

## Survey The Cross!

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*Father, we thank You, Father. We worship You. We praise You, O Lord. Father, we just humbly surrender ourselves to You this morning. Father, in ourselves, we have nothing to give. Father, we have no strength even to hear You unless You quicken our mortal bodies this morning. I pray, Father, that even now, O Lord, You quicken each one of our ears, O Lord! Grant us receptive ears, O Lord Father. I pray, Father Lord, the word that is going to be preached is going to become a burden in my heart and, Father, it will also, Father, find place in the hearts of Your people. Whatever is of God, O Lord, will take a root in our lives and bear fruit, even a hundred-fold, Father, this morning. We just don't want to limit Your hand in our lives. Let Your Word have its complete affect in our lives. Enable us, Lord Father, to guard what we receive this morning and let the enemy not steal it from us; to that end I pray, Lord, that You would anoint the speaking and the hearing of the Word. Father, change us write Your laws in the deep most part of the inner man and cause us to walk in Your ways and, Father, lead us in the way of everlasting life this morning. We thank You, we praise You, we worship You, we give You glory. In Jesus' Mighty Name, Amen.*

Okay. So, this morning, I just wanted to continue in what we've been looking at in our Church on different ways of the manifestation of witchcraft. Of course, if you've been coming to the Church for considerable period of time, at least, the past 5-6 teaching sessions, we looked at various manifestations the subtle variations of how it works in our lives and how to walk in our deliverance. It's a serious walk, as I said on Wednesday, it's a very dangerous calling to be a believer. There is no playing of games. We're in 100% completely. We don't draw back as Demas. And we ask God for the grace every time when we listen come and listen to the Word that He will give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that the Word becomes relevant in our lives.

Second thing, if you looked, at least, in the last Wednesday's service, especially this message will be corollary to the last Wednesday's service where Pastor was talking about how witchcraft works in our lives and how we have to discern the spirit of witchcraft in our lives. He was talking about one thing, the only way to defeat the spirit of witchcraft in our lives is the way of the Cross. Very important for us to understand because one of the things that you'll see over period of time, even as we progress in our walk with the Lord and even as we look at the environment around us, especially the religious environment, the message of the Cross will get more and more diluted. It's very difficult to hear voices where the Cross is preached. You see, Paul tells in *Philippians*; he says, "They are not enemies of Christ; they're the enemies of the Cross. I say that weeping and my heart is broken because I see. Can you imagine right there at the time at the Apostolic age, you had a set of people who were corrupting the gospel and the message of the Cross was getting diluted which is the only weapon that we have to overcome the evil one, in our lives? And that is the only one we really.

Let's go back this morning and see what is the message of the Cross is, what is it specifically? I mean, we sing that song 'when I'; you see, it is a survey. It's something like your searching what's going on over here, scouting, your putting all your faculties of your mind, and your spirit and your soul, and your strength, and surveying it. Do you see the Puritans especially the songs and the hymns that we sign they were essentially were the product of the reformation? And therefore, the central message of the Cross has come back during the reformation and therefore, you'll see all those hymns, they had one thing in common is the message of the Cross. 'And I surveyed the wondrous Cross.' Do we survey? What is surveying of the wondrous Cross. You know the entire message that I am going to share this morning is inspired by one book that I am reading I am almost 70% through by Martin Lloyd Jones, 'The Cross'. That's the title of the book. It's a very old book. I found it in Pastor James' Library and I sneaked it out. Of course, he knows it. He hides all those Martin Lloyd Jones in his library and he doesn't allow anybody to see them. I just go and said, "Pastor, can I have the book?" You need to understand. I was trying to buy that book on Kindle, it was 2000 Rupees. And you go to Pastor James' library, you'll have gems. That is for people who are searching, you need it grab it with both hands. The Kingdom of God progresses by and the violent take it by force, alright?

This is very important. That entire book is a fabulous study. It's not copied; it's inspired, okay? I just wanted to look at what is the message of the Cross. If I were to ask one of you randomly to come and share for 5 minutes what does the message of the Cross mean to you, what would you say? Think about it; just about maybe 20 seconds, what would come to your mind? What is the message of the Cross, kya hai yeh cheez? You see the Apostles, on the other hand, they were absolutely

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passionate about the message of the Cross. Let me tell you what I mean by that. You see, Jesus was not a great Teacher alone; He was a great teacher for sure. He did not come to lead an example to follow. And say, "What a great Teacher," follow His example. Yes, we will follow His example but that is not the reason He came. See, if I say we have to live by the Sermon on the Mount, if you read the Sermon on the Mount, you'll be depressed, and you'll want to end your life because the Sermon on the Mount is not difficult it is impossible. So, if you're saying we, in our Church, we teach what Jesus teaches and we exhort and encourage follow His example, you know what is actually going to happen? You'll be depressed. Who can follow His example unless you understand what the Cross has done for us? And therefore, you know what? The apostles were absolutely passionate about the Cross. The Cross was something which permeated their thinking they were saturated by the message of the Cross, I am going to show you some portion from the Bible. Look at what *Galatians chapter 3* will say,

### **Galatians 3:1**

***<sup>1</sup> O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?***

You know what Paul did when he went to the Galatian Church and started evangelizing them; you know what he did? Possibly 20 years back, Jesus was crucified. I am not sure when the Galatian Church was established but through his preaching, he clearly depicted the Cross on which Jesus was crucified and he says proclaimed among whom? In other words, he literally brought the Cross of Jesus Christ into the Church and showed what exactly the Cross meant. And he says, "You know what I taught you – the Cross; what has happened? Somebody has bewitched you, why?" What is bewitching? Therefore, it's the word in Greek 'baskanos', means 'evil eye' to charm, you know? This happens a lot when girl meets boy and she wants to charm him, and she does this 'baskanos' evil. I mean movies, plays in Hollywood called 'bewitched'. So, this is the spirit of the age. And what is the primary work of this spirit of bewitching or charming? Is to obscure what? The message of the Cross because that is the one tool or the weapon that God has given us to finish the witchcraft in our lives, the work of witchcraft in our lives and what happens the enemy does? You know what the enemy hates the Cross, this is what he does, *Galatians chapter 3* he says

### **Galatians 3:3**

***<sup>3</sup> Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? <sup>4</sup> Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?***

And again,

### **1 Corinthians 1:17-18**

***<sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of no effect. (Why? because) <sup>18</sup> For the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is (what?) the power of God.***

***<sup>18</sup> For the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."***

And then, 'it pleased God' – same chapter verse 21

### **1 Corinthians 1:21-23**

***<sup>21</sup>...it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached...***

What was the message that was being preached? The message of the Cross it is foolishness this is what he says

***...preached to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,***

This is what he preached. I remember, Billy Graham, in one of his crusades, in 1955, one man of God was commenting on it. 1955, he was invited for series of evangelic some meetings in Oxford. The Oxford University extended an invitation to Billy

