

Day 32 ~ THE BLESSING OF THE CROSS

*“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”
Galatians 6:14*

One of the blessings of the cross consists in this, that it teaches us to know the worthlessness of our efforts and the utter corruption of our own nature. The cross does not offer to improve human nature, or to supply what man is unable to do. Many people, indeed, use it in this way, like patching a new cloth on an old garment. But this rends the garment, and such persons walk about in torn clothes, and go from one minister to another without finding what they seek. No, the old garment, our old man, must be laid aside, and given over to the death of the cross. And the cross causes all that is of the lost nature of man to die the accursed death, and the “I” takes the place of a malefactor — it breaks the staff over all that is of the old nature.

Whosoever has been brought to the cross through the Spirit has learned to pronounce the death sentence on his old nature, has broken the staff over himself, for whatever does not bear the mark of the cross lies under the curse. He who would save his life remains under the curse. If we have learned through the Spirit to understand the cross, then we have lost our life and will no longer expect any good from our old nature, and will not judge others, but ourselves only.

But as long as we have not been taught this lesson through the Spirit, we shall try to find good in ourselves, something of worth in God’s sight, and upon which the sentence of death need not be passed. And if we find nothing at all, we fall into a false grief which the Evil One eagerly uses to make us despair, by saying: *“You may as well give up. God will not trouble about you. There is nothing for you but failure.”*

But this is not what God desires. What we possess by nature must be nailed to the cross and we must put on the new man. The cross brings man to utter bankruptcy of himself, and then God can come to our aid. The cross brought the disciples of Jesus once to such an end of themselves, which even the words of the Master had failed to do. It took from them the aureole of holiness which they thought they had won in the three years that they followed Jesus, and it taught them to know themselves. And so they were prepared to receive the Holy Spirit, who would impart a new nature and a new life. For we cannot separate the cross from the Spirit. We can have no Easter and no Pentecost until we have first had a Good Friday.

Through the cross alone are we prepared for life in the fullness of God; only he who is crucified with Christ can be a vessel unto honor.



“The Secret of the Cross”



Our “old man” must be crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6), and in the resurrection of Christ we find the roots of our new life (1 Peter 1:3). Whosoever loses his life shall find it. We must learn the lesson of the cross as condemned and rejected ones, who have been crucified with Christ. Then the door will be open for a life of power and blessing. All that belongs to death must be given over to death, even as the body is laid away in the earth because it belongs to the earth.

The Holy Spirit, the Eternal Spirit, is unchangeable. He brought Christ our Head to the cross, and us His children with Him. For this work in us is twofold. On the one hand it leads us to death, and all that belongs to death; and on the other hand, to that life which God has placed within us, and which leads from glory to glory. ♥

PRAYER

“How I praise Thee, O my God, for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will reveal to me the secret of the cross of Christ! The Spirit strengthened Christ to offer Himself to God on the cross. The cross gave Christ the right to receive the fullness of the Spirit from the Father to pour out on all flesh. The cross gives us the right to receive the Spirit. And the Spirit teaches us to love the cross, and to partake of the life crucified with Christ.

“O my Father, I thank Thee that Thou dost give the immediate, continual working of the Spirit in my heart, that the crucified Christ may be formed within me, and His life maintained within me.

“Father, I beseech Thee humbly, teach me and Thy people so to know this work of the Spirit and to yield ourselves to Him to take full possession of us, that the crucified Lord Jesus may be glorified in us. Amen.”