

What is the Cross?

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We must "hold fast" the truth of the Cross, for it lies at the very foundation of all our faith and blessing and there is a certain phase of popular "Bible teaching" which is well calculated to rob us of the true meaning of it.

This subtle teaching may best be indicated by a short extract put into our hands the other day. It is based upon a curious and we believe untenable rendering of Hebrews 12: 3, and runs as follows:-

"The deepest note of the Cross is not what our Lord suffered within His own person, but that which He suffered in comradeship with those who were sinning against *themselves*. He saw how their opposition to His high ideals was reacting upon themselves for their own harm and ruin.... He 'endured' the 'gainsaying of sinners against themselves.' That is the Cross."

Is that the Cross? If it be, it is a very much less wonderful thing than we had supposed! No *divine* Saviour is needed for such a cross as that, the Christ of the Unitarian will easily suffice!

The fact is that statements such as this weaken the whole arch of truth, and no surprise would be felt if any of its stones dropped out. Only, blessed be God, *that is NOT the Cross* and the truth as to the Cross is far too firmly embedded in Scripture for it to be rooted up — unless indeed the whole fabric of Scripture be destroyed.

Let us appropriate the skeleton of the above extract and clothe it with a scriptural body. It then runs as follows:-

The deepest note of the Cross is not what our Lord suffered as seeing the sin and degradation of men, great as that was, but what He suffered in His own person at the hands of a holy God when, to accomplish propitiation, "His soul" was made "an offering for sin." He saw indeed how men opposed the light He brought and ruined themselves, but far beyond that. He "poured out His soul unto death. He was numbered with the transgressors and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." THAT IS THE CROSS.