

Born Crucified

L.E. Maxwell

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This is an abbreviated version of my notes. For more information email tb@usa.com

I. Chapter 1 - The Believer's Identification (15)

A. The connection between Romans 5 and 6

1. Illustration of Civil War soldier George Wyatt

"During the Civil War a man by the name of George Wyatt was drawn by lot to go to the front. He had a wife and six children. A young man named Richard Pratt offered to go in his stead. He was accepted and joined the ranks, bearing the name and number of George Wyatt. Before long Pratt was killed in action. The authorities later sought again to draft George Wyatt into service. He protested, entering the plea that he had died in the person of Pratt. He insisted that the authorities consult their own records as to the fact of his having died in identification with Pratt, his substitute. Wyatt was thereby exempted as beyond the claims of law and further service. *He had died in the person of his representative.* There we have the truth of identification in a nutshell. God's way of deliverance is through death—through identification with our Substitute in His death and resurrection." [15]

2. Sanctification (Identification with Christ) follows from Justification

Maxwell points out that our efforts in the flesh cannot avail spiritual success:

"Has the reader labored and agonized to please God? You have resolved to read your Bible, to be more meditative and prayerful—all without effect. You are conscious of crushing failure and defeat. In spite of all your effort you are not like the Lord Jesus."

TAB: I appreciate Maxwell's point, but it must be balanced with the idea that no matter what we do, or what we believe about ourselves, we cannot achieve anything that is perfect. This has been won for us and is imputed to us. We can rest in that. However, there is a practical aspect of Christian living where we can either become passive or be put in a cycle of constant despair over our failures. But I don't see Maxwell disagreeing with this. It's a hard balance to express in words as it relates to the complexities of how we live our lives.

Maxwell cites F.J. Huegel in his book, *Bone of His Bone*:

"We have been proceeding upon a false basis. We have conceived of the Christian life as an imitation of Christ. It is not an imitation of Christ. It is a participation of Christ." [18]

II. Chapter 2 - The Secret of Victory Over Sin (21)

A. Maxwell's supposition in this chapter: We have been declared righteous so that we might live a holy life

1. Some Christians have been put off by the unbiblical doctrine of perfectionism

But we ought not rebel against holiness (or the doctrine of holiness) because a group has perverted it.

2. Romans 6 - we have died to sin and now cannot live in it

"God's way of victory is through *crucifixion*—deliverance is through *death*." [25]

III. Chapter 3- The Secret of Victory Over Sin, *Continued* (27)

A. Justification no "Mere legal fiction"

B. Reckoning Includes Self-renunciation

C. Reckoning Includes Rejection of Sin

1. To be sick of sin

2. God discipline us that we be delivered from sin

IV. Chapter 4 - The Cross and the World (33)

A. Worldliness

Maxwell warns against being the victim of a "single worldliness" - to be passionately attached to a single vice. "The apostle does not say, 'Love it [the world] not too much, or love it not so much;' he simply says, *Love it not at all*." [35]

The believer has been crucified to all forms of lust (1 John 2:16). "Let him [the crucified Christian] not come down from the cross." [35]

"The heresy of all heresies is a worldly spirit." [William Law, cited on page 37]

V. Chapter 5 - The Cross and the World, *Continued* (38)

A. Persecution by the world

1. The world cannot hate an unbeliever (John 7:7)
2. Christians - the "third race"

VI. Chapter 6 - The Cross and Consecration (44)

A. From Romans 5:1 to 12:2

VII. Chapter 7 - The Cross and the Crucified (49)

- A. Christ could not have risen if he had not first been crucified
- B. My identify with Christ

I should respond to every temptation with a "NO" that carries with it the power of the risen Lord.

VIII. Chapter 8 - The Cross and Self (56)

A. Self - The Biggest Enemy of the Christian

God harden me against myself,
The coward with pathetic voice
Who craves for ease, and rest, and joys:
Myself, arch-traitor to myself;
My hollowest friend, my deadliest foe,
My clog whatever road I go.
Yet One there is can curb myself,
Can roll the strangling load from me,
Break off the yoke and set me free.

--Christina Rossetti.

[pages 56-57]

B. The Denial of Self and the Cross of Christ

I see the crowd in Pilate's hall,
I mark their wrathful mien;
Their shouts of "Crucify!" appall,
With blasphemy between.
And of that shouting multitude
I feel that I am one;
And in that din of voices rude
I recognize my own.
'Twas I that shed the sacred blood,
I nailed Him to the tree,
I crucified the Christ of God,
I joined the mockery.
Around the cross the throng I see
Mocking the Sufferer's groan;
Yet still my voice it seems to be
As if I mocked alone.
-Horatius Bonar.

