

The Cross of Christ: Its Necessity, Work, and Call to Discipleship

Why did Jesus need to go to the cross? Because it was the only means by which sinful humanity could be reconciled to a holy God. From the beginning, sin brought death (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23). Under the Law, blood was required for atonement:

“For the soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the soul that makes atonement.” (Leviticus 17:11, LSB)

Yet the blood of bulls and goats could never fully remove sin (Hebrews 10:4). Only the spotless Lamb of God could make a once-for-all sacrifice. Jesus said of His mission:

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45, LSB)

The work of the cross is the complete and final offering for sin. At Calvary, Jesus bore the wrath of God that sinners deserved. As Isaiah foretold:

“But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our peace fell upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5, LSB)

Jesus satisfied divine justice, removed the curse of sin, reconciled believers to God, and triumphed over the powers of darkness (Colossians 2:14–15). He cried out before His death:

“It is finished!” (John 19:30, LSB)

This was not defeat but victory—the mission accomplished.

Yet Jesus does not only invite people to believe in His work; He calls them to follow Him in it:

“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.” (Luke 9:23, LSB)

To pick up our cross is to embrace the death of self—our own will, pride, and love of the world—and to follow Jesus in obedience and sacrifice. Discipleship is costly. The cross is not just Christ’s burden; it becomes the pattern of our own lives. Paul understood this when he said:

“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”
(Galatians 2:20, LSB)

To walk the way of the cross is to embrace God’s will above all else. It is to suffer with Christ, to be raised with Him, and to be conformed to His image. The cross is both the instrument of our salvation and the road of sanctification.

Yeshua went to the cross to redeem, restore, and reign. And He bids us come—not to a life of ease, but to true life found through dying to self and living for Him.

Referenced Scriptures (LSB):

- Genesis 2:17 — “But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat from it, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”
- Romans 6:23 — “For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- Hebrews 10:4 — “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”
- Colossians 2:14–15 — “Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us, He also has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them in Him.”
- Galatians 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.”