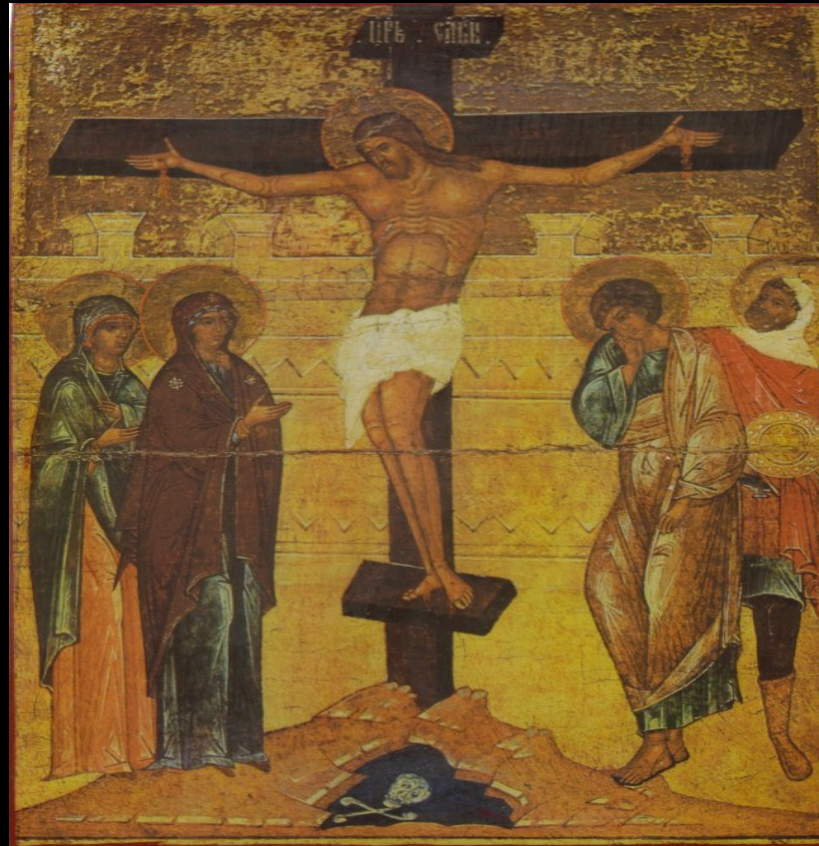


PATH TO THE CROSS



TENNY THOMAS

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

- John 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son (on the cross), that whoever believes in him (and in His death on the cross) shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world (and on the cross) to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

- Christ's death on the cross was not a negative thing.
- No matter what people think of the cross of Christ; good, bad or otherwise, the cross is here to stay.
- To know the cross is to know the Christ, to feel some of what He felt, to behold Him, to live for Him, to live as He lived.

Today I want us to consider these thoughts

- the death on the cross
- the blood on the cross
- the power of the cross

THE DEATH ON THE CROSS

- Phil. 2:5-8 “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God ... being made in human likeness ... he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!”
- Christ became obedient to death

Eastern Orthodox Prayer before receiving Holy Communion

I believe and confess that this is indeed Thine Own pure Body and this is indeed Thine Own precious Blood. I believe thou art the Son of the Living God who came into the world to save sinners of whom I am first.

May the partaking of Thy most pure Mysteries be not unto judgment or unto condemnation but for life everlasting! O, Son of God, as a partaker of Your mystical Supper, today receive me as a communicant. For I will not tell of Your mysteries to Thine enemies. Nor will I betray Thee with a kiss like Judas. But like the thief I will confess You.

Remember me Lord in Your kingdom!

THE BLOOD ON THE CROSS

- Col. 1:18-20 “And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning ...and through him to reconcile to himself all things...by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”
- God made peace through the blood of Christ on the cross.

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

- Eph. 2:13-16 “But now in Christ Jesus.... he himself is our peace,to reconcile to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.”
- The power of the cross is reconciliation.

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- The public veneration of the Cross of Christ originated in the fourth century, according to early accounts, beginning with the miraculous discovery of the cross on September 14, 326, by Saint Helen, mother of Constantine, while she was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.



ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- Christians "exalt" the Cross of Christ as the instrument of our salvation.
- Adoration of the Cross is, thus, adoration of Jesus Christ, the God Man, who suffered and died on this Roman instrument of torture for our redemption from sin and death.

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- The cross represents the One Sacrifice by which Jesus, obedient even unto death, accomplished our salvation.
- The cross is a symbolic summary of the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ -- all in one image.

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- The Cross -- because of what it represents -- is the most potent and universal symbol of the Christian faith.
- We remember Our Lord's words, "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake shall find it." (Mt 10:38,39). Meditating on these words we unite ourselves -- our souls and bodies -- with His obedience and His sacrifice; and we rejoice in this inestimable gift through which we have the hope of salvation and the glory.

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- Cross is that blessed Tree through which the communion of the Creator and the creature was restored after being lost through man's transgression.
- The Fruit which grows on this Tree is the Lord Himself. By this Tree man's nature is healed of all its sins and the effects of our rejection of God's Grace are completely removed, so that we may live forever – not in a corrupted state, but rather as God intends us to live: as vessels of His divinity.

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- In the same way, the Lord of all, when He willed to lead all men back to Paradise and give them the Fruit of Eternal Life, set up the Cross in the midst of the earth and said "Here I will meet you:" To all mankind he showed the precise location of our salvation, saying, *"Here, on the Cross, I will meet you."*

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- If we are to partake of this life, then we must ascend the Holy Tree.
- We must ascend and eat of its fruit.
- If in the forest we find a tree with beautiful fruit, we do not stand idly at the foot of the tree, but we climb the tree to get the fruit, especially if we are suffering from mortal hunger.
- Even so, we must ascend the Cross of the Lord if we are to be united to Him forever. If we are afraid of the suffering of the Cross, this only means that we do not have the taste for its fruit, for the Grace of Christ sweetens all the sufferings of this life.

ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- Therefore, let us never fear to bear the Lord's Cross.
- Let us ascend with joy, striving for all the virtues, accepting all that comes upon us by God's allowance, knowing that through patience in sufferings we are united with Him who united Himself inseparably with us on the Tree.