IX. Chapter 9 - The Cross Contrary to Nature (62)

"In spite of all our efforts, the stream of our life is mixed and muddy through our own unholy duplicity of motives." [69]

X. Chapter 10 - The Cross and Two Natures (70)

A. There is within each believer an old nature and a new nature

1. Yet the believer is a single person and cannot 'blame' his sin on the old nature

B. The believer is no longer "in Adam" but "in Christ"

1. The believer's access to the throne is through the blood of Jesus

C. The believer is no longer a debtor to the flesh

XI. Chapter 11 - The Cross and Two Natures, *Continued* (77)

A. Addressing I John 3:6-9

B. Progressing in sanctification a battle at a time

1. We are to go possess the land that is ours
2. Losing ground isn't an option
3. A "stalemate" between the two natures is not an option

XII. Chapter 12 - The Cross and the Flesh (84)

A. The raging battle against the flesh

1. The flesh rages against the Spirit: "The flesh is an 'I' specialist" [87]

B. The flesh as crucified

"In the Palace of Wurtzung there hangs a hall of glass. It is called the Hall of a Thousand Mirrors. You enter--a thousand hands are stretched out to meet you, a thousand smiles greet your smile, a thousand eyes will weep when you weep; but they are all your hands, your smiles, your tears. What a picture of the selfish man! Self all round, self multiplied, and he is deceived" (Mantle). [87]

C. The power of the cross

D. The centrality of the cross

My friend, the Lord is coming. What is your life? Is it lived in the Spirit? Oh the power of the Cross to, sever every relationship that would bind us to the flesh! We are debtors only to the Holy Spirit. Give the Cross full place in your life; abandon yourself recklessly to the Crucified, for over His crucified life the flesh has not one speck of power. Let the Cross seize upon you and sever you from that dominating thralldom to the flesh. "Every strong conviction ends by taking possession of us; it overcomes and absorbs us, and tears us ruthlessly from everything else." *Has the Cross so seized upon your life?* If it has, you can live for self nevermore. Rather, you will cry out with a determined saint of yore, "Oh my God, hear the cries of one on whom Thou hast had mercy, and prepare my heart to receive whatever Christ has purchased for me. Allow me not to rest short of it. *"Put a thorn in every enjoyment, a worm in every gourd, that would either prevent my being wholly thing, or in any measure retard my progress in the divine life"* (T. C. Upham). [92-93]

XIII. Chapter 13 - The Cross and Relationships (95)

A. The Cross Revolutionizes Family Relationships (Luke 12:51-53)

1. A new family

CHRYSOSTOM SAYS that when St. Lucian was asked by his persecutors, "Of what country art thou?" he replied, "I am a Christian," "What is your occupation?" "I am a Christian." "Of what family?" "I am a Christian."

To St. Lucian, Christ was all, whether of country, of occupation, or of family. [95]

2. Children

3. Maxwell closes with this illustration:

In the days of the Scottish Covenanters, in those times before an enervating effeminacy had overtaken our faith, Jane Welsh, the noble daughter of John Knox, was approached by the prison officials with the assurance that her husband, John Welsh, would be freed if only he would renounce the Protestant faith. Gathering up her apron she replied, "Please your majesties, I would rather catch his head there." Our modern sentiment would call her intolerant, dogmatic, unloving. But she truly loved God first, and her husband as herself. She had suffered much for the faith through her husband's imprisonment, but she still had him in her heart to die and live with him. There is nothing so terrible, nothing so revolutionary as the Cross. But it is God's place of victory for ourselves and for our relatives--" dying, and, behold we live." [99-100]

XIV. Chapter 14 - The Cross and the Will of God (101)

A. Stages of suffering and acceptance of it as coming from God's hand (102-03)

B. God's will supreme over all (page 105):

"Let us then sing with Faber:

He always wins who sides with God,
To him no chance is lost;
God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost.

Ill, that He blesses, is our good,
And unblest good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet will."

C. Consecration to God (surrender) always comes through tribulation

XV. Chapter 15 - The Cross and the Will of God, *Continued* (109)

A. Submission and suffering are contrary to the flesh

We love ourselves more than anything else in the world is himself. "The thing man wants is to have his own way and to enjoy himself."

B. Sin drives us to turn away from God's will to do our own

C. The example of Christ

D. The surrender of self to the power and sufficiency of Christ

XVI. Chapter 16 - The Cross and Discipline (117)

A. Discipline and the Cross

1. Example of Mathilde Wrede (baroness / daughter of a provincial governor in Finland)

In her teens she was taken by the Cross and became Christ's captive. She literally spent herself for the prisoners of Finland. In her own home "she lived on the same fare as the prisoner in prison, and they knew it. Such were the contrasts in this life-related by birth to the highest breeding and by choice to the greatest need." Dr. Ernest Gordon says, regarding the place of affection she held in the hearts of Finnish prisoners, that "idolized" would be a lean word. "One convict invited her to his home and slept on the floor before her door like a dog so that she should not be disturbed in any way." Dr. Gordon further says regarding her tireless ministry and self-disciplined life:

When, after a night of insomnia, she felt a certain reluctance to take up her daily task, she would say, to herself encouragingly, "Today I have again the privilege of being occupied with my Father's business." Then while going down the stairway, she would continue, "O my poor body! How tired you are! We are now going to try again to get a-going. Up to now you have shown yourself obedient and patient when love spurred you to work. I thank you. I know that today you will not leave me in the lurch."

