

## "On Finding The Crux"

Ever been rock climbing? When climbing a pitch or section, there is always what we climbers call a "crux." This is the one thing we try to climb past, the most difficult part. Get past that one part and you've got it made.

Now suppose for a moment that in life there is a "Crux", the most difficult and yet most important thing in life. We are street-wise, life-educated people here, and we want to know what really counts, what really matters. What is at the heart of life?

Most of us grew up with some religious grounding. We know the language of our religion. For Christians there are words such as salvation, sanctification, justification, and propitiation. Let's just cut through that mumbo-jumbo and get to the crux of the matter.

Imagine someone asking you the question over coffee. Can you taste the frustration? In your "Bible of over a thousand pages, what's most important? What is essential? What is indispensable: circumcision, grace, baptism? "Well son, lets talk about all the evil in the world..." "Friend, let me tell you about the eminence of heaven..." "Let me quote a scripture, perhaps John 3:16, Acts 2:38, or 1John 4:7-8..."

There is a good chance you've asked this question yourself. You've gone through the acts of religion and faith and yet found yourself, more often than not, at a dry well. Prayers seem empty, goals seem unthinkable, and religion's become a warped record full of highs and lows and off-key notes. Is this all there is, Sabbath day attendance, pretty songs, faithful tidings, golden symbols? Where is the heart of it?

Back at the Coffee Shop you stir your coffee. All those canned responses seem inadequate.

I'll tell you what the apostle Paul said, Christ crucified, buried, and on the third day resurrected back to life. That's all there is, surprised? The part that Paul numbers first is Christ of the cross, no more and no less. So, perhaps the Catholics have got it right with their crucifix crosses.

It rests on the timeline of history like a compelling diamond. Its tragedy summons all sufferers. Its absurdity attracts all cynics. Its hope lures all searchers. History has idolized it, despised it, gold plated it, burned it, worn it, and trashed it. History has done everything but ignore it. That is the one option that the cross of Christ does not offer. You can't ignore someone who hangs on a cross making the greatest claim in history; a crucified Nazarene carpenter claiming that he is God. If the crux is in fact "The Crux" it is history's hinge. Period! If not, it is history's greatest hoax.

I'm not going to tell you what you should believe "The Crux" to be if there actually is a "Crux." You'll have to figure that one out on your own. But I'll tell you what I am putting my faith in. I stand with Apostle Paul on this one.