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Graham those days and some of the intellectuals in Oxford were so upset Oxford University invited Billy Graham, they said, "How come this fundamentalist preacher is asked to come and speak to our students about his fundamentalist doctrine?" And Billy Graham was really scared. So, what he did; he wanted to appease the people and all the intellectual audience who were there. It was a four-day meeting. For three days, he started quoting from Friedrich Nietzsche and this Soren Kierkegaard and all these intellectual people to just please them and you know what happened? Nothing happened. He just got more frustrated. By the fourth day, you know what he did? He said, "Lord, I am going to keep this aside." He took the Bible right from the *Genesis* to *Revelation*. He preached the message of the Cross the sacrifice after sacrifice blood, blood, blood. You know what one commentator said? Blood was flowing through Billy Graham's pulpit. And that day, 400 people came to the Lord, that one Day. The message of the Cross, it is foolishness, you see? *To those who are perishing but to those who are being saved, it is the power of God.*

So, you know, there is, sometimes, we, even in our own Church, we're looking for some new ideas, new preaching, you know, some new thoughts. It is the Old Rugged Cross. And Paul, when he went to Corinth, he made determined decision. He didn't say; I don't have to say it. Let him speak in his own words.

### **1 Corinthians 2:1-2**

***<sup>1</sup> And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. <sup>2</sup> For I determined (you see that?) not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.***

That is the reason why I was telling the children, the brethren, who were getting baptized – when you are getting baptized, you are identifying with Jesus at three levels – you are identifying with His death, His burial, and His resurrection but death, it's just no ordinary death; it is death on the Cross. It is so specific, you see. *Philippians* will talk about these specifics. He is just not beating in the air. What is the death on the Cross?

### **Philippians 2:7-8**

***<sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, (Full stop? No. Comma. what is that?) even the death of the Cross.***

Specific. So, question, therefore, is: what is the message of the Cross? You know, I didn't title today's message, what is the message of the Cross, if I were to ask you? Well, let's see what the Bible has to say. What is the message specifically? I want to look at one particular conversation or the dialogue or the interchange of ideas between Nicodemus and who? Jesus. Nicodemus, for those people who don't know Nicodemus, he is supposed to be the guy who was part of the Jewish Sanhedrin, one of the top guys, in the religious order in Judaism in those days. And he sees the miracles of Jesus and he listens to the teachings of Jesus and he is little troubled in his conscience and he knows this is no ordinary Man. And he comes in the night to talk to Jesus and he says, "Rabbi, we know that You're a man from God. Nobody does these things." And Jesus says, "Unless you're born again, you will not see. Unless you're born of the water and the Spirit, you'll not enter. That which is born out of flesh is flesh; that which is born out of Spirit is Spirit." The wind goes wherever it wishes and same way is the one who is born out of spirit. And he is scratching his head and saying, "How can a man be born again? How can he go into his mother's womb and?" "Are you a teacher and you don't know these things? If I told you of earthly things and you cannot believe, what will happen to you if I tell you of heavenly things?" And then, He makes some interesting comments and you'll find the Cross there. Let's see the message of the Cross for Nicodemus, alright? We need to understand what this Cross is, right? What is the message of the Cross? If I were to ask you, I am sure most of us will have some vague ideas. We need to have concrete ideas as to what precisely in the message of the Cross is. *John 3:14-16* must have seen 100 times if you love the Gospel of *John*.

### **John 3:14-16**

***<sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.***

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What is he saying? “Nicodemus, just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, that is exactly how I should be lifted up and everyone who looks at the serpent got healed. Everybody who believes in the Son of Man will have eternal life.” Now this is what he told Nicodemus and we know from Scripture that this is the Cross. What is happening over here? Let us go to Numbers and look at what actually is happening over here.

### **Numbers 21:4-9**

***<sup>4</sup>Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way.***

Other translations will say,

*...They became very impatient...*

***<sup>5</sup>And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? (And you know what Moses says?) For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” (what did God do?) <sup>6</sup>So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. <sup>7</sup>Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us.” So, Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup>Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.***

This is exactly what Jesus is eluding to. So, what is the message of the Cross? First thing, message of the Cross to Nicodemus. What did the children of Israel say? “We have...” What is he telling Nicodemus? “You have sinned first.” Nicodemus is saying, “How did I sin?” First thing – did you ever complain and murmur? Were you impatient because you thought the Lord has delayed something but you wanted it now? Question” do you believe murmuring is sin? Think about it. You remember the parable of these labourers? So, these people are trying to find work, the landlord comes and says, “Hey, you guys, you did not find any work?” “How can we find work? Nobody is hiring us.” (This is early in the morning) He said, “Go and work in my vineyard; one day dinari, one day wage, I’ll give you.” So, they come and start working and then, he goes in the next three hours, he finds few people over there, “Go, I’ll give you the wages.” Third hour, “Go, I’ll give you the wages.” Fourth hour, “Go, I’ll give you the wages.” And finally, the day’s work is over, and he is giving the salaries to everybody. So, he begins with who first? He begins with the last ones, the people who were hired last, first. So, he gives them the same money he promised to the first guy. And then, all those people who worked really hard they thought they’ll get more. And then, he gives them same money, and they start murmuring. You know what Jesus says? “Did you not agree? Are you actually jealous because I showed mercy to somebody else? Is your eye evil? Because I showed mercy to someone else?” Know that is how they murmured. Murmuring is a dangerous, he was asking Nicodemus, “Did you ever murmur?”

Second – are you grateful? Do you know ingratitude is sin? If I were to ask you this question: if God were to judge us based upon the intensity of our thankfulness, what will happen to us? Think about it. “Thank You, Lord, for the job.” That is the reason why I like that man of God, they asked him this question, “How are you doing?” “Better than I deserve.” “How is your work?” “Better than I deserve.” “How’s your salary?” “More than I deserve.” You know, you see no complains, gratitude. That was, “You sinned, Nicodemus.” Nicodemus was completely shocked.

And then, second thing He says, “Nicodemus, you are under the wrath of God.” Why? because He was the one who sends snakes to bite, right? They sinned; I mean, otherwise, why should He say, “Just like Moses has lifted up the pole”? Why should He say that to Nicodemus, “Do you believe that you are under wrath of God? You know what is happening to Nicodemus? “Entire categories in my mind, what do you mean? All the works that I did till date nothing is going to value?” “Nothing.” “You have sinned you are under the wrath of God because He was the One who sent snakes to bite you.”

Third lesson, the next lesson He’s going tell the message; He’s going tell Nicodemus is, “You have poison of sin flowing through you, and that you are going to die and there is nothing you can do about it. You are going to die. Sin is flowing through you and you can do anything. In other terms, you can’t buy anti venom, you are under God’s wrath and in danger of eternal condemnation.” That is what He was telling Nicodemus.

Then, next one, He's telling, "The only way you can escape eternal death is by first humbling yourself and acknowledging you have." Can you imagine? He's actually telling Nicodemus, "You have sinned." That's exactly what they did, right? What did they say?

