

Amnesty and the Cross

Amnesty. It means an official pardon for the guilty offender for actions against a government. It's an acquittal, a "not guilty" verdict, but even more—it's a pardon for offenses committed. We don't often think of amnesty when we think of the cross. But that's exactly what happened. The government of God acquitted us, pardoned us. It's God's ultimate solution for guilt. A few days ago the Holy Spirit brought before me a face familiar in the current news cycle. I had not followed the trial of a young American by Italian courts. Snippets I heard were too devastating for everyone on every side.

I saw her as I had not reckoned before. A young life and a long future stretched out in God's desire, bathed in light, and completely free of the difficult and sordid public details of her trial.

The Lord said: "Pray for amnesty. Then watch for a sign indicating My season for the earth."

A lot of Christians seem to be missing something related to the reality and power of what happened at the cross and how that impacts our mission and message. When the viewpoint of the church toward our nation, for instance, is the same destruction willed by our sworn enemies, something is askew.

The cross is the supernatural comprehensive work of God reconciling us to Himself, to one another and to His creation. The gospel is amnesty extended until Christ appears. The work Jesus did 2,000 years ago is not in the rear-view mirror. What happened at the cross is an ever-unfolding demonstration of glory. Its power is a spiritual nuclear reaction, the splitting of the atom of desire in God in an ever-increasing chain reaction of love and power.

Amnesty isn't cheap grace, it is the revelation of an incredible exchange. Our complete pardon and release from the

judgment due us. You, me, the whole of creation was carried in the condemned body of the Creator that day. When He died, our death sentence breathed its last. We need an encounter with the revelation of the glory of the cross to liberate us and empower us to set others free, too.

Who knows the true details of the terrible events surrounding that young woman's original trial and conviction. I do know the Lord said, "Pray for amnesty and watch for a sign for the earth." A few days later, she was acquitted by an Italian appeals court. She came home. For me that's a sign revealing God's heart toward His world. It can be summed up in a word: *amnesty*. It's time we got to really know the power in the blood that speaks for us from Calvary.

"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

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