

THE THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS AND OF THE RESURRECTION IN OUR UNIQUE SALVATION REPORT

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The group wishes to thank Dr. Budiman for his paper, which provided a valued introduction to our discussions. We ought to add, however, that we are very conscious that this theme is far larger than we could handle in the time allotted, and with the resources available. With that in mind, we present a summary of our discussion.

1. We note the centrality of the Cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the total New Testament witness. It formed the central segment in the apostolic preaching (I Cor. 1:23, Acts 2:23,24).

Christ's death is a propitiatory sacrifice, and produces reconciliation for man in the areas of his need. It deals first with man's alienation and enmity with God, then with the estrangement of man and man; i.e., it is an absolute presupposition for complete personal, social, and international reconciliation; it makes a reconciliation between man and the natural world, and lastly, integrates man himself in his personality. (We are not certain of the implications of the third of these, but ecology, pollution, and the right use of the world's resources directly impinge on world relations, and on evangelization. More study is needed.)

Christ's work is a finished work. We affirm that the greatest strength and blessing that the church can know and experience is the assurance of the personal, continual, and effective intercession of Christ her Lord at the right hand of God. This has relevance to the suffering church: Christ is with his body, the church, and may be said to suffer with his body — not as he suffered on the Cross (for that is *hapax*) but with believers in their afflictions. Christians should share with Christ in this identification with their suffering brethren.

Man was judged representatively in Christ the God-man. He is saved representatively also. This is the Good News which demands a telling to men for whom Christ died.

2. Christ died unto sin once for all. He is the only Mediator (I Tim. 2:5). This we affirm over against all other saviors. The resurrection is God's confirmation of this truth, and therefore must be proclaimed with it.

This truth underscores the urgency of the need to proclaim forgiveness to all, through the death of Christ. The Cross has universal significance but the New Testament is not universalist. It calls for each person to repent and to be saved through faith. Nor is there to be only a recognition of salvation, but appropriation of it. We are not to tell men that they are saved (as some ecumenical theology states), but we are to call them to be reconciled and renounce their rebellion and enmity with God.

3. We came to a new appreciation of the subjective element in re-

demption. Christ has reconciled us to God through his death, but the historic event needs effectualization in our lives and in our world. This occurs in our sanctification, in our identity with the suffering church, through our victory over the world and death.

4. We believe that the emphasis in the New Testament on Christ's victory over the demonic powers which rule the world needs fresh and urgent emphasis. It is especially needed in situations where demon powers, the fear of death, and ignorance are holding men in bondage. Christ is Victor!

5. It is because of the Cross and resurrection that we have hope for the world. Although Christ stands in judgment upon every human system, and particularly man's utopian dreams, his death and resurrection are the means by which the Kingdom of God will be realized.

For world evangelization, this means that, just as Mary weeping at the tomb was given the command "Go and tell," so the church redeemed has still to take the message to a weary, death-ridden humanity.

The resurrection is guarantee that Jesus is Lord. It is the presupposition of his real Lordship over the world which he created and now claims. It is a contradiction, therefore, to affirm his Lordship in our lives without at the same time affirming his Lordship over every personal, social, national, and international structure of society and church.

6. In the church's identification with Christ, evangelization and service for mankind need to be cast in the role of Servant of the Lord. The Cross may be (even unknowingly) an offense to Christians as well as to the world, and we have often sought to evade the call to be servants and to lay aside the cross which Christ would lay upon us. The spirit of this Congress suggests that we may yet awaken to a truer conception of our role. It was through the death of Christ that his life was released to the world — the life of Christ still needs to be released through our death (Col. 3:1ff.).