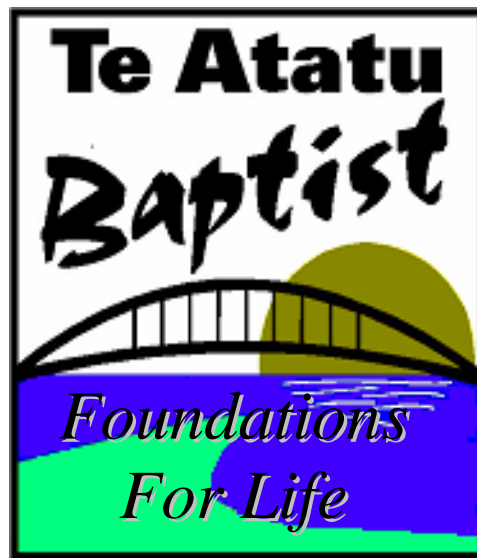


Slide # 1

# Crucified by Christians!

The deeper workings of the Cross

Part Three: *Finding Gethsemane!*



*Adapted from 'Crucified by Christians'*  
by Gene Edwards\*

\*This book should be in the hands of every believer who has known the exquisite agony that comes from being hurt by other Christians.

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Crucified by Christians! Part Three.DOC

Over the last two weeks, we've been discovering the *deeper beauty* of the Cross in our lives, as it applies to sanctification!

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Sanctification means: to be transformed into the image of Christ – as the dark attitudes of our hearts *are brought to the surface*.

It is only in the exquisite pain of a crucifixion, that your true character is seen, in the way you *react* to the crucifixion.

We discovered who was actually responsible for the pain, anguish and injustices our Lord faced at His crucifixion.

That it wasn't the Jews, religious leaders or even *satan* who were to blame.

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We discovered that the One who planned, orchestrated and perfected the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ, was none other, than His loving heavenly Father!

That it was God's plan to crucify His beloved Son, *from before the creation of the world*.

That: Christ had to learn obedience through the things He suffered!

We next came to the place of *applying the cross* to each of our lives as well.

## Scripture References

Rev. 13:8

Heb. 5:8

Lk. 14:27

## Slide # 4

Looking at the Scriptures that state such things as:

Fulfilling the sufferings of Christ!

Taking up our Cross daily!

Counting it all joy when we face trials of various kinds!

A seed falling to the ground and dying!

## Slide # 5

That God doesn't turn our *mourning into dancing* or our *sorrow into joy* by removing these things, but by *transforming our perception and attitude* towards these very things.

Malachi 3:3 describes God as a Silversmith who allows the darkness and sin in our lives to be 'burnt away' like silver heated in the furnace of affliction.

And this is where the Cross becomes relevant in our lives – *for the process of Sanctification*.

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Listen to this statement:

Each one of us has a 'Cross' that God calls us to bear. This Cross can take many forms, the most bitter being Christian Conflict and disillusionment. But the purpose of this Cross, is to draw to the

## Scripture References

Phil. 3:10

Lk. 9:23

James 1:2

Jn 12:24

Isaiah 61:3

1<sup>st</sup> Th. 4:3

surface of our lives the dross, the dark attitudes in our hearts – that can only be brought to the surface under the intense pressure of this pain.

Now, let me make one thing absolutely clear:

God does NOT cause sin – or sinful things to hurt us.

Neither does He cause people to be raped, abused or murdered just so they can learn to submit!

However, in these cases – Genesis 50:20 is very real, where Joseph declared:

‘What you meant for evil, God turned to good!’

If you have experienced abuse at the hands of others, even those you trusted,

...you *still* need to surrender this to Christ, and leave it at the foot of the Cross – and allow it to transform your life for the better.

Also, Jesus didn’t just *accept everything* that happened to Him as being from the ‘hand of God’.

Indeed, at one stage He made a whip out of chords and revealed righteous anger as He drove the money lenders from the temple!

