

Jeff Lingerfelt
PO Box 12131, SC 29211
803-467-7634
Jeff.lingerfelt@capitolcom.org

LEADERSHIP DURING DIFFICULT DAYS
OUR DESTINY IS WITH THE LORD
1THESSALONIANS 5:10

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

"PITHY PARADIGM" THE CROSS

Archibald Alexander¹

*The death of Christ on the cross may well be reckoned mysterious, for it was **at the same time a cursed and a blessed death**. Christ was "made a curse for us," that he might deliver us from the curse of the law. And yet Christ's death on the cross is the most blessed event which ever occurred in the world; for on the cross the price of our redemption was paid. Christ "bore our sins in his own body on the tree." He died, "the just for the unjust," to bring us unto God. This led Paul to say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The truths which are exhibited in a clear and strong light by the crucifixion of Christ, are such as these:

1. *The infinite evil of sin, which in order to its pardon required such a sacrifice.*
2. *The holiness and justice of God, which would not allow sin to pass without full evidence of the divine disapprobation, and his inflexible purpose to visit it with deserved punishment.*
3. *The wisdom of God, in contriving a method of salvation by which his own glory would be promoted in the eternal salvation of hell-deserving sinners. This wisdom is chiefly manifest in the incarnation of the Son of God, by which the divine and human natures are united in one person.*
4. *But the most wonderful exhibition of the cross is the mercy of God, the love of God to sinners—such love as never could have been conceived of, had it not been manifest by the gift of his own Son! "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

The cross of Jesus Christ was the means by which God chose to demonstrate His love for unlovable sinners.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 5 reminds us of our desperate situation by which we needed deliverance—

Romans 5:6, 8, 10 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly...But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the

death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Sin separates! It prevents our unity with God and thus God chose to reconcile sinners through the cross of Christ! The Cross supremely and eternally manifests God's infinite mercy and grace to us who were lost in Adam (Ro 5:12, 1Co 15:22) and were destined for eternity without Christ (2Th 1:9, Mt 7:23).

1 Corinthians 2:1-2 And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. ²For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

1 Corinthians 15:3-For I delivered to you **as of first importance** what I also received, that Christ died for (as our personal substitute) our sins (substitutionary atonement) according to the Scriptures.

1 Peter 3:18-For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

The **orist tense** points back to Calvary as a historical fact. It asserts that He "experienced death" in all the grim reality of the term. Furthermore the **active voice** points out that this Christ's choice to die for us. As **Hiebert** aptly comments...

He was not "killed" but was willing to die of His own accord.

The **Cross of Christ** is now and forever the source of power for our supernatural life....

For the **word of the Cross** is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are **being saved** it is the **power of God**. (1Cor 1:18)

The **Cross of Christ** provides not only the **power** but the **motivation** to live for Christ...

He died for all, so that they who live **might no longer live for themselves**, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. (2Cor 5:15)

The **Cross of Christ** means we are now the personal property of the King of kings, Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself **a people for His own possession** (1Co 6:20, 7:23, 1Pe 2:9; Lv 20:26, Dt 26:18-19, Ex 19:6), zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:14)

THE PURPOSE OF HIS DEATH:

Rom 14:9-For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

He died, 2 Cor 5:15, He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

He tasted death, Heb 2:9, But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

He suffered, 1Pe 2:21, For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

He became a curse, Gal. 3:13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE”—

He offered Himself: Hebrews 9:14, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

He offered His body: Hebrews 10:10, By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

He laid down His life, 1Jn 3:16, We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.,

He gave His life a ransom, Mt 20:28, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

He gave Himself, Gal 1:4, who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father

He gave Himself as a ransom, 1Ti 2:6, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.

He gave Himself up, Gal. 2:20. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

That is the epitome of divine love! Biblical Love gives to others at ones expense of oneself! How are you loving?

Awake means to arouse from sleep and in context refers to those who are still alive at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Asleep to sleep, fall asleep, be fast asleep and here is a figurative reference to death.

Paul's point again was that there was no advantage or disadvantage for one class of believer (living) over another (dead).

The outcome for us will not be determined whether we are "waking in life or sleeping in death" (Moffatt). When our Lord returns, both the living and the dead believers will receive their glorified bodies (1Co 15:51-54; 1Th 4:16-17) and the grand purpose of God for us will be realized, "that ... we may live together with him." Then both groups will enter into life in all its fullness.

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Blatt Rm. 317—Wednesday, 8:30am

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Barnes notes that...

This was designed to calm their minds in their trials, and to correct an error which seems to have prevailed in the belief that those who were found alive when he should return, would have some priority over those who were dead. (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

Live together with Him - Observe how this statement clearly implies Jesus did not just die on the Cross but was resurrected from the grave. Williams renders this clause to "live in fellowship with Him". The idea is to live in intimate fellowship with the very One Who Himself is the very essence of eternal life (Jn 20:31, 1Jn 5:12, Col 3:4). Simply incomprehensible bliss! This blessed eternal life will be realized when the Bridegroom returns for His Bride, the church and we receive our glorified bodies to forever be in His presence "with Him"—the Lord!²

¹ <http://www.gracegems.org/26/cross.htm>

² http://preceptaustin.org/1thessalonians_59-11.htm

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