

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

The heart of the gospel

Compiled by Gregg Gibbons

July 2006

These notes were compiled by Gregg Gibbons after he was reminded afresh to discern the temptation to drift from the heart of the gospel, the very foundation of life...which is the message (word) of the cross (Romans 1.16, 1 Corinthians 1.18).

These notes are rooted in God's Word...and rooted in Christ's cross...rooted in Christ Himself.

These notes are presented as individual bullets to hopefully facilitate reading. Each note can be read as a stand-alone truth so that the entire set of notes does not have to be read.

May these notes be as drops of pure water to nurture the Christian reader in the truths already implanted in his or her heart. May we never forget to only know Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2.2).

[Notes in brackets are supplemental comments by Gregg.]

Centrality of the Cross by Jessie Penn-Lewis

- The cross of Christ is the fixed point in history past and future.
- We were reconciled by the death of the Son; much more we are saved by the sharing of His life.
- The blood of Christ on the cross is God-ward...the body of Christ on the cross is man-ward.
- The believer is delivered from the power of sin not by conquering it, but by dying to it [2000 years ago].
- We were baptized into fellowship with Christ Jesus. This is intimate, rather than technical.
- It is not the cross that makes us miserable, but the absence of it.
- The Holy Spirit not only convicts a person of the sin of not believing God and convinces him that Christ is now his righteousness, but the Holy Spirit convinces him of the defeat of Satan at Calvary.
- Christians who know these aspects of the Cross stand on the solid foundation of the finished work of Christ.
- Even though subjectively a Christian may not experience the fullness of the reality of the Cross, he or she relies upon all of its completeness as theirs. Their faith is in what Christ has done, not their experience of it.

How to Live in Victory by Adrian Rogers

- Before you can experience victory, you must have knowledge of your identification with Christ. This means three things: (1) when Jesus died, you died with Him, (2) when Jesus was buried, you were buried with Him, and (3) when Jesus rose, you rose with Him.
- Christians are not nice people, they are new creatures! We are new people.
- Christians have the same power that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead!
- I have kingdom authority to be victorious! "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies" (Romans 6.12). Claim Christ's authority to obey that command.
- It is not enough to say, "Satan, be gone." You must say, "Jesus, right now I yield myself to You."

Faith Looks Back by John Money Penny

- Many Christians are discouraged over the lack of evidence that they are experiencing Christ as life. However, faith looks beyond observable evidence to the truth that is testified to in the Word of God.
- Faith is not a power that makes Jesus do anything. Faith is the conviction that all power to do anything lies in Him and all that was necessary for Him to do He has done [through the cross].
- Faith looks at our righteous behavior (things seen) and knows that they add nothing to our righteousness. Faith looks at our unrighteous behavior (things seen) and knows that they lose nothing of our righteousness. Faith says that our righteousness was never based upon what we did or didn't do (things seen). Faith is always based upon what Christ has done (which we did not see!).
- [My faith is first in Christ Himself...His being, then in Christ's cross...His doing.]
- It has never been about our obedience, but about His obedience.
- Therefore, walking by faith is stubbornly trusting in the historical death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for our righteousness regardless of what we see in our performance – good or bad.
- Walking by faith is not about making sure that your actions and deeds are always a direct result of your choice to let Christ live life through you. If it is, then you are once again in bondage to whether or not you are doing it right. You again become performance oriented.
- It's not about you doing anything right, or doing anything consistently, or doing anything sincerely. Walking by faith is all about resting in what Christ has DONE through the cross.

- When God initially showed us our need for Christ, we trusted Him for forgiveness based on what He did for us on the cross 2000 years ago. Now we are to continue in this same faith (Colossians 2.6).
- Our righteousness in Christ is no more based on our obedience than was our unrighteousness in Adam was based on our disobedience (Romans 5.18-19).
- Walking by faith is not so much making moment-by-moment conscious choices to let Christ live His life through you, or using any other method for that matter. Walking by faith is simply living life convinced [convicted] that no matter what your behavior looks like, good or bad, your righteousness before God is based solely upon the finished work of His Beloved Son [and that Christ resurrected IS your righteousness].

The Rest of the Gospel by Dan Stone

- It is impossible for a person to know their union with Christ, and live out of that union, if they don't know that they have died with Christ.
- If I think the old me is still alive, I am still my point of reference. I am still trying to correct me, straighten me up, make something out of me, or do something to change me. As long as the emphasis is on me, it can't be on Christ in me...and I am a divided person.

Simplicity – the Evidence of Life by Dudley Hall

- The beautiful life of Christ is the greatest gift from God to us. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1.4).
- Jesus did not initiate anything on His own. He did not feel under responsibility to produce or to be successful. He simply listened and responded to the Father.
- Complications arise when we can't see and hear.
- Many Christians today live under the illusion that God doesn't speak very often. The truth is, God is continually revealing Himself. We are so accustomed to tuning into to other channels that we don't recognize God's voice. We expect Him to speak in tones of judgment and condemnation, when actually He is speaking the good news.
- Christ walks on the pages of the Bible as Life, not just as dogma. He flashes His glory in the smiles of Christians. He shouts out of silence. He speaks peace in the midst of storms. He is everywhere. He is the God of light, always revealing Himself. He cannot be explained, but He can be seen.
- It is not what we know or do that transforms us, it is what we see [by faith] (2 Corinthians 3.18).
- When we try to reduce life to a dogma, when we try to systematize truth, when we try to define life in terms of standards, life defies us and mocks us. Life is a gift of God, and all of God's gifts are baptized in grace.
- Remember, it has always been the simplicity of God's ways that has confounded and astounded man. Moses could hardly believe it when God said to simply hold his rod out over the Red Sea. [And when He tells me to believe I am in union with Christ, I can simply believe it.]
- When my vision of God is beyond my explanation, I can always find a comfortable place to bow and worship.
- The organism that concentrates on growth rather than health will always wind up with a deformed image. Growth will come naturally as we cooperate with the divine Life within us.
- Jesus is not only the definition of holiness, He is the source of holiness.

The Way of the Cross by Dudley Hall

- You can preach on the cross and not preach "the cross."

- Is there any problem you have now that death and resurrection would not address?
- The cross mystifies the world because it exalts the weak things and debases the strong things of the world. Death wins over life. Love wins over power. Service wins over position. The unlearned are smarter than the learned.
- God's heart terrorizes Satan because Satan's tools of destruction are used against him in the cross, and he is exposed for what he really is.
- The cross glorifies God because the final product of the cross is something only God can produce.
- The natural man [and the flesh of the Christian] will always focus on his own abilities and inadequacies rather than the completeness of the cross.
- Battling sin and Satan, and striving to deny self, is not the message of the cross.
- If anyone ever tells you to do something to have victory, but the doing is void of the cross, it will never result in victory.
- The cross didn't destroy Satan, it defeated him. His tools were taken away at the cross (Colossians 2:15). What were those tools? The law? It was fulfilled. Jesus cancelled any accusation Satan could bring against me. Sin? That's forgiven. Death? The heart of death was ripped apart in the Resurrection, and now I have Eternal Life. So now, Satan's only hope is to deceive me with lies.
- I died by receiving [believing, embracing] Jesus' death as my own.
- Now, how do I activate the truth of the cross? By believing! Anything that is not of faith did not come through the cross. The cross reduces man to the place where he has to believe and depend on God to get anything [of eternal value] done.
- How do I receive victory over the guilt of sin? I believe Jesus died and God accepted His death as payment for my sin. How do I obtain victory over the enemy? Not by screaming and shouting, but by believing.
- How do I have victory over myself? How do I get over my self-consciousness, wondering all of the time how others feel about me and wondering how well I am doing? I believe I was crucified with Christ! I believe I was raised with Christ! I believe I am one with Christ and as much as God accepts Christ, He accepts me! I simply believe.
- Here's a practical working out of the way of the cross. God first reveals His vision to me...He gives me the desires of my heart. Next, my Father wants to relate to me, and He yearns for my prayers to simply ask Him with the attitude "Father, I can't do it. Would you do it for me?" Then, embrace the cross. I can walk in faith toward God's vision for me, realizing there will surely be a cross in this pilgrimage. The cross reduces me to the point of complete dependency on God. And when God brings the vision to pass, I will experience Christ through the cross, God is glorified, and the world is offended.
- God knows that without the cross, I would try to make His vision for me happen for myself, for my glory.
- I must not try to make the vision happen. I must not sit back in passivity either. I just keep walking in faith, knowing that God will accomplish my vision by faith. Whatever it takes to reduce me to faith will be my cross.
- [Many Christians are afraid that pure freedom leads to passivity. This defines a Christian by externals, by performance. However, Christ through His cross has truly and purely set us free! Christ is the living and powerful and active Word of God (Hebrews 4:12-13) indwelling each Christian...so as defined by God's Word, a Christian CAN NEVER be passive! No doubt the legalists of Paul's time accused him of passivity during his three years in Arabia being disciplined by the Spirit of Christ.]
- I must always remember that God loves resurrection. He delights in baffling the world.
- The cross looks like my death, but it's really my deliverance!

***Not I But Christ* by Sylvia Pearce**

- Most of us love and worship the Savior who saved us, while we hate the human self that He saved. However, Paul yearned that every Christian would see themselves as perfect in Christ Jesus (Colossians 1.27-28).
- The grave clothes are not my humanity, but the lies I've believed about my humanity.
- In Romans 7, the light came to Paul when he saw that his human self was not the producer of evil NOR of good.
- It is Satan's voice that tempts me to believe, "I am the evil culprit," and "I should be the solution" [and "I can do something good here"]. Both are lies. How do I untangle a lie? If I speak the truth, the lie will untangle itself. By the leap of faith, I simply declare that what God says about me is absolutely true.
- When I say that the good I do is Christ, but the evil I do is my sinful flesh, it can be a subtle form of self-righteousness. Striving to do good is my greatest sin.
- I cannot really know my oneness with Christ while still half-way thinking I am able to do some good.
- So, how do I get Christ who indwells me to express Himself through me? Say it is already done! Say what God says about me, not what my feelings or circumstances say. Say, "I am resurrected with Christ, and I am completely whole in Christ, therefore I lack nothing."
- God uses Satan to tear down all the remnant of false sufficiency (flesh) and to expose the truth that self-sufficiency is not produced by me, for the real me is united with Christ. This is the victorious revelation to Paul at the end of Romans 7.
- The struggle deepened when Paul knew Christ lived in Him, but he perceived Christ was still separate from him. [Union through the cross is so foundational.]
- It's like the Jordan River runs between the end of Romans 7 and the beginning of Romans 8. In Romans 7, I remain needy and condemned, a "I've got to fix myself" consciousness. In Romans 8, I operate by faith as "whole, complete, and lacking nothing" (James 1.3).
- There is glorious freedom upon entering Promised Land of no condemnation. How do I enter? "For we who have believed do enter into rest" (Hebrews 4.1). [Simply believe.]
- Christ did not come to improve me, but to replace me.
- The Jews deny Jesus' divinity, while many Christians deny His humanity. When Jesus became a Man, He became as weak as we are. We have been deceived into believing weakness is wrong, even sinful.
- How do we walk in the Spirit? We just "be" ourselves and expect the Spirit to cause us to walk in God's ways, and to "do" them. "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes...and do them" (Ezekiel 36.26-27).
- "Confession" means "agreeing with God." We are so sin-conscious that we more often see confession as asking forgiveness for sins. However, we are now called to confess with God that it is "not by my power, or by my strength, but by the Spirit says the Lord" (Zechariah 4.6).
- My only part is to just look into a mirror (2 Corinthians 3.17-18). The question is: Do I just see myself alone, or do I dare, by faith, to see the glory of the Lord in my human form? By simply gazing into the mirror of my true identity, I am transformed from the inside-out, from glory to glory.
- At the end of Romans 7, Paul's divided consciousness is finally united into the oneness of the mind of Christ. For it is Christ's own mind manifesting in Paul's mind. Paul leaves a double-minded, unstable mind set in Romans 7 and goes into Romans 8 with a single eye of seeing God only.
- God's name has always been I AM not "I have it to give." We do not have a distant God dishing out little bits of Himself for us to live on. He has given us the fullness of Himself.
- Isn't it so deceiving for me not to be satisfied with myself, when God is totally satisfied with me because of His Son in me?! This deception leads me to believe in myself, and not in God.

