

**Articles and Sermons :: DOUBLECROSS by Dan Stone****DOUBLECROSS by Dan Stone, on: 2016/4/15 7:34**

DOUBLECROSS

Dan Stone

PREFACE

With this book, my desire is for the Spirit of God in me to speak to the Spirit of God in you. I want you to read that phrase as a single unit, for that is what it is. To be indwelt by the Spirit of God is not just a concept. Concepts are very important but concepts do not reveal spiritual truth, just information about spiritual truth. We process information through our brains, via our common sense all that we hear and if it sounds reasonable, we accept it. That is why faith is so hard to come by.

In our human existence "seeing is believing" and in our faith existence "blessed is he who believes and has never seen". Difficult to explain. However, we do not need to be able to explain indwelling in order to believe it has occurred. The Holy Spirit has been our confirmation.

Once we believe something we work on our discovery until we whittle it down to some sort of explainable concept in order that we may share truth with someone else. But "faith comes by hearing". Therefore, I am asking you to suspend the process by which we usually come to accept something as true. Suspend the "thinking" and just allow God's Spirit to speak to your spirit. He can do that! You listen and "hear". You will do this by faith.

I wanted to write this book for a very specific reason. In travelling back and forth across the country sharing my understanding of the Christian life I have found that most Christians have experienced only a portion of what Christ came to earth to give them. I must admit to being in the same position for the first 24 years of my own Christian life so I was not surprised.

I often discuss the importance of 2 Corinthians 4:18. It reads, "while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (NKJ). This means that the spiritual realm is known only as God reveals it and the spiritual realm is the eternal one. The seen side, the earthly realm, though tangible, is incomplete and partial. It will pass away. The spiritual realm is everlasting.

We have an inkling of what all this means, but we still have a problem. Let me state it personally. "Though Christ has come into my life, I seem unchanged. The evil I did yesterday, I'm still doing today. How can God accept that? Am I still lost? I feel the same. I still sin."

Try as we might, we cannot totally answer our problem with sinning in this earthly existence. The answer is spiritual and requires a revelation from God. He will communicate with our spirit which is inner-life and eternal; alive and living. He will not communicate with our brains. (Romans 8:16.) The brain belongs to the body which is outer-life and temporal; alive yet dying. Naturally He is going to communicate with the part of us that is eternal.

This book will examine the Cross of Christ from the realm of the 'seen' and the realm of the 'unseen'. In not understanding the 'unseen' side of the Cross we remain trapped with Paul in "for what I will do, that I do not practice; but the will I hate, that I do." (Romans 7:15 NKJ.) No wonder the Christian life is so difficult.

First we will review the aspect that applies to Christ's death for us from both the 'seen' side and the 'unseen' side. Second we will examine what might well be classified as one of Paul's "mysteries."

Lord, open my eyes that I may see Glimpses of truth thou hast for me." Amen

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The Seen Side of the Cross:

He died for Us.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust," 1 Peter 3:18a

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There are two truths, of the Cross, therefore, I say two sides. I want us to examine both sides. This dual truth solves the confusion of the presence of sin in the believers' lives, when understood by faith. Most believers understand one side of the Cross; He died for us. However, some readers will not have yet experienced the transforming power of Christ from the other side of the Cross. A good-evil syndrome, resulting in an attempt to reproduce life in ethics, psychology, sociology, economics, education, and/or religion.

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We will lean heavily on the Apostle Paul's teaching in this examination for we know Paul had a great love for his own people. (Romans 9-11) Because of this great love, Paul seeks to explain the Cross by using as many Old Testament references as possible. He is seeking to show his people that Jesus of Nazareth is the long awaited Anointed One spoken of and anticipated in the Old Testament.

Therefore, let us begin in the country of Egypt as God prepared to liberate the twelve tribes of Israel from the tyranny of a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph.

The scene was described in Exodus 12:1-13. The setting was the coming tenth plague for Egypt, the death of the eldest son of every household in the land. However, a provision was made for the Israelites. God, in speaking to Moses and Aaron, inserted an escape clause for them. (Ex.12:7,13.)

God was inaugurating a special event in the lives of His people. The escape clause was very specific. They must kill the innocent lamb and sprinkle its blood on the doorposts and lintels of their homes. When the death angel passed through the land he would bypass the homes where he saw the blood. Just hearing the plan would not be enough. They must hear and respond in obedience!

Their personal act of obedience would spare them this death experience. All the Israelites could do was either hear and believe, or hear and not believe. Let us keep that in mind as we look at the fact of His death for us.

