

Why the cross?

In studying God's word, a "new light" seems to rise up for me each year – an old message becomes completely new. In 2011 it was my understanding of the cross of Jesus. In my book "You have to die before you live..." I now have to re-write two chapters about the cross – praise the Lord! Since I became a Christian I have asked myself again and again why God the Father let His son Jesus die on the cross. I asked myself: If God really is all-powerful and loved people so much, why doesn't He just forgive us? Why did His son have to die? Over the years I came to the following conclusion: God in His mercy definitely wants to forgive us, but His absolute justice prevents Him from doing so. As a holy God He has to judge all sinners, even though He actually wants to forgive them. The only way out of this dilemma was by sending His son Jesus. He solved the problem by taking God's righteous anger upon Himself on the cross. Through this substitutionary death the righteous anger of God was satisfied and God the Father is now free to forgive us. That was roughly my understanding of the cross. Intellectually, I could live with that, but I felt uneasy, because with this understanding a "split personality God" was the ultimate cause of the cross. As a loving God, He definitely wants to forgive, but as a holy God, He cannot forgive. His wrath on sin had to be satisfied somehow, either on the sinner or on a substitute. And Jesus Christ solved the dilemma of a "split personality God" by His death on the cross. The second problem was that I was making a triune God into two gods. There was the angry God-Father and the embracing God-Son. However, as Christians we don't believe in three gods (tri-theism) but in one triune God. I experienced a real paradigm shift, when I was studying Paul's second letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 5:19).



There we read: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself" (KJV). Three things became apparent to me. Firstly: God did not just nail any old person to the cross to solve His own problem; instead God gave Himself in His son Jesus. From the liberal corner you sometimes hear the accusation, "How could God murder His own son?" An Anglican Bishop even said, "That is cosmic child abuse". All these accusations come to nothing. God didn't just delegate the problem - He gave Himself. God was on the cross in Christ! Secondly: Who was reconciled to whom on the cross? Paul said: "God reconciled the world to Himself". Who needed reconciling? The world or God? God didn't need to be reconciled with the world. God wasn't the one with the problem, we had the problem. Man had to be reconciled to God. God was never the enemy of man – He has always loved us. We have gone astray from God and become His enemies. That's why we're the ones who need to be reconciled to God. God, who is completely guilt free, takes our guilt on Himself and comes to us in Christ with the request, "Please be reconciled to me!" It is unbelievable, but true. As a general rule, the guilty party goes to the innocent party and asks for forgiveness. In Christ, the innocent party comes to us, the guilty ones, and asks us to be reconciled! What an incredible God! God didn't start to love us because of Jesus' sacrificial death. He has always loved us. The cross is the eternal proof of His love. Thirdly: The reason why God can't just forgive like that is because sin, which has separated us from God, is a reality that must be removed. Sin and its effects are not just a theory but it has actually estranged us from God.

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Errors in our 2012 Brochure

Winter Camps:

The weeks shaded grey are reserved for closed groups. This is not shown correctly in our 2012 Brochure.

The weeks shaded grey should be: **Valdres** (15.01.-21.01.2012); **Beter Uit** (21.01.-27.01.2012); **FCAP** (05.02.-11.02.2012); **KRIK** (19.02.-25.02.2012); and **Liebenzeller Mission** (18.03.-24.03.2012).

Summer Camps:

The prices for the Photo Week II and Mountain Bike Week are the wrong way round.

The correct prices are:

Photo Week II □ 289/dorm; □ 329/double bedroom;
Mountain BikeWk □ 349/dorm; □ 389/double bedroom.
The family camp starts on **05.08.2012** and not on 04.08.2012 as stated.

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This alienation made us slaves to sin and that's why we experience on a daily basis the reality of death, suffering and loneliness. Jesus conquered and removed this power and reality of sin. The slavery to sin is broken. We are able to live in joyful fellowship with God once more, which we were created for all along.

My biggest barrier to this realization was the passage in **Romans 3:25-26**, where Paul says that God presented his son as a sacrifice of atonement...to demonstrate his (God's) justice...(1) I had always read it to mean that Jesus had produced the righteousness of the Father. But Jesus did not produce it; He demonstrated it. God's righteousness never had to be produced, because God was never unjust. In His love and devotion for us, Jesus demonstrated God's righteousness. This became all the more impressive to me when I learnt that in Hebrew thinking, the word "righteousness" is not first and foremost an abstract, legal term, but a description of God's faithfulness. God in His love remains just, He remains faithful, and on the cross He demonstrated that once and for all.

Some of you will ask yourselves why I am so excited about all this.