- I believe Jesus is worthy, but I often don't believe His finished work through the cross has made me worthy.
- The cross has not set me free TO sin, it has set me free FROM sin. God has set me free because He now trusts me.
- Sin (the noun) is the root. Sins (the verb) are the fruit.
- Faith is not saying it might be possible that I have died to sin. Faith is believing God says it is true. Faith says "He is."
- The master deception is believing the lie that flesh is my humanity that can do something. However, there is no life there to do anything [of eternal value].
- The victory Paul realized at the end of Romans 7 is that he is a resurrected form of Christ!
- The wonderful miracle is that what I take by faith, takes me, and becomes me. The old striving falls away. I start walking in the Spirit of who I really am instead of the appearance of who I thought I was.
- I begin to accept my negative reactions and surrender my perceived right to change myself. When I am positive about my negatives, I become free to embrace my whole self as a form of Christ. The life of Christ in me uses my desires rightly, for His glory. The Holy Spirit re-directs my desires upward, instead of downward into mis-use.
- There is a mind-set among faith healers that if you even acknowledge the negative, the devil will get hold of me. However, I am truly free through the cross. I am free to be negative and to trust God to use negatives as His springboards for my faith.
- Paul's coveting silver and gold was transformed into coveting souls!
- I resist evil not by fighting it, but by replacing the lie with the truth of who I really am. Lust is not evil in itself, for it is a God-given desire. Christ in me is pure desire. Surrendering (submitting) to God by faith makes Satan flee from me (James 4.7).

Conquest of Fear by Walter Lanyon

- Fear can manifest only because of a belief in separation. As long as I am something apart from God, I will experience fear. However, I am one with Christ through the cross.
- Jesus totally depended on His oneness with the Father.
- When I am one with God, I am a majority and I am one with the Brightness of His coming. Nothing is too small or too great to put through the fire of His brightness!

The Preaching of the Cross by Dave Hunt

- One of the greatest problems today is the often well-intentioned attempts to reinterpret the gospel to make it sensible and acceptable to natural man.
- Among the plastic saints of our times, Christ has to do all the dying and all we want is to hear another sermon about His dying, and what's in it for us -- no cross for us, no dethronement, no dying.
- Christ's death was not to deliver me from death, but to take me through death and out the other side into resurrection.
- [Christ died FOR me is Christ separate from me. I died WITH Christ is me in union with Christ. This is the whole gospel. The former opens the door, and the latter opens a new heart for Christ to come in.]
- [Christ living through me is not the result of me "allowing" that to happen...it is the natural outcome of me being willing to suffer alone (my personal journey to the cross). It is not me allowing a "doing" (Christ living through me)...it is me simply "being" (believing I am dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus).]

***The Secret of Abiding* by Jared Mutsembi**

- Nothing is as easy to a branch as to abide in the true Vine. God's will is that I should find abiding in Christ (as a result of the cross) as easy as I find breathing in my physical life.
- The secret of my abiding in Christ is that once I know I already am a branch in Him (though the cross), in child-like faith I simply believe that He lives in me.
- I simply expect Christ's Life will flow, produce fruit, and manifest through me.

***The Powerful Message of the Cross* by Robert Innes**

- Paul knew the cross is a commitment on God's own part to self-emptying humility, the opposite of control and manipulation.
- A man who knows the way of the cross doesn't need to say much.
- The cross is not only the content of my proclamation, it also determines my mode of communication.
- Christian maturity is not giftedness or leadership. Christian maturity is my ability to live for others [and that way of living is through the cross].

***Transcending Choice* by Hope for Today**

- Being poor in spirit means I have no choice. I am poor in spirit when I am enthralled by the love of God, and I am so in love with God that choice is transcended. Sin is no longer appealing because I have the pure satisfaction of the Father (as a result of the cross).
- Being poor in spirit means I have surrendered my right to choose, and joyfully embrace God's sovereign plan because I delight in none other.
- [Surrender is the choosing of Christ as my life source! Beholding Christ is the foundational "choice."]

***The Power of God* by John Money Penny**

- Colossians 2.9-15: "In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, In Him you have been made complete, In Him you were also circumcised having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him THROUGH FAITH in the working of God who raised Him from the dead." Notice that through faith in His work, not my works, I have participated in the working of God. In demonstrating His power through the cross, I was His lovely assistant!
- To see real power, I have to look no further than the cross of Jesus Christ. I don't need to look forward in anticipation of something God is going to do. I only need to look back at what God has already done. The word, or testimony, of the cross IS the power of God!

***Bone of His Bone* by Heugel**

- Why doesn't God demand of me what I might reasonably attain? He bids me to soar, yet I have no wings. The Christian life is not an imitation of Christ; it is a participation in Christ [through the cross]. Hebrews 3.14 says "We have become partakers of Christ."
- What is impossible to me as a imitator of Christ becomes perfectly natural as a participant with Christ.
- The moral mandates in Matthew 5, 6, 7, without the Vine-branch relationship in John 15 is like freight cars without an engine, a whale without water, and a bird without air.

***Romans 7* by Dorman Freewill**

- The Law is not my problem, indwelling sin is my root problem [perhaps it is better to say "indwelling sin is my apparent root problem...for Christ through the cross has once and for all dealt with sin.]
- Christ is my indwelling Deliverer. Not only do I have a new identity in Him...I have Him, living inside me.
- Beholding Christ is finding Him to be sufficient for every need. Beholding Christ is seeing myself for who I really am in His genuine light.

***Know Your Changed Identity* by Dorman Freewill**

- I am called to reckon myself TO BE. This command is all about who I am, my identity.
- *Reckon* means to consider my identity as utterly changed.
- I can now consider the amount of love and sacrifice of God in Romans 1.18 through 5.21 to utterly change my identity so that I could have Christ's resurrection life...and therefore so that I could indeed obey this command.

Anonymous

- When I walk at the edge of all the light that we have, and take a step into the darkness of the unknown, I must believe that one of two things will happen – there will be something solid for me to stand on, or God will teach me to fly!

***Obedience is Believing* by Norman Grubb**

- Obedience is the product of believing. The only obedience I have is not doing, but believing. Christ is the Doer, so all that I do is believe. [Obedience IS believing, not the result of believing.]

***Free At Last* by Christ in Y'all**

- Paul's public rebuke of Peter in Galatians 2.14-21 may seem a bit jumbled when you first read his words. This is because his meager vocabulary is bearing the weight of a truth so huge that your page can hardly contain it.
- Everything that follows Paul's rebuke of Peter in Galatians is built on this tremendous foundation: *The life I live is Christ. Even my believing is His believing – in me. Any other way of living is a false way. If I go back to striving under the law, then Christ died in vain.* This is the Emancipation Proclamation of my faith. This is the starting point for everything.
- We lose something undetectable when we explain coming to Christ in terms of heaven and hell, rather than in terms of an ongoing relationship with the Lover of our souls.
- Until I see that I have died to the Law, I will never be free to love God because I will fear His judgment. When I see that I have been given the righteousness and freedom of Christ Himself, I will spontaneously throw myself to the One who had done this wonderful thing in me!
- When Christ died, I was in Him.
- The requirements of the Law no longer apply to me any more than tax laws apply to residents of graveyards!
- The heresy in Galatia was not justification by works but sanctification by works.
- My choices are not about good versus evil, but about good and evil versus Life. [The two trees!]
- We have erected towers of agendas and requirements to reach heaven, much like the Babylonians.

- I am one with Christ. Is Christ under the Law? Then neither am I!
- Back then, a son did not become heir at birth. He was raised as a "child." It was only when he became adopted as "son" did he become heir. Therefore, adoption did not mean that one who was not really of the family became part of the family; it meant that the child by birth had reached the age of son-ship and was ready to become heir.
- It is impossible to distinguish between the Spirit and my spirit (1 Corinthians 6.17). His identity becomes my identity. When I cry out "Daddy, Father" was that me or the Spirit? What's the difference? What matters is that I allow the testimony of Spirit of Christ who dwells in me to boldly admit and proclaim that I have become a son of God.
- I am free of everything! My life is "Christ in you" (Colossians 1.27), and that cannot be contained or controlled by rules and regulations.
- What happens when Christians learn they have truly been set free in Christ? They are free to fall more in love with the Savior who did this for them.
- Satan tries to encourage me to become something I already am.
- Holiness is not something you do, it is something you are...in Christ.
- Paul is beaten everywhere he goes because he preaches 100% grace. Grace is an offence to self-righteousness because it takes away any room for boasting.
- The Ten Commandments never said "Do not..." The Commandments actually said "You will not..." They were actually a prediction of what sort of behavior will result in one whom the Spirit of Christ indwells.
- When my attention is on "not sinning" rather than on Christ, I will never grow in my relationship with Him. My true life is learning to behold Christ in all of His glory.
- Paul relates "flesh" to works, and he related "Spirit" with fruit.
- A tree bears fruit by literally getting rid of excess life [giving away an overflow of life.]
- Flesh and Spirit are not Evil and Good, but independence and dependence.

