



## CELL GUIDE

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<b>TOPIC</b>	Why the Cross?	<b>SPEAKER</b>	SP Daniel Foo
<b>THEME</b>	Focus on the Spiritual	<b>DATE</b>	08 & 09 April 2017

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# MESSAGE SUMMARY

## Experiencing the Cross

As Good Friday draws near, we are reminded of what Jesus has done for us, and why we must follow Him at the Cross. Its significance is spelt out in a verse written by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." In this sermon, SP helps us to understand the significance of Jesus' sacrifice, and its application for us as believers.

## Understanding the Impact of the Cross

### 1. The worst of times, the best of times

The Bible recorded the beginning of the worst of times (Gen 6:5, 11-12; Matt 23:6-8, 12), which started with man's rebellion against God. This began the deterioration of our relationship with God, with one another, and with our environment. Today we move ever closer towards the end of times. However, it is in a dark world that our light as believers shines the brightest (Isa 60:2-3). The world is ripe for us to preach the gospel and we must be equipped to share it, presenting ourselves as a holy, unblemished church (Matt 24:24; Eph 5:26-27). We are assured that God's grace abounds more than evil and sin, and that we may find peace in Jesus (Rom 5:20b; John 16:33).

### 2. The horror of sin and the penalty paid by the death of the Lord Jesus

Romans 1:29-32 illustrates the depravity of man and the extent of our sin. In paying the penalty for us, the Lord bore the iniquity of all mankind, and He suffered deeply physical abuse, mental and emotional anguish (Isa 52:14, 53:3-7). SP highlighted two of Jesus's utterances from the Cross:

i) "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt 27:46)

Jesus had called God "Father" throughout His life, but did not do so in this moment. This line indicates separation from God, because sin causes separation from God, and Jesus had taken on our sin.

ii) "I thirst." (Jn 19:28)

This shows the effect of the agony of His soul in the fierce heat of God's wrath, which was upon Him due to the sin that he bore on our behalf.

Although we are sinful and undeserving, Jesus suffered and died in order for us to be saved and reconciled to God (1 John 4:9-10; Rom 5:6-10).

### 3. Appropriate the divine exchange provided for us at the Cross

These provisions are given to us when we come to the Lord:

#### i) Relationship with God

- A. Peace from God - right standing with God
- B. Sins forgiven, cleansed, and covered
- C. Eternal life
- D. Placed in Body of Christ - now a member of God's family
- E. Name written in the Book of Life

#### ii) No more fears

When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God as sons and daughters (Rom 8:15). Yet many Christians continue to live with an orphan spirit, characterized by a focus on temporary things, a tendency to strive, and negative comparison with others. We ought to develop a spirit of sonship and build our identity in Christ instead. Many fears in life can be crippling. But 1 John 4:18 reminds us that perfect love casts out fear, and so we should continually connect with God and receive His love, a love that can soothe the hurts and pains of life's struggles.

#### ii) No more guilt and condemnation

We are covered by the blood of Jesus (Col 2:14-15). The devil cannot harm us, but he wants to sow lies and guilt. To avoid being vulnerable, we must know our position in Christ, that is, we have been set free by Him (Rom 8:1-2), and can pursue a guilt-free, no-condemnation relationship with God.

#### iii) No more curses

When we are in Christ, Jesus redeems us from curses (Gal 3:13-14). He has also given us weapons to break free from them: His blood, His name, and the sword of the Spirit (i.e. God's word). These enable us to be free of word-curses and their consequences.

#### iii) The more abundant life: victorious and overcoming

- A. We have access to the grace of God for every need in our lives. For every need, there is a corresponding grace from God (Rom 5:2; Heb 4:16).
- B. We have the word of God (2 Pet 1:2-4). In order to live a victorious life, we must be word-empowered believers who know His great promises and have experiential knowledge of God.
- C. We have the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). When we receive Jesus, the Holy Spirit dwells in us. We must live in total dependency on the Holy Spirit, acknowledging His presence and surrendering all areas of our life to Him.

## CONCLUSION

Where there is darkness, despair, or doubt, we must keep faith in the knowledge that Jesus can intervene. Experiencing Jesus and His crucifixion means living a spiritually vibrant life with God. Through this can we comprehend 2 Cor 2:14, which says, “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.”

# QUESTIONS

**1. The Cross was the penalty for the horror of sin, paid in full by the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. Share your experience when you first understood the severity of your sin.**

**2. At the cross, there was a divine exchange that enables us to live the abundant life. Do a quick stock-take of your life now: Are you living the 'more abundant life'? If yes, share a recent victory that God has brought you through. If not, what is it that is holding you back?**

**3. Hebrews 4:16 promises grace in time of need. What is one area in your life now that you are in need of a corresponding grace? Share your burdens and pray for one another.**