The lamb of the Old Testament was sacrificial. The New Testament Lamb of God, Jesus, is sacrificial. Both teach the same truth. Escape and deliverance. The ideas are one and the same. In the Old Testament the idea is defined in escape and deliverance. In the New Testament it is defined as forgiveness and new life.

Let us suspend time right there. Even after this act of obedience and the result of life spared, they were still in captivity to Pharaoh and under his threat. They were going to depart Egypt, but Pharaoh did not give up easily. (Ex. 14:18-31.) He pursued them all the way to the Red Sea. Even though God had kept His promise and they had been obedient, they were still in Egypt; still in captivity.

This is crucial to understand. God heard their cry for deliverance, "We want out!" God delivered. But they were still in a foreign land and under foreign rule. True, they were on their way to Canaan, but they were not out of Egypt. This is the same predicament in which Christians find themselves with just this side of the teaching on the Cross. We are still in bondage. And if we are obedient to the narrative described in the New Testament our lives are spared and we go to heaven. We are forgiven. Nothing else. The death "for us" bequeaths forgiveness only. When we believe, we have the assurance that we are a forgiven person. Stated in the terms we are used to hearing, "Our sins are forgiven."

Paul took this incident, which the Jews knew very well, and moved it into the New Testament, using it to explain the death of Christ. (See diagram 1) Because the Israelites were obedient to God's instructions, they preserved the lives of their first born sons. Obedience = preservation.

Let me devise an illustration for you to see. You are a spectator of the crucifixion of three men outside the city of Jerusalem. Perhaps you are a pilgrim who has come to Jerusalem to observe Passover. You hear the crowd's comments, "Two are robbers and the one in the middle is a political and religious radical." But somewhere in your spirit you have the sensation of hearing a voice, a knowing. This inner, "unseen" voice says, "He is no political and religious radical. He is God's anointed and He is dying for you, for your sins. He will forgive you your sins if you will accept His offer. But you must obey and believe what you are hearing within you."

You are startled, scared, but convinced. For you are in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, when God spared the Israelite's first-born in every household that believed through obedience. You are caught by the gaze of this Jesus in your spiritual being. You know it is true. You obey the voice within. You are obedient. Your sins are forgiven!

And what are sins? Sins are the fruit of a deeper "unseen" problem. Christ dying for you does not speak to the "unseen" problem of sin. We see our sins and think their point of origin is "us". But sins point of origin is Sin, and the sin problem is still with us. A forgiven past is all we have, with a hope for a forgiven future hanging in the balance. Every day we are one day further from the experience of being forgiven and one day deeper into the hope that it will be enough. We need more blessed assurance. We are told that He will supply all our needs and we need to know it's true. We have such trouble living the Christian life.

Evangelicals are falsely taught (and therefore, falsely teach) that Christ's death for us and our being forgiven will somehow apply to the problem of how to live the Christian life. But remember, forgiveness applies only to the past. When we try to apply Christ's dying for us to the living of the Christian life, it does not work. All that the Holy Spirit can teach us from this side of the Cross is our past sins are forgiven. In churches where this one truth is the sole revelation sermons sound like this. "Surely you've done something wrong this week. Surely you've committed sin. Even if you can't remember it, that's a sin of omission. You must admit it and God can forgive it." Consequently you are constantly being taken back to the Cross event and seeking to extract from it the way to live victoriously. But all you can get from this effort is the awareness you are still sinning.

Why do the people of our churches always end most prayers with a plea for the forgiveness of their sins, even the ones they don't remember? I wonder if the Holy Spirit revealed to them that they were sinning? Let's try an experiment. Let's not ask for forgiveness anymore, unless the Holy Spirit convicts us. I know some of our backgrounds will call that heresy, but the Holy Spirit is able to reveal to us when we blow it and in our spirit we will agree with Him, thank Him, and get on with the business of living. If the Holy Spirit hasn't prompted us, then we have not been prompted. (John 16:8:15)

Some of you are thinking, "Well, surely I've done something wrong." I say if you have then the Holy Spirit will bring it to your attention. And your Advocate has already interceded on your behalf. (1 John 2:1) It is forgiven. What you have done wrong has already been dealt with. Agree with Him that you are forgiven.

However, because many believers haven't experienced consummate ongoing forgiveness (living in a state of forgiveness), all they are hearing is "surely you've done something wrong." We think it humble to talk about being sinners. Oswald Chambers says this false humility of calling ourselves sinners, this pious humbleness, is in order to sound good to the ears of men yet is near blasphemy to the ears of God. It is disagreement with God. Do you see the fallacy of continually calling yourself a sinner?