Oh Say, Can You See by Christ in Y'all

- We need to learn that behavior flows out of identity, as fruit flows out of a tree.
- Satan's has only one tactic that works...lying (John 8.44). His primary strategy in calling God's Word into question. According to Genesis 3.1, the first recorded words were "Did God really say...?" When God says I am dead to sin and alive to God in Christ, I hear Satan's strategy. "Did God really say that you died? Didn't He mean He pretends you are dead, but you really are not? Just look at your behavior...perhaps you misunderstood God." [Satan tempts me to learn to live like Christ.]
- Believe what God said, and you will enter into His rest (Hebrews 4.9-11).
- The cross not only did away with my sins, it did away with me!
- I am either a vessel of wrath or a vessel of mercy. Because we are vessels, we have always received our identity from someone else. The power of sin has deceived us into thinking we have an independent identity which we constitute by our actions. This is the great lie, and it continues to deceive both unbelievers and believers to this day.
- The power of sin deceives us into believing we are free people, while we actually are either slaves to sin or slaves to righteousness. This deception tempts us to believe we are free and thus capable of falling back under sin's mastery.
- We have trouble seeing ourselves as dependents in Christ because we were deceived for so long into thinking we were independents while we were in sin.

- Just live life normally. Learn what it means to behold Christ. The secret of the Christian life is to solve your problems by looking away from them [but not denying them], and looking unto Jesus.

***The Mystery of Union* by Dan Stone**

- Until we know union, we are constantly confronted with the illusion of separation. "God is up there, and I am down here. How do I draw closer to God? Give me a plan, a program." Plenty of people are ready with the answers. "Read your Bible. Pray. Study. Tithes. Go to that conference."
- Once I know my union with God in Christ, there is nothing else left for me to do! I am as close to God as I can ever be.
- Most of us believe we are both good and bad. It vital to know that this is not true, because if we believe we are both righteous and sinful, it will be impossible to live out of our union with Christ and to rest, trusting that He IS living through me moment by moment.
- The moment I praise God for my humanity (e.g., impatience), I don't see it anymore. I don't mean it disappeared, but I don't have a fixation on it. I am less anxious about it.
- When I see that my humanity is not the starting point of my life, but rather the means by which God's life if manifested, I can take my humanity back. I can accept myself as I am...as God's asset.
- We are meant to be frustrated when we try to produce something that we are incapable of producing. It's the goodness of God to let us be frustrated. If God were to interrupt our frustration before we were completely frustrated, we would think, "I've learned how to do it. I'm not frustrated anymore."
- I've always liked the word *awareness* more than the word *growth*. I simply become more aware of who I already am in Christ. I operate from who I am, not from who I will become.

***The Case for the Cross in the Cure of Souls* by Charles Solomon**

- Since many Christians do not understand the Cross experientially, the only other foundation on which to build their lives in the flesh.
- While it is wonderful to see the lost saved from their sins, it is just as wonderful to see Christians get saved from themselves.
- While there are many involved in church growth, programs, and buildings, there are relatively few who are teaching the real growth of the church which is the nurturing of the body of Christ and developing disciples who live and teach the message of the Cross.

***Reckon* by Miles Stanford**

- Some believe they are very weak. But what does that imply? That they have some strength! But when a man is dead, he has no strength. We must act on the fact that we are dead in reference to sin.
- Someone has rightly said that there are many Christians separated from the world but who are not separated from themselves.

***Born Crucified* by L.E. Maxwell**

- There is a vast difference between reckoning myself dead to sin and reckoning sin dead to me. Attempts to make sin dead to me are futile. If I am willing to be rid of sin, let faith fasten on the fact of my death to sin through my actual life-union with Christ.
- To be in Christ is to be dead to sin. Oh to believe it! Never mind the feelings.

***Romans 6* by Newell**

- Many Christians fear utter freedom. Many say, "If we are in a reign of pure grace, what will control our conscious evil tendencies?"
- We must not confound our relationship to sin with its presence. The presence of sin "in our members" will make the fact that I am dead to sin difficult to grasp...but God says it. And He will duly explain all to our faith.
- 1 Peter 5.8 literally means "walking about in newness of life."
- No one by nature will be ready to count himself so incorrigibly bad as to have to be crucified. But when the Spirit of God turns the light upon what were in Adam, these will be blessed words of relief: "Our old man was crucified."
- Legalists set you to crucifying yourself! You must "die out" to this and to that. But God says our old man, all that we were, has already been dealt with by the crucifixion of Christ...the very words "with Him" show that this was done back at the cross. Our task is to believe this good news, rather than to seek to bring about this crucifixion ourselves.
- [It's not up to me to "allow" Christ to live through me. I can simply rest in the finished work of the cross, i.e., I am already truly dead to sin, and Christ WILL faithfully live through me! Until I "reckon" upon this Truth, I will be deceived into believing there is something in me able to "do" this Christian life "right," i.e., that there is something in me to do the reckoning.]
- The constant presence of condemned sin in Paul's members only reminded him that he was in Christ.
- [I share in not only Christ's life, but His death...for it is through my death with Him that I truly have my life with and in Him!]
- I am not commanded to die to sin because I already am in Christ who did indeed die to sin.
- The word of the cross is the power of God. It is God's word as to what was done on the cross that establishes my heart. God says I died with Christ. I am to reckon it so. "If you do not believe, surely you shall not be established" (Isaiah 7.9).
- The word *reckon* is a word for *faith* in the face of appearances. To reckon myself dead to sin while still conscious of sin in my members is faith indeed, and is walking according to God's word and not by feelings.
- Not behaving, but believing is God's way for me.
- To "hope for the best" is to fail to see myself in Christ alone.
- To be disappointed with myself is to have believed in myself.
- To be discouraged is unbelief as to God's purpose and plan of blessing for me.
- To preach devotion first and blessing second is to reverse God's order. That is preaching law, not grace. The Law made man's blessing depend on devotion. Grace confers undeserved and unconditional blessing...and my devotion may or may not follow.

***Romans 6* by Jim Minker**

- If we were to stand in the simplicity of Christ when confronted by the bondage of theological "giants" we might easily recognize them as children making challenges based on how much higher they can count.
- To him who seeks to know God by elemental principles is in bondage to those principles.
- [The message of the cross] is not a separate part of the good news of Christ that must be taught in some kind of Advanced Christianity class.
- Many times the truth of what happened at the cross and beyond has been presented in such a sterile form that the reality that we've been made the righteousness of God is religiously refuted at every turn.

- Immersion results in a permanent change...and we have been immersed into Christ.
- One of the biggest mistakes we make regarding the meaning of "sin" to which we have died is to assume it refers to a collection of individual sins, when in fact it refers to the existence or the realm or the domain from which sins flow. [*Sin* is a noun over 40 times in Romans! This noun *sin* is first revealed by God in Genesis 4.7...He personifies it as "*sin* lies crouching at your door and his desire is for you." Satan seeks to deceive the Christian that *sin* is verb, i.e., it is a *doing* from the heart of a Christian. However, because of Christ and His work through the cross, *sin* is exposed as a noun and is not from the heart (the *being*) of the Christian, for that heart is Christ!]
- Confusion of gospel issues from the absurdity of a co-experienced death and new life with Christ that just doesn't seem to pan out according to what we see in the world around us. It just isn't logical.
- In Adam, we were dead in sin and in sins. In Christ we were made dead to (toward) sin.
- Notice Paul said, "How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" Paul did not say, "How shall we who BELIEVE still live in sin?" Paul indeed believed in miraculous faith, but when it came to the sin question he did not pit it against our BELIEVING in Christ but against our DYING with Him.
- The truth is that our having died with Christ is an integral part of THE faith of Christ that has been declared. Unfortunately, we have fallen victim to the contemporary hocus-pocus that says faith in Christ is about what WE have done with Christ as opposed to it being the very essence of the good news of Christ...so essential that it is the very embodiment of our hope, who is Christ Himself.
- The law convinces us that even though we are supposedly "saved" from sin through Christ, we are still sinners who are subject to the law of sin. It's only reasonable, isn't it? After all, why would we ever think that just because we believe in Christ we would not still have to deal with sin? Unless, of course, we really did share in Christ's death and also have been raised to new life in Him.
- Why would I try to re-establish the thing (the law) that can only bring knowledge of sin when that thing is what killed me so that I could be delivered from it?
- We get deceived into thinking that we can operate according to the flesh only because we are not considering the simple truth that it is only the law of death the flesh is in subjection to. Insanity has us believing that we can find life and freedom in the realm of sin and death...the very realm done away in Christ.
- A principle-driven life really is a desperate attempt at fixing that which cannot be fixed.
- The fact is that what Paul found shook him to his very core because he was able to distinguish himself -- his real self -- from the lie that law had convinced him he was.
- What was the reality Paul came to realize? That he was indeed serving the law of God in the renewed mind through the Spirit of Christ. He experienced freedom in this, not bondage to two natures in him. [God revealed Paul's union with Christ.]

***Romans 7* by Jim Minker**

- At the end of Romans 7, Paul came to realize that he was in fact serving the law of God in his renewed mind through the Spirit of Christ. The second part of his realization of the law of sin and death had nothing to do to set up a Christian split-personality. As a result of these realizations, Paul did not resign to a life built upon a vicious sin-cycle.
- Paul's thankfulness was found in his inward realization that what he WAS (the flesh) was not only NOT his real life, but that its utter corruptness made it so clear as to what his real life is. For a life that answers to (is in subjection to) the law of sin and death CANNOT be the life that has been raised from the dead through Christ!

Applying the Cross of Jesus Christ in Our Lives by Father Gerard Beigel

- Deep down, we do not think that we need such a radical solution [the cross] for our sin. We prefer to think we can do something ourselves. We still imagine that we are "still basically ok" and that overcoming sin doesn't require a total interior transformation. It is against such vanity that Paul explains powerfully what happened for us when Christ died.
- How do I apply the power of the cross in my life? I first must understand what happened when Christ died for me, that my old man under sin was crucified with Him. I must grow ever more deeply in love with the work of Christ on the cross. I am rooted in the cross with Christ.
- Grace is remembering, treasuring, and calling upon the power of Christ's cross.
- Every moment of my life is present to God. This means that God can heal wounds in our past!
- I must reckon the attitudes and the expectations of my old life that spring from a wound as dead, having been crucified with Christ.

Miscellaneous notes by Jim Minker

- The reality of the past is not the problem. The problem is the fear, guilt, condemnation, false pride, self-justification, etc. that is linked to our perceptions. We should not ignore this, but we should focus on realizing that we have been freed from this all in Christ! For He has taken it away. To ignore the past is to leave it as buried alive...to see it in Christ is to see it as having already been put to death. Ironically, trying to ignore our past only sets us up to dwell on it.
- When we try to figure out HOW to live free in the Christian life, it can only come across as being some difficult requirement. Why? Because the natural get-it-figured-out mind cannot understand true freedom. More and more I realize how much my thinking has been programmed by learning to live by fear and guilt.
- [Many Christians are afraid of the "freedom" according to their own minds and perceptions.]
- The preaching of the good news is not about trying to make it make sense, but is simply putting forth that which is in itself impossible to be understood by the one hearing it! It is after all, why Paul described himself and others as "fools for Christ" (1 Corinthians 4.10). Faith, in view of such absurdly impossible odds, sound miraculous!
- [KISS is the common acronym for Keep it simple, stupid. In view of the miraculous nature of the gospel message, in that it cannot be understood by the human mind, we might better say, Keep it stupid, simple! However, even that has legalist tones. Maybe the most appropriate acronym is HIM, He is miraculous!]

