

**Articles and Sermons :: "And They Crucified Him" by Art Katz****"And They Crucified Him" by Art Katz - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/13 23:18**

Greetings in Jesus!

I had listened with much interest to this message given by Art Katz last night "And They Crucified Him."

I was very moved by this message, and as for those of you who may have heard this message and would have interest in discussing this message this most excellent brother had given. I would have interest in discussing this message with you. I believe it may could make for a profitable discussion.

It would seem that most preachers today when they talk about the cross, most aren't able to talk for it for more than 10 minutes.

Why is that?

I believe it's because "Christ crucified" and the perfection of the work of the cross (the perfection of the work of the new covenant atonement) has come to be largely obscured in churches today.

While having listened to this message of Art Katz's last night, I noticed he talked for more than an hour about it, in unfolding the perfection of the work of the cross, from the aspect of what the cross must do in us.

There are two main aspects of the work of the cross (the perfection of the work of the new covenant atonement).

Firstly, there is "What the cross does for us?"

Secondly, "What the cross must do in us?"

Of course, we have need also to receive instruction, as for how to appropriate what the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross had accomplished from both main aspects (1) "What the cross has done for us," and (2) "What the cross must do in us."

In this message given by Art Katz, I noticed he had focused on (2) "What the cross must do in us," and he unfolded how we may appropriate it.

As for those of you who have heard this message, that have interest in discussing this message, I would be delighted to discuss it with you.

There would seem to be very little teaching on the fullness of the perfection of the work of the new covenant atonement in the churches today.

In Christ,

Jake

**Re: "And They Crucified Him" by Art Katz - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/5/14 0:04**

Quote:  
-----Firstly, there is: (1) What the cross does for us? Secondly, there is: (2) What the cross must do in us? Of course, we have need also to receive instruction, as for how to appropriate what the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross had accomplished, as for from both aspects of (1) What the cross has done for us, and (2) What the cross must do in us. In this message given by Art Katz, I had noticed that he had focused on (2) "What the cross must do in us?", and he unfolded how we may appropriate it. As for those of you who have heard this message given by Art Katz, that have interest in discussing this message, I would be delighted to discuss it will you.  
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Yes, there is a two-fold work of the cross, Andrew Murray referred to them as: 1) The redemption of the cross 2) The fellowship of the cross. Just a different way of stating your two points.

Much of the preaching from pulpits today includes the first point but too often there isn't much said about the second. As Mr. Katz said in this message, we are too much like the world, not wanting to even consider the suffering that must come with point two.

In this sermon Mr. Katz chooses to focus on that which most want to run from (myself included). There is a great tendency to just want to sit down once we are inside the gate of redemption, but Jesus wants us to follow Him down the narrow way in the fellowship of the cross.

This message strips away every excuse. It reminds me of how Jesus preached when He walked this earth. He always appealed to a man's conscience, forcing him to make a decision one way or another. Over and over again Jesus asks thought provoking questions designed to expose and clarify a person's innermost thoughts so that we have to grapple with reality. This sermon presents such a question. "are you crucified with Christ?".

In Christ,

Ron

**Re: The two points - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2005/5/14 2:19**

Most Christians know that Christ died *for* us.

What most of us still need to *know* in real truth, in reality, in the depth of our being, is that Christ died *as* us.

Brothers and sisters, could we not pray for ourselves and one another what Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians (Ephes. 1: 17,18)

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of our understanding being enlightened ...”

that we may know that Christ died as us?

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3,4).

That we might know

“what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead” (Ephesians 1:19,20).

**Re: What the cross must do in us? - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/14 7:02**

Thank you, brothers Ron and Roger, for your posts.

By the way, I have since edited my post above to correct typos, and to try to make for a more easier read in my attempt to convey my thoughts, and Roger I agree with your prayer, brother. Yes, that is the way we are to pray for one another, and thank you so much for putting me in remembrance of that.

After now having had more time to chew on this message of Art Katz's: "And They Crucified Him," and to give some prayerful thought to this message. I believe the Lord had impressed this upon my heart and I will now share it with you.

My scriptural quotations will be from the New King James Version.

