Coronavirus Social Distancing Daily Devotion #51

Why the Cross?

**1 Corinthians 2:2 (NASB)** *2  “For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”*

Someone recently asked me why the cross is the symbol of Christianity and not the empty tomb? They went on to say that the Resurrection is what we rejoice in and have hope in so why isn’t the empty tomb the symbol? I thought that was an excellent question.

The answer is the cross represents the place of death and also the place were our lives intersect Christ. If you think about the shape of the cross, there is an intersection. That intersection is where humanity meets God. Now before you ask where that is in the Bible, let me explain. First, it’s not in the Bible, but there in enough in the Bible to draw that conclusion.

When God made the Hebrews wonder in the wilderness because of their rebellion, He had them erect a tabernacle. The Tabernacle was the place were man met with God. The entire layout was designed so that man could see his journey into the presence of God. But for man to gain access to God, God required the death of a perfect lamb or some specific animal. That animal became the substitute for the person’s sin.

Once the animal had been sacrificed, some of its blood was sprinkled on the altar as a symbol of death and sacrifice. At that point, the priest would wash his hands in a giant bowl of water before entering the presence of God. Once inside the tent, various pieces of furniture were there to symbolize the requirements that had to be satisfied in order for God to allow the priest into His presence.

But the point is that the altar was known as the place of death. It was the most important step for acceptance into God’s presence. That’s why is was placed first in the Tabernacle. Sin had completely broken the fellowship between God and man to the point were man would be without God and without hope of eternal life if his sin was not forgiven. So, God’s demand was that death must occur to pay for man’s sin.

When Jesus died on the cross, the cross took the place of the altar in the Tabernacle because the Lord Jesus became the final sacrifice for mankind to be forgiven by God. That’s why we put our hope and trust in the Lord Jesus. He took our place as the sacrifice we owe to God for our sins. That’s why John 3:16 says... "*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”*

So the cross represents both the place of death and the place where our lives intersect with God, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must die to ourselves; we must die to our wants and our ways and our desires and serve Him. He paid the price with His death, but we must be willing to surrender to His service as the only reasonable thing we could do in exchange for eternal life with Him. Our lives must intersect with His as we die to ourselves and embrace Him and His life so that we will have the joy of knowing Him.

The hardest thing for our sinful natures to do is to surrender, but there must be death to self if we are to see the eternal kingdom. Jesus came to give His life to pay for our sins against the Father, so that we could be restored to a right relationship with our Creator.

That’s why we use the Cross.