

## The Cross: Eternal Beacon of God's Love

### 1. Judging God by Present Circumstances

- A. Christians, like everyone else, will face hardships and tragedies in this life.
- B. Recent BOL story: Christian woman killed man/daughter; injured own children; mentally defective child; lose majority of family farm to lawsuit.
- C. The emotional stresses of failure (job loss), disappointment (dashed hopes), loneliness, bereavement, and sickness can overwhelm us. We find it hard to think about or feel anything else other than the present moment. This provides Satan with an opportunity.

### 2. Three Cries of Anguish

- A. "Why doesn't God **DO** something?!"
  - 1. God has created man with the ability to decide, choose and govern the world. This power is given latitude and it is not God's habit to intervene into the affairs of men and override free will.
  - 2. But we know God **can** providentially act. Why doesn't He when we think He should?
  - 3. The cross: God didn't intervene when His Son suffered at the hands of wicked men and nailed to the cross. Even Jesus cried, "*My God, **why** have You forsaken Me?*" (Mt 27:46).
    - a. God had a purpose in allowing Jesus to die. That purpose was hidden to all those who witnessed the event. It was unfathomable.
    - b. So God may have a purpose in allowing things we don't understand. Our duty in such cases is to trust God whether or not the purpose is clarified.
- B. "If God loved me, He wouldn't let this happen!"
  - 1. Many people look at the world and conclude, "If there is a God, He is neither good nor loving." Satan wants people to blame God for his doings.
  - 2. The cross is an eternal "memorial" of God's love for man:
    - a. Jn 3:16 – "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son ..."
    - b. Jn 15:13 – "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life ..."
    - c. 1 Jn 3:16; 4:7-11 – Love is *of* God; God *is* love; "In this is love ..."

3. The cross of Jesus testifies of God's love for us. If He has provided for our eternal welfare and has declared that He wants us to be with Him forever, what is still lacking in His love? Rom 8:31-39.

C. "This just isn't fair!"

1. This world does not represent the final judgment against all ungodliness. While the world does need law, order, restitution, punishment, it is true that many sins and crimes go unpunished and many acts of godliness are not rewarded.
2. Jesus came not to judge or destroy but to save: Jn 3:17; 12:47. God was willing to see His Son nailed to the cross so that the opportunity for repentance and forgiveness might be extended to the murderers. We must be grateful that justice is deferred, for how often have we escaped wrath because God was patient with *us*?

### **3. What Job Forgot About God**

- A. Job was troubled by the events which befell him. He felt that God was unfair to him for he had not sinned or done anything to deserve the punishment.
- B. Job begged for a mediator or arbiter between himself and God.
- C. But the end of the story of Job is telling. When God finally speaks (chs 38-41), He does not reveal the scenario of chs 1-2. He simply says to Job, "I am God; I am in control; I know what I am doing, and you need to trust that."
  1. Job 40:1-5; 42:1-6 – Job is humbled when God speaks and justifies Himself.
  2. God was in control in Job's life. God was in control at the cross. God is in control of our lives. So we should approach our circumstances of life with reverence and humility.

**Conclusion:** The cross eternally declares that God loves us, cares, will supply all our needs to get us to heaven. We must have confidence and faith in Him to see beyond the present circumstances and appreciate the character which God has demonstrated through the ages.