

The Cross Is A Sword!

It should be always kept in mind that the true Christian Church is a divine spiritual family and that loyalty to it can often cut across ties that bind human families together.

The cross of Jesus Christ is a sword and can often separate friends and divides households.

The idea that Jesus Christ always brings peace and patches up differences is found nowhere in His teachings.

Quite the contrary is true.

Luke 12:51-53 [NIV] *“Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”*

This is Jesus Christ’s personal warning to all who would become His disciples.

Often the presence of a true Christian in a home, if it does not actually divide the family, it will at least bring a serious divergence of interest within the family.

One weakness of much that passes for the Christian faith these days is seen in the readiness of many professed followers of Jesus Christ to make any concessions in order to “*get along with people*” especially with relatives.

Too often today’s Christianity is a philosophy of appeasement.

The truth is regularly sacrificed on the altar of peace and appeasement.

Jesus Christ cared nothing for the good will of persistent bad people, nor did He alter one word of His message to stay in favour with anyone, be it Jew or pagan, or even a member of His own earthly family. [**John 7:5**]

No-one fully understands the meaning of the cross if they place blood ties alongside the ties of the spirit as expressed in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

John 3:6-7 [NIV] *“Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’”*

All fleshly relationships will be dissolved in the resurrection, including even the intimate relationship between a husband and wife. [**Luke 20:27-36**]

Luke 14:26-27 [NIV] *“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”*

The Greek word translated “*hate*” is “*misēō*” that comes from a root word that means “*to love less by comparison.*”

What Jesus Christ is saying here is that faith in Him immediately introduces another and a much higher loyalty in our lives.

Jesus Christ demands that He must have first place.

For a true disciple of Jesus Christ it is –

Christ before family.

Christ before country.

Christ before life itself.

The flesh must always be sacrificed to the Spirit in our lives.

Romans 6:3-4 [NIV] *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”*

After baptism, by total immersion, a kind of grave, we are raised to a new life of total allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:6, 11-13 [NIV] *“For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin,” ... “In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.”*

Our new life is with a new Master, Jesus Christ our Saviour.

This is what Jesus Christ meant when to be disciples of His we had to take up our cross.

Jesus Christ carried His cross on the way to give up His life in the service of all humanity. [**John 3:16-17**]

When we take up our cross we become expendable, it is Jesus Christ who is central within our lives.

We then truly pray, *“Your kingdom come, Your will be done [in me] on earth as it is in heaven,”* and show we mean it by acting it out in our day-to-day life.