The Christian's Identity in Sanctification by Mark Saucy

- Sanctification cannot be reduced to a matter of just thinking often enough of who one is in Christ. This focuses on the positional change, and not the heart of the real change. This is the temptation of positive thinking.
- Having a new heart is the clearest indication that there has been a real change in the person himself, not just his position. "As in water face reflects face, so a man's heart reveals the man" (Proverbs 27.19). "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life" (Proverbs 4.23). 1 Peter 3.3 describes the wife as being "adorned with the hidden person of the heart with incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit."
- The deepest core of a Christian seeks God whereas before he was in bondage to sin and sought only to preserve the idol of himself. In the knowledge of this new propensity of the heart is where growth is nourished. If I was forgiven yet still a sinner at heart with an orientation toward sin, I simply could not grow. If that were the case, the commands of God would come to me from the outside and I would have no means of obedience.

- Regenerated and surging with Christ's life, the Christian is thereby drawn and moved from within to cooperate with the Spirit for growth.

***The Gospel for the Believer* by Robert Jones**

- God never imputes righteousness to anyone without also imparting it – never!
- Sin in Romans 6 should always be with a capital letter, since it is not once mentioned in the plural. Free from "sins" is not the subject, as in Romans 5 where justification frees us from sins. Romans 6 is the freedom from Sin as a master.
- I cannot experience freedom by learning...it is only by the Holy Spirit. Learning can never supplant faith.
- The only way of deliverance from Sin is by dying to it, for by dying I pass into a realm where Sin is not, and where the break with Sin is complete and final.
- Sin, driven out from the throne of my will and spirit, makes the [unredeemed] body its stronghold.
- I need Christ's life in order to reckon myself everyday to be dead to Sin. Note again that this is not a dying to sins, but to Sin...and that is why it is complete in one act [of the cross]. I am not done with the cross [in regards to trusting God to deal with sins each day], but I am done with dying to Sin.
- The Law was sent NOT to make bad men good, but to control their evil (1 Timothy 1.8-10).
- The Law did not create Sin, but it does give it energy. What a terrible thing Sin must be that it could slay me through the knowledge of that which is good!
- Don't be afraid of the paradoxes, for therein you get the full truth.
- Romans 8 presents a man free from shackles, his face to the light of day. He is no longer a poor slave, a vicious enemy. He is a child waiting for the day of adoption into full son-ship. With the knowledge of his amazing destiny, he thinks nothing of the perils and persecutions along the way, and in spite of bleeding hands and feet, he pursues his way to the goal, sure of one thing – that pure love will not let him go!
- In Romans 8, the Holy Spirit is shown to be the Spirit of Life (2), Spirit of Peace (6), Spirit of Victory (13), Spirit of Obedience (14), Spirit of Hope (15), Spirit of Assurance (15), Spirit of Sympathy (26), and Spirit of Prayer (26).
- [The Way of the Cross: death transformed into life, sin transformed into righteousness, law transformed into grace. The Work of the Cross: flesh work transformed into Spirit work.]

***Romans 7* by Newell**

- The sinner is not forgiven by what Christ does now, but by faith in what Christ did do at the cross, for "the power of the cross IS the power of God." [I confess FROM forgiveness.]
- Just so, the believer is not delivered by what Christ does for him now, but in the revelation to his identification with Christ's death at the cross. [I walk FROM victory and IN victory.]
- [The believer is delivered both by faith in what Christ does for him now AND by faith in what Christ did for him at the cross. My passion is to only know Christ (faith in the living, indwelling Christ now) and Christ crucified (faith in the finished work of Christ through the cross)!]

***Our New Life in Christ* by Wayne Barber**

- Why was it necessary for the old man to die? Romans 6.6 says, "our old self was crucified with Him SO THAT our body of sin might be rendered powerless." The flesh is pulling and tugging against the spirit AT ALL TIMES [like the law of gravity]. Sin to the believer is a choice.

- This body is dying because it is un-renewed. Because of this, the propensity to sin is in the body. This is where the flesh is. The flesh is deeply entrenched into this body that we live in every day of our lives. This body is trying to have power over us, but the Word of God proclaims it doesn't have power over us.
- Who lied to you and told you that you have a habit in your life that's empowering you?! You have been set free from the power of sin [through the cross].

***The Gospel of Rest* by F.B. Meyer**

- Rest in Hebrews 4.9 is a rest in the finished work of Christ through the cross.
- This rest is what I am invited to share. This rest is holding out both hands to the weary souls of men throughout the ages, offering its shelter as a harbor from the storms of life. [AELM ministries!]
- Jesus, our Fore-runner and Representative, has entered this rest for us. It is "His rest." We have been raised up together with Christ where we can simply appropriate His rest by faith (Ephesians 2.4-7).
- Why should we strive to add one stitch to a finished garment? Let us quiet our fears by considering that what satisfies Christ may well satisfy us. Let us dare to stand without a qualm in God's presence. Let us silence every tremor of unrest by recalling the dying cry on the cross and the witness of the empty grave [in the calm of His presence.]

***Hebrews 6.11-2* by Brian Coatney**

- Our one purpose is to contain and express God's self-sacrificing nature, so that as priests, we might see Christ formed in others.
- Paul did not live only to know truth, but to know truth formed in others. [My heart in discipling.]
- This does not mean that we bear the responsibility for others, as if we can determine their choices. It does mean that we see our purpose to be the actual life of Christ formed in others.
- Being diligent to enter His rest is not a human characteristic, but is a willingness to receive [the finished work of the cross].
- We accept ourselves as bodies that God made to contain His own passion. This is what He made us for.

***Living by Rights* by Dudley Hall**

- The surrender of rights for the sake of love is a true expression of the life of Christ. He gave up His rights for our sakes. As we partake of that kind of love, we actually begin to experience life.
- Until you are free, you have nothing to give up!

***So Free, It's Scary* by Dudley Hall**

- It can be more comfortable to walk by rigid commandments rather than to walk in the liberty of the Spirit. [We are so used to walking in bondage that it actually feels more comfortable...more familiar...more right.]
- Many think we were set free to serve. No, Christ came to set us free for the sake of freedom. "It was for freedom that Christ set us free" (Galatians 5.1).
- Our first calling is into fellowship, to enjoy God and for Him to enjoy us. True fellowship requires true freedom.
- Let us not confuse freedom with independence.

- Jesus came to set us free from sin-consciousness. If we focus on sin, we will continue to stumble. If we focus on the glory of Christ and the power of His resurrection, that is what we will live by. We become that which we behold!
- We are not transformed by beholding what is wrong with us...but by beholding Christ in all of His glory (2 Corinthians 3.18)!
- It is not our confession, but the blood of Jesus that cleanses our sin. Our faith in that blood appropriates forgiveness and cleanses our conscience.
- When we preach true freedom that is in Christ, we WILL be accused of preaching such things as sinless perfection. However, I would rather be accused of that than remain in a state of sinful defeat that rejects the very provision of God through the sacrifice of His dear Son. The source of these accusations is the very spirit that is trying to keep us from being what God has actually called us to be.
- God sets us free by taking us to the cross. The cross is a place of death. Our old man, with all of its old thinking, old values, old perspectives, has to die. We all like self-improvement, but none of us likes to die. We say, "God, I'm trying to be more like Jesus." The Lord says, "No, I want you to die so that I can give you resurrection life!" A person cannot be resurrected until he has died.
- The human concept of freedom is having our rights protected. However, true freedom only can come when we surrender all our own rights. We are supposed to be dead to this world, so what can the world do to a dead man? A dead man cannot be bound by insecurities, the fear of men, the fear of failure, or even care about insults and misunderstandings. The man who is dead to this world is the most free!
- When you are truly free, you don't have to prove you're free [and you're free to be misunderstood].
- Many people try to be free by not relating to those who are in bondage. They are afraid the bondage will rub off on them, which only reveals the shallowness of their freedom.
- Jesus was free from idealism. He did not attack everything that was wrong. He was willing for a prostitute to wash His feet.
- We do not change in order to come into the presence of the Lord. We are changed by coming into His presence!
- True freedom is a light that beckons all who live in darkness.
- We cannot walk in liberty if we have an unresolved past. The cross utterly and completely resolves it. Our death with Christ on the cross is the end of our previous past.

Indwelling Sin by Al Scardino

- Sin has only the power I choose to yield to it.

Our Faith or His Faith by Jim Minker

- Faith is to be understood by what it is dependent upon. Consider a tree – it is dependent upon the soil. It is the difference between a choice and a factual relationship! A tree simply lives in this dependence. We, too, have been brought into a dependent relationship, for we have been put into Christ. The mistake is trying to live, instead of simply living...trying to depend, instead of being aware that we've been made dependent.
- Trying to be what you already are will only bring confusion. For we walk by faith, not by sight.
- We haven't received a doctrinal faith nor a formula that can be broken down into an equation. We have received something real and living.
- The shackles of the enemy fall off when we see Christ [through the resurrection].

***Counting on the Truth of our Union with Christ* by John Best**

- "Reckon" in Romans 6.11 means to "have unreserved inner confidence" in the reality of Romans 6.1-10. [I am commanded to believe God in what He says He has already done through the cross.]
- Legalists will try to set you to crucify yourself! They will say you must "die out" to this and to that. However, God says that old man has already been dealt with. The very words "with Him" show that it was done back at the cross! My task is to simply believe this good news, rather than seeking to bring about the crucifixion myself.
- Counting on our death in union with Christ is a big part of the attitude that will free us from slavery to sin. It should never be forgotten or else we will be vulnerable to being deceived into thinking that the thing we most deeply want to do is sin.
- In Romans 6.11, God's purpose is for us to be Savior-centered and not sin-centered.
- While I trust that God is meeting my life's needs in me, sin is faced with the daunting task of penetrating such thoughts to deliver his junk mail.
- Temptation is actually a trigger to draw our attention to the reality of Christ. Praise God for temptations; do not dread temptations.

***Romans 8.1-11* by Newell**

- Those in Christ Jesus have more than justification from all things through His blood. They have "justification of life" (Romans 5.18), which means that they share His risen life.
- Sin has been condemned as connected to human flesh. This gives the Risen Christ the glorious right to live in these earthly bodies.
- The Law could forbid, rebuke, reprimand, and curse sin, but could not condemn sin.
- When Christ comes, we shall be freed from the very presence of sin. However, sin has already been condemned in the flesh, and should be reckoned so by us all. Just as surely as our sins were put away by the blood of Christ, so was sin in the flesh condemned, judgment executed on it.
- Sin has no more rights in us now [as a result of the cross]!