**Numbers 21:7**

***<sup>7</sup>So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and you;***

You see that? "We have sinned against the Lord and against you." That's exactly the order and that's exactly even the prodigal son comes back, "Father, I have sinned against heavens and against you." So, He is saying, "You are just like the prodigal son; you are no better than him."

And then, He says, finally, the provision of God is a serpent on a pole; when you just look at it, you will live. Isn't it interesting? God's deliverance is in the shape of the curse He sent. God's deliverance is in the shape of the snake that He actually sent. And if you look at that snake, you will be healed, and you will live, and you will not die. So, what is He actually telling Nicodemus?

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

***<sup>21</sup>For He (God) made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.***

**Galatians 3:13**

***<sup>13</sup>Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written...***

Why?

***... "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"—***

That is what he is telling Nicodemus. You know what Jesus is actually saying? "I am that serpent who's hanging over there because I became the curse." That is the message of the Cross.

You know what, in other words? Let us recap – He is telling Nicodemus, "You have sinned, you are under God's wrath, you have poisonous sin flowing through your veins, you cannot do nothing about it. You are going to die. The only way that you can have salvation is by looking at Me, who has become a curse for you, and then, you'll live but before you do that, you have to humble yourself and you have to repent and acknowledge that you are a sinner." That is the message of the Cross. To whom? To the Jew. So, the Gospel is the power unto the salvation to the Jew first. So, this is what He tells the Jew first. Then, what did He tell the gentiles? Question is: is this message only for the Jews or for everyone? What I am saying is I am talking about this precise message of the Son of Man being lifted up on a tree, is this message only for the Jews or for everyone else? Let us observe, let us see.

**John 12:20-21, 23**

***<sup>20</sup>Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. <sup>21</sup>Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." <sup>23</sup>But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.***

**John 12:32-33**

***<sup>32</sup>And I, if I am lifted up (the same term) from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." <sup>33</sup>This He said, signifying by what death He would die.***

This salvation message is for everybody. That means the first inference I get from this is message of the Cross is for everyone; there is no distinction. That is the reason why Paul says, "I am under obligation to the Greek, to the Jews, to the wise and to the barbarian." Everyone, everybody, it is no background check.

**Romans 1:16**

***<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.***

And then, for there is no difference; *for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*. Therefore, what does the Cross declare? What is the first message the Cross declares? Cross declares that no one is righteous; no, not one. You know, this is amazing – the most righteous Man confronted the most righteous men of that time and everyone’s sin was exposed.

I’ll tell you this example. I was thinking about this how to give this example for you to make you understand. One of the things I like to sing but I don’t have an interesting voice; I have a loud voice. Although I sing in tune, I have a loud voice. And I am just taking an example of Peter. So, I was hoping that he will be there. I didn’t want him to go to the Sunday school. So, I thought, Peter, you know, he has got a fantastic voice. In fact, Sam’s commendation about Peter and his sister is that when they sing, they sign like the cherubim, together. And which I don’t doubt any bit. Because he can sing at any scale – low, medium – any pitch and you just enjoy the song. So, let us imagine that there is a signing competition that Peter is being invited and I am also participating. I practice and practice. I go, I bend over backwards, I go into the waters, I do all kinds of breathing exercise and voice exercise and modulation exercises. And Peter is naturally gifted like that and he also practices, of course, but not as much as I practice. And then, the singing competition happens. First, I sing. I think that I did a fantastic job to the best of my ability and then, comes Peter to the mike. When He starts singing and he goes through the variations of all the tones and my mouth is open and my best is not good enough. You know, at that very moment, you know what I’ll say? “When compared to Peter, I’m a man of unclean lips.” Will I not say that? Yes. Precisely. Think about it! I worked hard to the best of my abilities and this guy beats me by a mile. What will happen to me? Two things will happen. I want that prize for myself. I’ll add some poison into his food. I’ll do something, because I want that prize so much for myself. On the other hand, let us say, Peter loves Pastor Vijay very much. This is called ‘adding insult to injury’. Okay? So, he sings very well. He gets the first prize. And he looks at me and he says, “Pastor Vijay, I know that you want this prize. You take it.” What will happen to me? I’ll be so upset. “What do you think of yourself? Let me work harder the next time. Next time, competition main dekh lenge! (We’ll see in the next competition.)” What is happening over here? No matter how much I try to reach the level of the sea, it is impossible! That is the why the song writer will say, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me. Let me hide myself in Thee. Let the water and the blood, from Thy wounded side which flowed, be for sin the double cure, save from wrath and make me pure. Not the labor of my hands can fulfill the Lord’s demands. Could my zeal no respite know? Could my tears forever flow? All for sin could not atone. They must save, Thou alone. Nothing in my hands I bring. Simply to the cross I cling. Naked come to thee for dress, helpless look to thee for grace. Foul, I to the fountain fly; wash me Savior or I die!” See, that is exactly what Jesus did. He magnified the righteousness and the holiness of God and people looked at Him and said, “Boy! Who can live like that?” And they were so angry with Him, they wanted to kill Him. And He would do it all the time. Let me show you some examples.

**Mark 2:15-17**

***<sup>15</sup> Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi’s house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. <sup>16</sup> And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, (They were observing Him. How is it? It’s like, how can He eat with sinners?) they said to His disciples, “How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?”***

Somebody told me this example – “Moses, you work for Microsoft? *You* work for Microsoft?” That means, Microsoft is so privileged to have Moses. “Moses, you? Work for Microsoft?” The same sentence, but the tone is different. That’s exactly what is happening here. He is eating with sinners. That means, “Dal main kuch kaala hain.” (There is something black in the soup.) And then Jesus sarcastically, neutralizes their weapons and you know what He says?

***<sup>17</sup> When Jesus heard it, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, (They don’t have to go look for a doctor. They don’t have to go look for a physician.) but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”***

That means, “If you want Me to come and eat with you, what do you need to do? You need to acknowledge that you are a sinner.” “Arre! Nonsense! No way!” Exposing their sin, left, right and center. I’m giving you a few examples.

**John 8:4-7**

**<sup>4</sup> they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. <sup>5</sup> Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" (You see that? What do YOU say? ) <sup>6</sup> This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. <sup>7</sup> So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."**

And nobody dared to say, "I am without sin." Nobody. Who can dare to come and say? It's exactly what happens. If Peter were to come and sing and play the piano and he does a fantastic job and after that, they ask me to come and sing on the stage, who wants to come and sing, baba? I don't want to spoil the show. That's exactly what's going on here. He, who is without sin, show. How can you?

**John 9:39-41**

**<sup>39</sup> And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." (And some of the Pharisees were upset.) <sup>40</sup> Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.**

You see, how He's just giving them left, right and center?

