

## “The Cross, the Divine Magnet!”

### I. **INTRO:**

A. Jesus responded as though the Greeks weren't even present. Jesus is preoccupied with one thing, His death. From *vs 23 to vs.50* as His last public teaching, Jesus concentrates on **4 Major Themes**:

1. The **Cross** is Imminent (only 4 days away; vs.23-28); The **Pain** is Great (vs.27); The **Need** is Urgent (35,36); The **Response** will be varied (37; 42,43)
2. The **Cross**, was His final word/His final answer!

### II. **THE CROSS, THE DIVINE MAGNET!**

A. **LIFTED UP!** (27-36)

B. (27,28) *My soul is troubled* - everything which really *counts* really *costs*!

1. This went beyond the **physical & emotional** agony that awaited Him.
2. This was the result of **bearing the weight of the sin** of the whole world, **as a sinless being**.
3. Yet, while He contemplated praying to God for deliverance, He **remained on the course** toward what God had willed for Him.

C. He was saved not *from* the hour, **but out of** the hour.

D. *Father, glorify Your Name* - Oh that we would set the promotion of **God's glory** above any thought of **ourselves**! [May this be the *master-principle* of our lives!]

1. Bring glory to YOUR Name Lord!

E. (31) When **Jesus** is *lifted up*, **Satan** is *cast down*.

1. When **heaven bleeds on the cross**, **hell** is defeated by its own schemes.

F. (32) In *vs.24* we saw the **Necessity** of the cross; In *vs.27* we see the **Anguish** of the cross; In *vs.28* the **Master Principle** of the cross; *here* in *vs.32* we see the **Triumph** of the cross

G. *The cross is the divine magnet!* And *our attitude toward it* shows what we are... **either steel shavings** drawn to it, **or ashes** that feel no magnetic draw.

H. *If I am lifted up* - obviously speaking of His *crucifixion* (vs.33)

1. Yet here, **Calvary is Transformed!** - He looks beyond the *revolting externals* to the **inner glory & ultimate triumph** of it.

2. **His crucifixion became His coronation!**
3. As Paul said, **the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.** Gal.2:20
4. Yes, **Calvary is Transfigured!** - **Redeeming grace** transforms the **Cross** into a **Throne!**

I. **The Cross...the most eloquent word** in all the vocabulary of God!<sup>1</sup>

1. The **tragic**, yet **magnetic** Cross! [which **draws all peoples** to Him!]
2. "That which showed how much He was **hated**, is that for which He is now **most loved!**" :)

J. **God**, the ultimate **target** of sin!

1. Whatever **sin** you commit, in its *final meaning* it is a **wound** inflicted upon God.
  - a) **Sin** is not just a breaking of **His law**, **but** a wounding of **His heart!!!!**
  - b) **And that is why** He was there at Calvary, as that broken-hearted sufferer.
  - c) **Jesus took our place!**

(1) *{Loves transfigures Calvary; then Calvary transfigures everything else}*

K. Can you see your **ultimate triumph** **beyond** your **present tragedy**?

1. **Illustration:** A young Christian student offered his life for **overseas missionary service** & labors hard at study to become a qualified **doctor**, is suddenly afflicted with an illness the very year he qualifies, & is informed that he can **never** go out as a missionary. Is God mocking him? These life enigmas make our baffled minds & our frustrated longings scream, **WHY?**<sup>2</sup>
  - a) *William Cowper*(famous Hymn writer), who had a strange enigma in his own life wrote, *Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His grace; Behind a frowning providence, God hides a smiling face.*"
2. That young medical graduate, who could not go out as a missionary learned to find his **ultimate triumph** beyond his **present tragedy**. **For he was used to influence & train hundreds for the overseas fields;** & today there is a large missionary memorial hospital erected in his venerated memory.
  - a) *Puzzled, frustrated, disappointed* Christian? **there is a golden lining** to the cloud & **a hidden good purpose** in that which seems cruel.
  - b) **See your ultimate triumph beyond your present tragedy?**

L. (35,36) **Walk in the light; believe in the light; & you will become sons/children of light!**

1. It's real simple...**Accept Him, before it is too late.**

<sup>1</sup> J.Sidlow Baxter; Awake My Heart; pg.297.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid pg; 94

M. **BLIND EYES & HARD HEARTS!** (37-41)

N. In His **words & works**, Jesus showed Israel the **light**, **but** they chose to walk in **darkness**.

1. Jesus tells the Jewish crowd their unbelief was **predicted** centuries before by Isaiah.

O. (38,40) Both Isaiah quotes speak of Christ (Messiah)

P. Quick *Infomercial* on **Isaiah**:

1. Isaiah is quoted far more in the NT, than any other prophet.
2. He is mentioned 21 x's by name.
3. **Ch.53** is quoted, or alluded to, at least **85 x's** in the NT!