You say, It is arrogant to the ears of men to say I'm righteous. I can't say I'm righteous. I can't say it." We had better decide with whom we are going to agree. Because if we do not agree with God we are never going to get out of the sin trap.

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The False Self

What then are we left with when all we have experienced is Christ's death for us? Simply, we are left with a forgiven past and a false self. The false self is a way of seeing ourselves that clearly does not agree with the way God sees us. (See diagram 2.) The false self evolves into a desperate, everyday-existence for the believer.

The false self begins before you are born. Everyday we are learning from new evidence that if a mother drinks, smokes or takes drugs her fetus is affected. Hear this. As God was conceiving you, Satan was conceiving the false you. (We all know Satan tries desperately to counterfeit all the creative workings of God. Therefore, Satan is busy conceiving the false self born in you.) Life, then, becomes a series of events that convince us who we are. We learn to weave our way through life in order to survive until we can die safely in the arms of our Lord.

Life is like working one's way through a maze, like a laboratory rat. If our world is chaotic, we learn to be quiet or submissive or sit in a corner. If playmates are wishy-washy, we learn to dominate them; play them against each other. If nobody likes us we learn to adjust to that. If we are popular we learn to adjust to that. When we fall in love we adjust to that. We get a job and on and on it goes, yet there is no reality in it. Still we plod on in this false existence because it seems so real. But haven't you ever said to yourself, "There has to be more to life than this."? This nagging unrest comes from God's heavenly call to our spirit.

Thomas Merton is excellent on this point. Let me quote from *The New Man*. "Spirit in Bondage" p. 101-128. It is a spiritual disaster for a man to rest content with his exterior identity, with his passport picture of himself... he assumes he is a person because there appear to be other persons who recognize him when he walks down the street... There is no other way for us to find out who we are than by finding in ourselves the divine image."

The false self is a roller coaster, up and down. In evangelical circles, we learn how to ride the roller coaster as best we can. But this life belongs to the world that will pass away. Norman Grubb said, "It isn't long before your 'new life' eerily resembles your old life."

Romans 7 describes false self. The good I want to do (and I really want to do it) but I can't. And what I don't want to do (oh, I'm so stuck in this pattern) I can't help but do it. Oh wretched person that I am. And we sell that as the good news? It's tragic. Where's the joy? Where's the peace?

There is a key word here. Self. You can't be good enough by yourself. You can't stop yourself. You can't change yourself. You can't save yourself. Self, self, self. You are preoccupied with self. It is no wonder the How-To-Do-It books have been so popular. Many appeal to self-improvement. The Christian life (the way it has been taught) is self. Psychology is self. In the "seen" realm that is psyche, Psychology can help you, but it belongs to the "seen" realm. It will keep you in a rut that will not reveal spirit, because it deals with your psyche (feelings and thoughts). What is Psychology's leading question, "How did that make you feel?"

So I'm left with self, trying to be consistent. We blow it, then we try harder to live for the Lord. Let's take a typical 30 day period. You have made a new commitment to live for the upward call. For 29 days you have followed your prescription for new life perfectly but on the 30th day you mess up. What happens to your past-perfect 29 days? In your mind they are erased. Swallowed up by the mistake riddled 30th day.

Isn't it amazing what the 30th day can do? We have all said, "1 read the Bible, 1 prayed, 1 witnessed..." Whatever it was, you did it for 29 days and the 30th day you got too busy, or you forgot and with that realization comes misery and you are ruined. Now you're right back to where you started. "Oh wretched man." (Romans 7:24)

There is no good news in this. This is the trap of the false self. Professionals can help you with the false self, but only God can help you realize your true self. We're talking about growing in Christ and knowing Christ as our life. He is the Spiritual Psychiatrist. He is the Spiritual Psychologist. He is the Spiritual Physician. He is the one who can expose this false self and relieve us of the pressure of playing games; relieve us of the pressure of thinking we have something real when all we've had is an unreal concept of who we are. He keeps exposing our false self and we work double-time trying to patch it up. We are covered with band aids from psychology and SELF-help.

What is the answer to the false self? is there a final total solution to the vexing problem of false self? Yes!

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The Unseen Side of the Cross:

We Died with Him. ...

He judged us, that is one died for all, then all died."

2 Cor. 5:14b

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The Cross: We died with Him.

