

The Necessity of the Cross



Introduction

- Such a familiar emblem
- “Sign of Christianity”
- Need--see beyond the emblem of death to the death itself
- Death by crucifixion from antiquity
- “Necessity”—unavoidable, compelled, a requisite
- Was the cross a “MUST BE” event?

The Problem--Sin

- Sin—“missing the mark”, “lawlessness” cf. I Jn. 3:4
- Origin. Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12
- Is it really THAT bad? Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 6:23; 7:13



Solution—Sacrificial System

- Earliest recorded sacrifice. Gen. 4:4-5
- Noah. Gen. 8:20; 9:3-4
- Mosaic period. Heb. 9:18-22



Animal Sacrifice--Insufficient

- Could not remove sin. Heb. 10:1-4
- Needed—blood of greater value
 - Man sinned, man must pay the penalty
- Animal sacrifice, a shadow of the better. Heb. 10:1



In Jesus—Justice and Mercy Meet

- Law violated demands penalty; justice demands payment.
- In mercy, God provided. Cf. Heb. 10:5-7, 11-14; 4:15; I Pet. 2:22-24
- But mercy did not cheat justice—full penalty was paid.



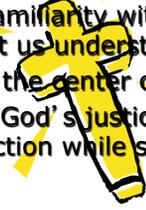
But Was the Cross Necessary?

- Necessity of His death seen, but the cross?
- YES!!
 - Prefigured. Num. 21; Jn. 3:14-15; 12:32
 - Part of being made a curse for us. Gal. 3:13
 - Awfulness reflects the magnitude of sin.



And so...

- Does familiarity with the form prevent us understanding the event?
- It is at the center of our salvation.
- There, God's justice received full satisfaction while showing man mercy.



A Blessed Sentiment...

- "When I survey the wondrous cross
- On which the Prince of Glory died;
- My richest gains I count but loss
- And pour contempt on all my pride.
- 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?"

