

LIVING WATER

The Official Newsletter of Southside Church of Christ

SURVEYING THE WONDROUS CROSS

by **Cody Pastorella**

"When I Survey The Wondrous Cross" is a familiar song. We sing it often in preparation for the Lord's Supper. The lyrics of Isaac Watt's song covers a solemn message about God's power, His amazing love, the cost of salvation, the divine royalty of Christ and His incredible sacrifice.

The first two stanzas goes as follows: ***"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. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my Lord; All the vain things that charm me most I sacrifice them to His blood."***

I believe the first and second verses create the following syllogisms.

- If the cross is wondrous to me, then I will no longer be governed by the pride of life.
- If the cross is wondrous to me, I will pour contempt on all my pride. To have contempt means to view something as so worthless that it is beneath consideration. So, if the cross is wondrous to me, I will leave the pride of life buried with the old man (Romans 6:3-5). That former life is worthless, well beneath me. That life is buried and gone.
- If the cross is wondrous to me, I will count earthly gain as loss (Philippians 3:8).

- If the cross is wondrous to me, then the cross will charm me most. Vain things will no longer be a delight to me. However, if vain things charm me most, then I will not see the cross with clarity. I will not examine it with value. And the cross will certainly not be wondrous to me.

The truth is, it is the cross that should charm us most. I believe this is the idea of the third frame of the song which reads: ***"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?"***



Look at the cross. Picture his hands, his feet, and especially that crown of thorns. A crown intended to cause pain and humiliation turned out to be the most majestic crown ever worn. But how could Christ suffer so much? It's sad to consider. It's sad given man's choice to sin, sad to consider man's separation from God and sad considering the matchless price to redeem mankind. A sad situation for sure; but in the fullness of God's timing, this sad situation was met with matchless love.

Verse four: ***“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small; Love so
amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my
all.”***

As if God’s original gift of life was not enough, there would be more. As if creating the earth, all that is in it, and giving mankind dominion over it was not enough, there would be more. As if life itself was a present too small, God did more! He gave life again. What an incredible thought!

Do we truly see the cross? Do we give an honest appraisal of its value?

When we survey the cross, we are examining our Savior’s amazing love. A survey of the Cross should remind us that Christ’s incredible sacrifice demands our soul, life and all.

Is the cross wondrous to you? Does the cross charm you most?

Southside
CHURCH OF CHRIST • BLUE SPRINGS

