

## **THE CROSS OF JESUS IN EPHESIANS**

**Ephesians 1:7; 2:13,14 ; 4:32-5:2; 5:25-27**

One way to study the Bible is to look at a theme or subject through a book or several books. Today we are going to look at key passages on the cross in the book of Ephesians.

### **1.THE CROSS OF JESUS IS THE BASIS OF FORGIVENESS WITH GOD – Ephesians 1:7**

- We have redemption “though His blood”, shed on the cross. Redemption is setting free at the payment of a price. It was used of slaves or prisoners of war being set free when the ransom price was paid. The cost and price of our forgiveness was the death of Jesus on the cross.
- The blood speaks of sacrificial death offered up to God. It is substitutionary. Christ died “for our sins”, in our place. It is all according to the riches of God’s grace. Grace is unmerited undeserved favor. Everything God does in redeeming us is for His glory and our good. Redemption is now, but will be completed finally in the End, when Christ returns – Ephesians 1:14, 4:30.
- Let us not be ashamed of the cross and blood of Jesus, even though it is being downplayed and reinterpreted by some today. The cross was a horribly revolting message and symbol of Christianity in the first century – 1 Corinthians 1:18, 22-24. No Roman would mention crucifixion in polite conversation. *“There is no fitting word that can possibly describe so horrible a deed.” – Cicero, 106-43 B.C.*

### **2.THE CROSS OF JESUS BRINGS PEACE WITH GOD AND EACH OTHER– Ephesians 2:13, 14**

- Because of the cross of Jesus we are at peace with God. We are no longer God’s enemy. Once we were alienated, strangers, “having no hope and without God in the world” – verse 12. Jesus by His shed blood brings us near to God – verses 13. Jesus does not only bring us peace, Jesus Himself is our peace - verse 14. Peace is not just absence of war or hostility, but a positive wholeness or completeness. The blood of Jesus brings us to peace with God because it is propitiatory. The death of Jesus satisfies and removes the wrath of God due our sin – verses 15 and 16; Hebrews 2:17. The Law with its commandments condemn us all. But Jesus paid it all – Colossians 2:14. Jesus’ work is finished once for all time – John 19:30; Hebrews 9:25-28; 10:10-14. The floodgates of grace open on us now in Christ.
- Now in Christ we are declared right with Him (justified) by grace alone through faith alone in Him. We have barrier -free access to God. We are brought near to God, now citizens in God’s household forever – verse 19.
- Christ proclaims peace to us and through us- verse 17. Being at peace with God affects our relationships with others. It is the basis of peace with others who were formerly our enemies. Both Jew and Gentile are now united in One Body – verse 16. If God can bring them together, He can bring anyone together today. Are you at peace with others?

### **3. THE CROSS OF JESUS DISPLAYS GOD’S LOVE SO WE CAN DISPLAY GOD’S LOVE - Ephesians 4:32-5:2; 5:25-27**

- The cross of Jesus demonstrates and proves God’s love – Romans 5:8. When you look at the cross it should remove any wondering about if God really loves you. We are to imitate God’s great love and forgiveness of us in Christ’s cross – Ephesians 4:32-5:2.

- The cross of Jesus is the reason we are to be forgiving and loving to other people. The way we can forgive others is “as God in Christ forgave you.” The way we love others is “as Christ loved us.” Are you walking in love and not holding onto grudges, bitterness, etc.?
- The way a husband can and should love his wife “is as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for it.” Christ’s focus was on the needs of the Church, not His own. He died to not only forgive us, but to purify us. Christ died to sanctify us, cleanse us, and present us to Himself as a beautiful holy Bride! – Titus 2:14. All the preparation of the Bride is accomplished by Christ Himself. The Word of God cleanses the church. *“The church is made pure by spiritual cleansing...and this is accomplished through the purifying Word of the gospel.” – Peter O’Brien.* Because of the cross of Jesus we are now and will be forever without blemish, spot, or wrinkle before God’s throne!

Concluding applications:

- Are you rejoicing in the cross of Jesus and sure of the forgiveness of your sins?
- Do you thank God for being at peace with Him? Do you live at peace with others?
- How are you displaying God’s love in your life, even to those closest to you?