

The Cross—The Symbol of Supreme Love

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I. Introduction.

A. The heart of everything a Christian believes is symbolized in the cross.

B. Text: Galatians 1:4.

II. We see the voluntary expression of supreme love through the cross.

A. Jesus was never a victim. (John 10)

B. Jesus was able to endure the cross because of the joy He foresaw following it. (Hebrews 12, Colossians 1)

III. The suffering of Christ was painful.

A. He suffered physically, emotionally, and spiritually because of separation from the Father.

B. The cross is a symbol of love.

IV. The cross was an act of substitution on our behalf.

A. You can have no Christian faith apart from the cross.

B. Christ took the place of us for our sins. (Isaiah 53, Matthew 20, Romans 5:6, II Corinthians 5:21, I Timothy 2:6, I Peter 2:24, I Peter 3:18, I John 2:1)

C. God could not simply say that one is forgiven because God is righteousness—His holiness demands a penalty for sin.

D. Somebody sinless had to become a substitute for us in order for us to have life.

E. Salvation is not cheap.

V. The cross is the offer of universal salvation.

A. God rescued those who were dead, disobedient, having the curse of God and were blind. (Ephesians 2, II Corinthians 4)

B. God's grace brought us favor.

Application questions:

1. How is the cross the central expression of the Christian faith?

2. Why is it important to understand that Christ's death was voluntary?

3. What does it mean that Christ was a substitute? Explain.