Now we transfer ourselves totally to the "unseen" realm, Paul's realm of mystery, where events are not as we know them and we encounter new ideas. (Romans 6:1-10 and 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.) The first passage says we are immersed in to Christ's death. And that he who has died is freed from sin. The latter passage says that when one died, all died. Impossible? Incredible? (2 Cor. 4:18.) Time is not a factor and people are not seen chronologically. Time is suspended. Paul is saying that we died with Christ. Right here is where our brains usually short-circuit. But you must take this by faith just as you did your forgiveness.

I know if you've not experienced this it seems unreal. But it is real. It seems untrue, but it is true because the unseen is eternal. (2 Cor. 4:18)

Remember the earlier illustration of our being observers at the crucifixion and of the Spirit's role as interpreter of the true meaning of the event? Now the illustration must be changed.

It's as if you left the chair where you are reading and got up and disappeared into the body of Christ on the Cross. You are no longer standing before the Cross, you are in the body of Christ on that Cross. You are involved and you're on the Cross. From the Cross you look out and there is no crowd anywhere. They are all in Christ on the Cross with you.

So as He died how many died? All. When he was buried how many were buried? All. When He was raised how many were raised? All. When He ascended how many ascended? All. (Eph. 2:5-6. NKJ)

We were obedient spectators in our first illustration. In the second, we are no longer spectators, we are participants. We move from standing before the Cross, where He died for us, to being on the Cross, where we died with Him. So what happened to Jesus also happened to us. When one died, all died. Impossible? Incredible? Only if you let your brain be the place where you make agreement. You must let your spirit be the place of agreement.

Now, does all mean all but you? No....even you. This point demands a spirit of revelation in order that may agree with the Spirit. You died with Christ. Way back then a death that historically occurred, included you. The unseen realm defies time. It defies past, present, and future. There seems to be no way all of humanity could be at one death at one time, yet in the eternal, spiritual realm, we were.

Thomas Merton in *Ascent to Truth* speaks of... "truths which are so profound and which so far exceed our intelligence that they are called in the highest sense - mysteries." Mysteries? Yes. Some things are so incredible to the human brain that you assign them the title of mystery. The brain won't compute a biblical mystery. It defies all things known. When time is involved the brain can only process it chronologically, therefore the brain must reject any experience that doesn't happen along the line of time.

That is precisely why God's Spirit must speak this truth to your spirit. Your spirit can know, but you need a vital connection with The Spirit. You have the spiritual capacity to know, but you have to be in union with The Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:12,16.) Then you can recite what The Spirit has made known to you. You then experience what The Spirit has known before the beginning of time. One who has not yet seen will call us radicals, crazies, or even worse, heretics. To them it isn't logical to the orderly brain; it is therefore, unbelievable.

When the Children of Israel put blood on the door, even though their flesh was still in Egypt, in God's reality, they were in Canaan. Even as you read this, as you sit in your chair, your spirit sits in heavenly places. For when Christ died, you died. And where He lives, you live. Yes, you live in the realm of spirituality.

Hear now what Jesus also dealt with on the Cross. All these years you thought it was only your sins. But in truth it was your Sin, the root of the problem. Sin is the root, sins are the fruit! To God there is no fruit if no root exists. (Romans 6:1-4 and Romans 7:1-4.) We were immersed into His death with Him, we were buried with Him, we were raised with Him and according to Ephesians we are seated with Him in the heavenlies. What a powerful statement!

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Summary

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Let us make a quick summary. As far as God is concerned, one man represents the entire human race. He was us. We were with (in) Him so that whatever He did, we did! Again, how many died? ALL DIED. (2 Corinthians 5:14.) How many were buried? ALL. How many were raised? ALL. How many are seated with Him in the heavenlies? ALL. Does all include you? YES!

From that moment your false self was dealt with (if you will believe it). Whatever you think you were to God (the false self), you are no longer that. In Romans you are called the "old man." Sin was your nature; it is your nature no longer.

Romans 6:6,7 put the cap on the sin problem. Read it carefully. Paul says, "The old man (you before you met Jesus) was crucified with Jesus that the body of sin might be done away with." Maybe not in your sight but in His, and He has the vote that counts. He is the judge. Can you imagine a criminal whose been excused by the judge who then stands up and recounts his crimes?

"Judge you can't excuse me from all I've done."

"But son, you are free, you are blameless."

"Not me. I'm a criminal."

That's what we do in the name of false piety. He died that we shouldn't be slaves of sin anymore. That sin slave master does not own us anymore. We have been purchased and freed.

