

GOD'S NEW WAY

Jeremiah 31:31-33

Introduction: If Jesus' crucifixion had been announced in our modern times, it might have been like this: *United Press International:* "The United Arab Republic announced by repeated broadcast on Radio Cairo, that Jesus Bar Joseph was executed for inciting riots and aiding in insurrection. His repeated inferences that he was some sort of king or leader seemed to be a threat to the national and international stability of many Near Eastern countries. His execution seemed unopposed even by his closest followers. Officials in Tel Aviv felt that Jesus, who only days earlier had caused a riot in Jerusalem, might be planning a military coup. Although no specific charge has, as yet, been released concerning his execution, it is generally known that he was openly unsympathetic with the present political regime of that country."

The average person would then grab a snack and turn t.v. off and go to bed with very little, if any concern for that man in the Middle East who was killed. Why get all excited over some man killed 2,000 years ago who several hundred people die in a single accident today, like a plane crash or earthquake.

The cross has happened! God had sent messengers for hundreds of years foretelling of its approach.

I. GOD HAS BROUGHT TO MAN A NEW WAY

1. What was the old way? A yardstick of 10 commandments which people were to keep totally.
- Everybody fell short, nobody measured up to God's yardstick.
2. God's plan was to measure people differently one day. Still using the yardstick He would add something that people could stand on and then measure up to God's requirements.
3. The cross was not an accident. It was not a tragedy that surprised God. It was that something He was going to let people stand on in order to measure up to His standards.
4. A news story told of a man who got his arm caught in the door of a subway and was dragged to his death while his wife watched. His death got only momentary coverage in the local news, it was just a little tragedy, one man among tens of thousands who rode the subways daily.
5. Many view the cross with the same attitude, a poor man caught up in a dream and killed by his opposition. What's the big deal?
6. The greatest sin a man can commit is to ignore the cross and try to measure up to God's requirements/standards without the cross. To do so is to enter eternity lost and damned.

II. GOD'S NEW WAY ENABLES EVERYONE TO MEASURE UP TO HIS REQUIREMENTS

1. Everyone can now approach God, meet His requirements, measure up and be accepted into heaven. However, it is only by way of the CROSS.

2. Where soldiers gambled and priests mocked is where God's new way was made.
3. There is no way to God that does not depend upon nails, thorns and wood.
4. "Get-even" lust surrounded the Cross:
 - Judas got even - Jesus had failed.
 - Rome got even - All Jews were hated.
 - The Pharisees got even - Jesus had mocked their hypocrisy.
 - The Saducees got even - Jesus had taught against their doctrines.
 - The Herodians got even - Jesus was said to be a King.
5. What was Jesus' reaction? FORGIVENESS! From the cross He forgave them. Love hung on that Cross. Hate surrounded it, but LOVE won.

III. GOD MEANT BUSINESS

1. The blood of Christ is God's signature to His new way.
2. The Cross proves that God is serious.
3. God offers YOU and everyone else this new way.
4. To take the Cross lightly, a "so what" attitude will bring eternal damnation. God has made His final Way. We can take it or leave it, there will be no other offer from God.
5. Golgatha is not some Church Passion Play where actors play-like.
 - God is deadly serious.
 - It is where God was caught up in the violence of life and death while completing His New Way for mankind.
6. God's new way to man is a life and death business.

CONCLUSION:

1. Read the words to "When I Survey The Wondrous Cross."
2. God is asking you to give Him your life for His Son's life.
3. God makes no deals for only half of your life. God does not bargain.
4. With God it is ALL or nothing.
5. People waste their time offering God anything else but their total lives.
6. What about YOU? Have you taken God's new way, Jesus?