

## **THE RESULTS OF THE CROSS**

### **Revelation 5**

**By Andy Manning**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The cross has become the most recognized symbol in the world. It is found on national flags. It is used to decorate buildings. It is found on jewelry and clothing.
2. Before Jesus, the cross was not a cherished symbol. It was a symbol of crucifixion, the worst form of capital punishment in the world at the time. A person back then wearing a cross-necklace would be like a person today wearing a necklace with an electric chair charm, or a noose charm.
3. But when Jesus died on the cross He changed the world. He changed the course of history. And since that day, over time, the cross has become the most recognized, and the most cherished symbol on earth. Today it is a symbol of hope, love, life, forgiveness.
4. What is the significance of the cross? What did Jesus accomplish when He died on the cross? The cross is a symbol of the death of Christ. But what is so special about the death of Christ? What did Christ accomplish on the cross? Why did He die?
5. Today we are looking at the fifth chapter of Revelation. In Revelation 2-3, Jesus gives John some very personal letters to send to the seven churches in Asia. Then in Revelation 4 John has a vision of the throne-room of heaven. Here in chapter five that vision in heaven will continue.
6. Tucked in this chapter we will see four results of the cross.

#### **II. TEXT: REVELATION 5:1-14**

*1 Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides, sealed with seven seals. 2 I also saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or even to look in it. 4 I wept and wept because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or even to look in it. 5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Look, the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Root of*

*David, has conquered so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”*

- i. This is part of the same vision in chapter four. God is on the throne, holding a scroll that is sealed with seven seals. An angel asks who is worthy to open the scroll. No one in the universe was worthy. So John weeps. Then one of the twenty-four elders said, “Don’t cry, the Lion of Judah, the Root of Jesse is able to open the scroll.”
- ii. He uses two terms to describe Jesus:
  1. Jesus is the Lion of Judah. Judah was one of Jacob’s sons, and he was called a young lion (Gen 49:8-10). Jesus was a descendant of Judah (Mt 1:3). Calling Him a lion speaks of His fierceness and strength.
  2. Jesus is the Root of Jesse. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be a shoot or a branch growing out of the root of Jesse, David’s father. Jesus was a descendant of Jesse and David. This is an affirmation that Jesus is the promised Messiah.

*6 Then I saw one like a slaughtered lamb standing in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth. 7 He went and took the scroll out of the right hand of the one seated on the throne.*

- iii. John is weeping because no one can open the scroll. An elder tells him not to weep because the Lion of Judah, the Root of Jesse can open the scroll.
- iv. Who is the Lion of Judah and the Root of Jesse?
- v. It is one like a slaughtered lamb standing in the middle of everything. For the rest of the chapter Jesus is called the lamb.
- vi. Why this image to describe Jesus?
  1. He is depicted as one like a slaughtered lamb because He was crucified for our sins.
  2. He is standing because He is resurrected.
  3. He is a lamb because He was the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29). Jesus is our Passover

Lamb (1 Cor 5:7). On the night before God rescued the Jews from Egypt, He instructed each household to sacrifice an unblemished lamb and wipe the blood on the door frame. Then God sent the angel of death through the land, and if he didn't see the blood, then he would kill the firstborn son in the house. If the house was covered by the blood, then he would pass over that house. Jesus is our Passover lamb because He was sacrificed for our sins; if we accept Him, then God will forgive us and give us eternal life. If we reject Him, we will be punished for our sins.

- vii. Jesus alone is worthy to take the scroll and open its seven seals.
- viii. What is the significance of this scroll?
  1. First, remember that the prophecies of Revelation “must soon take place,” because “the time is near” (Rev 1:1-3). The prophecies concern events that would be fulfilled in the first century.
  2. Second, remember that the theme of Revelation is about the judgment on those who pierced him (Rev 1:7) – the Jews who rejected and crucified Christ.
  3. Third, the book of Revelation is filled with OT imagery. Revelation borrows heavily from the Old Testament, more than any other New Testament book.
  4. Fourth, in the OT, Israel is depicted as God's wife (Is 54:5; Jer 31:31-32). When she is unfaithful to God, this is called adultery/harlotry (Jer 3:9; Jer 5:7; Eze 23:37). In the Bible a divorce was made official with a certificate (Dt 24:1, 3; Is 50:1; Mt 5:31; Mt 19:7; Mk 10:4). And the punishment for adultery was death by stoning (Lev 20:10; Dt 22:21).
  5. Fifth, the book of the Revelation talks about two women: the harlot (Rev 17) and the bride (Rev 19:7). The harlot is Israel, God's unfaithful wife who has rejected and crucified the Messiah. The Bride is the church of Jesus Christ.
  6. Sixth, the book of Revelation is not about the end times. It is about the end of God's marriage to Israel. It is about God

divorcing and punishing Israel, and then God taking a new wife for Himself – the church.

