

The Cross: From Seven Points of View

Intro

- 1) The Cross
 - a) What does it mean to you?
 - b) Do you think about it very much?
 - c) Is it a precious thought?
 - d) Do you understand what happened there?
 - e) Do you appreciate the atoning work of God through Christ?
 - f) Today ... we need to take a good close look at the cross ...

- 2) ... From Seven Points of View
 - a) Not everyone sees the cross today from the same perspective
 - (1) Some see it as a piece of jewelry
 - (2) Some see it as a talisman (a good luck charm)
 - (3) Some see it as a source of income
 - (4) Some see it as a means for controlling others
 - (5) Some see it as a joke
 - (6) Some see it as something for someone else to think about

 - b) Even on the day that Jesus died ... there were varying points of view ... for instance ...

I. To Judas ... It Was All About Silver

- A. Judas was a thief and a traitor
 - Jn 12:4-6
 - Jn 13:28-29

- B. He made a deal with the Jewish leaders to sell Jesus for the "goodly price" of thirty pieces of silver
 - Mt 26:15

- C. I read a story the other day about a new preacher in town
 1. Rode the city bus – driver gave him too much change (25 cents)
 2. As he sat – debated about returning it – he did as he left the bus
 3. Driver – I know who you are – testing you out – I'll be in church
 4. "I almost sold out Jesus for twenty five cents"

- D. To Judas ... the cross was all about **silver**

II. To the Pharisees ... It Was All About Silence

- A. The Jewish leaders knew that the people were following Jesus
 - Jn 12:19

- B. They were afraid the whole world would believe on Him
Jn 11:48
- C. They tried to silence Him with tricky questions
Mt 22:15-17 Mt 22:35-36
- D. When this didn't work ... they decided to silence Him through death
Mt 26:3-4
- E. Not even this drastic move could possibly silence the Son of God
 - 1. After "3" days in the tomb ... Jesus rose again to continue His reign
 - 2. This "gospel" message is still boldly preached by all His disciples
- F. What about you ... do you wish the cross had silenced Jesus?
 - 1. Does His teaching convict you?
 - 2. Would you rather not hear the word of Christ?
Mt 24:35
 - 3. Not even the cross can **silence** the Savior

III. To Pilate ... It Was All About Self Survival

- A. Pilate was put into a real predicament
 - 1. He knew that Jesus was innocent
Lk 23:4
Mt 27:24
 - 2. But the Jews had threatened to accuse Pilate as disloyal to Caesar
Jn 19:12-13
Mk 15:15
- B. Pilate put Jesus on the cross to save his own neck
Jn 12:25
 - 1. Do we ever toss Jesus to the dogs when we're around unbelievers?
 - a. It's not that we don't believe that Jesus is God's Son
 - b. But others might think us stupid if we confessed it
 - 2. So we don't stand up for Him
 - a. We wash our hands and say, "I don't want to be involved"
 - b. It's times like this that we "crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame." (Heb 6:6)
 - 3. To Pilate ... the cross was all about **Self Survival**

IV. To the Soldiers ... It Was All About Sport

- A. The Roman Soldiers brought Jesus into the common hall to mock Him
Lk 23:11
Mt 27:27-29 Mt 27:30-31
What is Jesus to you? A dress-up doll to use & abuse?

- B. At the foot of the cross, they played a game for His garments ...
they teased Him in His agony and pain
Mt 27:34-35
- C. They had done this deed so many times it was only a meaningless task
 - 1. Have we lost our sensitivity toward the cross?
 - a. Have we discussed it so many times we are numb to its horror?
 - b. Is the Lord's Supper ... and worship itself ... just a game to us?
 - c. Have we lost our sensitivity toward those who are dead in sin?
 - d. Is "Hell" a reality to us ... or just a game we play sometimes?
 - 2. I fear we may be striding through meaningless paces ...
 - a. Otherwise ... we would be more serious about lost souls.
alien sinners wandering saints ourselves
 - b. To the Father above ... this was not about **sport** ...

V. To the Father ... It Was All About Substitution

- A. In His grace ... God sent Jesus to taste of death for us ...
... to take our place & to pay our debt for the sins we've committed
Heb 2:9
Rom 5:8-10
Is 53:5
I Jn 4:9-10
- B. This was not a game for Jehovah ... but a strategic maneuver of war
Rev 12:7
- C. The "Righteousness" of God was impugned ... and had to be answered
Rom 3:25
 - 1. "Passing over sin" was judged to be weakness and injustice
 - 2. But Peter said the patience of God was "salvation"
II Pet 3:9,15
- D. Nevertheless ... Jesus paid a debt He did not owe ... on the cross
II Cor 5:21
- E. To the Father ... the cross was all about **substitution**

VI. To the Son ... It Was All About Submission

- A. Although the cross meant shame and suffering ...
... Jesus submitted to the Father's will and complied
Mt 26:39
Heb 5:7-9
Phil 2:8-9

- B. This same attitude of submission is required of Christ's disciples
 - Phil 2:5-7
 - Lk 9:23-24
 - Lk 9:25-26

- C. Would you submit to the cross if God made such a commandment?
 1. We'll scarcely submit to God's command to "assemble together"
 2. Almost any excuse will do ... we choose to forsake for any reason
 - children's sports
 - out of town company "Sorry Lord, it's too big a price to pay"
 - an ache or a pain
 3. It wasn't too big a price to pay for Jesus (He did it for you!!!)

- D. To the Son of God ... the cross was all about **submission**

VII. To the Saints ... It Was All About Salvation

- A. The early Christians saw the cross ...
 - and the blood that was shed there ...
 - as their only means of salvation
 - Mt 26:28
 - Acts 20:28
 - I Cor 1:18
 - Eph 1:7
 - I Pet 1:18-19
 - Rev 1:5
 - Rev 7:14
 - Acts 22:16

- B. What about you?
 - Have you been to the cross to receive salvation?
 - Have you had your sins "washed away" in the blood of the Lamb?
 - Can you look at the cross and then turn away untouched?

Conclusion

John B. Gordon was one of the best generals the South ever had. He led the last attack upon the enemy lines at Appomattox Court House that Sunday morning, 1865, when General Lee finally surrendered his entire command to Ulysses Grant.

General Gordon afterward became a candidate for the United States Senate. One of the old veterans who had served under him had become estranged from him for some political reasons, and being a member of the legislature, he vowed he would do everything in his power to defeat him. He stormed and raged against his old commander on every occasion. When the day of the convention came, he walked resolutely down the aisle to the ballot box with an anti-Gordon vote in his hand.

There on the platform sat his old commander with a face that had once been handsome, now all disfigured with scars and wounds of battle. As the old veteran saw him the memory of other days came back. He tried for a moment to compose himself, but it was too late. The sight of the General was too much for him. The tears began to run as he turned to the convention audience and cried aloud: "It's no use, boys, I can't do it! Here goes my vote for John B. Gordon. It was all up for me when I saw those scars. Forgive me, General. I had forgotten the scars!!"