

THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS (2)

By Keith Greer

Self-Righteous Men—Offended by Atonement. *“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”* {Romans 5:6-11} The cross presents the vicarious atonement of Christ for the world’s sins; this offends the self-righteous. Some are unwilling to admit their sinful conditions and the shame that accompanies sin. Sadly, they are unwilling to acknowledge their need for a Savior.

God’s word clearly voices the foolishness of concluding that any of us is without sin. *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* {Romans 3:23} *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”* {1 John 1:8} People must swallow their pride and accept their sinful state and the remedy God offers by way of Calvary’s events—it’s our only hope.

Lovers of the World—Offended by Its Purity. *“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.”* {Philippians 3:18} *“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”* {Galatians 6:14}

Satan has always dangled the world’s glitter and pleasures in front of men. It began way back in the Garden of Eden when he tempted Eve with the fruit that could make her wise like God {Genesis 3:1-6}. God’s word clearly teaches us not to love the world. *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”* {1 John 2:15-17} The folks who desire to live worldly and sensual lives are offended by the cross and its pure and perfect sacrifice for sin—Jesus Christ. God requires purity and living above sin. For those who love pleasure, that is often too much of a demand.

Impenitent and Willful—Offended by Its Demands. *“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”* {Romans 6:16-18} Those who are rebellious are offended by the requirement to

obey the gospel that is associated with this sacrifice. It asks for humble submission and obedience to the commands of the One who died for us. Unfortunately, for many to place someone as more deserving than self, live to help others, look for opportunity to lift others up, is not very attractive to the self-centered, selfish, and arrogant person wrapped up with their own importance. For some, the price is too high.

Every hope and promise made by God is seen in Christ's death on the cross. What man could never find the answer for himself. God stepped in and provided the means of eternal redemption for sinful men. Why? Simply because of His love for mankind and to fulfill his greatest need. Accept the Divine love and mercy God has shown by allowing His Son to die and the Son's willingness to die. Submit to His will and be thankful for the cross. Greater love has NEVER been expressed to mankind than what Christ did on the cruel cross of Calvary. Personally speaking, we need to look at the cross as necessary because of MY SINS. ***