7. Seventh, in Revelation 4 and 5, God is on His throne, the place of judgment. The scroll represents a divorce certificate. The seven seals represent the seven-fold judgment that promised against Israel if she ever broke God's covenant (Lev 26:18, 21, 24, 28). God said He would discipline them seven times, multiply their plagues seven times, and strike them seven times.
8. Eighth, in Revelation 6, Christ is going to begin opening up the seven seals of the scroll, and it is filled with terrible judgments against the nation of Israel that will be carried in the first century in the Jewish wars as the Romans utterly destroy the nation of Israel. This will continue all the way until chapter 19, when the new bride is introduced, and God takes a new wife for Himself.
- ix. The rest of this chapter is about the following: When Christ takes the scroll from the Father's hand, everyone in the universe falls down and worships Jesus.
  1. First, the four-living creatures and the twenty-four elders.
  2. Then countless angels join in to worship.
  3. Then every creature in the universe joins in to worship.

*8 When he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and golden bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song:*

*You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
because you were slaughtered,  
and you purchased people  
for God by your blood  
from every tribe and language  
and people and nation.  
10 You made them a kingdom  
and priests to our God,*

*and they will reign on the earth.*

- x. We're going to come back on focus on this section, because this is where we see the four results of the cross.

*11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels around the throne, and also of the living creatures and of the elders. Their number was countless thousands, plus thousands of thousands. 12 They said with a loud voice,*

*Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered  
to receive power and riches  
and wisdom and strength  
and honor and glory and blessing!*

*13 I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them say,*

*Blessing and honor and glory and power  
be to the one seated on the throne,  
and to the Lamb, forever and ever!*

*14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.*

### **III. REVELATION 5:9-10**

1. "And they sang a new song: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slaughtered, and you purchased people for God by your blood from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on the earth."

### **IV. FOUR RESULTS OF THE CROSS**

#### **1. Christ's death was propitiatory.**

- i. (9) "you were slaughtered"
- ii. Why was Christ crucified?
- iii. We must understand two realities:
  1. The character of God.
    - a. God is just, and He will never negotiate His justice. A simple definition of God's justice is His eternal, immutable commitment always to do what is right (RC Sproul).

- b. As the just judge of the universe, God cannot excuse sin. He must pass judgment on it. He must either punish sinners, or provide a way to atone for their sin.
  - 2. The character of man.
    - a. All of us have sinned, and therefore all of us must be punished (Rm 3:23; 6:23).
    - b. **RC Sproul** “In the smallest sin we defy God’s right to rule and to reign over His creation. Instead, we seek to usurp for ourselves the authority and the power that belong properly to God. Even the slightest sin does violence to His holiness, to His glory, and to His righteousness. Every sin, no matter how seemingly insignificant, is truly an act of treason against the cosmic King.”
- iv. Why was Christ crucified? Either we had to be punished for our sin, or someone else had to be punished for us.
- v. This is what Jesus did on the cross. He died in our place for our sins.
- vi. **Isaiah 53:6** “We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all.”
- vii. When Christ died for us, He rescued us from the wrath of God – God’s just punishment against sin (1 Thess 1:10). The word for this is “propitiation.”
- viii. **1 John 2:2 (HCSB)** “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world.”
- ix. Propitiation refers to the satisfaction, or the appeasement of God’s wrath. God’s anger is turned away. When He died for our sins, all of God’s wrath against us was turned against Christ instead of us, and it was completely satisfied. So now we can be forgiven and be reconciled to God.

## 2. Christ’s death was redemptive.

- i. (9) “you purchased people for God by your blood”
- ii. Christ purchased us for God. What does this mean?
- iii. The Bible repeatedly refers to salvation as redemption. To redeem is to purchase someone’s freedom. In the Roman empire

- there were many slaves. To set them free was to redeem them. To redeem them you had to pay a price, called the ransom.
- iv. The Bible says that Jesus redeemed us.
1. What are we redeemed from? 4 Things.
    - a. The penalty of sin (aka justification; see also Gal 3:13).
      - i. **Colossians 1:14** “In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
    - b. The position of sin (aka adoption).
      - i. **Galatians 4:5** “to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”
    - c. The practice of sin (aka regeneration and sanctification; see also 1 Pt 1:18-19).
      - i. **Titus 2:14** “He gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people for his own possession, eager to do good works.”
    - d. The presence of sin (aka glorification).
      - i. **Romans 8:23** “Not only that, but we ourselves who have the Spirit as the firstfruits—we also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.”
  2. What was the ransom price?
    - a. The blood of Christ (see also Mk 10:45). The “blood” of Christ is often used as a metaphor for His death.
    - b. **Ephesians 1:7** “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”
  3. To whom was the ransom paid?
    - a. God the Father.
    - b. A false view of the atonement is that Christ’s death was a ransom paid to Satan to release us from bondage to Satan’s kingdom. The Bible doesn’t say that we or God owe anything to Satan.
    - c. The Bible describes sin as a debt to God (Mt 6:12 “and forgive us our debts”).