There is a difference between committing a sin and being a sinner. A Christian may commit a sin, but he is not a sinner. Sin is a nature. A sinner is a lost being who occasionally does a righteous act. He can do a righteous looking act, but to God he isn't righteous. And a Christian can commit a sin, but he's not a sinner. "He who is dead has been freed from sin" (Romans 6:6-7, NKJ.) You've been freed from a nature of sin.

The main point is in verse 7. Now look at verses 6:10-11 and let's couple it with 2 Corinthians 5:17 which says something else incredible that gets chipped away by theologians. "Behold, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation."

A new creation is a new creature! A new creature is one who never existed before. It's not you made over. It's not your old motives amended, perfected. It's not a second chance. It's a new creature operating from a new disposition. It's reason-for-being is brand new. The new nature you possess is the nature of Christ. That's the new part; the spiritual nature. David Needham said something like this in Birthright, 'A brand new person came into being who never before existed.' Paul says this in Galatians 2:20, 'I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live (as a person of sin), but Christ lives in me (as a person of righteousness).'

When you weren't a Christian you were an old creature, you had an old nature, a spirit of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2.) When you were born again you became a new creation in Christ Jesus. That's how God sees you. He sees you white as snow. He doesn't see your sin. He can't tolerate that. He can't put band-aids on your soul. You are not meant to remain a soul dominated person. He can't fix you. But here's what He can do. He can take you to the Cross, kill you, and raise you up again. It's the same vessel full of new life. He calls it a new creation. Praise the Lord!

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, Paul says another incredible statement. Let me quote it, 'We (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin (singular), Sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him Jesus).'

Norman Grubb called this Paul's deepest statement on the Passion of Christ. "God made Jesus to be sin, so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus." This verse under-girds the reason Paul spoke so harshly about confessing that we (righteous ones of God) are still sinners. Do you think it humble to stand in Church and say, "I'm a sinner." ? Oh the devil is so wily. Your spirit has been wed to His Spirit. You have a marriage. Get over the negative. You are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. You are in union with the One who was never created.

This means we are righteous in God's sight. We lack nothing. Colossians 2:9,10, "For in Him (Jesus) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (and He lives in you) and you are complete in Him."

Look yourself in your mirror and say, "I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus!" That is the true confession. You are in union with the uncreated God of creation. He cannot die (as He is originating, creating Spirit); therefore you cannot die (for you are now possessed by the divine Spirit). We have already admitted that a Christian can commit a sin, but the Christian is not a sinner. A sinner can do a righteous act. It happens all the time. But is that person righteous because of the act? No. His righteousness or unrighteousness is based on his relationship with God through Christ. That is why a Christian's conscience is bothered when he acts out of accordance with his true spirit. The Spirit says, "You did wrong, that was not me." Your spirit agrees with His Spirit (1 John 1: 9.) and you get on with the business of living.

What stopped my Christian life of defeat was being told that I died in Him, that I was a brand new creation whose inner being had been invaded and replaced by the Godhead. Sin was out. Christ was in. Just keep confessing it.

'I am righteous.'

'I am peace.'

'I am love.'

"My whole life has been put together." But the Holy Spirit must show you that you died. If He doesn't show you, you will forever thrash around trying to perfect the false self, trying to be your own saviour. But if you see life from both sides of the Cross; He died for you and you died with Him, you are free indeed.

My final pleas are these. See yourself the way God sees you. Possess, by faith, this truth of God. It is yours. It is the free gift of grace if you will believe it. And if you will, you will see that what you take will take you. What you possess will possess you.

I want to include a dear friend's letter who heard this message delivered at a conference. She told me she could never see herself on the Cross with Christ. She was always at the foot of the Cross begging. I suppose I was led to give her the statements listed above and at last, she was caught. She left me saying she must think about it. I could see in her face and eyes that some Godly action was taking place. I saw her the next morning and she was radiant. Read her letter and rejoice with her. Her confession can also be yours. God bless!

Dear Dan,

To possess my possession is the most significant step I've taken in my Christian walk, and I have the retreat and you to thank for pointing that out. It's amazing to me that MY stumbling block was "not seeing myself on that Cross." No wonder my Cross was so heavy! I believe "church" training left me at the foot of the Cross and taught me to take up my cross and follow Jesus! To them I say now - No, No, No! That Cross will be too heavy. Jesus has already borne our Cross! We don't follow Him; He and I go as One! Well, Dan I'm here to tell you, that spells RELIEF, And, now I know that I do not have to understand how, but I just have to take what has been given! I can, with a very humble heart, say thank you, Jesus, and I can say that you for the humans that helped me along the way.

I am now in Christ and He is in me."