you view the cross then you sit in danger of the judgment.**
- 1) Why not show your love for God through obey the Gospel of His Son?
 - 2) Why not view the cross in a different light today?

fact, hostility to the Roman emperor. They supposed that it would involve the nation in war if he was not arrested, and that the effect would be that they would be vanquished and destroyed. It was on this charge that they at last arraigned him before Pilate, Luk 23:2-3. (Barnes Notes)

- 2) They were fearful that Jesus would cause the Romans to destroy them and take away what little control they had among their people.

B) **Do we share the viewpoint of the Jewish leaders?**

- 1) Are you afraid to truly believe in Jesus because you might lose physical things?
- 2) *(Mat 10:37-38) - Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.*

II) Judas

- A) *Mat 26:15 and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver.*
- 1) Judas wanted to know what he was going to get for his sin.
 - 2) To Judas, at the time, there was a price that he would except for his soul.
- B) **Do we share the same viewpoint of Judas?**
- 1) "I don't miss services for any old game. It has to be at least a playoff game."
 - 2) The only way to get your raise in pay is to work every Sunday.
 - 3) What we are really doing is asking what we are going to get in exchange for our souls.
 - 4) *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? (Mat 16:26)*

III) Pilate

- A) *Luke 23:4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man."*
- 1) The Jews accused Jesus of trying to supplant Caesar.
 - 2) Pilate makes the statement, "*I find no guilt in this man.*" after he had questioned Jesus privately in the Judgment Hall.
 - 3) After Jesus told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world then Pilate realized that Jesus was of no threat to himself or to Caesar.
- B) **We should view Jesus in a similar way.**

- 1) *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2Co 5:21)*
- 2) *He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1Pe 2:22)*
- 3) *You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1Jn 3:5)*
- 4) Only in His innocence could He save us.
- 5) He was innocent. It is we who are guilty of sin.

C) Other applications.

- 1) Pilate knew the law and knew what was right yet he let the crowd dictate his actions.
- 2) Do we do the same?
- 3) When others want to do things that are unscriptural what is our response?

IV) The Roman Soldiers

A) *Matt 27:27-35 (Read from Bible)*

- 1) These Roman soldiers already looked down on the Jews.
- 2) They would have thought of Jesus as just another Jew who thought to put himself above them.
- 3) And so they began the mockery, cruelty and spiteful contempt for Jesus.
- 4) They made a mockery of the salvation of man.

B) Do we share the same viewpoint of the Roman Soldiers?

- 1) More than likely you don't blatantly mock or hold contempt for Jesus,
- 2) But just as this seemed to be joke to the soldiers we too can tell some horrible jokes.
- 3) Jokes that degrade Christ or that belittle sin.
- 4) *Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour. (Pro 14:9)*
- 5) When we go about willfully sinning we make a mockery of salvation as well.

V) The Father

A) *Heb 2:9; But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

- 1) *Rom 5:8; but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (see also Isa 53)*

- 2) *In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. (1Jn 4:9)*
- 3) God the Father viewed the cross a message to all of the world that said "I LOVE YOU!"
- 4) The greatest act of love ever shown was displayed when Christ was offered on the tree of Calvary "that we might live through him".

B) Do we share the viewpoint of the Father?

- 1) When you look at the cross what do you see?
- 2) Do you see salvation? Do you see the Love of God? Do you see the Grace of God?
- 3) Or do you see cross that is similar to the one that you are unwilling to take up and follow after Jesus?
- 4) *Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. (Mat 10:37-38)*

VI) The Son

A) *Matt 26:39; And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.'*

- 1) *Heb 5:7-9 In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,*
- 2) Jesus viewed the cross as sufferings to come.
- 3) "These bitter sufferings. These approaching trials. The word cup is often used in this sense, denoting sufferings." (Barnes Notes)
- 4) Jesus saw the difficulty in the task set before Him and He prayed to the Father to remove it and then says, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will".
- 5) Though the trial was going to be a difficult one, ultimately Jesus knew that this was His mission.
- 6) His mission to "seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10) was completed on the cross and He acknowledged this when He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

B) Do we share the viewpoint of Jesus?