Well, **it revolutionized my image of who God is**. So often I had a bitter aftertaste when I thought about the cross, because I had the impression that God's anger killed His own son. That made me at times unsure about God's character. God was loving for sure, but also incredibly angry. But it wasn't God's anger that was the problem; my sin was the problem. God Himself in Christ

carried all the sin and guilt that I had caused. That's why we should be a lot more afraid of sin, than of God. We should honor God because of His love, but we should fear sin because of its destructive nature. Not the wages of God is death, but "the wages of sin is death" (**Rom. 5:21**). God doesn't kill - sin kills. Sin destroys and kills, God, on the contrary, saves and gives life in Jesus Christ.

So I will now joyfully re-write the two chapters in my book. I am delighted that I am able to discover new aspects in my loving father and I am eternally thankful for brothers and sisters who help me time and time again on the way. By the way, when did you last change your opinion over a Biblical theme? Are we even still prepared to change our opinion or have we already drawn our conclusions and just want to hear that which we already know, repeated. If we want to remain alive and truthful, then we have to let ourselves be corrected anew by God and His word. That is an incredible privilege as His children.

May the Lord Jesus have a good year IN and THROUGH you in 2012!

Hans Peter

(1) The NIV is especially unhelpful in this case, because in a footnote it wrongly explains the words "sacrifice of atonement" with "as the one who would turn aside His wrath, taking away sin..." Jesus did not take away God's wrath, but our sin. We are the problem, not God. The second problem with the NIV is the wrong translation of 2 Cor. 5:19 – please compare with the KJV.

The "New Chalet"

Some guests ask us when we'll be starting to build the next storey of the chalet even though they're standing right in front of it.

The additional floor with seven new comfortable bedrooms is from the outside actually "remarkably unremarkable". Perhaps one of the reasons for this is that the buildings of our neighbours at PLANAI are also becoming bigger and higher – with that, from the outside, the proportions fit better.

In my 23 years of building activity at Tauernhof I have never witnessed such a relaxed project. The project manager JOHANN KOCHER and our ANDY REITER co-ordinated the work streams and supervised the many helpers and building companies so well, that it really was a joy to be a part of.

The first guests moved in at the start of October and meanwhile all of the new bedrooms are occupied by our 75 Bible School students and Taste & See participants.

We have invited all of the building project helpers in mid-December to come to Tauernhof where we'll ski together, enjoy fellowship and listen to God's word. We're really looking forward to it. For us it was incredibly encouraging to hear how so many of the volunteers



expressed their gratitude towards us because it did them so much good to be a part of it. A short time ago I came across the following proverb: Do something every now and again where you earn little or nothing. It'll pay off!

In any case: a VERY WARM THANK YOU to all the **helpers and supporters and prayers!**

Hans Peter

CD's / MP3's

You can buy or download CD's & MP3's from lectures at Tauernhof

th-buchladen@tauernhofaustria.at

www.tauernhofaustria.at

Thank you so much Maja!

Dear Tauernhof friends! In Ecclesiastes we read that ‘there is a time for everything’ and I believe that this is true for all of us. And what happens sooner to one person, may become true to another later. For me, the time to say goodbye has come. In the past months and years I have frequently asked myself for how much longer is this my place and a while ago I decided to open a new chapter in my life. The Lord has blessed me with a new job in a hotel up in Ramsau and I am looking forward to this new challenge.

I read these quotes a few days ago: “It is much better to try and to fail than never have the courage to go after something” and “It is vital that our past does not become our future, or regret will shadow us all our lives.” (G. Cooke).

Of course, the Lord has blessed me a lot in the past 15 years of my service at Tauernhof and I had lots and lots of valuable encounters with staff, guests and students from all over the world and I could learn and enjoy so many different things. I really appreciate this and I’m very thankful for this time...not forgetting to mention that I found my wonderful husband here! He will stay faithful to the ministry here as he still loves teaching and preaching and through him I will continue to stay connected to Tauernhof as well.

I wish you all the grace and peace of our Lord and send you my warm greetings,

Yours, Maja



Introducing...



Simon Brehmer
(IT & Finance, Ski Instructor,
Hiking Guide)

When I quit my job in December 2011 in order to enroll for Spring Bible School at Tauernhof I did not expect my plan to just take a short time out from work to change. After I had spent two months learning and experiencing a lot, I was given the opportunity to volunteer at Tauernhof over the summer. I’ve been working full time on staff since 1st October 2011 and am responsible for IT and Finances. During winter time I also work as a ski instructor and over the summer months I introduce our guests to the beautiful area surrounding Schladming.