There are some experiences in life where we must learn to defend ourselves and be delivered from a spirit of fear!

## Scripture References

Gen. 50:20

Rm. 12:19

John 2:15

2 Tim. 1:7

In other circumstances, we have to face the consequences *of our own sinful actions*.

Regardless of where it comes from, these things become a ‘cross’ that we must bear, and learn obedience to God through!

Through all these things, God knows where we are the most tender and vulnerable, and it is at this place, that he skillfully applies the heat – *and the healing*, to bring about our *sanctification*.

Last week, we looked at the reactions of those two criminals who shared Golgotha with Jesus over 2000 years ago.

How one thief shouted abuse at Jesus, at God and at those around him, declaring his *innocence* and *defending his rights*.

We discovered *one* of the foundational needs of all human beings, *at least in our carnal nature*, is *to be innocent*.

That none of us want to be *guilty of any sin or injustice*.

And that is the cause of most, if not all – relational breakdown.

Because of this, we saw how this thief ‘wasted’ his crucifixion.

He failed to see it as from God to *transform* his life, leading to resurrection!

## Scripture References

Gal. 6:7-8

Lk. 9:23

Mal. 3:3  
Is. 42:3  
Mt. 12:20

Lk. 23:33

Job 9:20  
Ps. 19:13

Had he been like the other thief, things would have been vastly different!

This thief saw God in the midst of his crucifixion, and in doing so – found life and resurrection!

May I suggest today, that the same will be true for you.

Let's be real.

Christianity, Church and Christians can be just plain nasty and horrible at times!

My experience as an 18 year old, working voluntary as an assistant to the pastor at a local Baptist church taught me that.

Being offered police protection from your pastor, *if you would testify in a court of law against him* –

...goes a long way to leaving you disillusioned – *let me assure you of that.*

However, how I *reacted* to those horrible events, just like the two thieves beside Jesus,

...determined whether or not I entered into resurrection paradise, or a living hell for the rest of my life!

Where are you today - in the beginning, middle or aftermath of *your* crucifixion?

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Let there never be a doubt in your mind, it is God's will

## Scripture References

Lk. 23:42

Jn 10:10

Heb. 5:8-9

for ALL believers to enter into the sufferings of Christ.

And that the purpose of this, is that you also ‘learn obedience’ to the higher calling of Christ upon your lives.

Does it hurt?

Darn right it does!

Will you want to run away, to come down off the cross in the middle of the pain?

Yes – you will, *time and time again*.

But if we were to ask the thief who found God,

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‘Knowing now, what you know, and having found God in the midst of your crucifixion, would you still have wanted to escape the suffering!’

You know what he’d say?

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‘No way! Embrace your crucifixion! It is the most glorious event ever to enter my life! Praise God for crucifixions – for though it, I found Life, and Life in all It’s fullness!’

May that dear brothers and sisters, be your experience today as well.

You may have given up on God, but God hasn’t given up on you.

Scripture  
References

Mk 14:36

In fact, God would rather die, than live without you!

Believe me, Jesus didn't want to suffer the pain of the cross, any more than you want to suffer either.

And the way He gained victory over His desire NOT to follow God,

...are exactly the same ways we shall learn to overcome as well.

You see, you are not alone in your doubts, in your pain or confusion.

Jesus experienced them all – *far greater* than you ever will.

And *He* will give you the strength and ability to come through life victoriously!

I know this, because the same Christ who faced the Cross, who faced the anguish of sweating blood in the Garden of Gethsemane,

...lives within you now – by the power of His Holy Spirit!

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Get in touch with that Life, and your life will never be the same.

One thing though, that you might find hard – is learning to accept that your Christian life, *up to this point* –

...has only been like *dipping your toe* into the Streams of

## Scripture References

John 3:16

Heb. 4:15

Eph 3:16

Gal 2:20

Living Water.

Today, can be like; ‘Being born again – again!’