As I pondered on this message I believe the Lord had drawn my attention to the epistle of Paul's to the churches in Galatia of his day, and to this verse ...

Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Galatians 5:24)

Since this verse says that "those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh," we have a distinguishing mark of those who belong to Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15:23, speaking of the order in which the dead are to be resurrected, Paul uses the same phrases ...

But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, after those who are Christ's at His coming. (emphasis added)

Christ is coming back as thief, in the sense that He will return at an unexpected moment; but there the likeness ends. He will take only those who belong to Him.

Now let's turn back to Galatians 5:24, the first verse I earlier quoted, and we discover the kind of persons for whom the Lord Jesus is coming: those who "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

So we see its those belonging to Christ, these are the kind of persons for whom the Lord Jesus is coming: its not a denominational matter, Jesus is coming back not specifically for Protestants or Baptists or Pentecostals or whatever, but for people who fulfill a particular condition.

And what is that condition?

Jesus is coming back for those "who have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires."

By this I am wanting to bring more understanding as to this message that Art Katz has given or at least as much as God would enable me to do so. For I see that this is a very important message Art Katz had given in which reveals the fact, that it isn't optional that we embrace the cross, and to allow it to have the fullness of its work that God has ordained to be done in us.

Please share your thoughts!

May we take our time with this and to go slowly, in sharing our thoughts concerning this subject matter. For if we do, I believe it may would make for a more profitable discussion if we do.

There is still yet more that I would like to say about this, but my interest isn't in dumping information, but in having a dialogue in which I believe is by far better to further our learning, and in hope that we may all may be able to learn from one another, and I am looking forward to learning somethings from you.

May the Lord be very gracious to you!

Jake

**Re: And they crucified... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/5/14 7:26**

Hi Yehuda,

Wonderful that you have come and grabbed hold of this message. Here is an older thread in regards to it along with an transcription of the audio:

([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmodeflat&order0&topic\\_id1082&forum35&post\\_id&refreshGo](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmodeflat&order0&topic_id1082&forum35&post_id&refreshGo)) And They Crucified Him by Art Katz

**Re: And they crucified Him - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/14 8:01**

Crsschk wrote to me:

Wonderful that you have come and grabbed hold of this message.

Here is an older thread in regards to it along with a transcript of the audio.

My Response:

Yes, and I believe that He who is wonderful, may well have been behind it.

Kapish? (smiling)

"Kapish?" is Jewish, it's Yiddish for "Do you understand?" or "Do you know what I am saying?"

Thanks for this you shared, it's very helpful.

Be blessed, brother.

Jake

**Re: And They Crucified Him - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2005/5/14 12:39**

Thanks, Mike, for pulling it up. I'm still "challenged". :-)

Since segments of the message are numbered consecutively, it should be a handy tool for anyone to tell the others what is the part of the message to which he/she is referring.

Re: And They Crucified Him - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2005/5/14 12:48

Dear brother Jake,

I follow your reasoning and thank you for it, because it brings us right back into the heart of Art's message which you summarize so well when you summarize it with the few words,

"it isn't optional that we embrace the cross, and to allow it to have the fullness of its work that God has ordained to be done in us".

Let's not kid ourselves. It isn't optional.

Quote:

"May we take our time with this and to go slowly, in sharing our thoughts concerning this subject matter. For if we do, I believe it may would make for a more profitable discussion if we do.

"There is still yet more that I would like to say about this, but my interest isn't in dumping information, but in having a dialogue in which I believe is by far better to further our learning, and in hope that we may all may be able to learn from one another, and I am looking forward to learning somethings from you."

Again, I agree with you on the importance of keeping focused, keeping it tight. I agree so much that I was in a sense reluctant to make my post about the need to know the fact that Christ died as us.

It was a departure from the message itself because Art did not specifically teach the need for us to recognize that Christ died as us.

I'm so glad I did not divert in a disruptive way.

Quote:

"There is still yet more that I would like to say about this..."

Please tell us what you understand to be *the meaning of* "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:24).

Thanks so much!

Roger

**Re: Works of the Flesh - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/14 17:50**

Roger wrote:

Please tell us what you to be the meaning of "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires ." (Galatians 5:24)

Thanks so much!

