

“The Cross of Christ”

Galatians 1:3-5

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I. Introduction

- A. Why does Paul mention the cross of Christ in his greeting to the Galatians? (vv.6-10)
 - 1. So we might be right in our doctrine on the person and work of Christ
 - 2. Note five important truths about the cross of Christ

II. The Cross of Christ Was Voluntary (Galatians 1:4)

- A. “Who gave Himself” (v. 4)
 - 1. Who gave Himself?
 - a) “our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 3)
 - 2. Who is Jesus?
 - a) Philippians 2- “He humbled Himself”
 - 3. What did Jesus do?
 - a) “He gave Himself”
 - b) “Gave” (past tense) shows that the gift occurred once and for all at the cross. It can never be repeated.
 - c) It forever demonstrates His great love for us
 - d) Note also the Father’s love
 - 1) “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.” (John 3:16)

III. The Cross of Christ Was Substitutionary (Galatians 1:4)

- A. Why did Christ give Himself?
 - 1. “for our sins” (v. 4)
 - 2. The cross of Christ was the self-substitution of God Himself for us
 - 3. John Stott- *“The concept of substitution may be said to lie at the heart of both sin and salvation. For the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be; God sacrifices himself for man and puts himself where only man deserves to be. Man claims prerogatives which belong to God alone; God accepts penalties which belong to man alone.”*
 - a) Genesis 22
 - b) Isaiah 53

- c) “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

IV. The Cross of Christ Was a Rescue Mission (Galatians 1:4)

- A. “That He might deliver us from this present evil world” (it’s emphatic) (v.4)
 - 1. “Deliver” or “rescue” is literally “to pluck out”
 - a) To save us from sin’s penalty
 - b) Sin’s power and sin’s presence
 - 2. Jesus came to rescue us from sin
 - 3. Jesus came to set us free

V. The Cross of Christ Was Planned by God the Father (Galatians 1:4)

- A. (v.4) “According to the will of God and our Father”
 - 1. The cross was not an afterthought
 - a) “In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will” (Ephesians 1:11)
 - 2. God’s love planned it
 - 3. God’s Word promised it
 - a) “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” (Genesis 3:15)
 - b) Illustration- Jesus in Gethsemane

VI. The Cross of Christ Brings Glory to God (Galatians 1:4)

- A. “To whom (the Father) be glory forever and ever, amen.” (v.5)
 - 1. The false teachers said “do works” (The Law)
 - a) The good news of the cross says “done.”
 - b) Jesus on the cross said, “It is finished.”

2. The cross brings glory to God.

- a) “But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.” (Jonah 2:9)
- b) “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- c) Salvation by grace brings glory to God.
- d) “But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” (Galatians 6:14)