Because if God’s people were taught about the deeper workings of the Cross, the church of today would be bursting at the seams!

One thing that all disillusioned Christians have faced, and faced badly, *is a crucifixion.*

We have failed to understand, or been taught – about the deeper workings of the Cross *towards our sanctification!*

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One thing that *also* awaits each of us here today, is the same garden of Gethsemane –

that our Lord faced BEFORE His crucifixion.

If you are to know total healing, total release from the memories and the scars of your horrible experience,

...then it will be necessary *for you to come to this same garden.*

Some of us here today, who have experienced a crucifixion, need *now* to come to our Gethsemane, in order to find healing.

In our Gethsemane, we must either choose to follow God’s path for our lives –

...and *YES, this involves an enormous amount of pain* –

## Scripture References

Jn. 3:3  
1 Pet. 1:23

Mk. 14:32

1 Pet. 5:7

Josh 24:15

1 Cor 3:15

...or choose the *other* path that is wide and broad – but ultimately leads to eternal destruction.

Mat. 7:13

Listen to the *heart* of what Jesus prayed during that night of anguish and surrender.

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‘God, this is too hard for me to bear. I can’t do it! I don’t even *want* to go through with this! I have the freedom of my own will, and I don’t want to accept what You have in store for my life. Never the less, I yield. I place my opinion concerning this matter on the altar of sacrifice. Let the events continue. Let these men outwork the will of God for me. Let me be crucified!’

Lk. 22:41

What’s your reaction to this scene?

Imagine the outcome if Jesus choose *not* to obey the Father, *not* to submit His will to that of the Father!

And then ask yourself the same questions in relation to *your* own crucifixion!

How *you* face crisis, disappointment, even crucifixion in *your* life!

You see, the crucifixion was the focal point in the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What makes you think it is any different in your life either!

2 Ti. 2:11

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Didn't you pray the *prayer of surrender* - similar to the prayer Jesus uttered in Gethsemane?

'Lord, have your way in my life, crucify my old fleshy nature, let me follow in your footsteps!'

The deeper workings of the Cross were essential in the life of Jesus, and brothers and sisters, so it is in *your* life as well.

From this day forward, may you see pain as God's refining work in your life, to bless you, turning mourning into dancing, sorrow into joy!

Learn from Jesus. Stop resisting!

Surrender is your only option.

Many of you have said to me over the last two weeks,

'If only I'd been taught these things *when I first became a Christian*, before I experienced my pain and hardships,

*...then* I would have handled it *differently* – at least *then* I would have been prepared – then I would have surrendered!

Allow me to share some wonderfully good news with you today!

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Gethsemane is not a place, nor is it a specific time.

Rom 2:16

For most believers, Gethsemane must come *after* crucifixion, when you finally come to a place of *total surrender* to God.

When you no longer try to defend, declare your innocence or blame others for your pain.

The second thief had to have his Gethsemane while nailed to a cross and breathing his last breath.

*So might you.*

Gethsemane is not a when or a where, but Gethsemane is a *must*.

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Without *facing your* Gethsemane, the crucifixion you have known - will destroy you... *with no hope of resurrection*.

Today, some of us need to face our Gethsemane, we need to surrender to God – *again!*

Rest assured, you are not alone in your resistance to the Divine will of God.

Your Lord struggled with surrender, and little wonder – so will you!

Think about it.

Slide # 16

Following in the footsteps of Jesus means that there are times in your life when you *don't* want to obey God,

## Scripture References

Lk. 23:40

Gal 6:1

...when it becomes too difficult and painful.

When all you want to do, is run away.

Jesus gives you permission to *feel* like that *today*.

Resist yes, run away – no!

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It's time to stop resisting, it's time to *come home*.

You're not alone in your struggle.

Jesus has faced Gethsemane, and won the battle.

He is here today, willing and ready, to face it again – *in* you!

Turn the scene of your life around, see it from the other side, step into heavenly territory!

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*Come home to the Father!*