My Response:

Todah Achi (Hebrew for "Thank you, my brother").

You are too kind.

The Lord bless you!

I believe the Lord has strongly impressed the importance of this message Art Katz gave upon my heart, and I am going to listen to it again tonight.

And all that I am going to try to do using this message Art Katz gave as a foundation is to try build upon the truth of God's Word that he had brought forth in his message is all or as much as God would enable me to, and I am going to take this slowly, and to be in no hurry about with it.

As for as your mention you think you may had drifted off topic a bit by something you said in one of your earlier posts. Don't be overly concerned about that, it's normal for us at times to digress a bit.

I am now going to try to pick this back up from where I left off in my last post addressing this topic of discussion.

In our most excellent brother Paul's epistle to the churches in Galatia in Galatians Chapter 5 he gives us a list of the works of the flesh --- the way the fleshly nature expresses itself in our lives.

"The works of the flesh," Paul says, "are evident."

All too evident, I would say. However, not always evident to the one who practices them, but evident to everybody else. Do you know what I am saying?

These works are ....

adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentious, idolatry, soccer, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21, NKJ)

We can search in vain for anything good in this list above.

Nothing good ever comes out of the flesh.

It is incapable of producing good.

It is clear that we cannot live according to the flesh and inherit the Kingdom of God. They are mutually exclusive.

I am wanting to cover this thoroughly before moving on with all this, but I want to keep my posts short and not a long read, and to encourage dialogue and questions some may have about what is now being covered, and for others to share their thoughts.

In my next post I am going to briefly cover four categories of the works of the flesh in which I believe has need to be discussed:

- \* Sexual Impurity
- \* The Occult
- \* Division
- \* Self-Indulgence

Only I share that because I want to keep your interest in this discussion. And even to perhaps, to slow some others down who may casually read here. Who maybe, might come to say to themselves: "What's up with this?" and may would come to have some interest in this discussion too, you see. (smiling)

And ultimately we are going to get around to dealing with this stuff, and I believe we may come to have even a new appreciation of "Christ crucified" and the perfection of the work of cross.

In fact, for my part, I already have in having heard this message by Art Katz: "And they crucified Him," and after having believed that the Lord had impressed it upon my heart to start this discussion and to have begun to share with you. I am coming to have a new appreciation of "Christ Crucified" and the perfection of the work of the cross.

Be blessed, brother.

Jake

#### **Re:Works of the Flesh - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/15 1:10**

Greetings in Jesus!

Now that I have come to have a little more time to post. I am going to try to pick back up from the place I came to in my last post. if I can to take this on further.

I have discovered that there are four main categories of the works of the flesh, and they can be seen in Paul's list we had read in Scripture in my last post.

Firstly, sexual impurity.

Sexual impurity includes fornication or sexual immorality, uncleanness and licentiousness.

Fornication --- or sexual immorality --- covers every kind of sexual immorality; premarital sex (if you want to give it that fancy name); adultery (breaking of a marriage covenant); homosexuality; and every other type of perversion.

Churches or denominations ordain whom they will. But that does not change what the Bible says. Do you know what I am saying?

The Bible says: Those who practice sexual impurity are excluded from the kingdom of God, and that we saw in Scripture in my last post.

The second category of the works of the flesh is the Occult: idolatry and sorcery.

An alternative translation for sorcery is witchcraft.

Initially, witchcraft, though a satanic activity, is a work of the flesh. Its objective is to manipulate and control.

Once the flesh comes into operation, however, the satanic moves in and takes over.

Of course, we know that we are all descendents of Adam, and have inherited the fallen nature. But for just a moment I w

ould like for you to recall the first desire of Adam and Eve that led them into trouble.

What was it? It was to KNOW!

That was the first desire of Adam and Eve that led them into trouble! to KNOW!

And that is, a desire of the flesh.

Uncounted millions are captivated by the occult today, because they want to find out things God has not permitted them to know.

For example, going to a fortune teller what is that? Going to a fortune teller would be an act motivated by the fleshly desire to KNOW --- a work of the flesh.

The same applies to consulting the horoscope.

