

Our Cross to Bear

1 Peter 4.1-6

The Lord Jesus told his disciples during their training,

Anyone who dares not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Matthew 10.38

What Jesus meant was beyond the disciples' comprehension because, at that point, he hadn't even told them about his own cross. Peter had come a long way from the time when he first heard Christ's words to the point of writing 1 Peter 4.1-6 in which he gives a full commentary on Jesus' teaching about cross bearing.

The Growth in Peter's Understanding of the Cross

John 1.35-42; Matthew 16.21-22; John 21.15-17

This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. Acts 2.23

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. 1 Peter 3.18

Slowly but surely, over the years Peter had come to a solid appreciation of the Cross of Christ. We need to trace the steps of our understanding to ensure that we rightly relate to the Christ of Calvary.

Peter's Application of the Cross to the Life of the Believer

1. Applying the cross to our **attitudes**.

*Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same **attitude**, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.* 1 Peter 4.1

2. Applying the cross to our **human desires**.

*As a result, he does not live the rest of his **earthly life** for evil **human desires**, but rather **for the will of God**.* 1 Peter 4.2

3. Applying the cross to our **time**.

*For you have **spent enough time** in the past **doing what pagans choose to do** – living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.* 1 Peter 4.3

4. Applying the cross to our **associations**.

*They think it strange that you do not **plunge with them** into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.* 1 Peter 4.4

The Appeal of the Cross as Expressed by Peter

*But **they will have to give account** to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.* 1 Peter 4.5-6

*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.* Philippians 2.9-11

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