***The Day I Died* by Ray Steadman**

- Every time a Christian chooses to sin, he is saying "I am sinning so that grace can abound." [We often interpret Romans 6.1 to mean licentiousness, i.e., "I have a license to sin all I want to because God will forgive me." However, it is more common for Christians to simply "get by" in this world hoping that they will finally experience victory in heaven. This is the most subtle form of licentiousness, masquerading as humility, which is actually self-pity. "Woe is me...I'll get by the best I can with God's help until He takes me home by His grace." That is Christianity without the hope that is rooted in the cross.]
- We confess over and over, and ultimately we give up and do the next best thing: keeping up as good an appearance as possible [the flesh]. We rationalize that as long as we can outwardly be as good as the rest of the people around us, we are satisfied. We become content with defeat.
- Baptism united me with Christ, and the day I believed in Jesus Christ, God cut off the old life, and crucified it with Christ, and buried it with Him, and declared that it no longer had any right in His sight.
- Now the trouble in our lives is that we have this old battery that we got from Adam, but it is without power. God declares it to be dead, but we simply refuse to believe that it is dead. We have a certain fondness for it because we have had it for so long. We hate to part with old antiques...we refuse to believe it is no good.
- "Reckon" means to "keep on counting yourselves to be what God says you are."

- Every time you let enter your thought life any of the things God has said are of the old Adam, you are presuming to let live what God declares has no right to live.
- The Spirit takes the manifestations of my flesh, and makes me face up to them.
- "Yield" means "to give over" to the indwelling Christ.
- God doesn't give me anything (e.g., power, patience, etc)...He gives me Himself.

Based on quote by A.W. Tozer

- [If my fire to testify of the message of the cross is not large, it is yet real, and there may be those who can light their candle to its flame...so that the glory of God shines around the world.]

***Christ Moment by Moment* by Mike Rule**

- God showed me that I wanted victory more than I wanted Him. I had false assumptions about what His victory really is.
- I am now free to surrender to God my "right" to be miserable.

***Exchanged Life Ministries Newsletter February 2001* by Mary Wilkinson**

- A.W. Tozer wrote, "Always remember, you cannot carry a cross in company."

***A Living Sacrifice* by Jim Minker**

- How we see ourselves is how we present ourselves. *Visualizing* is merely an attempt to create your own reality...*presenting* is the reality of standing before God right now as He has made you. Paul didn't tell anyone to make themselves acceptable to God but to present themselves as acceptable to God...a huge difference.
- Despite all appearances and doubts, God has made your dying body alive for Him to live His life through!
- "Holy" does not refer to the goodness of a person, place, or thing...it is someone or something that God lays claim on. God sets it apart for His use. It's the ordinary becoming extraordinary by association.
- There has only been one altar of sacrifice as far as God is concerned. All other altars are only shadows of the real altar, the Cross.
- So what is a "living sacrifice?" There is only One who has been sacrificed and lived to tell about it. Christ not only removed our sins from us, He Himself was removed to a new life where sin doesn't exist! That's a living sacrifice! The gospel tells you that you have died to sin and that you live to God...that's a living sacrifice...in Christ.
- True worship is seeing ourselves before a holy God as He has made us through the cross.
- When your Christian life demands that you must deal with your sin, then you are trying to do what Christ has already done.
- The gospel calls you to take your place in God's presence with confidence and boldness as those who have been made alive from the dead and have equal standing with His beloved Son Jesus.

***Lies, Lies, and More Lies* by Lee LeFebre**

- The lie of counterfeit victory convinces Christians to fight sin (temptation) rather than believing and acting upon their death to sin.
- The lie of false perfection convinces Christians that they are saved by grace and perfected by works.

- The lie of false sanctification convinces Christians to change their life rather than exchanging it. This results in coming to Christ for forgiveness but not for transformation.
- The lie of false motivation convinces Christians that they still need the law, that [our resurrected] Christ is not sufficient.

Identification Truths by Set Free Ministries

- The most important question a counselor can ask is "Who are you?"
- My new nature lives in an old body. The body is not evil. The body is not the source of sin, but it is the organ sin uses to manifest itself. We cannot sin without a body.
- Being dead to sin does not mean we are dead to its influence. It does not mean we will never be tempted any more. It does not mean that we will not sin anymore. It DOES mean that we have died to the realm where sin reigns. Sin can raid as an outlaw, but it can no longer reign as king. We reign over our bodies through the grace of God in us.

Overcoming the Power of Sin by Don Krow

- Romans 6 tells us that it is not our responsibility to overcome sin, or to even resist sin...but that we have been freed from sin [through our union with Christ through the cross].
- Sins spring forth from sin. Most Christians don't know what sin is, and don't understand the battle they are having with what the Word of God calls sin.
- Paul discovered sin is more than just an act; sin is a law in his members. That's why he couldn't defeat it; sin is a law that is consistently present, [like the law of gravity].
- The flesh is the combination of the un-renewed mind, the emotions, and the physical body. The lust of the flesh is everything that was programmed into us by the "old man."
- Christ doesn't give us salvation; He is our salvation. He doesn't give us righteousness; He is our righteousness.
- Why not let the only One who is life be your life?
- Victory is not something you try for, it is a gift. Victory is Jesus Christ.
- Sin dwells in the physical realm. We are delivered from this realm on a daily basis by resurrection life.
- Philippians 4.12 says, "I am so in union with Christ that I am strengthened and infused with power and strength of Christ."

Our Mission by Identity in Christ Ministries

- Grace is God's power that enables one to live out their true identity.

Romans 6 by Wayne Barber

- Christ lives in us now, and His holiness in us begins to drive us like a current towards the Father. To sin, we have to pull out of the current and go upstream because we have become new creatures in Christ.

Quote by Charles Hadden Spurgeon

- There are no crown-wearers in heaven who were not cross-bearers here below.

***The Offense of the Cross* by T. Austin-Sparks**

- Our goodness and badness have all been included in that death [on the cross]. From now on, we are called to live not on a human level, but on a divine level.
- To regard not only our sins but our selves as having been taken to the cross by Christ is the only way by which those purposes of God can be wrought out through our lives.
- We are slow to accept the verdict of the cross on our natural lives. We find it humiliating to accept the same verdict on ourselves as has been passed on the world, namely that of death by crucifixion.
- Only by really knowing the power of the fact that I am crucified with Christ can I know the blessedness of the new life.

***Secret to Reigning in Life* by John Money Penny**

- The secret to reigning in life is to CHOOSE to receive God's grace and righteousness as you own. That's all. "Those who RECEIVE the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness WILL reign in life through Jesus Christ" (Romans 5.17).

***Only Oneness with God Validates the Christian Faith* by Paul Armstrong**

- Oneness with God [through the cross of Christ] is the only thing that makes the Christian faith real, believable and effective. People can decide to believe anything they want about Jesus, but who can dispute the presence and power of the living God?!
- God gives us faith, but we must believe. "The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent" (John 6.29).
- There is nothing I can DO that can make the world know God loves them. The world CAN know that God loves them because, in spite of all of my failures and weaknesses, God loves me and accepts me as much as He does Jesus, and I love them the way Jesus loves me.

***Reduced to Resurrection* by Dudley Hall**

- God allows circumstances to provide a setting for the glory of the gospel to be expressed. It is ok to despair of our strength...when we have access to His strength.

***How do I allow Christ to live through me?* by Jim Minker**

- Struggling to learn how to allow Christ to live through you is a good thing! Here are two options: (1) Beat yourself up over what you may consider doubts, failures, and shortcomings, or (2) Thank your Father for giving you continued insights that cause you to recognize the difference between your trying and His doing.
- The Father knows that the world is the perfect background against which we may see the reality of Christ. We have much of the world's logic clinging to us in our everyday thought processes. Our Daddy brings us into His understanding by means of contrast. The more we see what it isn't...the more we see what it is.
- We seek to do things for God, and to re-dedicate doing things for God because we have been convinced to ignore the miraculous of what has happened to us in Christ. For through Christ: sin no longer has a valid claim on me, I have been made the righteousness of God, I have received the Spirit of God, I have been brought into union with God, I have the mind of Christ, I have a new life, etc.

Death and Freedom by Bob Smith

- Worship means that in every situation God proves to be worthy to us.
- A Christian can be operating in the flesh and the result is just as deadly as in the non-Christian. Flesh produces the same thing – death, because life is only experienced in the One who is our life.
- The way to render the flesh inoperative is to judge it. God has already judged the flesh in Christ. We must agree with God that the "old man" is dead and has no right to assert himself in us.
- Sometimes we pray really "spiritually" asking God for victory over and over. It's like God says, "Don't talk to Me about it, I've already talked to you about it." Spirituality is like humility – when you brag about it, you've already lost it!

But Where is the Cross? by Charles Solomon

- Understanding and experiencing the Cross is not optional – it's a command (Romans 6.11, 13).
- Without the reality of the Cross, the disciplines of the Christian life will result in the flesh becoming stronger.

Grace by Dudley Hall

- From Romans 1.1 through 6.10, there are no commands. God wants to talk to us first about relationship with Him and His love for us. The commands come after the relationship is established.
- God doesn't want us to be fruit-conscious, but relationship-conscious.
- Some try to "crucify themselves" or to "deny themselves" or to "reckon themselves to be dead." This is deception. You can't die yourself. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus died for you and you are alive to God.
- ["Reckon" means to count on Christ Himself, not to count of the truth.]

June 2006 Monthly Message by Dudley Hall

- We live on the resurrection side of the cross. We live in a day where everything is filtered through the cross.
- Paul said that he sought to know nothing except "Christ and Christ crucified." This means that every truth I ever preach to you will always go through the cross...whether it is Old Testament prophesy or wisdom literature...everything is interpreted through the cross.
- When you take it through the cross, i.e., the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and see that Jesus fulfills it, now you have the final and proper interpretation. The Old Testament temple through the cross becomes Christians indwelt by God. The Law through the cross becomes the Spirit of God written in the heart of man, so that we don't have to read it externally to LIVE UP to something, but we know it is written in our hearts to LIVE OUT. Take the land and inheritance in the Old Testament through the cross and see Christ as your inheritance.
- The New Covenant fulfills ALL of the other covenants.
- Jesus has freed me from sin-consciousness. Now I can focus on my relationship with Him.
- The gospel is not intended to make you good, but to make you dangerous! It makes you infectious, affecting EVERYTHING around you. This is against the trend to attract people in numbers.