Sometimes people are inclined to plead ignorance as an excuse, saying, "I didn't know there was anything wrong with that."

But ignorance is no excuse.

In 1 Timothy 1:13-15 Paul acknowledges that he was the chief of sinners for things he did "ignorantly in unbelief."

The word translated "sorcery" is directly related to the Greek word for drugs --- the same word from which we get "pharmacy."

The cult of drugs is sorcery, and those who engage in it are outside the Kingdom of God.

And now for the third main category of the works of the flesh in which is the longest part of Paul's list, I have drawn your attention to in Scripture in my last post, is very little attended to, centers around division.

Paul identifies "hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy."

Every broken personal relationship, everything that divides homes and families, and every kind of division in the Body of Christ, is the product of the flesh.

And the fourth and final category is Paul's list we read in Scripture in my last post above in the fourth and final category of the main works of the flesh is "drunkenness, revelries and the like."

I understand this to refer to unrestrained indulgence of fleshly appetites and desires, especially in the area of food and drink.

In 1 Corinthians 9:27 (NJK) Paul describes the kind of discipline in this area that he imposed on himself ....

I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

If you and I decide to follow Paul's example, we invoke the help of the Holy Spirit, whom Paul describes as "a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7, NIV, emphasis added).

But if we continue to be undisciplined and self-indulgent, the Holy Spirit will not impose on us a discipline that is contrary to a lifestyle of our choice.

Someone had said, "I am my worst enemy?"

In saying that, they may have been more speaking of the enemy within.

What is the mark of carnality?



I am going to talk about it in my next post (the Lord willing).

Share your thoughts!

Grace be with you!

Jake

**Re: The Enemy inside - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/15 7:28**

Greetings in Jesus!

What is the mark of carnality?

Some theologians will say that in 1 Corinthians 3:33, Paul called Christians in his day in the church in Corinth, carnal because they spoke in tongues.

However, that was not the problem in the church in Corinth in Paul's day.

The problem in the church in Corinth in Paul's day, was not that they spoke in tongues. It was wrong attitudes and relationships that revealed carnality --- the work of the flesh.

In Paul's first epistle to the church in Corinth he said ....

... Where there is envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal? (1 Corinthians 3:3-4, NKJ)

It is not really theology that divides the church. What divides the church is people using theology in a very carnal way, and that is actually the root of the problem.

Carnality is division, following human leaders.

One says, "I follow Luther"; another says, "I follow Calvin"; another says, "I follow Wesley."

You receive the teaching of those men and thank God for it. But becoming a follower of one leader or another marks you as carnal.

There is only one solution to this as well as to every kind of carnality:

**THE CROSS!**

Where people are unwilling to submit to the cross in their lives, there will be division, strife, jealousy and pride.

Where people are UNWILLING to submit to the cross in their lives, there will be DIVISION, STRIFE, JEALOUSY and PRIDE.

But let me say something here that I hope will help you, lest you form the impression, "I am not up to standard. I have not arrived at the place described in Art Katz's message or perhaps even by some things I said in my earlier posts."

RELAX! God does not expect you to have arrived, but He trusts that you are on the way!

We need to realize that every one of us has an enemy of God within us.

Most of our struggles and difficulties as Christians are due to this enemy within.

I have listened again to this great message that Art Katz gave "And They Crucified Him."

I cannot improve on what he said, there is no new truth. There is no more truth than what God has already given us in the Bible. Only more understanding of what God has already given is all that is possible, but no new truth.

So by my posts I am only trying to bring to understanding to the things that Art Katz had said in this great message he gave.

The truth is that every one of us has an enemy inside us. And I will tell you what it is! It is the FLESH!

So don't feel guilty if you are struggling inside. That may mean you are more alive than Christians who have no struggle. The enemy is not meeting with any opposition within them.

Look at what Paul says in Romans 7:18 (NJK) ...

I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

Sometimes I say that the difference between the apostle Paul and most of us was what he knew that we do not know.

He said, "I know there is nothing good in my fleshly nature. Therefore I cannot expect any good to come out of it. No matter how hard I want to do what is good, I am faced with a continual struggle with something inside me that does not want to do what is good."

