

Lesson No. 3

The Glorious Feast of The Cross

References:

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Notes For Servants:

1. The Cross is our honour and refuge, the symbol of our salvation and redemption.
2. The power of the Cross defeats the Devil and we should draw strength from the Cross in our daily lives.
3. The Cross has a wealth of teachings: spiritual, theological, doctrinal and symbolic.

Objectives:

General: The meaning of the Cross in our lives.

Specific:

1. What does the Cross mean to us?
2. Why should we keep our eyes on the Cross?
3. What is the meaning of carrying the Cross to us?

Instructions:

1. Church occasion: the Feast of the Cross.
2. Explain the reason behind the two feasts of the Cross (Discovery and Recovery).
3. Give reasons for respecting the Cross and remembering its meaning when signing oneself.
4. Draw examples from daily life where we could draw strength from the Cross.

Bible Verse:

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

(Galatians 6:14)

Lesson:

The Glorious Feast of The Cross

The Church celebrates the feast of the Cross twice every year, on March 19th and September 27th. On the feast of the Cross we remember many vital matters: spiritual, theological, doctrinal and symbolic.

- (1) We remember the love with which Christ loved us - to the point where He died for our

sake. Sacrifice is the greatest sign of love, and self-sacrifice is the summit of sacrifices.

(2) In the Cross we also remember redemption. A soul that dies for another soul; this is the principle of atonement. We were under the judgment of death, then came He who would die for us in order for us to live. His death on the Cross can be described as follows: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6).

(3) In the cross, we remember endurance. The great sufferings that our Master endured, as recorded in the Gospel of St. John, “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” (John 19:34)

With this suffering came shame and dishonour. However, St. Paul reminds us that, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:2).

(4) In the Cross, we remember forgiveness; how our sins were forgiven on the Cross and how the Master spoke to the Heavenly Father while on the Cross saying, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34).

(5) In making the sign of the Cross we remember the Holy Trinity, the One God. This is because we make the sign of the cross while saying, 'In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God; Amen! Hence, the Cross carries a theological meaning.

(6) In the Cross, we remember the Incarnation and its aim. We remember when making the sign of the cross how the Lord came down from heaven to earth to transfer us from the left to the right, from darkness to light and from death to life.

(7) In the Cross, we remember our sins. Our sins that He carried on the Cross and for which He was incarnated and crucified. With this remembrance we are humbled and our souls contrite, and we are thankful for the price which He paid for our sakes, “For ye are bought with a price” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

(8) In the cross, we remember Divine Justice; that forgiveness was not on account of justice, but Divine Justice fulfilled its right on the Cross. Therefore, we must not underestimate sin, which has such a price.

(9) When we remember the Cross, we remember the great power that defeated the devil. All of the devil's effort to destroy mankind was completely lost on the Cross with the redemption which the Lord offered. Hence, the devil is extremely terrified of the Cross. On the other hand, we find in it safety and protection, that is why we remember the Apostle's words, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” (Galatians 6:14).

(10) In the remembrance of the Cross, we remember how we should be crucified with Him. As the Apostle said, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Galatians 2:20). We also remember the Lord Jesus Christ saying, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” (Mark 8:34).

Conclusion:

1. Do not deny that you are Christian.
2. Do not sacrifice your Christian morals, no matter the situation.
3. Have courage to follow church traditions and dogma even when among non-Copts.