

*From Where I Sit . . .*

## "TAKING CHRISTIANITY SERIOUSLY"

The story has been told of a preacher who was describing the crucifixion of Christ in very dramatic detail. He preached of the anguish and pain that Jesus felt, the crown of thorns on his head, the physical pain of crucifixion coupled with the personal feeling of being alone when He cried out "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?" As he described all that Jesus did for those whom He loved so dearly, a little boy in the audience began to cry, and soon was sobbing aloud. The people sitting next to the mother gave her a knowing smile and the mother, evidently quite embarrassed, turned to her son and whispered, "Don't take it so seriously!"

Perhaps this is the trouble in the church as we know it today a failure to take the cross of Christ seriously. We all admit that it was a real moment in history, and an excruciating experience for a real man, Jesus Christ. Yet time may have tarnished the story and removed the sense of "realness" so that it seems more like a story than the most shameful moment in history. This in turn serves to take the urgency out of our Christian service. No wonder we have to beg people to attend services if that Old Rugged Cross has become but a fainting awareness to them. On the other hand, when one is so in touch with what the cross means to the Christian, he'll look for opportunities to thank God for Jesus, and give Him glory and honor and praise.

To the Apostle Paul, the cross of Christ was very real. He writes in Galatians 6:14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Again in 1 Corinthians 1:22-24 he writes: "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

If one is unable to take the cross of Christ seriously, as the greatest moment in history; if one has quit personalizing the cross with the continuous reminder that he bore my sins there (see Isaiah 53); and if the cross has lost its wondrous attraction, no wonder that the whole of Christianity is less urgent to that person.

One of our hymns declares:

"My life, my love, I give to Thee,  
Thou Lamb of God, who died for me;  
O may I ever faithful be, My Savior and my God!  
I'll live for Him who died for me:  
How happy then my life shall be!  
I'll live for Him who died for me,  
My Savior and my God!"

..... Terry Broome

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