



# Life Principles Notes™

## The Cross:

### Where the Wrath of God and the Love of God Meet

#### Summary:

**When you look at the Cross, what do you see?** Some see a wooden decoration or a religious symbol. Some see a cruel device for execution. If you have been transformed by the grace of God, however, you see the place where His wrath intersects with His love.

The Cross shows how seriously God looks upon our sin. John 3:36 tells us that because of our sin, the wrath of God rests upon anyone who doesn't have faith in His Son. The Cross is our only

hope; remove it and we'd have nothing.

What is this Cross all about? Paul answered that question when he visited the city of Corinth. "For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18).

**Key Passage:** [1 Corinthians 1:17-24](#)

**Supporting Scripture:** *John 3:36; Romans 1:18; Romans 2:4-5; Acts 2:23-24; John 1:29; Romans 3:23-26*

#### Scriptural Principles:

##### 1 God's wrath is just as absolute as His love.

Most people enjoy hearing about God's incredible love, but what about His wrath? Whether we like it or not, it is an inescapable fact. The wrath of God is described many times in His Word; it is part of His character. God's wrath is His intense hatred for sin and His punishment of it. He is holy and He desires that we be holy.

##### 2 God's wrath is stored up when people choose to live in sin.

God hates sin because He knows it destroys anything it touches. Romans 1:18 tells us that God's wrath "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Anyone who denies Him, ignores Him, or rebels against Him is living under His awesome anger. "You are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Romans 2:5). Many people fail to take sin seriously, but God takes it very seriously.

##### 3 God's wrath was poured out upon His perfect, sinless Son.

In the Cross we see that the wrath of God was directed against the Son of God to fulfill the purpose of God. This is the very essence of the Gospel from beginning to end. All humanity's wrath was laid upon God's perfect Son—the only person who earned no wrath at all. This was God's plan from the beginning. Paul said that though the Romans crucified Jesus, they were unknowing participants in God's plan. (Acts 2:23-24)

##### 4 God's wrath is shown because He must always be just.

Someone might ask, "Why couldn't God accomplish this plan some other way?" The answer is that God must be true to His nature, and His nature includes perfect justice and righteousness. That means that He always does the right thing at the right time in every circumstance. The just and righteous response to sin is a sentence of death. The question is, how could God offer both justice and eternal life?

## 5 The Cross allows for forgiveness that remains just.

The atoning death of Jesus Christ is God's perfect and wonderful plan for appeasing His wrath against sin while offering His love to every one of us. The Cross has its power because of the One who shed His precious blood upon it. It is the place where the holy wrath and the abounding love of God intersect, so that our sin may be judged and yet we can be reconciled to Him and live eternally in His holy presence.

## 6 The Cross offers us redemption through sacrifice.

You and I see Jesus as the Lamb of God, slain as a sacrifice according to the plan of His Father before the foundation of the world. John the Baptist called Him the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29) He was a perfect lamb, spotless and without sin of any kind. So why would God direct His wrath upon His only Son? He did so because sacrifice is the only solution available for the atonement of sin. The death of Christ on the Cross is different from any other death, because it was also a sacrifice of atonement.

## 7 The Cross redeems us through the death of God's perfect Son.

Why does an event that happened two thousand years ago, the death of Jesus on the Cross, make any difference in your life today? What about those who lived before Jesus came to earth? In Romans 3:23-26, Paul explains that, though we have all sinned, we are justified—that is, declared not guilty. This justification is a gift of God, meaning that we have done nothing to earn it. Jesus died publicly, displayed as a sinner though he never sinned.

## 8 The Cross offers cleansing for every sin ever committed.

God had only two choices. He could condemn to eternal punishment everyone who ever lived, or He could send His perfect Son to take that punishment instead. In His perfect love and wisdom, He laid the guilt of every sin ever committed upon His Son during those painful hours on the Cross. He condemned the innocent because it was the only way to forgive the guilty.

## 9 The Cross satisfies God's wrath while pouring out His love.

It is an awesome thought to consider that every terrible thing we have done was already nailed upon the Cross with Christ. All the guilt we have felt has been cleansed. Our sin made us fully worthy of eternal death, but the love and compassion of God has washed over that sin and given us the free gift of purity in His eyes, as well as eternal life. The Cross is the place where His wrath was satisfied and His love was triumphant.

## 10 The Cross is our hope for life both now and eternally.

The death of Christ was not the final statement. God raised Him from the dead to validate the meaning of the Cross. Jesus accepted the full punishment He had not earned, and therefore God raised Him to the full reward of resurrection. Knowing that Christ has already felt all the pain of our imperfection, you and I can face the problems of everyday life without being defeated. Then we can have life without fear of death, for we know that He has gone to prepare a place for us.

## Conclusion:

The most deceptive trick Satan can play on us is to convince us that we are not very sinful. The greatest and most tragic error is the belief that our good somehow outweighs our bad.

The Word of God will not allow us to believe that lie. The truth is that there is not a single thing we can do to earn the tiniest fraction of our justification before God. Apart from the

Cross we are lost, but we need not live without the Cross. The glorious truth is that we have been justified and forgiven as a free gift.

Christ has written your name in the Lamb's Book of Life, only because of the Cross. You are a saint today, only because of the Cross. For us who are being saved, it is the power of God! ✝

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