

“The Cross Of Christ”

Mark 15:22-26

April 14, 2019

Christianity has a very famous visual symbol. However, the cross was not its earliest symbol. Because of the wild accusations which were levelled, they “had to be very circumspect and to avoid flaunting their religion. Thus, the cross, now the universal symbol of Christianity, was at first avoided, not only for its direct association with Christ, but for its shameful association with the execution of a common criminal also.”

So on the walls and ceilings of the catacombs (underground burial-places outside Rome, where the persecuted Christians probably hid), the earliest Christian motifs seem to have been either con-committal paintings of a peacock (supposed to symbolize immortality), a dove, the athlete’s victory palm or, in particular, a fish. Only the initiated would know, and nobody else could guess, that ichthys (fish) was an acronym for *Iesus Christos Theou Huios Soter* (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour). But it did not remain the Christian sign.

Instead the chosen symbol came to be a simple cross.
John Stott

I) Provided The Payment For Our Sins: Romans 5:8

A) God brought darkness on the land at the sixth hour until the ninth hour. The death of Jesus greatly touched the heart of God. Amos 8:9

B) Darkness is the sign for God’s judgment throughout the Scriptures. Exodus 10:21-23

C) God will judge the world, but on this day, God has judged sin – (Teleostei). It is finished – “Paid In Full.”
John 19:30

II) Provided Perfection Through Suffering:

A) When Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why has thou forsaken Me?” This was a climactic moment on Calvary. II Corinthians 5:21

B) Sin separated Him from God. And, therefore, since Jesus had never sinned, He had never felt separated from His Father. Hebrews 2:10

C) This changed His ministry towards us. Hebrews 4:15-16

III) Provided A Personal Way To God:

A) The curtain in the temple was torn. This signified that we now have direct access.

B) Now with the death of Jesus, the curtain which hid God was torn and men could see Him face to face.