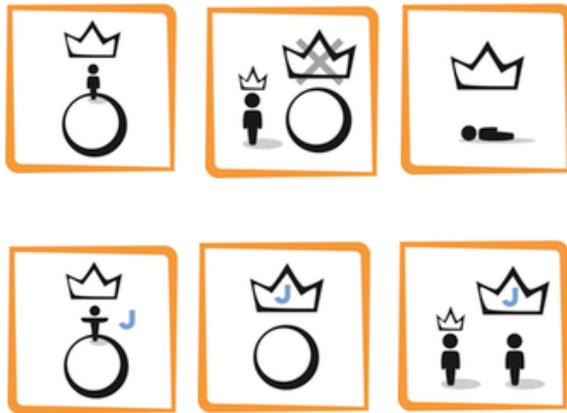


THE CROSS



‘Christ died for sins,
once for all,
the righteous for the unrighteous,
to bring you to God’

(1 Peter 3:18)

What happened on the Cross?

- Christ died
- for sins
- once for all
- the righteous for the unrighteous

What difference does it make?

- to bring you to God

Now back to the topic, one thing I think is vital to mention, How Jesus and religion are on opposite spectrums, One is the work of God, one is a man-made invention, One is the cure and one is the infection. Because religion says do, Jesus says done. Religion says slave, Jesus says son. Religion puts you in shackles but Jesus sets you free. Religion makes you blind, but Jesus lets you see. This is what makes religion and Jesus two different clans, Religion is man searching for God, but Christianity is God searching for man.

Which is why salvation is freely mine, forgiveness is my own, Not based on my efforts, but Christ's obedience alone. Because he took the crown of thorns, and the blood dripped down his face He took what we all deserved – I guess that's why you call it grace. While being murdered he yelled, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do", Because when he was dangling on that cross, he was thinking of you He paid for all your sin, and then buried it in the tomb, Which is why I'm kneeling at the cross, saying "Come on, there's room". So for religion, no I hate it, in fact I literally resent it, Because when Jesus cried "It is finished", I believe He meant it.

(Joel Bethke: Why I hate religion but love Jesus)



Discussion questions

? "Isn't it about time the Church got rid of the Cross as its main symbol? How about a dove of peace instead?" What would you say?

? what place does the Cross have in your life? What pressures do you find taking you away from the Cross? How can we keep holding on to it?

? "Religion's like spraying perfume on a casket. See the problem with religion is it never gets to the core. It's just behaviour modification, like a long list of chores". What do these lines from the poem mean?

? Susan has been a Christian for many years. But she constantly feels guilty because she fails God in so many ways. She says she does trust in Christ, but she lives under a dark cloud of feeling guilty. How could you use this verse (1 Peter 3:18) to help her?