

Over the past few months we have looked at the Word of the Cross, the Work of the Cross, and the Witness of the Cross. Although in no way exhaustive of the full meaning of the Cross, we will conclude our meditation on the cross by considering the Way of the Cross.

Jesus' way is the way of the cross. It is the way of faith - a life out of death experience. Faith is a death to all other voices, powers, "gods" that clamor for our attention and worship. His faith, His faithfulness permits ours. Both the faith of Christ and faith in Christ become the objective basis of our justification and personal transformation. It is the only proper response to the gospel and the only way to right relations with God. Our faith in Him opens the door to our own life out of death experience.

Jesus' way is the way of love. Love is also a life out of death experience. If Jesus' love took Him into death... so it is to be with us. The way of the cross is death to self-centeredness, self-preservation, self-glorification. Without this love our faith has no value (I Cor 3:2; Ja 2:14). For the Son of God, love was a voluntary self-expenditure ("...He loved me and gave Himself up for me." Ga 2:20). This is what our freedom is for (Ga 5:13). Cross-ified love is no self-pleasing love (Ro 15:3). The way of love is no excuse to step away from difficult, obstinate, un-like-us others, but a reason to go to them as Christ did for us. At the cross, a self-for-itself was replaced by a self-for-others! The way of the cross is certainly "not I, but Christ" - and just as certainly it is "not I, but you."

Jesus' way is the way of hope. Hope is a life out of death experience as well. It is essentially a death to human measurements and standards, a death to our definitions of wisdom, power, strength, success (to name only a few examples). It is death to "what works", to "fair", to the approval of our fellow man, to the need to control and oppress others, to manipulation, to rage, to shame, to the demand for immediate temporal results. A cross-ified hope disarms us of such tactics. The cross proclaims we'd rather die than live like that! Christian hope is a passion for what is possible because God is with us (Matt 19:26). It not only allows for, but calls for, a voluntary weakness (II Cor 14:6-10; 12:9-10). The way of Christian hope is the way of reversal, the way of resurrection. (The last will be first, the least the greatest, the slave becomes lord, etc.) Our hope is in the God Who exalts the humble, glorifies the sufferers, strengthens the weak, assures us of a future wherein every wrong is righted... and proves it by RAISING THE DEAD!

This is the way of the cross!



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👋 **GREETINGS** 👋

That great philosopher Snoopy once said, "It really doesn't matter if you win or lose... until you lose!" Or, as others have said it, "You don't know what you've got until its gone." As things are (rapidly) changing around us we could learn much from the Psalms about staying centered in God no matter the circumstances.

In a nutshell, opposition and adversity, peril and trouble were accepted (though not always fully understood) as part of life's journey by Divine decree. Yet, these perils were not presented as a call to panic, but, rather as a call to worship. Trouble, no matter the temporary forms, is always subordinate to God's purposes. And true "help" (salvation/deliverance) always comes from "above" and not "below".

Although we are neither to resign ourselves to injustice nor merely ignore our circumstances and "hang on" until we die, we are not to focus on enemies or opposition, but on our God Who always gets the final word (even if not before our eyes!). With such a vision cast upon Him, He becomes our Shield, our Glory, the Lifter of our souls. As our Indwelling Source, the battles are never against just us, but against His life in us.

No need for panic, no use for carnal tactics, no room for fearful motives. Then the Light of Life Himself may, perhaps, shine more brightly than ever against the backdrop of dark and turbulent times!

✍️ **CALENDAR** ✍️

AUGUST	
2,9,23,30	CCF
11	Alachua Study
13-16	Hobbs, NM
SEPTEMBER	
26 - OCT 2	Durango, CO
OCTOBER	
9-11	Binghamton, NY
23-24	Sebring, FL

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- ♥️ Fresh Supply for every need
- ✝️ Wisdom and Fearlessness
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