The struggle itself is, in a sense, a good sign that you are alive.

Let me tell you, Paul was not an immature Christian when he wrote Romans chapter 7.

He was on the threshold of Romans chapter 8!

But you never really get into Romans chapter 8 till you have learned to deal with your flesh.

We must move on, then to Romans 8:6-8 (NJK) ...

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

To let your fleshly nature control your thinking is death, but to let the Holy Spirit control the way you think produces life and peace.

There is no way to bring your fleshly nature into obedience to God. It will never obey God. Accept that fact! Don't try to make it obey God. Don't try to make it religious. Don't try to take it to church, and sit for hours in meetings and go through a lot of religious exercises trying to make it obey God. It will not obey; it cannot do so. It is incurably corrupt, a rebel to the roots.

So WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

God's solution is EXECUTION!

The good news is, that execution took place about 2000 years ago, when JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS, our old man, the carnal nature, was put to death in Him.

What we have to do is simply apply what JESUS ACCOMPLISHED FOR US ON THE CROSS ....

Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. (Romans 6:6, NJK)

This is a historical fact --- true whether we know it or not, whether we believe it or not.

When we know it and believe it, however, it works in us.

When we KNOW IT and BELIEVE it, however, IT WORKS IN US!

Again I have to point out a problem with much of the contemporary Church: MOST CHRISTIANS DO NOT KNOW THEY WERE CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

Actually to say that the old man has been DONE WAY WITH IS MISLEADING.

As long as we are in this life, we never come to the end of our carnal nature.

I have met people who believe they were totally delivered from the flesh, but I did not see evidence.

They only merely changed their terminology, you see. They no longer lost their tempers; they indulged in "righteous indignation."

As I understand it, THE FLESH CAN BE RENDERED INEFFECTIVE, INCAPABLE OF DOING WHAT IT WOULD LIKE TO DO; but in this age it CANNOT BE ELIMINATED.

I have listened to this message Art Katz gave again. In fact, I have listened to it not twice, but three times already. And I understand why he said that it was the hardest message for him to bring forth, and the reason it is, is not because its hard to preach, but because it's difficult to explain.

Actually, the goal of this message that Art Katz gave was to move those who were nominal Christians (Christians in name only) to come to the Lord Jesus and to get the real thing, instead of just to settle for simply being religious. There are a lot of religious people who are going to go to Hell.

But also I saw the goal of his message was to urge Christians to embrace the cross and to allow it to have the fullness of the work that God has ordained to be done in their lives. And that's what I am wanting to talk about in my next post (the Lord willing) which may be my last and final post on this topic of discussion.

In Christ,

Jake

**Re: The Enemy inside us is the Flesh! - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/16 5:30**

Greetings again in Jesus!

More on this to try to complete my thoughts relating to this message given by Art Katz. I had thought that I may would be able to complete my thoughts about it in this post, but now I am seeing that I am not going to be able to do so in this post. So I am going to continue on with this until I have done so.

Every one of us has an enemy inside of us, and that enemy is the flesh!

So do not feel guilty if you are struggling inside. That may mean you are more alive than Christians who have no struggles. The enemy is not meeting with any opposition within them.

In Romans 6:1 (NKJ) Paul says ...

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead to sin ...

Notice the progression.

In verse 6, which we looked at in my last post above, we are to know we are dead to sin, but in verse 11 we reckon it, or apply it to ourselves.

I do that when I say, "My carnal nature has been crucified."

Three simple words may help you in this reckoning process: fact, faith, feeling.

Notice the order.

You begin with the facts, which are the truths of the Bible.

The Bible contains truth or facts; then your feelings come into line with your faith.

Never let your feelings dictate to you.

What I have been attempting to bring forth in my posts are facts. Perhaps it seems a little too objective or remote to you, but the truth is, we must begin with the objective.

If we begin with our feelings we are without an anchor, at the mercy of every wind or current. So we begin with the scriptural facts, basing our faith on them and allowing our feelings to come into line.

Sometimes when you or I feel like the most miserable failures, we are actually more pleasing to God than when we think we are doing tremendously, God is near those who are of a broken heart.

