

Devotional Thoughts :: May I never boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

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John 19:30 “

Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

Matt. 27:50-51 “

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

Heb. 10:19-22 “

Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

ARTICLE BY T. AUSTIN-SPARKS:

So we have to look at the altar, or the Cross, the function of the altar, and as you know (most of you do, and I am always at this time bearing in mind that there are those who don't know, as others do, what is in the Bible) the Cross, or its representation in the old dispensation: the altar, the altar has a double side, a double meaning. On the one side, it sets forth the consuming from the presence of God of that which is incapable of being accepted by Him and being glorified. The sacrifice was brought in in that dispensation and in a symbolic act the offerer laid his hands upon the head of the sacrifice and by so doing in type transferred himself and his sin to that sacrifice. He declared as he laid his hands upon that sacrifice that he was a sinner, and that being a sinner, he merited judgment and death at the hands of God. As a sinner he had no standing with God, no acceptance with God, no place with God. His only hope was that he as a sinner, with his sin, should be put out of the way. That is one half, only one half, but that is the half. And so, with the transference of himself and his sin to that offering, it was consumed wholly upon the altar, nothing left but ashes... consumed from the presence of God. That is one side of the meaning of the Cross of Christ that we know. We haven't grasped it yet, we really haven't apprehended that yet, we are not in the good of that yet; only in part. But there it is. It stands as the one side: consumed from God by transmission of sin to the offering.

There is the other side:

Consumed Unto God

Because this offering must in itself be without spot or blemish, without sin; in itself it must be perfect. And because God sees that side of the offering, it is not annihilation; there is prospect. You see dear friends, if you and I, as we are, took that place on the Cross, then nothing would come back, nothing would survive. That would be the end forever of every vestige of us, we would be blotted right out, and there would be no afterward. But because the sacrifice was perfect, without spot, without blemish, while it took on itself the sin, in itself it was not sinful, therefore there's another side and there can be that which comes back. Well of course you see Christ at once, the Sin-Bearer, but the sinless Sin-Bearer. And while, in that representative capacity as the sinner, He was consumed from God, as indicated in that terrible moment when He sensed His God-forsakenness and said: "My God, Thou hast forsaken Me. Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" That is, consumed from the presence of God in the place of sinful man. On the other hand, that's done! That is done, and the same Person is heard in the last breath saying, "Into Thy hands, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." It is all done, it is all over that side and now He can commend Himself to God. I think He is the only one in this universe who has the right to use that word. I notice, I notice... of course it's inadvertent and unintentional, but those of us who are rather finicky about words notice things... I so often hear people say, "Lord we commend ourselves to Your care, to You" and so on. No, we don't! We commit ourselves. There is nothing about us to be commended to God and we can't commend ourselves, and there is no commendation where we are concerned. But He could commend Himself to God. Not only commit. But that by the way, if it sounds pedantic, don't worry. But you see, He could do

that, because there is another side to Him. Well, here is the consuming unto God just as completely and utterly as the altar fire consumed the sacrifice to the last bit, away from God, so it consumed unto God that which was according to God's mind. And by the transmission of sin to the sacrifice it was cut off from God, so by the remission of sin, it is brought unto God. The function of the altar, is that two-fold, much more than that, of course, but I just stay with that for this morning.

-- Taken from "The Cross and the Eternal Glory" by T. Austin-Sparks

Quote:

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There is the other side: Consumed unto God

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You see dear friends, if you and I, as we are, took that place on the Cross, then nothing would come back, nothing would survive. That would be the end forever of every vestige of us, we would be blotted right out, and there would be no afterward.

Christ at once, the Sin-Bearer, but the sinless Sin-Bearer. And while, in that representative capacity as the sinner, He was consumed from God, as indicated in that terrible moment when He sensed His God-forsakenness and said: "My God, Thou hast forsaken Me. Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" That is, consumed from the presence of God in the place of sinful man. On the other hand, that's done! That is done, and the same Person is heard in the last breath saying, "Into Thy hands, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." It is all done, it is all over that side and now He can commend Himself to God.

2 Cor. 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Rom. 6:4, 10-11

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

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.

ARTICLE BY ANDREW MURRAY:

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.

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.

--- Taken from "The Secret of the Cross" by Andrew Murray.

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I Will Sing the Wondrous Story
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICyxs4udKi0>

It Was Finished Upon That Cross
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUGQNYm44hk>

Quote:

Onward to eternal glory
To my Saviour and my God
I rejoice in Jesus'™ victory
It was finished upon that cross
