

## The Cross: God's Altar for Man's Sin

**Mortal Messiah 4:224;** "That which began in Gethsemane was finished on the cross and crowned in the resurrection. Jesus took upon himself the sins of all men when he suffered and sweat great drops of blood from every pore in Gethsemane. It was then that his suffering caused himself, even God, to suffer both body and spirit...Then again on the cross—in addition to all the physical pain of that horrifying ordeal—he felt the spiritual agonies of the sins of others..." – Bruce McConkie

I started this ministry for a number of reasons, however, the main reason was to ensure I get the true story out to the Mormon people of *where* Jesus paid for your sin and mine – the Cross.

While the LDS Church has chosen to reject God's gift to them in more ways than one, the fact is that no matter how determined they are in turning their backs on His gift – it still happened. God still offered His Only Son on the altar to pay the price needed to redeem mankind.

There have been untold numbers of people this side of the cross who've done the same, so it shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone this defiance in man's soul still goes on. Yet the shock for me is that I come from a line of people who've done it.

**Answers to Gospel Questions 4:17;** *"To many, like the writer, such a custom is repugnant and contrary to the true worship of our Redeemer. Why should we bow down before a cross or use it as a symbol? Because our Savior died on the cross, the wearing of crosses is to most Latter-day Saints in very poor taste..."* – Joseph Fielding Smith, 10<sup>th</sup> Prophet

What's so disheartening in this particular case (i.e. Mormonism) is how one man was able to trick a few people to follow a different god and they in turn did the same. One man.

We live in a fast paced, crazy world nowadays don't we? The internet fills our heads with info as fast as we can think up questions, we upload info to hold information we want to share with others who will then download what we've created, microwaves zap our food to refuel our bodies and now some of us are plugging in cars to fill them with power to take us where we need to go.

With all that craziness you might believe you're just one person who can't meet up to the same standard of changing millions of lives in today's day and age. For those people who think this – I say, you'd be wrong!

One person (Jesus) saved untold millions and will continue to do so until the earth passes away.

One man (Joe Smith) led millions on a divergent path to follow a false god.

One person (you!) has the ability to share the gospel with a handful of people who in turn does the same. I've only been in ministry for a couple of decades and have had the blessing of seeing people accept Jesus into their lives as God and Savior. But this isn't about me. It's about those who shared the love of Jesus with me.

From '83 to '93...

One person at a time took the time to share Jesus with me over ten years. From Los Angeles to Frankfurt, I met people who spent a half hour or a day sharing the truth we me about Jesus paying for my sins on a cross. Their patience and kindness gave me pause as I began rethinking what I thought I knew about Christianity and the reason for that cross.

The cross has been defiled by naysayers from the time it was used by the Romans to nail God to it and in their shame; He still welcomes people with open arms and as Peter told us it took place on the tree. Neither Peter nor any of the other apostles ever said anything about Jesus paying for sins in the Garden and if anyone would know, it'd be them~

**1** **Peter 2:23-24;** “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

As a Mormon I was warned repeatedly not to wear crosses so by the time I received a cross necklace laden with dark red garnets from my grandmother at the ripe old age of eleven, my reaction to her gift was a learned behavior from those who had already rejected God themselves.

**Mormon Doctrine, pg 172;** “...churches which came into being through an intermingling of pagan concepts with the true apostolic Christianity developed the practice of using symbolic crosses... All this is inharmonious with the quiet spirit of worship and reverence that should attend a true Christian's remembrance of our Lord's sufferings and death.” – Bruce McConkie

Other family members gathered round me to look at my birthday present in the velvet covered box and a wide-eyed silence fell onto the small crowd as if we'd all just been punched in the gut. No one said a word as I closed the lid, placed it under my other gifts and planted a kiss on my grandmother's cheek.

Days later I took the necklace out and with my mother's watchful eyes and help, we cut the necklace apart stone by stone. There were about twenty square garnets that connected at the back with a lobster claw enclosure. At the center hung a cross made from bigger garnets. As my mother and I took wire cutters to the gold chain holding the stones, we dismembered the garnets from each other and clicked our tongues at the “grandma's ignorance” and threw the precious dark red garnets in the trash.

I recall writing in my diary that I couldn't sleep at night for over a week...hmmm...I wonder why! My grandmother wasn't active in the Church, but she was active in my life listening to my endless questions about the cross and my enquiries as to why we shouldn't give it heed. Looking back I'm filled with horror at my behavior; both for rejecting the Lord's sacrifice to me and for being so insensitive to my grandmother's gift.

My story of denying God wasn't a pretty one and was a reflection of my ignorance to the meaning of what it (the cross) means.

In my heart of hearts I honestly believe the Mormons of today react the same way because of what they've been taught. I believe with all I am they love Jesus to their very core, yet stand as a testament to what it means to be tricked into believing a lie.

As a side note – I also receive e-mails from Mormons telling me they have no problem with the cross. The odd thing about their comments is the absence of the cross in their homes or even the acknowledgement of it as the place where Jesus died for their sins.

The tragedy of not knowing the truth about the cross is what they don't know about the Mosaic Law.

There are 613 Laws of the Torah that demanded total obedience to each one in order to be saved.

One of those Laws requires the life of the sacrifice to be taken. So while it's important that blood be shed, equally as important is that the sacrifice must die. While Mormons have twisted the story of how Jesus paid for the sins of man and will point to their belief that He died on the cross – they've missed the mark and won't accept the truth of what it says in God's word.

Others reject it as well. Jehovah Witnesses, the Jewish people today, Christian Scientists, Muslims, atheists...they have all denied He died on the cross for the sins of man along with the Mormon people.

**D**id you know...

The number of negative commandments (thou shalt nots) coincide with the number of days there are in a calendar year – 365. The remaining 248 laws coincide with the number of bones and major organs there are in the human body.

Just think...

613 laws to obey perfectly all day, every day, OR accepting Jesus as God, the Creator of everything, into your heart and believing He paid for your sin on the altar of God on the cross at Calvary. Gethsemane held a special place in Jesus' heart, but it wasn't where He paid for the sins of man!

In those 613 laws are dozens of specific requirements one must adhere to when making sacrifices to atone for sin. Each gives strict guidelines of what type of sacrifice is needed when and what for. We also have references in the Lord's Supper of how Jesus fulfilled these requirements when He gave His disciples instructions on the meanings of each element they were to partake of in remembrance of Him.

Then there are countless verses in the Bible showing how Gethsemane absolutely could not be the place where Jesus' atonement was fulfilled; Deuteronomy 21:22 & John 18:11 are just two examples of where we can find these truths.

Living on this side of the cross in the age of grace doesn't exempt us from obeying the Lord's standards, but it's also important to remember observing His word can only be accomplished through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

Whether you're desecrating the symbol of where Jesus paid for the sins of man which is a sin (Deuteronomy 12:4) or denying its locale (Isaiah 53:5), the effects of each behavior are the same – separation from God for eternity.

I'm praying that as the Mormon people begin their new adventures on the internet they'll take to heart the information they're sure to read about the cross and accept God's gift to them.

With Love in Christ;  
Michelle Grim  
1 Corinthians 1:18

*“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”*

