

The Radical Cross – Part 2

As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in all the attractive things of the world was killed long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead. Galatians 6:14 (TLB)

*“For Christ didn't send me to baptize, but to preach the Good News—and not with clever speech, for fear that the cross of Christ would lose its power. The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! **But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God.**”* 1 Corinthians 1:17-18 (NLT)

*As they led Jesus away, a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, happened to be coming in from the countryside. **The soldiers seized him and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.** A large crowd trailed behind, including many grief-stricken women. **But Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don't weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.** For the days are coming when they will say, ‘Fortunate indeed are the women who are childless, the wombs that have not borne a child and the breasts that have never nursed.’ People will beg the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and plead with the hills, ‘Bury us.’ For if these things are done when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”* Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left. **Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.”** And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.

Luke 23:26-34 (NLT)

*When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified. **A passerby named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was coming in from the countryside just then, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.)** And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means “Place of the Skull”). They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it. Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross. They divided his clothes and threw dice to decide who would get each piece. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. **Mark 15:20-25 (NLT)***

But as he came closer to Jerusalem and saw the city ahead, he began to weep. “How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes. Before long your enemies will build ramparts against your walls and encircle you and close in on you from every side. They will crush you into the ground, and your children with you. Your enemies will not leave a single stone in place, **because you did not recognize it when God visited you.”** Luke 19:41-44 (NLT)

And when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you will know that the time of its destruction has arrived. Then those in Judea must flee to the hills. Those in Jerusalem must get out, and those out in the country should not return to the city. Luke 21:20-21 (NLT)

*For those will be days of God's vengeance, and the prophetic words of the Scriptures will be fulfilled. How terrible it will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers in those days. For there will be disaster in the land and **great anger against this people.** They will be killed by the sword or sent away as captives to all the nations of the world. And Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the period of the Gentiles comes to an end.*

Luke 21:22-24 (NLT)

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Greet Rufus, whom the Lord picked out to be his very own; and also his dear mother, who has been a mother to me. Romans 16:13 (NLT)

What Does This Mean For Us?

1. We are forgiven.
2. We are expected to forgive.
3. The Hostility ended for us at the cross.
4. The Cross is the only way to peace.

But as he came closer to Jerusalem and saw the city ahead, he began to weep. “How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes.

Luke 19:41-42 (NLT)

*“For Christ is our living peace. He has made a unity of the conflicting elements of Jew and Gentile by breaking down the barrier which lay between us. By his sacrifice he removed the hostility of the Law, with all its commandments and rules, and made in himself out of the two, Jew and Gentile, one new man, thus producing peace. **For he reconciled both to God by the sacrifice of one body on the cross, and by this act made utterly irrelevant the antagonism between them. Then he came and told both you who were far from God and us who were near that the war was over. And it is through him that both of us now can approach the Father in the one Spirit.”***

Ephesians 2:15-18 (J.B. Phillips)