2. Is this an attainable standard?

3. Discipline of life must start with the discipline of worship (prayer)

a. Andrew Murray:

" . . . our efforts are futile, unless we first learn to abide in Christ by a simple faith. . . . The message I need is this: 'See that your relationship to your living Saviour is what it ought to be. Live in His presence, rejoice in His love, rest in Him.'" [118-19]

b. We cannot live in the flesh and pray in the Spirit

4. Discipline cannot be divorced from discipleship

XVII. Chapter 17 - The Cross and Discipline, *Continued* (126)

A. Discipline and Suffering

1. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church

XVIII. Chapter 18 - The Cross and Fruitfulness (134)

A. Discipline and Suffering

1. Stories of suffering believers who demonstrated the power of the gospel to others through their crucifixion with Christ

2. Jolly Christianity vs. Crucified Christianity

3. As it pertains to our churches

4. Herein is the challenge:

XIX. Chapter 19 - The Cross Day by Day (141)

A. The death position must be learned and practiced daily

This is only the beginning. What follows is a lifelong process.

B. Thoughts of Bishop Moule (142-43)

This matter of the Cross once-for-all and the "cross daily" is what Bishop Moule calls an "inexhaustible paradox; on one side, a true and total self-denial, on the other, a daily need of self-crucifixion." We are followers of the Crucified. We must surrender to Him once-for-all.

There is also what has been called the "spread-out-surrender, a surrender which covers our whole sphere of action and lasts all our days." The Cross-life is not an attainment, but a lifelong attitude. It is not a goal, but a road. There is no ready-made holiness that we can put on like a suit of clothes. God does not show us everything at once. Those who have entered into the life of Christian victory will all their lives be making deeper discoveries of the depths of self. The scriptural attitude, then, must ever be: "Not as though I had already attained."

In remarking upon the "cross daily" Bishop Moule insists that it is "without intermission, without holiday; now, today, this hour; and then, tomorrow! And the daily 'cross'; a something which is to be the instrument of disgrace and execution. . . . And what will that something be? just whatever gives occasion of ever deeper test to our self-surrender . . . just what-ever exposes to shame and death the old aims, and purposes, and plans, the old spirit of self and its life."

New occasions, fresh tests, difficult circumstances-all bring us up against the question of the will of God, or the will of self. If we are hungry to go on with the Lord; if we have an appetite whetted for reality at any cost, then we will set our faces like a flint Cross-ward. Each of us will find "his cross" in his daily pathway-waiting at his feet. Providential circumstances bring us up against choices which cross self. These will become the instruments of death to our own wills.

The Bishop of Durham sums up the daily cross as: "Some small trifle of daily routine; a crossing of personal preference in very little things; accumulation of duties, unexpected interruption, unwelcome distraction. Yesterday these things merely fretted you and, internally at least, 'upset' you. Today, on the contrary, you take them up, and stretch your hands out upon them, and let them be the occasion of new disgrace and deeper death for that old self-spirit. You take them up in loving, worshiping acceptance. You carry them to their Calvary in thankful submission. And tomorrow you will do the same."

C. What it means to "die daily"

XX. Chapter 20 – The Cross And Attainment (147)

A. The death position must be learned and practiced daily

1. Learning to Die

B. Conformity to Christ's death / Union with Christ vs. Self

XXI. Chapter 21 – The Cross And Attainment, *Continued* (153)

- A. Contentment as Christian victory
- B. Letter from a student (given as an example)
- C. Humorous story of what it means / doesn't mean to be "dead but alive"

XXII. Chapter 22 – The Cross And Satan (158)

- A. The reality of spiritual warfare and the believer's consecration to Christ
- B. God's sovereignty and Satan's rebellion

XXIII. Chapter 23 – The Cross And Kingship (167)

- A. The first Adam was created to have dominion but forfeited his regal power through sin
 - 1. Adam and his posterity dethroned God and enthroned self
- B. The new Adam came as Head of a new race
 - 1. Believers die with Christ - dethroning self to the glory of a new King

XXIV. Chapter 24 – The Cross And the Crown (172)

- A. The "crown of righteousness" that awaits all who have "loved His appearing"
- B. Following the path of Christ - from crucifixion to exaltation

XXV. Chapter 25 – The Cross And Methods (182)

Our gospel has ceased to grip men's souls because we use the language of compromise. [183]