I remember a few years back, when I was growing I watched a very interesting Telugu movie classic. The movie's name is 'Swathi Kiranam'. How many of you know that movie? Somebody knows there. They're all ashamed of their past. Don't worry. In the movie, this guy who is a pandit in Carnatic classical music. Highly respected guy. They all think that he is god in Carnatic music. That's exactly how they speak. "Vadu god ra carnatic music lo! (He's a god in carnatic music!)" "He is a god in mathematics. Mega-pand." All these kinds of adjectives! He is really a mega pand, like hexa, peta, terra, giga, mega. Mega is least. He is the giga-pand of Carnatic music. And there's one young chap and somehow, he gets invited into his house and he starts singing. And everybody says, "Baba! This little kid's voice is better than his voice!" That guy can't take it. His pride is hurt, just like Saul and David. "To David, they ascribed his ten thousand, and to Saul only thousands?" That's exactly what happened here. His pride his hurt. They ask him to do sanmanam (an act of acknowledgement). He refuses and says, "How dare you ask?" And this guy, whenever he comes with an improvisation of a tune, he says, "Not very good. Not very good." He just keeps on discouraging him. Then, in one of the concerts, this master goes and copies the student's tune and he starts singing as if it was his own tune. Everybody in the audience is saying, "Wow! Wow!" And then, you know what happens? That guy comes then. And he just looks at him and he just doesn't say anything. At that time, he is overwhelmed with pride. He goes back home, beats him to pulp and he sends him out of the house. You know what that kid does? He goes and kills himself. And this man goes mad. And that's exactly what happened to the Pharisees. They were so upset with Jesus. The only way they could find themselves to be better in their own eyes, was to kill Him. Why? Because the cross says, what? There is no one who is righteous. No, not one. Look at how Paul describes it in,

**Romans 3:9-13**

**<sup>9</sup> What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. <sup>10</sup> As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. <sup>12</sup> They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." (Look at this.) <sup>13</sup> "Their throat is an open tomb (Not a closed tomb. What happens when you go to an open tomb? It stinks!); With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; (What is on their lips?) "The poison of asps is under their lips";**

In other words, they have literally become poison. In other words, I told you, right? You lie and you're called a liar? No. You lie because you are a liar. You not only lie because you are a liar. You lie, because you are a lie. That is more profound. You see, that's exactly what's happening. The poison of asps is under their lips. Literally, the poison of sin is flowing through and through everybody. That's what the cross declares. No one is righteous and there is no fear of God before their eyes.

**Romans 3:18**

**<sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes."**

## Survey The Cross!

The cross declares that the whole world is guilty before God. That's what He says, "Let God be true and every man a liar." Every man is a liar. That's what it means.

Then, what is the Cross to? The Cross exalts the righteousness, the justice and the holiness of God.

### **Matthew 5:17-20**

**<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.**

This is the holy, righteous requirement of God. Nobody could reach the standards of God. As I was telling, nobody can reach the standards of God. Only the way you could reach is to kill those standards and set up your own standards, which is impossible.

So, what do people want? They always want the standards to come lower and lower. They don't want the Cross to be exalted. When I lower the standard, then I will feel good about myself. That is exactly the reason Paul says, "If you compare yourself with yourselves," that's exactly what happens with the Grace Home; you will compare yourself and say, "I am very good at Math", then you go to University, that fellow will be solving equations in the air. I am telling you this is what exactly what happened to me when I went to Masters. I was a Megapand from University, Osmania University, Third. The moment you go to University, you stop one, two, three only. Everyone is one, two, three; then, how can the Professor give everybody one, two, three? He can't. In the class of everybody, how can he give you also one; everyone one. No, we can't give. What happens, therefore? You see that the standard is raised from here to here. I used to go to class and this fellow never used to come with a pen or a paper and I am with notes and I am trying to listen to the lecturer. He is sitting in the back bench; his name is Tony Jacob from Kerala. Tony Jacob is now a Professor in IIT Gwahathi. Right there in the class, he says, "Sir, that equation is wrong." And I say, "What?" He never studies, apparently so and we are sweating and going through night outs and night outs. He goes to the exam – "A" and what is happening to the class? B-, C, "What did you get?" "B-." "Arre! Average grade." And what happened to this fellow? This one fellow will change the entire average of the class. You see, therefore, the only way to make sure that I get an A grade in the course, I used to tell, "Tony, do me a favour. This is an elective; please drop the course. Let us get an 'A'." The only way to make myself good is to eliminate that fellow or to lower the standard. That's exactly the reason why the message of the Cross because it exalts God, you know what? Please lower the standard. "Please, God, come down from the Cross." They will never say that, "You are bad." They will say, "Come down from the Cross. Don't have to set up so high standard." That's exactly the reason in the Churches, one guy; you have a set people who have been there in the Church for a while and they think that they are really, really holy, holy people and one guy who is addict and he messed up his life and one day, he hears the message, God touches his life and he is 180° changed, he is on fire for God and he reads the Bible. Even as he is reading the Bible, he is getting revelation after revelation and this guy who is in the Church for ten years looked at him and he says, "This Jonny-come-lately, he is making me look so bad. Don't have to be radical, brother! Lower the standard!" They won't say that, "You are doing good," "don't have to be so radical." That's exactly what the Israelites did. God said to Moses, "You come up." How many days? Seven days. "Forty days, this fellow Moses, who is going to wait for such a long time? Who can live up to those standards. Let us lower the standards. Aaron, make gods." They are very religious. They get up in the morning. How many of you got up early in the morning to come to the Church? Many got up early in the morning. Earlier means earlier than the normal time. They also offer peace offerings. We also sang a few songs, peace offerings, listening to the message is a big offering for some of us. Because we have to endure. And then, after that, they rose up to eat, to drink and to play and some of them became naked. Why? Because they lowered the standards. This is exactly the reason why the Cross is an offense to the natural man and it is called the offense to the man. I am not saying something extra Biblical. Look at,

### **Matthew 27:38-44**

**<sup>38</sup> Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. <sup>39</sup> And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, They said, "You are a sinner" save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."**



Lower the standard. Likewise, the Pharisees said,

***41 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, 42 “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross...***

Lower the standard

***...and we will believe Him. 43 He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ ” 44 Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.***

**Luke 23:39**

***39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”***

In other words, “Come down from the Cross. Lower the standard. Don’t have to be so radical.” If you look at the modern-day hymns and old hymns, Pastor showed this example, one of my favourite hymns I taught all the children at GTLC. It’s called “At the Cross” by Issac Walts. The original hymn will say –

*“Alas! and did my Savior bleed And did my Sov’reign die? Would He devote that sacred head For such a worm as I? Was it for crimes that I had done He groaned upon the tree? Amazing pity! grace unknown! And love beyond degree!” What is he saying? “I am a worm. I am a criminal.”*

Look at the modification. Because you know what? That’s exactly what they thought. Criminal no. 1, Criminal no. 2, Criminal no.3. He was numbered among the transgressors, he considered to be a criminal. If he is not a criminal, then I should also be a criminal. So, what is the Cross saying? I am a criminal when compared to God. The modified version –

*“Alas! and did my Savior bleed And did my Sov’reign die? Would He devote that sacred head For such a one as I? Who is this ‘one’? Nobody knows. Was it for crimes that I had done He groaned upon the tree? Amazing pity! grace unknown! And love beyond degree!”*

“Was it for; ah! Not for crimes, that I have done. Amazingly, the subtle variations because of modern day worship cannot stand. “What is this worm?” Already feeling so sensitive, feel low, you are more sensitive people, if I say a worm. It becomes even more sensitive. Sensitive people coming to Church. Oh! We should walk on eggshells because sensitive people around, “Touch me not, I am antiseptic.” You see, unbelievable because that’s exactly the modern-day people are. Have you seen the modern-day songs are?

