

Simply One Page-What This Means

This piece was created from my own reflections and vision. I used ChatGPT as a tool to help shape the text from my original concepts and structure. The final form is the result of thoughtful revision motivated by my one page intent. Mike Haddorff 2613

If the Cross truly reveals the power at the heart of reality then it reshapes how we see God, how we see ourselves, and how we relate to others, especially when pressure reveals what we actually trust.

First, it reshapes how we see God. God is no longer imagined primarily as requiring satisfaction or an enforcer of correct belief. The Cross reveals a God who enters the human condition fully, who absorbs betrayal, violence, and misunderstanding without retaliation, and who refuses to abandon us within our worst moments. God's power is not shown through force, but by faithful presence. Nothing needs to be proven. Nothing needs to be secured. God's posture toward humanity is already clear.

Second, it reshapes how we see ourselves. If God meets us before we are right, then our worth is not anchored in certainty, performance, or moral clarity. We are freed from the exhausting need to defend ourselves at every turn. We can be wrong and still loved. We can be unfinished and still held. Our identity no longer depends on winning, persuading, or justifying ourselves. We are not projects God is managing; we are people God is with.

And then it reshapes how we see others. And this is where the vision becomes costly.

I come from a deeply conservative Protestant world where doctrine is supreme, Scripture is to verify, and being right matters most. Over time, that shared impulse has splintered into countless denominations, each convinced it has what God wants and what God needs. When pressure rises, cultural pressure, relational pressure, theological pressure, what often emerges is not humility or love, but defensiveness, suspicion, and the need to win. The kingdom of this realm quietly takes over, even while we quote the Bible.

The Cross exposes this instinct. Jesus does not reveal God by winning arguments, enforcing agreement, or shaming opponents. He reveals God by absorbing hostility without returning it. By refusing to coerce. By remaining present when misunderstanding and accusation surround him. This is not weakness. It is trust in a deeper kind of power.

So what does this look like in everyday life? It means that under pressure, love becomes the measure, not correctness. It means we listen before we label. We stay present when it would be easier to withdraw or attack. We refuse to reduce people to positions, categories, or threats. We hold conviction without domination. We trust that God does not need us to defend Him through fear, force, or control.

Truth matters. But truth severed from love becomes a weapon. The Cross shows us a different way.

Living in light of the Cross does not mean abandoning conviction. It means embodying conviction in a way that reflects the character of God revealed there. Jesus said, "it is finished." We are not trying to secure God's kingdom; we are learning to live from it.

Under pressure, the question is no longer, "How do I protect what I believe?" It becomes, "How do I reflect the love that has already claimed me?"