The King and the Kingdom.

The Victory of the Cross.


Within a short 20 years or so it will be 2000 years since Christ died on a cross on a hillside outside Jerusalem. Over many centuries the Church has claimed that the death of Jesus has brought countless victories for his followers and for the human race as a whole—and that these victories will continue and increase until that day when all enemies and foes of Christ and his kingdom will have been conquered and subdued and when Christ will reign supreme in the restored Kingdom of his Father.

Before we accept such a claim I feel it is imperative for the sake of truth to ask ourselves which victories of the cross can we as Christians truthfully claim to have been those won by Jesus dying on Golgota? We must be very careful not to take any claim at face value and to build our life and beliefs on false grounds or unsubstantiated hopes! So let us look at what has been proven and found true: if millions of Christians have been inspired and strengthened throughout the centuries by Jesus' prayer of forgiveness for his enemies uttered in his dying moments on the Cross as a tremendous challenge to follow his example.
and not to allow hatred or bitterness to consume their lives or to seek revenge. They learnt the marvellous truth of love being stronger than hate.

2) Millions of Christians have gained a deeper insight of the criteria for acceptance of people into the citizenship of God’s kingdom through his assurance to the widow of the parable: “Today you shall be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). It reveals to us the glorious truth that determined by dogmatic beliefs, liturgical practices, church structures, forms of church government, long-standing service in the church, but in essence by an act of grace and acceptance on God’s part.

3) Millions of Christians have been encouraged to know in the person of Peter’s betrayal, in his acceptance into the circle of the disciples that despite our human failure, our conscious betrayals, Christ is always ready to accept us back into the fellowship of his kingdom if we are sincere in our repentance and confession.

4) Millions of Christians have learnt that the real test (in the eyes of Christ) of our support for the suffering, the rejected, the oppressed.

5) Millions of Christians have learnt that in our conflict between the forces of truth and falsehood, deception and deceit might again the internal victories, but that eventually, truth triumphs and stands secure. And this assurance have given thousands of Christians the strength and courage to stand a struggle for righteousness and truth in the certain knowledge that just as Christ was convicted and crucified on the strength of false accusations, so too will be exposed and destroyed!

6) But it is also true that in the case of millions of people, the cross of Christ has not brought victory of any kind, and that it could be said that up till now it has suffered some defeat at the hands of human selfishness, greed, 

7) Millions of people who nominally profess to be followers of Christ and who have accepted

church membership, understand and accept, but little about the truth about the victory of the Cross.
2. Multitudes of people are born, live and die, who are totally indifferent to the message and meaning of the Cross and its triumphant end. Or if not indifferent, they are highly sceptical or reject it out and out. To them the message of the Gospel, the suffering and death of Jesus has no meaning, does them no good.

3. Despite the convincing proof of the triumph of the Cross in the lives of so many Christians, we are faced with the fact that after nearly 2000 years of proclamation of the Gospel and its challenging, transforming message, hatred and revenge still remain more effective than love and forgiveness in so many human relationships; violence still is the easily accepted practiced and justified than non-violence, dishonesty and deceit still being more successfully practiced than honesty and truth; justice still being regularly distorted than sought and defended. In other words: a preponderant share of the human race still subscribe to spiritual and moral values which are in direct contradiction to the message and standards proclaimed and practised by Christ—and are that serene therefore the meaning of Christ's suffering and death has not yet succeeded in

successfully challenging the injustice, the cruelty, the hypocrisy, of so many human relations and practices of political, economic, social evils. We talk about the victory of the Cross. Some of the most meaningful and influential spheres of the life of man and society have either not been challenged by us as Christians or if so, have not even attempted to respond to such a challenge. In that sense the victory of the Cross is still a distant dream.

This brings us to our final question: Will the message of Christ's suffering death triumph? Will Christ's claim that He is King, that His Kingdom will eventually prevail, be vindicated? If so, when and how?

I have no doubt in a single moment that the triumph of the Cross is assured; I have no doubt whatsoever that Christ's claim of kingship and His Kingdom will one day be fully and visibly realized. I know that I cannot prove this by rational argument alone—but I know that it simply rests on faith.
But I also know that without our willing
ness as disciples of Christ to accept this
challenge, to live this faith and to pre-
present this to the world the triumph
of the Cross.