***Romans Chapter 6* by ACEWEBNETWORKS**

- Many Christians actually fear freedom. We say, "If we were in a reign of pure grace, what will control our evil tendencies? We feel more safe and comfortable with rules for holy living."
- The new life testified in Romans 6 does not refer to a new manner of living, but rather a "new kind of life."
- Victory is the believer's right, as sure as the air he breathes. However, without knowing myself in union with Christ through His cross, I will live defeated in spite of all my efforts and prayers.
- Legalistic Christians encourage us to crucify ourselves, to "die out" to this and to that. However, the words *with Him* reveal that it has already been done. [Legalists focus on "doing" in addition to the finished work of the cross and Christians focus on "being" through the cross alone.]
- We are not told to do our own dying, but to reckon by simple faith that in Christ's death I died...and to be conformed to His death as already a fact.
- Many Christians beseech God to do what He has already done.
- If the difference between "Christ dying for us" and "our dying with Christ" has not been recognized and counted upon, we will be deceived to believe our old man is still the dominating factor in life.
- At the cross the old man WAS crucified and buried. When I plant my feet on that truth and say, "As for me, I stand in the Lord Jesus as my life," [the power of sin is kept in its condemned state, exposed for what it is.]
- It is a greater testimony to the power of the Father to let that thing [power of sin] be in us and give us dominion over it, than to eradicate it to begin with!
- I believe Christ died for me because the Word of God says so. Likewise I can believe I died with Christ.
- God's way of deliverance is completely different than man's way. Man's way is to try and suppress sin by seeking to overcome it. God's way is to remove the sinner.
- Many Christians pray to God for strength to overcome sin. God's way is not to make us stronger and stronger, but to make us weaker and weaker (2 Corinthians 12.9, Isaiah 40.29).
- We must "know" before we "reckon," else reckoning becomes a work of the flesh. Knowing is revealed truth in our hearts. [Without revelation, we make reckoning a principle to do...and when it doesn't work, we get frustrated and say, "This Christian life doesn't work!"]
- [I do not become dead through reckoning. I reckon because I AM dead AND alive to God in Christ Jesus.]
- If a Christian does not believe [know] that he died with Christ, his life will be a struggle with frustration, guilt, and fruitlessness.
- Surrender is not setting ourselves apart for God's use. Consecration does not call on us to do anything but to rest on our sanctification already declared upon us at salvation (1 Corinthians 1.2, 1 Thessalonians 4.3, 5.23-24).
- Law is "working for God." Grace is God working for me. Law asks, "What must man do?" Grace asks, "What has God done?"
- Not behaving, but believing is God's way. Behaving is a product of believing.
- Romans 6.17, "You have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine (the cross) which was delivered you."

Quote by Vance Havner

- We need men of the cross, with the message of the cross, bearing marks of the cross.

Quote by John Schultz

- Christ rose from the dead by the Father's power, not His own. Thus, it is God who sanctifies us.

Quote n by Frederick W. Norwood

- The cross is central. It is struck into the middle of the world, into the middle of time, into the middle of destiny. The cross is struck into the middle of God's heart.

Romans 7 by Sylvia Pearce

- Paul had to learn "who he wasn't" before he could discover [before God would reveal] "who he was."
- "Mortify the deeds of the flesh" sounds like hard work. Yet it simply means to consider yourself ALREADY DEAD to the deeds of the flesh and to trust the Holy Spirit to make manifest the transformation.
- The cross transforms negative desperation into positive revelation (Romans 7). This is how Paul discovered that he was not an independent self [that he not only could not do evil, he also could not do good]. The revelation was that he was in union with Christ.

The Centrality of the Cross by Dorman Followwill

- The love of Christ on the cross becomes the love God desires to pour through us in our marriages, in our families, in our relationships within the body of Christ, and in our relationships with the world.
- May the cross of Christ [Christ Himself] remain central to all we think and do!

Death and Life in Christ by C.H. Spurgeon

- The two pillars of our religion are *the work of Christ for us* and *His work in us by the Holy Spirit*.
- If you want to find the apostles, you will surely discover them standing between these two pillars. They are either discoursing upon the effect of the passion in our justification, or its equally delightful consequence in our death to the world and our newness of life.

The Cross of Christ by Victor Shepherd

- The issue of forgiveness is a simple matter, but it is not easy. Is a cross ever easy?
- Most of us confuse *forgiveness* with *excusing*. We forgive precisely what can never be excused.
- Only those people forgive who have been seared and stamped with the cross. Forgiveness entails vulnerability before an offender, even when this offender has wounded us more than he or she will ever know.

Crucify the Flesh by Vernon Terrell

- *Flesh* is the way of the old self in our thinking and behaving [reacting to life's circumstances]. Those old desires, habits, and behaviors have been recorded and will resurface. It was the engine or generator of your old way.
- There is no real power to make a Christian act or think in the "old way." In fact, the opposite is true. A Christian has the omnipotent power of the indwelling Christ to think and live a brand new life. When you "choose" to walk in the Spirit, you are depending [trusting God in] the truth of your co-crucifixion, which bears fruit of the Spirit...His victory.
- How did you crucify the flesh? By believing in Christ, accepting His forgiveness AND receiving His life.

- [The "old man" was crucified when I first believed in Christ crucified...I just did not realize it then. Now the "flesh" experiences a "crucifixion" when I believe in the Christ resurrected.]
- Our victory is in knowing Christ. To know Christ is to know our hope, our significance, and our victory.
- Knowing Christ is not the result of human effort, which does not discount Bible study, prayer, etc. Knowing Christ is a lifetime process of intimacy [a relationship].

***Christ Died for our Sins that we might Die to Sin* by John Piper**

- 1 Peter 1.24-25, "Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross SO THAT we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls."
- What causes our death to sin is the work of the cross convincing us in the depth of our hearts that God is committed to us like a mighty Shepherd.
- [By Christ's wounds from the cross we WERE healed. And those wounds are part of His glorious resurrected body, an ever-reminder of my complete healing through the cross!]

***Testimony* by Stephen Olford**

- As a young preacher, Stephen Olford was haunted by the memory of past defeats. He tried to conquer this problem by self-effort, and instead of being liberated, he became paralyzed.
- In desperation, Stephen Olford went to listen to a missionary teach on Romans 6. At one point, the missionary said, "Is there someone here who is haunted by his past and defeated in his witness? Do you know that such introspection is a violation of the principle of grace? God had condemned, crucified, and buried your old self. What right do you have to visit the cemetery of your moral past and dig up the bones?! Accept by faith what God has DONE and trust the Holy Spirit to liberate you to live the resurrection life in Christ." The grace of God set Stephen Olford free.

***Christ and Christ Crucified* by Jim Minker**

- The Christ that Paul knew among the Corinthians was the living Christ. Paul added "and Christ crucified" because it was what defines the living Christ. He is not the Jesus who is connected to the Law and with sin anymore because He died to it! Done, finished!! Paul didn't add this phrase so that we would not forget to mourn Christ's death, but that we would never be confused as to who this Christ, who IS our life, really is.
- Someone in Corinth was convincing the Christians that they could understand the things of God through their intellect. Paul reminded them that understanding God was the miraculous work of the Spirit who was IN them. [Paul loved to tell his brothers and sisters in Christ, "Don't you know, don't you know who you are, who God made you to be in Christ through His cross?!"]

***Power by the Cross* by G. Campbell Morgan**

- Old temptations come through old avenues.
- [Are you seeking to tell people how to get to heaven out of fear...fear of not doing God's will in evangelism, fear of hell for others, etc? Or are you testifying of the living presence of Christ with compassion for others and with confidence in the power of the cross?]
- The religious Jews said that the Cross is a stumbling block, the Greek word *skandalon*. [The message of the cross is scandalous! This is why Paul was persecuted so much by the religious people of his day.]
- 1 Corinthians 1.18 is best interpreted "The WORD of the cross...is the power of God," and not, "The PREACHING of the cross...is the power of God." [The Greek for *Word* is *Logos*, the same word used to

present Jesus in John 1.1. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines *Logos* as a "message from the Lord, delivered with His authority, and made effective by His power."]

- It is not the preaching of the Cross that is the power. Thank God there is a sense in which the preaching of the Cross is powerful, for it is by the proclamation of the Cross that men find the Word of the Cross. However, it is not the act of preaching that is powerful, it is the thing [Christ] preached [who is powerful].
- The Bible has much to say about the "Word of God." By the "word of the Lord" the heavens were made. God upholds all things by the "word of His power." The angel spoke to the virgin Mary that "No word of God shall be void of power." Etc.
- The word of man is a wish. The Word of God is a work! The Word of God is the expression of God, the revelation, the uttering forth, the going out...and with the Word is the Work.
- Every one of the words spoken by the Word in the supreme agony of the Cross tells of defeat AND of victory, of weakness AND power.
 1. *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* It is the word of unutterable pain, but the pain is the plea [of forgiveness] that prevails.
 2. *Today you will be with Me in Paradise.* To the Jew, "paradise" was the place of departed spirits where no man wanted to go. So, to the Jew these were words of defeat. However, Jesus' words proclaim that He was indeed dying, but He was dying as a King, and that "you shall be with me [in victory]."
 3. *Woman, behold thy son. Behold thy mother.* Jesus' heart is bereaved, and He knows His mother's heart is pierced as with a sword. And yet He knows that there, through that bereavement and agony and loss and suffering, there He creates a new kinship, the new relationship...He gives His mother a son in the bond of His love...He gives Himself back to His mother through John in the new discipleship of John. He begins that gracious work that He has carried on ever since, of healing broken hearts with the new kinship, the new relationship, the new family of God. It is a great triumph through a great sorrow.
 4. *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?* That forsaking is but the way of approach...forsaking is the pathway of fellowship.
 5. *I thirst.* Out of that thirst there springs the living water of which thirsty men shall drink and never thirst.
 6. *It is finished!* We sing of this, not as a declaration of a Man who is beaten and defeated. We know the ending is but the beginning. This is the dawning of the new order and the new life [a new creation].
 7. *Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit.* The actual passing is the coming back to the Father.
- Take away any of these words, and I will defy you to explain them. Crucified in weakness, and yet throbbing through the weakness are rivers of power, which, by way of the resurrection, have passed out into all human life.
- The Word of the Cross IS the power of God. God spoke at creation...it was done. God spoke in Jesus...it was done.
- Now, how am I to realize this power in my life? The abiding condition of the manifestation of divine power is that of *weakness*. It is when I come to the point of the cessation of my activity in the power of the flesh, in the power of my own intellect, that the power of the Cross becomes operative in and through me.
- That great power of the Cross operates in and through only men and women who are content to die with Him, to be at the end of self, that Christ may be the one supreme enthroned and crowned Lord of the life. It is this dying [dying to flesh, not flesh itself] that hinders us. I must be willing to be nothing [in a day of "successful" Christians]. This willingness to die is easily said, but not easily consented to.
- In the realm of faith the power of the Cross begins to thrill and throb through a [surrendered] man's life.
- It is at the place of the end of self-life that true life touches omnipotence! How great and gracious is the power of God!

