

DRAWING POWER OF THE CROSS

Christ stated, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32). Burton Coffman in his commentary on the book of John writes:

“The primary reference of this is to Jesus’ death by being lifted up upon the cross; but the words suggest other truth also. Christ was lifted up from the grave; he was lifted up into heaven; he has been lifted up in the hearts of men by the preaching of the gospel in all ages since then” (p. 302).

What drawing powers the cross has! Can you imagine a hardened centurion even taking the time to look up at a condemned criminal, yet, on this occasion he said, “Truly this was the Son of God” (Matthew 27:54). An angry mob was there. This mob consisted of those that “passed by” (Matthew 27:39), “religious leaders” (Matthew 27:41), “two thieves” (Matthew 27:38), “the soldiers” (Matthew 27:27), and even “compassionate women” (Matthew 27:56). The truth is the world has been drawn to the cross since that horrible day. Why or how does the cross have such a drawing power?

The Cross touches or draws through the heart. For one to read the account of the cross with the agony, pain, suffering, hopelessness and it not affect your heart, something would be wrong. Isaiah 53 is a perfect example of how the story of the cross touches our heart. We can see a man of sorrow, “...a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief (53:3). There is also a man put to shame, “...he was despised and we esteemed him not” (53:3). This one on the cross was a man of sufferings, “...the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed” (53:5). There is a man of solitude on the cross, “...He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth” (53:7). This point of solitude is the most difficult for me. Imagine the Son of God on the Cross as he cried out “...Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me” (Matthew 27:46), and no one answer? Why did the Son of God do this? Why suffer the shame, sorrow, and solitude? Because he loved us! He was willing to do the will of His Father (Matthew 26:39,42,44). How can this not pull at our heartstrings?

Another draw of the Cross is that it brings hope. In the darkest moment in time there was hope! Satan may have thought he won and that the Son of God was dead and forgotten, but HE AROSE! When the women arrived early at the tomb, what they found was an angel which said, “...fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen” (Matthew 28:5,6). Hope springs out of tragedy. There is hope from the grave. In Luke’s account of this great event, he records the angel as saying, “...why seek ye the living among the dead” (Luke 24:5)? Christ is not dead! Our hope over the grave is based on what Christ did. Paul records, “...death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15: 54-57). There is hope from the grieving. God has promised, “...to wipe away all tears” (Revelation 21:4) and this is done through the cross and our Lord’s resurrection. To all those who are weeping at the edge of a grave, you can look up to the cross and see hope! To all those who may be crying at the bedside of one who is extremely ill, you can look up to the cross and see hope! This is why the cross has the ability to draw all unto it.

Third, the Cross draws because of the promise of Heaven. God’s plan of redemption runs through the cross. Christ said of His Father, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Paul records that “...God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Because Christ made the sacrifice on the cross, we have the promise of the reward. Don’t you love the words of Paul when he said, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7,8). Everyone who is drawn by the cross has the promise of that crown! One excitement to consider is the great reunion that will occur in heaven. All the saints of all ages will be there (Matthew 25:31-46). Heaven

truly is brighter with all those we love which have gone on before us. What a glorious reunion it will be. For all those who have been drawn by the cross comes the promise of a rest. John wrote, “...that they may rest from their labours” (Revelation 14:13). Now is not the time to rest, but we can look to the cross and see that our rest is at hand.

The Cross has an amazing power to draw. Does the Cross draw you?

Ronnie Hayes *from Vigil*

OUR GRATITUDE TO YOU

As we begin the New Year together, it gives us an opportunity to reflect upon the past, look forward to the future, and be thankful for the present and the many blessings of our Heavenly Father.

We are especially thankful for the brethren here at Olathe and for the opportunity you have given us to labor together with you. We are extremely grateful for the fine attitude of unity and cooperation which now exists among us. We deeply appreciate you all and look forward to our efforts together during this New Year as we continue to grow and support the work of the Lord through out the world. We believe that with the Lord's help we can accomplish the good works set before us.

We are grateful to our faithful brethren and fellow laborers in the Kansas City area and beyond and appreciate the support and fellowship of each one of you.

We are thankful for the opportunity we enjoy to serve in the Online Academy of Biblical Studies and labor together with some of the finest preachers and teachers in our brotherhood. We are thankful for our students and all who labor with us and support this good work.

Finally, we are grateful to those who receive our bulletin, for your many kind remarks and contributions through out the year. We wish all of you the very best in the New Year! **3 John 2**

The Thrashers — Ted, Julia, Trent and Leah

BIRTHDAYS

Lauren Brown, 01-07; Lindsey Brown, 01-07;
Janice Carter, 01-08.

ILL

Sunday: Allen Scott, Millie Robertson (PM), Tom Tucker (PM). **Wednesday:** Steve Brown.

Cleo Stone continues his treatment at Olathe Medical Center.

Those battling cancer: Jamal Abyad, David Cole, Ledgia Campbell, Betty James and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

HOME BOUND

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

The Brown's visited relatives in Texas last weekend. Trent Thrasher was in Owensville, MO last weekend. The Hanson's departed for Florida on December 31.

POT LUCK DINNER

Our monthly Pot Luck Dinner will be held this Sunday, following our AM worship. All are encouraged to come and enjoy the good food and company!

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Our able treasurer, George Thomas, will present our 2008 budget this Sunday at 5:15 PM in the auditorium.

MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING

The monthly Men's Business Meeting will be held next Sunday, January 13 following our AM worship. All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 50; Sunday PM, 32; Wednesday PM, 33.

Those To Serve

January 6, 2008

BUILDING AND COMMUNION.....Thomas

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS.....Steve Brown
SONG LEADER.....George Thomas
OPENING PRAYERJohn Cody Carter
PRESIDE.....Trent Thrasher
ASSIST.....John Dodson
ASSIST.....David Parish
CLOSING PRAYER.....Chris Edwards

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYERJoel Nelson
CLOSING PRAYER.....Jared Nelson
LORD'S SUPPER.....Trent Thrasher

WEDNESDAY 9th

SONG LEADER.....Trent Thrasher
INVITATIONTed Thrasher

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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