

ties *before everything else*, or as belonging to the weightiest articles of the faith. In the Septuagint the same phrase is used in Gen. 33: 2, where Jacob places the two maid-servants and their children in the very front of his cavalcade to meet Esau. And again the same Greek words are used regarding David (2 Sam. 5: 8), where he says: "Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first." Paul evidently means to say that the death of Christ for our sins is of the first importance. It is the cornerstone and keystone of Paul's Christianity. In Weymouth's Version the passage is rendered, "For I repeat to you the all-important fact which also I have been taught, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures."

The importance of the death of Jesus Christ as the fundamental fact in the New Testament is shown by the place it occupies. One-third of the New Testament matter deals with the story of the cross and the atonement. Matthew devotes two long chapters to the trial and death of Jesus; in Mark the two longest chapters relate to this event; one-seventh of the entire text of Luke is taken up with the same story, and in John's Gospel the shadow of the cross falls on the scene almost at the outset, while one-half of the narrative deals with the last week of Jesus' life.

In the Apostles' preaching as recorded in the Acts and the Epistles their one theme seems to have been Christ crucified. Peter (Acts 10: 38-43) voices the message than which they had no other, the Good News of peace through Jesus