Our History in the Last Adam by Miles Stanford

- Our history in the Last Adam, our risen Lord Jesus, begins on the only basis for resurrection life--death. Our relationship to the first Adam rendered us dead *in* sin, but our death with Christ made us dead *unto* (in relation to) sin--the one condition for newness of life.
- Death, our ruin, has been made the very means of our triumph over it. *"Death is swallowed up in victory... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (I Corinthians 15.54, 57).
- Whereas our old position in the first Adam rendered us dead unto God and alive unto sin, our new position in the risen Last Adam renders us alive unto God and dead unto sin. *"For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God"* (Colossians 3.3, ASV).
- The old life is not changed, but exchanged for that which is altogether new. Paul's clearest description of this is given in 2 Corinthians 5.17 and 18: *"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ."*
- Our Father sees each of us as completely new in His Son. We have been forever freed from our relationship to the first Adam with its reign of sin and death. And He wants us to see ourselves from His point of view--new creations in Christ Jesus!
- In this death-to-life transition our personal identity is kept intact. We remain the same individual while acquiring a new position, life, and nature in the risen Lord Jesus. The Father maintains the identity of each believer throughout the process of the Cross, the Tomb, and the Resurrection.
- On the one hand, He applies the finished work of the Cross to the life of the flesh within. *"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh"* (Galatians 5.16). On the other hand, He causes the fruit of the Spirit to grow in our new life. *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control"* (Galatians 5.22, 23).
- It is true that He is our risen life, but it is also true that His is the life and nature of *our* newly created life. *"For to me to live is Christ."* *"Christ, who is our life"* (Philippians 1.21; Colossians 3.4). We are not to become lost in Him, but He is to be found in us. *"That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh"* (2 Corinthians 4.11). He lives in *me*, not instead of me; He is the source and motivation of my Christian life.
- I am to realize and rest in the fact that it is *my* being, *my* personality, which is uplifted by the human-divine life and nature of the Lord Jesus. I am the same person, but with a new life in union with His life. By the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit I will grow in grace and increasingly be conformed to His image.

The New Creation Christian by Miles Stanford

- The Comforter's present ministry to us is to minister the things of the Lord Jesus (John 16.13-15). He initiates nothing, but receives and administers from the Person and finished work of Christ.
- As we count upon the finished work of the Cross, the Holy Spirit applies that crucifixion experientially to the [flesh] within. *"Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit"* (John 12.24). Life out of death! *"For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal body"* (2 Corinthians 4.10).

The Wonderful Spirit-Filled Life by Charles Stanley

- Branches were not designed to produce fruit – they were designed to have fruit produced through them!

***The Cross – God's Way* by Miles Stanford**

- The 'flesh' will only yield to the cross; not to all the resolutions you may make at a conference, not to any self-effort, not to any attempted self-crucifixion; only to co-crucifixion, crucified together with Christ (Galatians 2.20) (G. Wyatt).
- It is not by putting yourself to death, but by taking, through faith and surrender, your place of union with Christ in His death. That is the blessed barrier of safety between you and all the attractions of the flesh, and that makes the way open to do the will of God (G. Wyatt).
- Praise the Lord! It all happened at Calvary: Our sins were paid for, our sinfulness was dealt with, and both by the ultimate—*death*. And we receive the benefits of the work of the cross simply by reckoning on, or believing in, the finished work of the cross. First, through the Word, we find out what God did about our problem. Then, as we become thoroughly convinced of the fact and begin to understand it clearly, we are able to agree to "reckon" it true.
- As we exercise faith in God's fact, we begin to receive the benefits of that finished work in experience. Was it not true in the matter of our justification? Yes, and we will likewise find it to be true in the matter of our emancipation from the slavery of the self-life.

***Christ the Power of God* by T. Austin-Sparks**

- The Holy Spirit comes into our hearts He brings Christ in the completeness of His finished work on the cross, and then proceeds progressively to conform us to Christ.
- Nobody should make a special kind of "overcomer" teaching, for this is what God intended Calvary to mean for every believer.
- The Christ who is the power of God to us is the crucified Christ who progressively applies the cross to us also, so that being released from the flesh which so holds us back, we may advance in the realm of the Spirit. So spiritual progress is not conditioned by special teaching but by ever deeper experiences of the in-working of the cross of Christ.
- The Holy Spirit has been charged with and has accepted full responsibility for conforming us to Christ. But we must recognize that power in relation to the Holy Spirit is not just an impersonal force but is vitally connected with Christ, and especially on the basis of the cross. For us the power of the Holy Spirit is inseparably bound up with the Person of Jesus Christ and depends on our willingness to accept the implication of union with Him in His cross.

***The Way into the Holiest* by F.B. Meyer**

- The Christian is the workshop of God. In that mortal but renewed nature the divine Artisan is at work, elaborating products of exquisite beauty and marvelous skill. Would that we might be less eager to give the world ourselves, and more determined that there should be a manifestation through all the gateways of our being of the wondrous in-working of the God of peace! Then we might say, with some approach to the words of our Lord, to such as demand evidences of His resurrection and life, "How do you say, prove to me the resurrection of Jesus? The words which I speak, I speak not of myself, but my Savior, who dwells in me, He does the works."

Beloved – From God's Heart to Yours by Kay Arthur

- In God's economy, crucifixion always brings resurrection. In Romans 6, the whole purpose of death is life – death to sin's power “so we too might walk in newness of life” (verse 4).
- “Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Corinthians 5.17). “Passed away” means that that it took place at one point in time. The verb “have come” denotes a past completed action with a present or continuous result. This is how effective Calvary was: *For all who truly believe, there is newness of life.*
- What makes us new creations? It is the death of the old man and the new indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- It is through our identification in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- The cross leads us to the Spirit. Yet, when the Holy Spirit comes to indwell us, where does He lead us? To the cross! A personal cross. Why? Because the cross works death – to self, to our ways, to our desires – death to our own life. And through this death, Christ is manifested in our flesh. That is why, Beloved, God does not redeem our bodies immediately when we are saved. Instead, He puts the Spirit in our mortal bodies of flesh in order that men might see the surpassing greatness of the power of His Holy Spirit.
- Natural men shun the cross, to keep it from their thoughts, their eyes, their ears. Yet to those who would be God's men and women, comes the call of Jesus to keep the cross ever before them. Why? Because the cross is where the natural dies and the supernatural takes over (Galatians 2.20).
- We who love God are never to fear the cross. Rather we are to fear its absence. Therefore, when you want to run, to escape, to save yourself from the call to forsake all and take up your cross and follow Him, you can be certain that fear is not from God.
- Fear would cause you to doubt the character of the God of Calvary, who is a God of love. Fear that would keep you from the cross comes only from the one who would offer you a crown without a cross, the devil himself. Satan fears the cross, for there men are set free from bondage to death.
- Have you, precious one, found yourself in a difficult situation? Have you seen it as an opportunity for Christ's life to be seen in you?

The Rest of Grace by Wayne Barber

- Paul showed the Roman believers that they were new creatures: “For if we have become united in Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6.5). The word *united* is an intimate word. It means to be blended together, much like a baker blends the various ingredients together to create something new. Christ's life has been “baked” into us, if you will. That's why I like telling people in churches that we are “biscuits” for Jesus.
- Paul continues telling the Romans, “...knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin” (Romans 6.6). The old man is dead. What I was in Adam I can never be again. I call this principle “the Christ life.” We have to realize that *we can't*, but *He can*. Galatians 2.20 says, “I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” It is His life living in me.
- If I exchange my life with Christ's life, the exchange takes place when I'm willing to make the choice to surrender. It is no longer me, but Christ living in and through me. As Christ said, no one can serve two masters (Matthew 6.24). No one can serve Christ and himself. There has to be a choice on my part to surrender to Him.
- When you come to understand grace, you realize that nothing has changed as far as what God demands. What has changed is who is qualified to meet those demands, and you discover it is Christ and Him alone. Our responsibility is not to be perfect, not to win the victory, not to fulfill the law, but *to yield to Christ*, for He alone is our perfection, our victory, and our fulfillment of the law.

- Paul said, “I glory in the cross of Christ alone” (Galatians 6.14). By this he meant that he found identity in the cross. Our identity is not in what we do or in what we think we are. Our identity is that we are believers in Jesus Christ.
- The word for *glory* is *doxa*, which means the “recognition” or “worth” of something. Your worth can only be found at the cross, where we died in union with Christ. When we are willing to die to ourselves and our agenda...then we can glory in the cross. Then all our glory will be pointed toward Him and not toward us.
- Until we are willing to take our place with Him on the cross and find our identity not in ourselves but in Him, then we cannot glory in the cross. By doing so we become enemies of the cross (Philippians 3.18). Most doctrine gets off centered when people don’t understand the importance of the cross in the life of the believer.
- It’s amazing what happens when you begin to understand these truths. You start seeing things differently. Your outward characteristics become transformed by His inner presence. Gradually, like the lifting of a fog ...you see what’s been there all along – victory and fulfillment you’ve been seeking.

***The Cross in the Christian Life* by Henry Blackaby**

- The cross is God’s decisive deed in history! It is in the cross that God dealt with sin, once for all, and completely! Not only did God deal with sin on the cross, but He also dealt with sin for us! “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5.21).
- A crucial truth concerning the cross is our identification with and participation in the cross. Paul insisted that we are crucified with Christ: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2.20), and “For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin” (Romans 6.6).
- We are buried with Christ: “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” (Romans 6.3).
- We are risen with Christ: “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6.4).
- We reign with Christ: “For if, by the trespass of the one man (Adam), death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one Man, Jesus Christ” (Romans 5.17).
- Our whole identity with Christ is found in the cross! There it was that God totally dealt with sin.
- The cross created an opportunity for us to be buried with Christ. That is, we can experience in our lives all God did when He defeated – forever and totally – sin, death, and hell. That incredible power of God that dealt with sin, and defeated it, is the same power that is at work in us to radically defeat sin in us. “But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5.20-21).
- We were united with Christ in His resurrection! “Having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead” (Colossians 2.12). The same power that raised Jesus from the dead, defeating sin, is the same power given to us who believe.
- The victory accomplished through Christ’s death and resurrection is the very same victory we may experience daily in our lives!

