

God's Great Plus Sign

A while back, my wife was talking to an 8-year-old girl who had almost no exposure to Jesus. As they visited, the girl asked, "Why do churches have plus signs on top?" It took Nancy a bit to figure out what she meant but realized she was referring to the cross. Sadly, this girl had no clue what the world's greatest symbol stands for, yet her question perfectly illustrates what that symbol does.

No child or adult 2000 years ago would have mistaken a cross for a plus sign. Having witnessed crucifixions, they would never think that crosses added anything but pain. Crucifixion was invented to inflict maximum suffering. In Jesus' case, add the weight of every sin ever committed and we realize that for Him, the cross was the biggest minus sign ever.

But in God's typical method, He took what was designed for evil and turned it into gain. Jesus' sacrifice on this instrument of torture supplied the energy to transform every other speck of suffering into enormous positives. Because of Jesus' cross, God adds much to our lives!

Jesus' cross adds new life! Those who accept Him are reborn and it feels so good to know that He subtracts our iniquity and adds His righteousness and holiness.

In 1 Peter 1:3-9, we are told that we are born into a living hope with an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade. Jesus has subtracted all sickness, disease, death, grief, heartache, and tears from our futures and in their places added joy unspeakable, delight in abundance, and pleasure beyond measure!

Peter tells us about another value-added benefit in verse 8 where he writes, "You are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy!" This doesn't mean all will be unicorns and rainbows, but beneath it all, there is a current of joy moving us, like the Gulf Stream, ever closer to God's harbor. There may be storms on the surface of life's sea, but the destination and our Captain make it all endurable and even enjoyable.

In Romans 5, Paul tells us that because of Jesus' cross, we receive peace with God and access to His glorious grace! He reminds us that God adds the

Holy Spirit to believers providing God's power, wisdom, and presence, and that He has poured His great love into our hearts to boot!

Many passages list other benefits that Jesus' cross adds to believers' lives including a church family for encouragement, love, and support. In 1 Timothy 6:17, Paul summarizes: "God ... richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." How's that for a gigantic plus sign?

This little girl's question was spot on. We're praying that she and all children and adults will receive all that God adds through Jesus' cross by accepting the One who was crucified on it as their own Savior, for only then are these benefits added. If you never have, kneel before Jesus' plus sign and receive God's benefit package today!

George Bowers, Executive Board

Weekly Prayer Points

"And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."
Acts 2:47 NIV

Church planting is alive and well in CBC! Along with new ministers and new churches coming to us from prior affiliations, we have numerous brand new congregations both in the U.S. and Africa. Give thanks for this new growth and ask the Lord to help these church planters and these new fellowships to prosper in Him.

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Ewing Congregation in Ewing, VA and Pastor Frank Turner
- Fairview Congregation in Oakland, MD and Pastor Samuel Moon

CBC Prayer Committee