

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

Week of March 16, 2008

THEME: The Hope of the Cross

“May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

Galatians 6:14

Men and women think and live by symbols. Symbols constitute a convenient way of expressing complex and far-reaching ideas. Our world is full of symbols. For example, in medicine there is the caduceus, and in law there is the scale of justice. The early Christians used a fish as their secret symbol, since the letters of the Greek word for fish furnished the initial letter for the expression “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.”

But the most meaningful symbol the world has ever known or will ever know is the cross. Crowded into that emblem is the whole significance of the universe and the world, of the destiny of humankind.

Consider some of the eternal truths symbolized by the cross. The cross tells us about God, and it tells us about him in such an emphatic and conclusive way that any person who is zealous for truth, and has an obedient and teachable spirit, cannot fail to discover something of what is in the mind and the heart of our Heavenly Father.

The cross tells us about man. It proclaims that man is not just a sinner. He was and is created in the image of his Heavenly Father. That thorn-crowned, bleeding figure nailed to Calvary’s Cross is I. He is the eternal humanity revealing to the world the deep inner nature of man, his insatiable idealism, his never-ending struggle with the flesh.

The cross has still another story to tell, a story about forgiveness and healing of body, mind, and soul, for men and women and children everywhere. The cross has a message for all sin-burdened, fear-obsessed, sick and afflicted men and women. That message is forgiveness, and a new start backed by the invincible power, wisdom, and love of God of all mankind. All of this is wrapped up in the cross, and much more.

Someone has pointed out that the cross on which Christ was crucified had an upright and cross-piece, signifying the meeting of two worlds - the visible and invisible. The horizontal stands for our human life lived on earth; the vertical bar is the life of the Eternal coming down to pierce and existence with a new spirit and a new power.

The cross, the, is the focal point in human history, proclaiming a God of righteousness and love, the godlikeness of man, and the possibility of forgiveness and a new start.

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