***They Found the Secret* by V. Raymond Edman**

- John Bunyan learned the wonderful reality of “the life that is Christ.” Ephesians 5.30 became “a sweet word” to him: “For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” He could say: “Further, the Lord did also lead me into the mystery of union with the Son of God...by this also was my faith in Him,

as my righteousness, the more confirmed in me; for if He and I were one, then His righteousness was mine, His merits mine, His victory also mine. “

- John Bunyan wrote, “Suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, ‘Thy righteousness is in heaven.’ And me thought, with awe, I saw, with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God’s right hand; there, I say, was my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, He wants my righteousness, for that was just before Him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself, ‘the same yesterday, today, and forever,’ (Hebrews 13.8).”
- At first John Bunyan's message was altogether about sin and the Savior. Then his preaching took on more of an exaltation of “Jesus Christ in all His offices, relations, and benefits unto the world.” Then, he began to teach “the mystery of the union of Christ.”
- Neighbors and friends of John Bunyan were aware of a great change in his life, and urged him to preach the Word to them and to others. He was timid to do so, but then was persuaded that God had given him the ministry of preaching and teaching.

***They Found the Secret* by V. Raymond Edman**

- Oswald Chambers wrote, "Holiness is not an attainment at all, it is the gift of God. He makes holy, He sanctifies, He does it all. All I have to do is to come as a spiritual pauper, not ashamed to beg, to let go of my right to myself and to act on Romans 12.1-2. It is never *Do, do, and you'll be with the Lord*, but *Be, be, and I will do through you*. It is a case of hands up and letting go, and then entire reliance on Him."

***My Utmost for His Highest (November 3^d)* by Oswald Chambers**

- I must be broken from my own understanding of myself. When I reach that point, immediately the reality of the supernatural identification with Jesus Christ takes place. And the witness of the Spirit of God is unmistakable – “I have been crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2.20).

***Revolution Within* by Dwight Edwards**

- “I have been crucified with Christ,” (Galatians 2.20). *You* also died on that cross at Calvary. Do you find this difficult to comprehend? It’s not difficult; it’s *impossible*. But we don’t have to wholly understand it to experience it. We simply need to trust that we’ve shared in Christ’s death, because God says so.
- *Our* death on the cross with Christ is what sets *us* free from sin’s power and dominion over us. But while we’ve died to sin, *nowhere does Scripture say that sin has died to us*. The fundamental meaning of death is “separation.” Because of our death with Christ we’ve become separated from sin’s power, although that power is in no way extinguished.
- We’re also united with Christ in His burial – “buried with Him in baptism,” as Paul expresses it (Romans 6.4). God has buried the old you with His Son. *We’re no longer who we used to be*. Let those words sink deeply into your soul. God’s way of dealing with our past is not recovery, but *burial*. This is why the “fix what is wrong” model is inherently flawed. God has no intention of fixing what He has buried.
- “You were raised with Christ,” (Romans 6.4, 8-9). We’re inseparably united to the same power that raised Christ from the dead. *We now are who we never were*. Every believer is a walking miracle, the scene of resurrection power. This is why Paul says, “Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life” (Romans 6.4). Whatever God calls us to in this life is to be carried out in reliance upon the Lord’s grave-busting power, a power that’s always present.
- “It is no longer I who live, “but *Christ lives* in me” (Galatians 2.20). We’re united with One who not only has a perfectly stellar past but also a perfectly stellar present. Christ didn’t stop living for God after He was resurrected and ascended...”He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7.25). Christ right

now is living as fully and working as passionately for His Father's glory as ever. This fully engaged Christ now dwells within us.

- Our life is not trying to “live for” Christ; our life *is* Christ Himself.

***Free at Last* by Tony Evans**

- Many Christians don't experience the abundant life Christ came to give (John 10:10) because we are trying to live the Christian life. That's not a contradiction, because the Christian life is, by definition, the life of Christ. So, in order for us to live the Christian life, Christ must live His life in and through us.
- “I have been crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2.20). Our crucifixion with Christ has already taken place. You may say, “But I don't feel crucified.” That's all right. Dead people don't feel dead. But you are crucified because God says you're crucified, whether you feel it or not.
- Paul rejoiced in the cross (Galatians 6.14) not just because it meant that his sins were paid for, but because the old Paul – the hate-filled persecutor of the church – was dead and gone. Paul was eager to share in Christ's death so that he might share in His resurrection life.
- Paul said in Galatians 2.20 that since he had been crucified with Christ, “it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” When I think, Christ thinks through me. When I move, Christ moves through me. When I speak, Christ speaks through me. That's why the Bible says that Christ is the fullness of God “in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete” (Colossians 2.9-10). He is all you ever need. We display the life of Jesus to the world.
- You may be thinking, “All of this sounds good. But it's not working for me. I pray and read my Bible. I go to church and try to witness. I'm doing the right things, but I'm not seeing the victory you're talking about. What's wrong?” Paul continued in Galatians 2.20, “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.” There it is. God's expectation is that we will live this new life by faith...not by trying or straining or even praying. Faith is living as if God is telling the truth, whether we feel like or not. It may feel awkward at first if you're not used to living by faith. But that's OK.
- Paul concludes Galatians 2.20 by talking about what Christ had done for him. “He loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.” Our “spiritual service of worship” (Romans 12.1) is responding to this sacrificial love and giving ourselves wholly to Christ. If Christ loved us enough to give His life *for* us, then He loves us enough to give His life *to* us, so that He might express His life [and His love] *through* us.

Billy Graham's Foreword to Stephen Olford's book *Not I, But Christ*

- The cross of Christ is the foundation for our salvation, for Christ came from the Father “to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross” (Colossians 1.20).
- The cross of Christ is also the foundation of our lives as believers, for God's plan was that through the cross our old nature would be crucified, and the power of the Holy Spirit would be unleashed to change our hearts and lives.

***Grace Works* by Dudley Hall**

- Paul chose not to preach anything to the Corinthians other than “Christ, and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2.2). This puzzled me somewhat as I thought of all the wonderful Old Testament truths that were readily available to Paul. He could have easily have preached Proverbs with all its wisdom. He could have preached Psalms with its varied and creative expressions of intimacy. Or he could have explored the many lessons from the history of Israel. Yet he focused completely on the message of Christ crucified. Why? Because Christ's death and resurrection represent the highest and most climatic revelation of God's entire design.

***The Bobby Richardson Story* by Bobby Richardson**

- We must have a purpose in life, and that purpose should be to know God, to love Him, to walk with Him in our daily lives. I take my stand on a Bible verse that has strengthened and challenged me because I know to claim it means a completely surrendered life: *I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2.20).*

***In-Touch Newsletter* by Charles Stanley**

- At the cross, our sin was exchanged for the righteousness of Christ. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5.21). Martin Luther spoke of this verse in this manner: “Christ became what He was not – sin – in order that we might become what we were not – the righteousness of God in Christ.”
- All of your sins – past, present, and future – have been forgiven through Christ’s death on the cross. You do not have to perform to gain God’s approval. You are holy and blameless before the Father.
- Think of this exchange that also took place at Calvary – our inadequacy for His adequacy. “Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God” (2 Corinthians 3.5). God has replaced our meager resources with His unlimited sufficiency.
- Christ now lives in us through the Holy Spirit, and we have been placed in Christ by God. We can exchange our anxiety and fretfulness for His peace, our weakness for His strength, our sorrow for His joy.
- I can enjoy all the blessings of Christ’s resurrection life as I set my mind on things above (Colossians 3.1-4), submit my will to Him daily, and choose to obey His Word. The Christian life is not an endless struggle but a daily adventure in allowing Christ to live His life through me.

***The Grace Awakening* by Chuck Swindoll**

- Romans 6 contains the Christian’s Emancipation Proclamation. Here, as in no other section of Scripture, is the foundational truth of our liberty – freedom from Satan’s intimidation and sin’s domination. It is here all young Christians should spend their first hours in the Bible.
- Most Christians have been better trained to expect and handle their sin than to expect and enjoy their freedom. Being creatures of habit, we still prefer the security of slavery to the risks of liberty. That is why the slaves stayed on the plantation, and that’s why we continue to be sin-conscious...even more than Savior-conscious.
- Christ died for us on the cross. He was then raised from the dead for us at the tomb. When we believed in the Savior’s death and resurrection, we were “dipped” into the same scene. Our identity changed. We didn’t feel it, we didn’t see it, we didn’t hear it, but it occurred, nevertheless. When we came to Christ, we were placed into Him as His death became ours, His victorious resurrection became ours, His “awakening” to new life became our “awakening,” His powerful walk became our walk.
- The Christian life is not stumbling along, hoping to keep up with the Savior. He lives in me and I live in Him. His very life becomes my life, guaranteeing that His victory over sin is mine to claim. I no longer need to live as a slave to sin.
- You will meet well-meaning Christians who teach about crucifying oneself. But I have good news for you: That has already been done. You are in Christ. He was crucified once for all. He died for you so you never need to die again.

Hudson Taylor's letter to his sister, Amelia, dated October 17, 1869

- How do you get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One.
- I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!) that He had said, "I will never leave you." Ah, there is rest, I thought. I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me – never to leave me, never to fail me?
- It is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Savior; to be a member of Christ! Can Christ be rich and I poor?
- The sweetest part...is the rest which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything...for He, I know, is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. His resources are mine, for He is mine, and is with me and dwells in me. I am no better than before; but I am dead and buried with Christ – aye, and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me.
- May God give you to lay hold on these blessed truths. Do not let us consider Christ as afar off, when God has made us one with Him. Nor should we look upon these truths as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God.

The Marvelous Exchange by Dick Flaten

- *Dead to sin* in Romans 6.11 does not mean that we are immune to sin or temptation, or that sin as a force in us has been eradicated, or that we will never sin again. The Scriptures never teach sinless perfection.
- *Dead to sin* does not mean that we *should* die to sin. God is not commanding us to die to sin. He is telling us that we have *already* died to sin. God cannot command us to do what He has already done for us.
- *Dead to sin* does not mean that we are dead to sin as long as we are in the process of gaining mastery over it. That would make the statement refer to something experiential, and it does not do that. It refers to a past event.
- *Dead to sin* does not mean that reckoning ourselves dead to sin makes us dead to sin. That is backwards. What Paul is saying is that because we have died to sin, we are to count on it (reckon) – this being an already accomplished fact [through the cross].
- Dead to sin means that through the cross we have been freed from sin's control.
- The engine that drives Romans 6 is the truth that we have died to sin. If I reckon myself dead to sin, I am dead to sin. If I do not reckon myself dead to sin, I am still dead to sin. The critical fact is what God says is true: *I am* dead to sin.
- Counting on (reckoning) what we know to be true is natural. When I travel overseas and then return home, I naturally count on the fact that I am an American to get me back into the United States.
- Simply knowing and counting on our union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, and then presenting ourselves to God will become lifeless and legalistic unless we are intimately relating and personally presenting (offering) this truth to the Person of God in Christ Jesus.

Quote by James Calvert (Missionary to Fiji Islands in the 1800s)

- When James Calvert went out as a missionary to the cannibals of the Fiji Islands in the 1800s, the ship captain tried to turn him back, "You will lose your life and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages. Calvert replied, "We died before we came here."

Gregg Gibbons July 29, 2006