In fact, "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" (Psalms 51:17, NJK, emphasis added).

One trait that keeps God at a distance is self-confidence.

There have been times when I have encountered problems, said I could handle it, and later on wished I had never said that! And to have failed, and later to have wished that I had prayed first, and to have asked the Lord for His help, and to have wished I had not been so self-confident. I hope you are understanding what I am trying to say?

Relating to this subject matter there is an important word of warning in 1 Peter 4:1-2, and I am going to talk about it in my next post (the Lord willing), and to begin to share my thoughts with you about how we crucify the Flesh?

By the way, God hasn't made that optional.

I remember once saying that to a certain brother once in just passing during a conversation, and his reply was "Oh, that's only if you want to be perfect."

In other words, he was saying that it was optional for Christians.

Well, that is not what the Bible teaches, it is not optional.

I am going to talk about how we crucify the flesh in my next post.

In Christ,

Jake

**Re: How to Over Come the Flesh? - posted by Yehuda (), on: 2005/5/16 23:38**

Greetings again in Jesus!

As we seek to overcome the flesh (to crucify the flesh) there is an important word of warning that I now want to draw your attention to in Peter's first epistle in the New Testament.

1 Peter 4:1-2 (NJK) says ....

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

Here Peter warns that overcoming the flesh will not come without suffering.

We must arm ourselves with this expectation, therefore, and be ready to embrace whatever it takes to be free from the domination of our fleshly nature.

This kind of mental armor is essential for victory, but far too many Christians face their tests without it. They are not mentally prepared for the pressures and conflicts that await them. All too often, therefore they allow their fleshly nature to defeat them.

There was a time when I once had a hard time understanding that "he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." I would say to myself, "I thought all the suffering took place when Jesus died on the cross. I can't add anything to what He has already suffered."

Eventually, however, I came to see that the suffering lies in crucifying our flesh.

Remember what we said in the beginning of this discussion? "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5:24, NJK)

It is NOT painless for anyone of us to crucify our flesh.

It means, in a certain sense, that we must drive the nails into our hands and feet and stretch ourselves out on the cross.

Here is an example of crucifying the flesh.

Let's say that a young woman in her early twenties, a committed Christian eager to serve the Lord, meets a young man. He claims to be a Christian and goes to church, but only to be with the young woman. He says he wants to marry her. She has become emotionally involved with him and does not know what to do.

Then her godly pastor, who has gotten to know the young man and who cares for her soul, tells her, "He's not a real Christian, he's just putting on an act because he wants you. Please don't marry him."

She has two options. She can gratify her flesh or crucify it.

Her flesh says, "But I love him."

Then she says, "But I love Jesus more."

She drives the first nail into her right hand.

Again the voice of her flesh: "But I want a home and children."

She drives the second nail into her left hand.

The same voice: "But I'm afraid of being lonely for the rest of my life."

She drives the final nail into her feet.

Do you understand?

Both the hands and feet must be nailed.

It is painful, but the pain does not last long.

After a while she is free and happy --- and in due course the right man comes along.

But suppose shes refuses to crucify her flesh.

She marries the man and soon realizes that he does not really love the Lord, and that he will not be any kind of spiritual head or help to her.

Then, after fifteen years of strife, he deserts her, leaving her with three children.

Which is more painful --- dealing with her flesh or spending fifteen years married to the wrong man and then being left al one with the children?

To be sure, it is painful either way.

But the root cause of our pain is our fleshly nature.

The question is, will you accept God's solution or go the other way?

God's solution is painful, but only temporarily.

Her broken heart will mend after a year or two; then she is free to live the rest of her life for God.

As crisis comes in the lives of most Christians, I believe, especially those called to some special ministry. In this crisis th ey either do what the flesh wants, and miss God, or else they crucify the flesh and suffer.

Out of the suffering comes a developed character and a committed life that is no longer enslaved to sin.

Carefully reread what Peter says in this passage..... "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but the will of God." (1 Peter 4:1-2, NJK)

You can come to the place where sin no longer dominates you!

This is what it means to embrace the cross, and to allow it to have the fullness of it's work in us.

In Christ,

Jake