**Sunday, April 1, 2012**

**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**When I survey the Wondrous Cross**

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. – Isaiah 64:6

What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ – Philippians 3:8

**When I survey the wondrous cross, On which the prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.**

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. – Galatians 6:14

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. – Colossians 3:2

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my God; All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.**

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. – John 15:13

**See, from his head, his hands, his feet; Sorrow and love flow mingled down.  Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

Then he said to them all: If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. – Luke 9:23

**Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were an offering far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all!**

Please join me in song as we worship our Messiah who came to give Himself as our Passover Lamb!

**Song of Praise** – *The Wonderful Cross*

**Worthy Are You, Our Lord and God** *(Revelation 4:11)*

Please declare with me the Word of God:

*“Worthy are you, our Lord and God,* *to receive glory and honor and power,*

*for you created all things,* *and by your will they existed*  *and were created.”*

**Songs of Worship** – *I Will Glory In My Redeemer/How Deep the Father’s Love For Us*

**A Cross Centered Life** –*John Piper*

It is at the cross where we find the gift of Grace. Listen to the words of John Piper as he describes the all sufficient Grace found only at the Cross of Christ:

“Christ is the glory of God. His blood-soaked cross is the blazing center of that glory. By it He bought for us every blessing–temporal and eternal. And we don’t deserve any. He bought them all. Because of Christ’s cross, God’s elect are destined to be sons of God. Because of His cross all guilt is removed, and sins are forgiven, and perfect righteousness is imputed to us, and the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Spirit, and we are being conformed to the image of Christ.

Therefore, every enjoyment in this life and the next that is not idolatry is a tribute to the infinite value of the cross of Christ–the burning center of the glory of God. And thus a cross-centered, cross-exalting, cross-saturated life is a God-glorifying life–the only God-glorifying life. All others are wasted.”

**Song of Worship** – *Amazing Grace*

**Offering**

**What Do You Think About the Cross of Christ *– (J.C. Ryle)***

*But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Galatians 6:14)*

The cross of Jesus Christ…this subject is one of the deepest importance. This is not one of those points on which people may agree to differ, and feel that differences will not shut them out of heaven. A man must be right on this subject, or he is lost forever. Heaven or hell, happiness or misery, life or death, blessing or cursing in the last day—all hinges on the answer to this question, "What do you think about the cross of Christ?"

The cross is the foundation of a Church's prosperity. No Church will ever be honored in which Christ crucified is not continually lifted up—nothing whatever can make up for the lack of the cross. Without it all things may be done decently and in order; without it there may be splendid ceremonies, beautiful music, gorgeous churches, learned ministers, crowded communion tables, huge collections for the poor. But without the cross no good will be done; dark hearts will not be enlightened, proud hearts will not be humbled, mourning hearts will not be comforted, fainting hearts will not be cheered…Christ crucified is God's ordinance for doing good to people. Whenever a Church keeps back Christ crucified, or puts anything whatever in that foremost place which Christ crucified should always have, from that moment a Church ceases to be useful. Without Christ crucified in her pulpits, a church is little better than a cumberer of the ground, a dead carcase, a well without water, a barren fig tree, a sleeping watchman, a silent trumpet, a speechless witness, an ambassador without terms of peace, a messenger without tidings, a lighthouse without fire, a stumbling-block to weak believers, a comfort to infidels, a hot-bed for formalism, a joy to the devil, and an offence to God.

Are you living in any kind of sin? Are you following the course of this world, and neglecting your soul? Hear, I beseech you, what I say to you this day, "Behold the Cross of Christ." See there how Jesus loved you! See there what Jesus suffered to prepare for you a way of salvation. Yes—careless men and women, for you that blood was shed! For you those hands and feet were pierced with nails! For you that body hung in agony on the cross! You are those whom Jesus loved, and for whom He died! Surely that love ought to melt you. Surely the thought of the cross should draw you to repentance. Oh, that it might be so this very day! Oh, that you would come at once to that Savior who died for you, and is willing to save! Come, and cry to Him with the prayer of faith, and I know that He will listen. Come, and lay hold upon the cross, and I know that He will not cast you out. Come, and believe on Him who died on the cross, and this very day you shall have eternal life. How will you ever escape if you neglect so great salvation? None surely will be so deep in hell as those who despise the cross!

Are you a believer that longs to be more holy? Are you one that finds his heart too ready to love earthly things? To you also I say, "Behold the cross of Christ." Look at the cross, think of the cross, meditate on the cross, and then go and set your affections on the world if you can. I believe that holiness is nowhere learned so well as on Calvary. I believe you cannot look much at the cross without feeling your will sanctified, and your tastes made more spiritual. As the sun gazed upon makes everything else look dark and dim, so does the cross darken the false splendor of this world. As honey tasted makes all other things seem to have no taste at all, so does the cross seen by faith take all the sweetness out of the pleasures of the world. Keep on every day steadily looking at the cross of Christ, and you will soon say of the world, as the poet does—

Its pleasures now no longer please,   
No more content afford;   
Far from my heart be joys like these,   
Now I have seen the Lord.   
  
As by the light of opening day   
The stars are all concealed,   
So earthly pleasures fade away   
When Jesus is revealed.

I lay these thoughts before your mind. What you think now about the cross of Christ, I cannot tell. But I can wish you nothing better than this—that you may be able to say with the Apostle Paul, before you die or meet the Lord, "God forbid that I should boast—except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!

**Songs of Worship –** *The Old Rugged Cross/Jesus Paid It All*

**Message** – *“Blessed Are Those Who Mourn”*

***Scripture Reference: Matthew 5:4***

* Mourning & sorrow are common to all.
* Tears are a gift from God to relieve the presence of grief.
* As sinners, we need this emotion to realize how hopeless we are without Christ.

1. **Proper & Improper Mourning**
   1. Improper: David’s son mourned because he couldn’t “love” his sister. Some are grieved because they get “caught” in their sin.
   2. Proper: Loss of a loved one, loneliness, defeat, discouragement
2. **Godly Mourning (*2 Corinthians 7:10-11*)**
   1. Only those who truly seek Him, as well as the children of God, can experience true mourning.
   2. We find the greatest comfort when we come to Christ.
   3. The result of Godly mourning is comfort.
3. **Take-away’s**
   1. It is an interesting fact that Jesus had all emotions (weeping, hunger, thirst, anger) but we find nowhere in the scripture that Jesus laughed.
   2. Godly mourning speaks of continuous action & comfort.
   3. A mark of maturity is not sinlessness, but rather a growing awareness of our sin & our sinfulness.
   4. *James 4:1-10*   
      What hinders us from mourning? Anything that makes us feel content in our sin (therapeutic preaching), love of this world, entertainment, busyness (keeps us from His word).
   5. *Matthew 11;25-30*   
      Jesus will comfort your soul.

**Time of Prayer**