

Open Air Witness 8 – Crosses By The Way

Introduction

I draw your attention to the Market Cross here. The Market Cross is a well-known sight by the wayside here. You'll know that many other crosses may be seen by the wayside in our area. You'll know about Ralph Cross on Blakey Ridge. What you may not know is why these crosses were set up. The reason dates back 500 years.

The reason why wayside crosses were set up was to remind the traveller that he was there but for the Grace of God *“for this reason ben Crosses by ye waye that whan folke passynge see the Crosse, they sholde thynke on Hym that deyed on the Crosse, and worsyppe Hym above all thyng”* Wynken de Worde 1496. See:

englishhistoryauthors.blogspot.co.uk/2012/07/miniature-cathedrals-englands-market.html.

A local author, Mr Harry Mead, inserts the same quote in his book *Inside the North York Moors* p 26. Mr Mead says of crosses in remote places like Ralph Cross *“Most of the crosses were probably put up as waymarkers in the Middle Ages. Although plain guideposts would no doubt have done just as well, crosses were probably chosen because they served as a reminder of Christ, a comfort to the traveller crossing the desolate waste.”* That is why we are here, like the crosses like Ralph Cross as *“a reminder of Christ, a comfort to the traveller crossing the desolate waste.”*

Here are some things to remember about *“Hym that deyed on the Crosse”* and why *“folke passynge...sholde thynke on Hym that deyed on the Crosse, and worsyppe Hym above all thyng.”* You should remember these things.

Romans 5:6 – “Christ died for the ungodly”

You should remember that the scripture says ***“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly”*** Romans 5:6.

None of us has any strength, really. The scripture says ***“There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death...”*** Ecclesiastes 8:8. When ***“the day of death”*** comes for you, death will have you before that day is out. You should remember that.

None of us is godly, really. The scripture says ***“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not”*** Ecclesiastes 7:20. The scripture also says ***“The ungodly are...like the chaff which the wind driveth away”*** Psalm 1:4.

You've all seen ***“the chaff which the wind driveth away”*** when the harvesters are out in the fields around here. That's your lot if you don't ***“live godly in Christ Jesus”*** 2 Timothy 3:12. You should remember that.

However, that's why ***“in due time Christ died for the ungodly”*** Romans 5:6. You don't have to be ***“like the chaff which the wind driveth away”*** Psalm 1:4. The Lord Jesus Christ has died the death in your place on the cross at Calvary. The scripture says the Lord Jesus Christ was ***“led...to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him”*** Luke 23:32-33.

Romans 5:8 – “Christ died for us” – at “Calvary”

The scripture emphasises *why* the Lord Jesus Christ was put to death on the cross of Calvary. **“Calvary”** is a precious word of scripture. It only occurs once in scripture. You won’t hear it read out in most churches today because the word **“Calvary”** has been changed in most modern bible versions that most churches use. However, you can at least hear the word **“Calvary”** here, by the Market Cross of Guisborough.

You should remember that **“Calvary”** is a reminder that **“in due time Christ died for the ungodly”** Romans 5:6. Remember that **“the ungodly”** is *us* because the scripture says **“that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”** Romans 5:8. We know this because right after the scripture uses the word **“Calvary”** the scripture says **“Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”** Luke 23:34. You should remember that about **“Hym that deyed on the Crosse.”**

You don’t know what you’re doing if you don’t **“live godly in Christ Jesus”** 2 Timothy 3:12. If you *did*, you would **“live godly in Christ Jesus”** because, again, as the scripture says **“The ungodly are...like the chaff which the wind driveth away”** Psalm 1:4. However, thanks to **“Calvary”** you *can* have God’s forgiveness, you *can* **“live godly in Christ Jesus”** and you *won’t* be **“like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”** The scripture explains why and you should remember this.

2 Corinthians 5:15 – “he died for all...which died for them, and rose again”

The scripture says **“...that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again”** 2 Corinthians 5:15. The Lord Jesus Christ not only **“died for all”** that is all **“the ungodly”** but the Lord Jesus Christ **“rose again.”** The Lord Jesus Christ **“rose again”** so that *you* can have God’s everlasting forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ for *your* ungodliness, so that *you* can **“not henceforth live unto”** yourself and not end up **“like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”** Instead *you* can live **“unto Him”** that died for *you* **“and rose again.”** You should remember that.

The scripture says **“that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him”** Romans 6:9. Death will have **“no more dominion”** over you if you choose to live **“unto Him”** that died for you **“and rose again.”** However, *you* must choose. It’s vital for you to remember *that*.

Deuteronomy 30:19 – “choose life”

The scripture urges you to **“choose life.”** The scripture says **“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live”** Deuteronomy 30:19. That choice still stands for you *today*. You should remember *that*.

That’s the message of the Market Cross of Guisborough and the message of Ralph Cross up on Blakey Ridge. Those crosses are empty. They stand for death like the cross of Calvary but being empty they are like the Lord’s empty tomb. As such they bear solemn witness **“that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him”** Romans 6:9. You should remember *that*. **Today** **“therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live”** Deuteronomy 30:19.