Looking back, I’m astonished how God brought me to this place and I realize how he has been preparing me over the last few years for my current responsibilities here at Tauernhof. God’s plans are so much better than our own! „*This is what the LORD says - your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.*“ (Isaiah 48:17)



Jonathan Halsey
(Registrar, Ski Instructor,
Hiking Guide)

I (Jonathan) first came to Tauernhof for a ski camp in 1994 and it soon became a second home for me. In 1997 I attended Fall Bible School which was one of the most important times of my life and worked as a Tauernhof ski instructor in 1998 and 2003. Since then I always hoped that God would provide an opportunity for me to be here again. I then worked in London as a lawyer, married a wonderful wife called Claire in 2005 and since February 2010 we have a son, Joah. We (all born in England) moved to Schladming in May 2010 as I got a job in Salzburg as a lawyer.

I never thought that a door would then open for me to be back at Tauernhof but since July 2011 I am here full time as the Bible School Registrar! I am also an Austrian qualified ski instructor and hiking guide and we are so thankful that we can serve here. „*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*“ (Ephesians 3:20)



Rebekka Sommer
(Housekeeper)

God answers prayer and most of the time in a way you did not expect him to! February 2011: I was here for a relaxed skiing holiday and content with my life. On the last evening the speaker asked: Where do you build your “summit cross?” Irritated that God wanted me to rethink my priorities in life I started a discussion with God. If he wanted me to use my life more effectively it was up to him to show me how. Ten minutes later I found myself sitting across from Julia (my predecessor) and her first question was: “What is your name?” and then “What do you do for your living (what are you trained in?)” July 2011: Completely out of the blue, I received an email asking if I would consider working at Tauernhof. I thought “why not?” September 2011: I quit my job, moved out of my flat, loaded my car and left the beautiful Westerwald - and now I’m here! „*Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.*“ (2.Cor 3:5)

Kingfisher Project - Update

Thirteen enthusiastic and evidently deeply affected students left us on 31 October to close our sailing season for 2011. Overall the summer was a very full one, starting with our 7 week Impact Training Spring Course, followed by six 10-12 day Sailaway programs, then to finish with, our 6 week Impact Training Fall Course. Except for on one Sailaway, every bed was filled, meaning that there were some 100 students / guests that had the chance to



come aboard for an encounter with God, to experience some of the most beautiful islands and coastal areas in Greece, and to gaze upon and walk where Paul the apostle had once traveled in Greece.

Meanwhile, local contractors on Skopelos went ahead building the staff house on our property, however the money didn't go as far as we initially hoped, which was to finish the house to the point of occupation by this winter. By the time this goes to press, the outside of the house will have pretty much been finished, then as more funds become available, we'll press on with the interior work over winter and spring.

In the following months with the help of Tani, Ben and Daniel (volunteers), we'll concentrate more on the grounds, including landscaping around the house and set up a vegetable garden and fruit tree orchard by which we hope to be able to complement our food needs for our summer programs. Further, much of the maintenance work aboard the boat

is scheduled to take place, with an overhaul of the plumbing and electrical systems and, in particular, work on the main engine.

Steffen & Tanja Hill who are with "Contact Mission", had been helping out at the property over the summer as groundkeepers and, in particular, pruning the olive trees. They have now become residents on Skopelos having found an apartment to rent and plan to continue to serve with us in the Kingfisher Project on a long-term basis as well as pursue opportunities to build relationships with the purpose of bringing the message of the gospel to the people of Skopelos. We're grateful for God's provision in them.

Sandra's health was much more stable this summer thanks to the medication she now takes. She's still in the high-risk category for heart attack and so we're still looking for someone to take her place as cook for the following season.

Please pray for Sandra's substitute, for funds to finish the house and skilled volunteers to help work on the house in the spring, also for open doors among the locals on Skopelos to receive the message of the gospel

For Sailaway opportunities in 2012 and more regular news updates, please see our website at:

kingfisherproject.org

Yours, Theo

Thank you also to ...

Julia Kley - Julia has worked with us for the last 3 years as the house manager. Since September this year she has gone back to Germany.



Leo van Klaveren - also served with us this past year as the bookkeeper. Leo moved back to Holland to work in his former company.

We want to say thank you to both of them for their faithful and warm-hearted service at Tauernhof and wish them **God's Blessings** for the future.

Available places at Tauernhof!

* Energie 1

08.01. - 14.01.12

* Energie 5

04.03. - 10.03.12

* Energie 6

11.03. - 17.03.12

* International Week

25.03. - 31.03.12

(English speaking!)

For information/brochures/application forms, please contact us at TAUERNHOF. Please inform us of address or name changes. To help save postage expenses, we will delete all addresses of students who attended Tauernhof before 2001, unless you let us know that you would still like to receive the Newsletter. If you have access to the Internet and don't need the Newsletter sent by mail anymore, please also let us know - THANKS!

Gifts for TAUERNHOF may be sent to:

U.S.A

Torchbearers Ravencrest
P.O. Box 3340
Estes Park, CO 80517

EUROPE (directly to Tauernhof)

or: Tauernhof Acc. # 17400007708
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