Q. Isaiah known as the **Mini-Bible!** - 66 chapters/66 books.

1. The 1st 39 chapters are like the **OT's** 39 books.
2. The next 27 chapters are like the **NT**.
  - a) **Ch.1-39** = a message of **Judgment** (on immorality & Idolatry) regarding: *Judah; surrounding nations; & whole earth.*
  - b) **Ch.40-66** = A message of **Hope** (Messiah is coming as Savior & Sovereign) To bear a **cross**, & to wear a **crown**)

R. Isaiah = "*Yahweh is Salvation*" (excellent summary of the book!)

1. **Deutero-Isaiah**, or **2nd Isaiah theory** (Deuteronomy=2nd Law; early & later Isaiah) is **destroyed here**, with Jesus quoting from both "**sides**" of Isaiah.
  - a) John said it & he's a pretty good bible teacher & contributed a few books to the NT
  - b) Jesus quoted from Isaiah **8 x's from the early section & 8 x's from the later section** & each time Jesus uses Isaiah's name.

S. (39) **They could not believe** - not because their freedom of choice had been removed from them, **but because** they had *purposely rejected God & chosen evil.*

1. Thus God turned them over to their own choices.

T. (40) **Blinded** - **What is the only reason you can now see?** Because the veil has been lifted!

1. 2 Cor4:3 **even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.**  
The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

U. (40) This verse is found **7 x's** in the bible, & each time it speaks of **judgment**.

1. It is a **repeated warning** that reminds the unsaved not to take their spiritual opportunities lightly. **While you have the light, believe in the light** (36).

- a) This doesn't mean much to us who can "*make light*" (electricity in every home, street lights everywhere, flashlights, back up lights, candles, cell phone lights, etc)
- b) **Back when we 1st joined Harold & Natalie in Haiti** (before generators, before solar power) **we had to rely upon "*Hinche Electric*"** (which was a giant Generator in town, that they would run, **if & when** they had diesel, **& if & when** they decided to run it)
  - (1) We understood, *A little while longer the light is with you. **Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light,***

2. **Seek the Lord while He may be found.**

V. **Hardened** - formation of a callous.

W. **Habits** are formed by the result of our **choices**.

- 1. Our **day by day choices** gradually turn into habits.
- 2. **Example: Trail through a forest!** - A pioneer **can barely see** the trail; **but** when followed by another, then another, **years later** it becomes **a highway**.
- 3. This works for both **good & bad** habits.

X. They **did not believe**(37) [though **they had seen** the evidence for His divine Sonship]  
 They **could not believe**(39) [because their **hearts** had become **hard** & their **eyes blind**]  
 They **should not believe**(39) [because they had **spurned His grace!**]

Y. **PRAISE OF MEN, PRAISE OF GOD!** (42-50)

Z. (42) Remember how severe this was, **putting out of the synagogue** meant, **separation from public worship & from social interactions**.

AA.(43) **They loved the praise of men** - & so do **I**, & so do **you**.

- 1. **But, I don't want to** offend anyone! **I don't want to** be a freak!  
**I don't want to** be embarrassed! **I don't want to** be hated!
- 2. I love the **praise of men**; I love **what people think** of me; I love **my glory**;  
 I love **my reputation**; I love **myself...more than God**.
- 3. Jesus received praise from the Father audibly(28), we most likely won't.
  - a) Well, we will later "**well done my good & faithful servant**".
    - (1) Can we wait, or do we need it now?
  - b) Do you want to hear that from *our Father who art in heaven* **or men on the street?**

BB.(45) **Sees** - i.e. Careful observation leading to spiritual insight.

CC.(48) **Paper trail** - I'm pretty forgetful. What has saved me a number of times is keeping emails conversations (i.e. *a paper trail*).

1. **What are the significance of Jesus words?** They will be the **sole criterion** at the day of judgment. Every one of His **sentences**, each of His **words**, were purely & simply the reflection of the Fathers mind!

DD.(44-50) The seriousness of **rejecting Jesus** is the subject here.

1. **Why is it so serious to reject Jesus?** To reject **Jesus** is to reject **the Father**.
2. **To accept Jesus** is to **accept the Father**, which leads to life everlasting.