*“Alas! and did my Savior bleed And did my Sov’reign die? Would He devote that sacred head For such a worm as I? Was it for crimes that I had done He groaned upon the tree? Amazing pity! Grace unknown! And love beyond degree! Well might the sun in darkness hide And shut his glories in, When Christ, the mighty Maker died, For man the creature’s sin.”*

You know why? These are songs of the products of reformation. Reformation was in their hearts. The work of the Cross, the message of the Cross was in their hearts. Because the message of Cross was in their hearts, their singing changed, everything changed. They did not want to lower the standard. They wanted to raise to God’s standards. That is the reason why,

**Galatians 5:11**

***11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.***

Think of all the songs that we sing. What does it say? *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.* Look at this – *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.* How should you sing with one another? With first – Psalms, what does the Psalm will say? *“Lord, the glory and the lifter of my head, I cried unto the Lord with my voice and He heard me out of his holy hill. My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?”* The Psalms are full of the Cross. And you see the hymns, which is the product of the reformation, full of the message of the Cross. What is your heart full of? Is it full of the message of Cross? No wonder your

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songs are so shallow. Worship is so shallow. Sometimes, we need to really humble ourselves and say, “Lord, I better sing those songs until that Spirit comes on to me.” “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. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God! All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.” That is the Cross!

What is the next message of the Cross? The Cross declares both the goodness of God and the severity of God. Think about it when you see the Cross, whom do you find there? Answer – Whom do you find there? The old rugged Cross, whom do you find there? Jesus Christ! Who is Jesus Christ? Son of God! Son of God is also God! Son of God, God and can God ever die? No! Why does He die? How can the One who gives life die? Can our modern mind can even think about these things? Can we think? Who is dying? God is dying. Who crucified Him? I crucified Him. God crucified, why is He dying? If He is the model. The question is why is He dying and for whom is He dying. Look at what it says in,

### **Psalms 85:10**

<sup>10</sup> ***Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.***

Another translation says, “*Unfailing love and truth have met each other; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*” What is happening on the Cross? This is God. God the Father; God the Son. God the Father is killing the God the Son so that He can save the son of men. That’s what He is doing. See mercy and truth – God has a big problem. Yesterday, Pastor was talking about it. How can a just God, forgive sin? How can He wink at sin? He cannot shove it under the carpet.

I was telling others that some people comes to our home. What do we do? Take a broom, start cleaning, cleaning and that fellow is near the corner, what do we do? Take the dust, put it under the carpet. And it is interesting, whenever you come to the Church office, when Pastor James comes, he first goes to the place where he finds the dust. Oh my goodness, exactly the place I didn’t clean; he finds it. This is exactly how God does. He does not wink at sin. He opens up everything, all the lies you have said, even though they were white lies. All the looks everything you thought nobody saw, He saw. And you know where He recorded it? Inside of you. Every thought that you thought, He recorded inside of you. Every day, you think 1 TB x 365 days x 80 years on an average. You can imagine how much of thoughts we have thought a day. You know what the Bible says in *Romans 2*?

### **Romans 2:15-16**

<sup>15</sup> ***They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them*** <sup>16</sup> ***on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.***

When? On that day when Christ, God, according to my Gospel will judge the world the man through Jesus Christ. In other words, on that day, all the thoughts that you had, all the thoughts, imagine the unconfessed thoughts, they will all be put on screen. Where is it? In your memory. Somewhere stored inside of your consciousness. Everything! One man of God said, “All the data is stored in the cloud.” We are all cloud people now. Every data, every thought, every attitude, every motive, everything is in the cloud. Your DNA is in the cloud. All he has to do is take one computer, access that file, your history will come out like that. We can do big data analysis, how much more God! He has the bigger data analysis. He will show everything He is not going to tolerate even one bad thought. Even one single thought is enough for me to be kept out of God’s presence for all eternity. That is how holy and righteous God is. The point is – if God is so righteous, how can He forgive sin? How can He not look at sin? So, what is the Cross? God is so righteous that He does not overlook sin; He is also so loving that He will punish Himself for my sin.

I heard some time back that one guy was saying this – imagine the entire world did not sin; I am the only one who sinned. “Would Christ come to die for me?” “Yes.” “But who will crucify Him?” “You will crucify Him.” That is the reason why you know what Peter says the first day message – “The Christ whom you crucified, God made Lord and Saviour.” The message of the Cross. They were cut to their heart and they said, “What shall we do? God is an incredible Problem solver. You know what He did? He took our sin, put it on Jesus and He said, “You believe in My Son, just look at Him and believe in Him, you will have eternal life.” That is what it says,

**Psalms 85:10**

**<sup>10</sup> Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.**

If you think about mercy and truth as two vectors the Cross is the intersection of those two vectors.

**Romans 3:24-25**

**<sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.**

What is this word 'propitiation' means? I have an iron box in my home. It is a ridiculous iron box. It gets heated very fast. I think that iron box like this and I take a few drops of cold water and I pour it on the iron box, what happens? It just disintegrates. Now, can I ask that the iron box is angry with the water? No, it's the nature of the hot iron to disintegrate anything which is cold. You will never say that God is so angry; it is the nature of God to be angry at sin. It is His nature. So, how is He going to quench that? We have one song – "That day, on the Cross, when Jesus died, what was satisfied? The wrath of God was satisfied, for every sin on Him was laid. In Christ alone, my hope is found." You sing that song. That's what is propitiation. God puts forth as a propitiation to His blood through faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance, He passed over sins committed. In other words, "I look at my Son and I look at your sin; in other words, literally pass over say, I didn't see that."

