

Study 14: The Godhead & The Cross

In this study we want to take a closer look at the cross. The cross is the very center of Christ's righteousness and it is the main truth around which all other doctrines cluster.

John 12:32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.

1 Corinthians 2:2 For I determined not to know anything among you except **Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**

"The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin **is the great truth around which all other truths cluster.** In order to be **rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation,** must be studied in the **light which streams from the cross of Calvary,** and in connection with the wondrous, central truth of the Saviour's atonement. Those who study the Redeemer's wonderful sacrifice grow in grace and knowledge."
5BC pg. 1137.7

"I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption--the Son of God uplifted on the cross of Calvary. **This is to be the theme of every discourse.** Christ declares, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me"" **MS 70, 1901**

As we study the cross we become more acquainted with the Father's love.

John 3:16 For God **so loved the world** that **He gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Christ and Him crucified was the most important event in all the history of man. All the truth in the Bible clusters around this one event.

John 15:13 Greater **love** has no one than this, than to **lay down one's life** for his friends.

The cross teaches God's character to its fullest: God is love

1 John 4:8-11 He who does not love does not know God, for **God is love.** In this the love of God was **manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world,** that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent **His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

If the cross is the event that points out who God is, then we need to see whether all Three Persons of the Godhead were involved at this event and the role each of them played.

- **Isaiah 48:16** Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the **Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me.**
- **Revelation 13:8** All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the **Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**
- "The **Godhead** was stirred with pity for the race, and the **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption.** In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself **an offering for sin.** What line can measure the **depth of this love?** **Counsels on Health pg. 222**

All Three Persons in the Godhead were involved in the working out of the plan of redemption before Lucifer was created. That would include the Holy Spirit. All Three decided that Christ would be sent and as Isaiah 48:16 says: "And now the **Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me.**"

"The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence **through times eternal.**" Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and **made provision to meet the terrible emergency.** So great **was His love** for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. [Desire of Ages pg. 22.2](#)

What wondrous love! God gave Himself to us in the Person of His Son! This plan was worked out among the Three Persons of the Godhead. This is an interesting concept which anti-Trinitarians deny - for love to be lived out to its fullest potential you need three persons and not just two. That does not mean that love cannot exist between two persons. For love to be lived out to its FULLEST POTENTIAL you need three persons or more but not less. This we see at creation when God told Adam and Eve to have children. We also find this concept in the Spirit of Prophecy:

"When **two** compose a family, as in your case, and there are no children to call into exercise patience, forbearance, and **true love**, there is need of constant watchfulness lest selfishness obtain the supremacy, lest you yourselves become the center, and you require attention, care, and interest, which you feel under no obligation to bestow upon others." [Adventist Home pg. 159](#)

I am not saying that God could become selfish if there were only Two Persons in the Godhead, but when there are three persons then TRUE LOVE can be experienced. This true love is who God is. God is true love and it is expressed to its fullest between the Three Persons of the Godhead.

A few years back my wife and I were praying about whether we should have children. The slam dunk for me that the answer was "yes" came one evening when we were talking about God's will for us. The thought popped into my head: "Our love as a couple has reached the stage where it needs to be shared. And the best way to share it was with one of your own children." That concept, before this Godhead doctrine became a big issue in our church, gave me a better understanding of the Godhead and the love that exists between the Three Persons of the Godhead.

The Bible confirms this:

- **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. **And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.**

The next question is: Do we find all Three Persons of the Godhead at the cross while Christ was crucified?

- **Christ**
 - He is the One that was crucified
- **The Father**
 - [Matthew 27:45](#) Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was **darkness** over all the land.
 - [Psalm 18:10-12](#) And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind. He made **darkness His secret place**; His canopy around Him was **dark waters** And **thick clouds** of the skies. From the brightness before Him, **His thick clouds** passed with hailstones and coals of fire.
 - [Psalm 97:2](#) **Clouds and darkness** surround Him...

The Bible teaches that God veils Himself in darkness/clouds/waters. Around the cross there were darkness/clouds/waters and the Father was within those clouds. He veiled Himself or else the people would have been destroyed.

“In that thick darkness God's presence was hidden. He makes darkness His pavilion, and conceals His glory from human eyes. God and His holy angels were beside the cross. **The Father was with His Son.** Yet His presence was not revealed. Had His glory flashed forth from the cloud, every human beholder would have been destroyed. And in that dreadful hour Christ was not to be comforted with the Father's presence. He trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him.” [Desire of Ages pg. 753.4](#)

- **The Holy Spirit**

- [Hebrews 9:14](#) how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the **eternal Spirit offered Himself** without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
- In the story of Israel's sojourn God gave them a cloud wherein He veiled His presence. (Exodus 13)
- Israel was baptized into that cloud and that baptism represented the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The cloud was also their guarantee as the Holy Spirit is our guarantee (2 Corinthians 5:5). We studied this in detail in study number 8: The Godhead, Israel & the Sanctuary.
- In Israel's story we also saw that the water which came from the rock represented the Holy Spirit.
- At the cross God veiled His presence with a cloud and waters, the same thing He did in Israel's day. Once again this cloud represents the Holy Spirit as a witness.
- At Jesus' baptism the Holy Spirit was given to Christ as a guarantee and as a witness. For this witness to find its full fulfillment the Holy Spirit had to be at the cross too. Listen to what John says:
 - [1 John 5:6-10](#) This is He who came by **water** [baptism] and **blood** [cross]; Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the **Spirit who bears witness**, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: **the Spirit, the water, and the blood**; and these three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.
- As the Holy Spirit bore witness at Jesus' baptism so did He at Christ's crucifixion.

In our next study we will take a closer look at the Godhead at the resurrection of Christ.

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