

6 Reasons Why the Church Should Embrace the Cross of Christ

Preaching on the cross of Christ has fallen out of favor in recent decades. Dispensational “hyper grace” teaching even dismisses passages employing Christ followers to take up their cross as not applicable in the church age (Mark 8:34).

However, the cross of Christ holds eternal significance for Christians, representing sacrifice, redemption and the ultimate expression of God’s love. Embracing the cross as a church community can bring about profound transformations in our lives and the world around us.

In this article, we will explore several reasons why the church should embrace the cross of Christ, leading to personal growth, unity, endurance and a deeper connection with our Savior.

1. Immobilizing the powerful effects of personal ancestral and original sin

Embracing the cross enables us to confront and immobilize the powerful effects of personal ancestral sin. By acknowledging the brokenness inherited from past generations, we can seek healing and restoration through the redemptive work of Jesus. The cross reminds us that through Christ’s sacrifice, we are offered forgiveness, liberation and the opportunity to break free from destructive habit patterns. Embracing the cross empowers the church to overcome the cycles of sin, break generational curses and live in the freedom of God’s grace.

2. Working for the oneness of the church

The cross serves as a unifying symbol for the church, since

Scripture illustrates that God came to earth as a human. He came as a servant who embraced the cross to bring healing and restoration to humanity (Philippians 2:4-12). Embracing the cross helps us die to our egos and selfish agendas while transcending sectarian, cultural, and social barriers and bringing a sense of oneness to our diverse congregations. Hence, by embracing the cross, the church can strive for reconciliation, healing divisions and working toward fulfilling Jesus' prayer for unity among His followers (John 17:20-24).

3. Connecting suffering with knowing Christ

The cross provides a unique lens through which we can understand and connect with the sufferings of Christ. When we embrace the cross, we realize that suffering is not meaningless but can lead to a more profound knowledge of Christ, emotional maturity and spiritual formation. Even Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered (Hebrews 5:8). By embracing the cross, we also develop empathy for the pain of others and become vessels of compassion and support. In doing so, we reflect the power of Christ's suffering in our own lives.

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4. Enduring hardship

Embracing the cross equips the church with the strength to endure hardship. The cross reminds us that Jesus Himself faced immense suffering and persevered for the sake of humanity. We find encouragement and hope when we embrace the cross, knowing our trials are not in vain. The cross teaches us to rely on God's grace and strength during challenging times, enabling us to press on with perseverance and faith. Paul said that we can endure suffering by the love of God that is shed abroad in our

hearts (Romans 5:3-5). The teachings of the cross enable us to navigate challenges and tribulations with grace as we fix our eyes upon Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-3).

5. Putting the interests of the kingdom before self-interests

Embracing the cross challenges us to prioritize the interests of God's kingdom above our self-interests. The cross represents self-sacrifice and humility, inspiring us to serve others and seek the well-being of those around us. By embracing the cross, the church can actively participate in acts of love, justice and mercy, embodying the teachings of Christ and being agents of positive change in our communities.

in newness of life and purpose

Embracing the cross enables the church to walk in the newness of life because if we are united in Christ's death, we will also experience His resurrection (Romans 6:5). Jesus conquered sin and offered us a fresh start through His death and resurrection. Embracing the cross means identifying with Christ's burial and rising to a new life with Him (Romans 6:6). Our old sinful nature no longer binds us. Still, we are given the power to live victoriously in righteousness (Romans 6:18). The cross empowers us to leave behind the bondage of our past and embrace a life of freedom, guided by God's love and filled with hope, joy and a renewed sense of meaning (Philippians 3:7-14).

The cross of Christ stands as a timeless and powerful symbol of redemption, sacrifice and transformative power. By embracing the cross, the church can experience a shift in perspective, unity, endurance and purpose. Let us wholeheartedly embrace the cross of Christ, allowing it to shape our lives, inspire our actions and draw us closer to the heart of our Savior. In doing so, we become a beacon of love and light to the church and the world. {eoa}

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