Yesterday, Pastor was talking to the Pastors and he was saying, "If you go into the Court of law, one thing, that you want to hear from the judge, is it "You are forgiven?" No. "You are not guilty," that is what you want to hear from the judge. You are not guilty, just not forgiven." Because law, as Pastor was saying, "Righteous demands of God are so high, you cannot even meet it." You can't even meet the righteous requirement of the law in our land, or law of any land. You wouldn't believe it. I remember give you this example, I was travelling from New York to Montreal, snowy day. We had to reach Montreal within 5 hours; it's about 4-5 hours, 6-hour drive. The traffic was terrible and we were literally zipping and you know what happens? Those fellows were hiding in the bushes. It is unbelievable, how you can; you don't even know them and suddenly, out of nowhere, this guy comes and three desi's driving Honda car, that is the desi car. And, suddenly, you will hear sirens, for us – gone. And you wouldn't believe it. He sounds the horn, everybody in the car is scared. And the voices are really, really terrifying, "Don't get out of the car!" In other words, "If you get out of the car, I am going to shoot you." And you will be shivering like that, and you are not even supposed to open the windshield. He's going to come and he's going to knock at your windshield and then you are supposed to put it down. So, he put it down and one fellow was behind, "Aipanda ra ne panni, Aipandi!(You are finished!)," "Aye Nuurmi Ra (Hey! You be quiet)" Gone, you're gone. And they were all shivering and he comes, "You know why I stopped you?" "Sir, we are going at 60." "60? 72." And immediately, charge sheet given. If you read the charge sheet, you will be terrified. This guy opens the charge sheet and he starts reading it, "The State of New York vs Vasudeva Janardhan" What? I broke the traffic rule and I sinned against the entire state? One traffic rule and you sinned against the... if you feel guilty, pay 250\$ fine, else find yourself a counselor and come to court on such-a-such day. "Sir, take \$250. We'll go." Don't want to argue with the law. See, that is the righteous and you think God is any less? One small traffic, whatever offense, you're sinning against the entire state. One small thought, are you not sinning against the almighty God? That's the point. That is the point. You know what is going to happen that day? When you stand before God, that one sin that you commit will be magnified to all eternity.

Think about it; let's say, you are addicted to alcohol. I am just giving you an example, you started drinking alcohol when you were 20 years old, you got hooked to it and you lived with that addiction for next 40 years and you drank and drank, you never got saved. And you are addicted to alcohol and with that addiction you enter into eternity. What is going to happen to your addiction? Is it going to be lessened? Or magnified? How much will it be magnified? Infinite times. You get into eternity with your anger, you didn't forgive one sin, bitter, so angry. My daughters know, "Papa, when you are gnashing your teeth," so they know their Bible very well. Don't gnash your teeth. So, you are gnashing your teeth now if you don't deal with it now. You don't deal with it, and you enter into eternity with one gnashing, what happens to you? All eternity, what will happen to you? Weeping and gnashing of teeth. That's exactly how God sees sin. You see sin in time, God sees sin in eternity. That is how God sees it, magnifies. And therefore, who can save us? Only an eternal God, can pay the eternal

## Survey The Cross!

punishment. So, what does God do? He sends His eternal Son, who was from eternity. From time memorial, he was from the beginning and he will be there till the ending. He was the eternal God. And you know, what the song writer will say?

*"Tis mystery all! The immortal dies! (You know that song, right?) And can it be that I should gain An int'rest in the Savior's blood? Died He for me, who caused His pain? For me, who Him to death pursued? Amazing love! how can it be That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me? 'Tis mystery all! The Immortal dies! Who can explore His strange design? In vain the firstborn seraph tries To sound the depths of love Divine! 'Tis mercy all! let earth adore, Let angel minds inquire no more, Amazing love! how can it be, that Thou, my God, shouldn't die for me?"*

You see what happens? What He does? He takes the eternal sin and He puts it on the eternal God and your sin is forgiven for all eternity. That is what the Cross does. That is the message of the Cross. You know why devil hates it? Now, you understand? What power it is for one sinner, when he knows that his sins are absolutely forgiven. He can shake the whole world. Because there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Amen. And as God says, it was to show His righteousness in present time that He might be just and justifier of those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

Luke 23, you see that, this is the other thief.

### Luke 23:40-43

**<sup>40</sup>But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? <sup>41</sup>And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." (You know what he says?) <sup>42</sup>Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." <sup>43</sup>And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."**

And what does Jesus say? *"Today, you will be with Me in Paradise,"* not tomorrow. That is the reason why God is telling some of us, "Don't keep postponing your sin." Confession, keep short accounts with God. *Don't let the sun go down on your anger.* Just imagine, you enter into eternity with that anger, what going to happen to you? All eternity, that's the point. Then, what is the next thing that God does? It shows the just requirement of God, and one of the things that does in our life is, it produces repentance. How does it produce repentance? It shows who we actually are and we begin to hate ourselves for our sin. That exactly what Job says, what does Job says? *"I have sinned you now and I abhor myself."* What do I do? I repent in dust and ashes. This is exactly what happens in *Ezekiel 33*. Look at what it says *Ezekiel 36:29-32*,

### Ezekiel 36:29-32

**<sup>29</sup>I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. <sup>30</sup>And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. <sup>31</sup>Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. <sup>32</sup>Not for your sake do I do this," says the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!"**

This is what exactly is repentance, "Lord, how could I do this to you?" Every day, think about it; if you have this attitude, what an incredible peaceful life you will have and enemy hates that. Because, he doesn't want you to be having condemnation. How many of us, go boldly to the throne room of grace? Something, always know, "I did this, I did this... will the Lord even hear me?" Why are our prayers not full of confidence? Because we have the thoughts of condemnation in our hearts. It is not appropriate with the message of the Cross. Then, finally, all boasting is gone. When you see the Cross, what will you do? Will you show off your degree? Nothing is going to work; all boasting is gone. Look at what it says in *Galatians*.

### Galatians 6:14

**<sup>14</sup>But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

What does it tell me? Everybody boasts. Either you boast in the Cross or something else, it doesn't matter what it is. Either you boast in your good works or penance or your goodness, how much you gave to the Church or how much time you have prayed, nothing. You look at the Cross and you say, "Lord, all boasting gone." What will you boast? In *1 John 2*, it says,

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“Boasting is of the world, everything is gone, there is nothing.: What does Paul say? “I’m a Benjamite, a tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee of the Pharisees and when it comes to the righteousness of the law, I am blameless.” And you know what he says? “Everything is rubbish when it comes to God and I can’t boast any of those achievements in my life, nothing.”

### **1 John 2:15-17**

***<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.***

What does it mean? In other words, if you do this, if you have this, then the Father’s love is not in your heart. The love of the Father is not in you. So, what does it tell me? When you look at the Cross, the only response that you can have is this – “Lord, You own me,” and what is the other thing that I can do when I see this goodness? The only response that I should have is, “Lord, You own me and I’m completely devoted to You because You bought me.” You know that song again? The hymn writer?

*“See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down.  
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?  
Were the whole realms of nature mine that were a present far too small?  
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.”*

It demands but out of love. That is the reason why *James 4* says; very interesting verse.

### **James 4:4**

***<sup>4</sup> Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.***

You need to understand this, this is very important to us to understand, when Jeremiah was talking about idolatry and every time when God talks about idolatry, He uses intensely graphic sexual imagery. He tells to Jeremiah to the people of Judah. Under every high hill and under every green tree you worshipped, what? He didn’t say, “You worshipped idols.” What did he say? You played the, what? You played the harlot. You know what the original Hebrew says? Under every high hill and under every green tree; English will say “You played the harlot.” The original Hebrew says, “You spread your legs.” That’s what it says. It’s remarkably intense and this is exactly what he says, “I was the One who brought you out of Egypt, I purchased you and I showed you love and then, you are looking and searching after other lovers.” After seeing the Cross, what will your response be? He says, “You are finding solace in somebody else? It doesn’t matter how many else you find, you will never find satisfaction apart from Me.” He says, “*Friendship with the world is enmity with God.*”

### **James 4:5**

***<sup>5</sup> Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?***

It’s intensely graphic picture in a marriage, “Your affections are Mine.” That’s exactly what the Cross says, “All your worship and all your affections in other words, your money, your time, your energy, your resources, your relationships, everything should be centered around Me and Me alone; else, you have not appropriate to the message of the Cross.”

