

Cross Analysis: How To Be An Effective Bridge

*“Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, so you are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself.”
(Mark 15:29-30)*

If you caught a thief in your home and you have authority and power over him what will you do? Man to man, eye to eye, and tooth for tooth, that is the reflex. There is an account for every mistake. Continuously, you are receiving the bill and paying the dues.

Who enjoys pain? Who enjoys affliction? In Psychology term, ‘Masochist’ is the person who delights in pain, suffering and torture. This is one abnormal behaviours of human. But consequences are, to the person who executes the assault, he is spoiled and encouraged to do more evil things by the silent attitude of his victim. And ultimately the silence of the victim becomes the license of the abuser. And to the victim himself his silence may destroy him and makes him lose all his rights. It is indeed a pathological state that human practice masochism without orientation to all its bad effects.

In the beginning God’s dwelling was with man. But when man disobeyed God he was driven out from the Garden of Eden and was separated from God. From that time on, man is longing to reach God and God as well wants His people to be reunited with Him. But there is that big gap between man and God because of sin and a bridge is needed to abolish that gap effect. In other words, somebody should pay for the human sin to be removed. And men try their best to pay the price to reach God through religion and good works but it is never enough. So God was the one who shoulder all the price. He sent His Son, Jesus to earth. God’s will for the Son is to suffer and die on the cross to bear all the punishment that the humankind should pay for their sins. Jesus Christ made Himself to be the bridge over the gap and the way for God to save us. We have now the bridge to cross and to reach God.

Over the bridge are many cars moving and heavy loads passing. Pedestrians walking on that bridge may throw dirt and trash or may spit over on that bridge but, the strong bridge remains standing.

Jesus, the bridge, is the only way for the people to reach heaven. Jesus carrying the burden and the sins of the world endured great pain till the end. He remained silent toward all the evil that were against him. What for? To endure pain, suffering, insults, and despise is for a great purpose: to save the world.

Today’s message is not only about forgiveness, not only about the unconditional love of Jesus, not only about submission, not only about doing God’s will, not only about humility, but how to be the bridge for the people to step on in order to bring them to the safe side. The message is how to win the battle!

In dealing with many people around, Christians should always portray Jesus. He said, **“You are the light of the world.”** Many ways are there to depict Jesus but sometimes all the options are expired and pockets are empty from discipline, generosity, love, forgiveness, submission, humility, etc. This is the time when the battle between you and the power of darkness becomes so furious and you have no other alternative but to endure insult in order to win a soul. This happened to Jesus. He used all the methods; miraculous healing; signs and wonders, raising the dead, forgiving sinners, was slapped and spitted on face, endured

pain from the nails piercing his body, and suffering on the cross. But finally, the evil forces before their final defeat faced Jesus, while He was hanged on the cross, with few more dangerous weapons which are also used against us when we want to show Jesus Christ to the world and around us. Thus, we need to recognize those weapons in order to avoid falling in their traps and tactics and to overcome our enemy. Following are some traps that we should be aware of:

1) Insult: A direct face to face attack. *“Those who passed by hurled insults on Him.”* It is a difficult condition to receive insults and be silent. But, that is what we need to do as Christians in certain situations to win the battle.

2) Mocking or sneering: *“So you are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days.”* (So you are going to do such and such...aha, ha, ha!) It is difficult to be silent and not to justify ourselves when the evil forces make the people laugh at us. The destroying and building of the temple in three days was told by Jesus to the Jews when they ask for a sign to show his authority as Christ (read John 2:18-22) But what Jesus meant is the death of his body and his resurrection.

3) Challenge: *“Come down from the cross and save yourself.”* (Show us your power, can you do it? If not it means you are weak!) That was especially difficult for Jesus, who raised people from the dead, to remain hanged on the cross.

The evil forces will try to ignite the flesh reflexes in ourselves pushing us to show our world’s splendour. Maybe if we use our body might to our spouse, friends, children, parents, our master, our servants, and even with our enemies we can win the situations but for sure we will lose the battle. And the person whom we want to come beside us to cross the bridge will repel from us and be snatched by the enemy. That is why it is written: *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21)* We should observe this command so the people will see Jesus even from a far.

It is not my opinion to entail Christian with soft and malleable character. A true Christian is not a masochist who enjoys pain, but he welcomes insults with a purpose in the heart, i.e. to be faithful to the task and the responsibility that God entrusted to him. The same initiative and power that caused Jesus to suffer and die on the cross, but as He rose from the dead on the third day He saved the souls of men. He proved to be the perfect bridge toward eternal life.

My Dear and Beloved: What is said is not only difficult to the reader but even to the writer. But let us ask this question: If the bridge fail and fall what will the people say about the Engineer who built it? What would be our fate if Jesus came down from the cross and save Himself not the world? The attitude of Jesus on the cross is what we need to have for our ministry, our service, and dealing with the world. We should not fail to carry the load, link the gap and to be an effective bridge. As you agree to pray God shall bless you.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and was buried and rose from the death to give me eternal life. Lord God gives me more patient, humility and self-control. Lord take away all my flesh behaviour and my pride. Take me and mold me and make me the humble person that you want me to be. Lord cleanses me from the sharp edges and the harsh attitude so I can be the gentle and kind vessel, a suitable instrument to bring others into your Kingdom. This is my prayer and my commitment to serve you and walk in your ways in Jesus name Amen.*