- d. God is our creator. He is the author of life. As the author of life, He has authority over all He has created. He has the right to impose obligations. Being under someone's authority means they have the right to impose obligations, and you are responsible to carry them out. We are under God's authority because He created us, so He has the right to impose obligations on us, and we "owe" Him our obedience. When we fail to obey God, we incur a debt.
  - e. That's where Christ comes in. Christ died as our ransom. He paid for our redemption, our forgiveness, with His blood. And the ransom price was paid not to Satan, but to the Father.
4. What was the purpose of redemption?
- a. Christ did not set us free to live for ourselves, but to live for God.
    - i. **Revelation 5:9** "you purchased people for God"
    - ii. See also (Titus 2:14; 2 Cor 5:15).

### 3. Christ's death was universal.

- i. (9) "you purchased people for God by your blood from every tribe and language and people and nation."
- ii. Before Christ you had to become a Jew to be saved. No longer.
- iii. Christ died to save to all people, no matter your race.
- iv. Christian salvation is exclusive in that it is only for those who put their faith in Jesus. It is inclusive it is available to everyone and anyone who is willing to accept Jesus.
- v. **Romans 10:11-12** "For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame, since there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him."

### 4. Christ's death was beneficial.

- i. (10) "You made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on earth."
- ii. Three benefits of the cross:
  - 1. We have a new citizenship.

- a. Through the death of Christ we enter the kingdom of God.
  - b. The bible says that there are two spiritual kingdoms, and every person on earth is a citizen of one or the other.
  - c. The kingdom of Satan:
    - i. Unbelievers are citizens of this kingdom.
    - ii. Called the “domain of darkness.” Col 1:13
    - iii. Satan is in charge. They are under his authority; his control. Acts 26:18; 1 Jn 5:18-19; Eph 2:1-3
    - iv. The Bible says unbelievers belong to the devil (1Jn 3:8); Satan is working in them (Eph 2:1-3); they are children of the devil, and carry out the devil’s desires (Jn 8:44).
  - d. The kingdom of God:
    - i. God is in charge.
    - ii. The kingdom of God is not just in heaven. It is on earth. It is wherever you find people who live under His authority and protection.
    - iii. When Jesus came to earth, He inaugurated the Kingdom of God (Lk 17:21).
    - iv. When a person becomes a Christian, your citizenship is transferred. God rescues you from Satan’s kingdom and puts you into the kingdom of God.
    - v. **Colossians 1:13** “He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.”
2. We have access to God in prayer.
- a. (10) “You made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on earth.”
  - b. Every Christian is called a priest in Scripture (1 Pt 2:5). What does it mean that we are priests?
  - c. In ancient Judaism only the priests could approach God. The temple had several courtyards leading up to the temple proper. If you were an ordinary Jewish

man, you could pass through the court of Gentiles, through the court of women, into the court of the Israelites. But you could go no further. You couldn't enter the court of the priests, and you certainly couldn't enter the temple.

- d. The inside of the temple contained two rooms divided by a large curtain. There is the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place. Only a priest can enter the temple. But not even the priests could go beyond the curtain into the Most Holy Place. Only the high priest entered there, and only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to sprinkle blood on the Mercy Seat, which signified the presence of God. But when Jesus died on the cross, the day He died, the Bible says that the temple curtain was torn in two. Why? Because through the death of Christ we all become priests and have immediate access to God in prayer. Through Christ our sins are paid for, we are reconciled to God, and we can draw near.
  - e. **Hebrews 4:19-22** 19 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have boldness to enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus—20 he has inaugurated for us a new and living way through the curtain (that is, through his flesh)—21 and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.
3. We have victory in Christ.
- a. (10) "You made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on earth."
  - b. What does it mean they will reign on earth? It is talking about victory. Triumph. When a team wins the championship, they are the reigning champs. Because of the death of Christ, Christians are the reigning champions on earth.

- c. Through the death of Christ, we live on earth in victory over sin, Satan, and death.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

1. The cross is more than just a symbol to wear around your neck. It is more than a nice decoration. It represents the salvation of our souls. Because of the cross we can be forgiven of our sins and go to heaven when we die.
2. But to benefit from the cross you must accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Have you made that decision? It is as simple as A, B, C.
  - i. A – Admit you are a sinner in need of a Savior. Admit that you deserve to go to hell, and that you cannot save yourself.
  - ii. B – Believe that Jesus died for your sins and rose again. Believe that He deserves your love and obedience.
  - iii. C – Call on Him to save you and to control your life.