### **Romans 12:1-2**

***<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.***

Again, you see this – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. What is the lust of the flesh? Desire. What is the lust of the eyes? Show off or outward beauty and no inward change. I want to look at an example concerning this from *2 Kings 9*. Outward beauty and no change inside. Remember this, Elijah is frustrated and he goes to the mountain and God says, “Three people you have to anoint. First person Hazael, king over Syria; then, Jehu, king over Israel; and third, Elisha the prophet who’s going to be in your place.” Elijah is taken over in the whirlwind and Elisha becomes the prophet

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and the time of Jehu's anointing comes. So, what does Elisha says? He tells a young prophet, "Go to Jehu's house, call him secretly into a room and anoint his head with oil and run for your life." Very comic because those days, the prophets head was gone. if somebody was getting anointed as a king, then the prophets head is gone. So, this guy goes to Jehu, calls him and anoints him and runs for his life. Now, this is what happens when he goes, let me read it.

### **2 Kings 9:4-7**

***<sup>4</sup>So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. <sup>5</sup>And when he arrived, there were the captains of the army sitting; and he said, "I have a message for you, Commander." Jehu said, "For which one of us?" And he said, "For you, Commander." <sup>6</sup>Then he arose and went into the house. And he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I have anointed you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. <sup>7</sup>You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel.***

Then, what happens?

***<sup>10</sup>The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.' " And he opened the door and fled.***

He speaks this prophecy over this guy, anoints him and run for his life. So, what does Jehu do? Jehu goes, he kills Jezebel and also kills seventy of Ahab's sons and everything is fantastic. So, is God happy with Jehu? Apparently so and this is when the Lord says.

### **2 Kings 10:28-31**

***<sup>28</sup>Thus Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel. <sup>29</sup>But Jehu did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin—that is, the golden calves that were in Bethel and in Dan. (And then, you know what happens?) <sup>30</sup>And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel." (But what happens? Jehu sins and this is the analysis of God about Jehu,) <sup>31</sup>But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel to sin.***

### **Hosea 1:4**

***<sup>4</sup>Then the Lord said to Hosea, "Call him Jezreel, because I will soon punish the house of Jehu for the massacre at Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel.***

What is he telling here? Did God not anoint Jehu to kill Ahab? Yes. Did He not anoint Jehu to kill Jezebel? Yes. Did He not anoint Jehu to kill the seventy sons of Ahab? Yes. Did he not carry them all out? Yes. But He is still pronouncing a curse on him. Why? You know why? Outwardly, you will see that Jehu is obeying God but inwardly, his heart is not right. What does he do? He goes and worships the two golden calves. He brings the standard of God down. And do you know what God says? "Outwardly, yes but inwardly, that is what shows." That is what we call the lust of the eyes, all show. Everybody thinks Vijay is very holy, holy but deep down inside, God knows. "Is Vijay anointed?" "Yeah." "Does he preach well?" "Yeah." "Does he drive out demons?" "Maybe," and will he not go and tell God, "God, in that day, did I not drive out demons in Your name, did I not prophecy in Your name?" And what will God say, "I do not know you, you workers of lawlessness." You know why? "Because deep down inside of your heart, you don't have any love for Me. It was all outward; it was a lust of the eyes and the pride of life." That is the story of Jehu, sad. Can you imagine? It is incredible, a man who is anointed of God; finally, messes up because he does not apprehend the message of the Cross in his life. That is lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and therefore what does Peter says? Peter says in *1 Peter 2:24*,

### **1 Peter 2:24**

***<sup>24</sup>Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.***

And then, you see *Romans 6:17*,

**Romans 6:17-18**

***<sup>17</sup>But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. <sup>18</sup>Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.***

You see what happens after this. One other thing that the Cross demand is, your life, your all, a battle against sin, the battle against your flesh everyday of your life and the battle against the world; every day of your life. This is the message of the Cross in a nut shell and that is the reason why the enemy knows if there is no condemnation, you can go free and there is no fear and therefore, he says, "Let us try to obscure it. Either he will say, "Do more things so that you can please God." Or "It does not matter God will always forgive." That is what we call as legalism or license, two extremes. Legalism, do, do and do. You have to maybe fast; twenty-one days to ask God to forgive your sin and that is exactly what so many young believers do. When I was young and when I sinned once, "Lord, I will not ask forgiveness now; first, let me just be holy for another twenty-four hours, I will not do anything, forty-eight hours and then, I will go on Sunday morning and will say, "Lord, I sinned, yes; but You know the next twenty-four hours and forty-eight hours was okay. Please can You forgive me?" That is what many believers do, that is what we call as legalism. Other people will say, "You know what? It doesn't matter how much you sinned, God will always forgive." That is what we call as license. You see, that is why the message of the cross – when is there no condemnation? Now! *There is, therefore, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* Not tomorrow, not yesterday, now, everything now. It is at the present time you live the life of the cross.

So, this morning, even as we are here in the house of the Lord, we will sing that hymn, if I can have the worship team, please, if you can come over and we sing that hymn – 'When I Survey The Wondrous Cross'. Even as we sing this morning, can we all stand up in the house of the Lord? There is only one answer to all our problems. It is the message of the Cross. You see, in the book, if you read the book, the pilgrim's progress, Christian comes to the Cross and his burden falls away. After his burden falls away, what happens? He's given a certificate. So, he carries the certificate in his hands and he kept on walking, climbing the mountain and before he goes to the house where all those beautiful sisters are, there is a place where he wants to take some rest. So, what does Christian do? He goes to that place and he falls asleep and even as he falls asleep, he just opens his hand like that and the certificate falls off from his hand. What is that certificate? Declaring him not guilty. And then, after a while, he just gets up and said, "Oh, my goodness. I've wasted so much of my time here." Then, he forgets about the certificate and starts running and if I remember the story well, there were couple of guys running back, you know what they say? They were scared. Christian asked them, "What happened? Why are you running? Why are you so scared?" You know what they said? "We have seen lions! We have seen lions." They are so scared. Christian says, "Oh, did you see lions?" And suddenly, he starts to fear and he asks, "Why am I fearful and he suddenly notices that in his hand the certificate is gone." So, you know what he does? He runs back to that place and he starts searching for the certificate and he finds it. You know what that means? Let me tell you symbolically what is going on. He climbs and he climbs and he said, "I have done enough." Let me just relax for a moment. That is typical of so many people who walked the Christian walk and they say, "We have walked so far. Let me just relax for a moment." Do you know what happens when they relax? Just like David, they fall into sin. And when they fall into sin, what happens to the certificate? It is lost. Now, you want to progress on your journey, there will be two lions. What are those lions? I will tell you but before that happens, Christian goes back to that place, when he finds that certificate, what does it mean? He confesses, he goes back to the place where he sinned. He confesses his sin, he repents of his sin and do you know what happens? He finds his certificate again. Now, this time, he clasps the certificate in his hand, he starts moving towards that place and he starts listening to the lions roaring and as they are roaring and roaring, he's scared but even as he's scared, he hears a voice from the other side saying, "Don't worry. They are chained." The lion is the devil; it will roar at you when you fall into sin but when you confess your sin. You will hear a voice on the other side, you humble yourself, God will keep you from the roaring lion because you know why, because silenced that lions voice on the Cross. It says, "The handwriting of ordinances which was against you was nailed to the Cross and He made the principalities and the powers of darkness a public spectacle and He disarmed them and made them only roar, they cannot devour you anymore." That is the message of the Cross. You know what Christian does? He clasps the certificate in his hands and the road becomes narrow but even as the lions are coming to him, he sees the chain, they can only come thus far, they can only roar. You know what he does? He gets boldness and he just walks through that place and reaches on to the other side. That is the reason why the song writer says,

## Survey The Cross!

*“No condemnation now I dread, Jesus and all in Him is mine, alive in Him my living head and clothed in righteousness divine. Bold I approach the eternal throne and claim the crown through Christ my own, amazing love, how can it be that Thou my God should die for me?”*

That is the Cross, no condemnation because every sin was nailed to the Cross, on that day, that is the message of the cross. You don't have to fear any condemnation today, therefore today, if you have any unconfessed sins, say, “Lord I ask you to forgive my sin,” even as we sing, just pray and cry out to God this morning.

### Closing Song: *When I Survey The Wondrous Cross*

Scripture says in *Romans 5*, “*Having being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*” and not only so, we have the grace for the present and a whole of eternal glory and this morning if you have sinned through the week or even if you have sinned this morning before coming to Church, this is the time when you can say, “Lord, Father, see from Your head, we see from your hands, we see from Your feet sorrow and love flow mingled down and Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch were talking and when this Ethiopian eunuch was reading the *Book of Isaiah chapter 53* says, “Who is this man talking about?” and Philip preaches Christ and that very moment, “Can anyone stop me from being baptized?” the eunuch says. This morning, even as you hear the voice of conviction, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ but there is definitely conviction. It says, “Lord, if You would mark iniquities, who can stand before You? But there is forgiveness in you so that you may be feared.” This morning, if you confess your sins, He is faithful and just and the Blood of Jesus will cleanse you from all sin. That is the exciting message of the cross and you don't have to fear any condemnation and the very God who is against you, He becomes for you and *if God be for us, who can be against us? Who can bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who it is to condemn? It is Christ who died.* Christ, who was buried, Christ, who was risen from the dead, Christ, who's seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us this morning, Hallelujah. I'm not sure to who I'm speaking this morning but I believe someone here is convicted I'm sure and you are saying, “Lord, this is too big a sin, Lord. Too big, Lord.” Don't shorten God's hands in your life. The vilest offender who truly believes that moment from Jesus a pardon receives and no only so, the very power of God, which was against you, becomes for you and He gives you the power to overcome every sin in your life. Hallelujah, that is the message of the Cross. And this morning, can we just say, “Lord,” whatever sin. Even as the Lord brings to your remembrance, even as the Spirit brings to your remembrance, even as you get convicted, just cry out and say,

### Closing Prayer:

*Lord. Now is the time. We are not playing games over here, O Lord. We are not playing games, O Lord. we just want to confess our sin. Father, so many of us, in fear and in bondage. The lions roaring at us because we lost our assurance of salvation because of our sin. But Lord, this morning, we want to run back like how Christian ran back, to the place where we sinned, O Lord and we want to set everything right with You and with man. O Father, we want to get that assurance back and no lion, no roaring lion can stop us because we know they are all chained, O Lord. They are only voices to make us fear and to intimidate us, Lord; but we will walk boldly because, Lord, if You are for us, who can be against us? He, who did not spare His only Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not freely, with Him, give us all things? Hallelujah, Father. We thank You, Father, for this morning. O Lord, we just humble ourselves, O Lord. Father, we ask You to forgive us our ingratitude. Father, our spirit of entitlement. Father, forgive us. We took so many things for granted. We took You for granted. O Lord, forgive us. Bring conviction into our hearts this morning, Lord. Father, I believe that You have put this message into my heart. O Lord, we don't want to be like Nicodemus, who will go back into the darkness without confessing but, Lord, we want to go back into the light, O Lord. We want to go back and we want to walk in that light guilt-free, without condemnation, O Lord, knowing that You are on our side and not against us. O Father, cleanse us from our sin. Cleanse us from our unrighteousness. Father, the Blood of Jesus. It is the Blood that cleanses us; it is the Blood that makes us whole; it washes us whiter than snow. Our Jesus, God's precious Sacrifice. O Lord, we come back to You this morning. We just want to love You more, O Lord. You are not a God who intimidates us. Lord, You are a God who woos us by Your love. Father, You don't scare us, Lord; but, Lord, You warn us lovingly like a Father. Father, this morning, we want to come back to our Heavenly Father. We want to come back like David and say, “Lord, against You and You only, we have sinned.” And just like the way You told David, You said, “Your sin has been put away. You will not die but you will live and declare the works of God in your lives.” O Jesus, the power of the Cross. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? Law and sin, both broken. The power of the law and the power of sin, both broken on the Cross. Thank You, Jesus, for the Cross. Thank You, Jesus. And this morning, we just want to lift up holy hands and we say, “Lord, we boast only in Your Cross and nothing*



## Survey The Cross!

*else, O Lord." Nothing in our hands we bring; simply, to the Cross, we cling. Naked come to Thee for dress; helpless, look to Thee for Christ; Foul, I, to the fountain fly. Wash us, Savior, this morning, or we die. O Lord, while I draw this fleeting breath, while my eyes shall close in rest, while I soar to world's unknown to see beyond Thy judgment throne; Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee. O Lord, we want to hide ourselves in You this morning, O Lord. O Jesus, we want to hide ourselves in You, this morning. Lord, we want to hide ourselves, O Lord. Father, we just want to come back to You, come back to You this morning, O Lord. Straying hearts. Even as we sang this morning, prone to wander, Lord, we feel it. Prone to leave the God we love. Here's our heart, O Lord. Take and seal it. Seal it for Thy courts above. O Jesus, this morning, we surrender ourselves, O Lord. We lift up Your Name. We lift up Your Word. We lift up the work of the Cross in our lives, O Father. Father, we will not be ashamed of the Cross of Jesus Christ. We will just not boast in any other thing except the Cross. O Jesus, do a deep in our lives, O Lord, through this day, through this week. Do a deep work, Lord, in our lives. Thank You, Father. Thank You, Jesus. We praise You, Lord. We worship You. We give You glory. We give You honor. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*

### **Benediction:**

*May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest and abide with each one of us. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*