

2 TREES

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THE DANGER TREE



July 1st, 1916 will forever stand out as a day of bravery for Newfoundland. In the early morning hours of that misty morning the Newfoundland regiment, as part of the 29th Division's 88th Brigade, began their attack at Beaumont Hamel in France. Their objective was to break through the German front lines that were so well fortified.

Before the soldiers bravely advanced, British forces detonated a huge mine to the left of the Newfoundlanders sector, almost a

kilometre away. The explosion alerted the enemy of the impending attack. The infantry attack was a disaster. The German artillery, protected from the shelling by the steep banks of the ravine, mowed down the advancing troops. The Newfoundlanders from their starting position in the reserve trench, nicknamed St. John's Road, had to cross about 230 metres of fire swept ground before they even reached their own front line. They were among the last waves to advance, and had to make their way forward over the bodies of their fallen comrades.

When the young soldiers finally emerged into no-man's-land they could see for the first time the barrier of German wire more than 500 metres away. Although the Germans hailed down bullets upon them, they advanced forward. Halfway down the slope there stood a single tree. Nicknamed "The Danger Tree", it marked the spot on the battlefield where soldiers entered an area of deadly crossfire. The skeleton of a tree still stands there today. What must have gone through the minds of

these young men as they approached this tree, knowing it meant an almost certain death? The next day at roll call, out of 801 soldiers, only 68 men answered!



THE DELIVERANCE TREE

A long time ago another tree stood out on a hill called Calvary, just outside the city of Jerusalem. There on that tree, a man called Jesus Christ was crucified by Roman soldiers. The Lord Jesus was nailed to the middle cross, reserved for those whom the authorities considered the guiltiest, although His judge, Pilate, declared, **"I FIND NO FAULT IN HIM"** (JOHN 19:4). The Roman centurion observed the scene of death and glorified God saying, **"CERTAINLY THIS WAS A RIGHTEOUS MAN"** (LUKE 23:47).

So, why was Jesus Christ crucified on the cross? The answer is, because of you and me! The Scriptures, with all their authority,

plainly declare that you and I are not right with God because of our sin nature. **"FOR ALL HAVE SINNED, AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD"** (ROMANS 3:23). Thankfully, God loves us and has moved towards us in tender mercy by allowing His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty for our sin.

"FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD" (ROMANS 6:23). God has accepted His Son's death on the cross as payment for sin; have you accepted the Lord Jesus as God's free gift?

This tree will forever be remembered because of the Man who died upon it, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. While that tree on Beaumont Hamel was known as The Danger Tree, the tree on Calvary's hill will eternally be remembered for Deliverance from sin and its consequences.

After His death, the Lord Jesus was buried in a new tomb. On the third day, God raised Him from the dead, proving that He has accepted Jesus Christ's death as payment for sin's penalty! **"WHO HIS OWN SELF BARE OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BODY ON THE TREE, THAT WE, BEING DEAD TO SINS, SHOULD LIVE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS: BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED"** (1 PETER 2:24).

The cross of Christ not only deals with our past and present but points us to our future. Where will you be in eternity? Jesus said, **"I AM THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE: HE THAT BELIEVETH IN ME, THOUGH HE WERE DEAD, YET SHALL HE LIVE"** (JOHN 11:25). It is not religion that saves a sinner from the penalty of sin, but a relationship with the Saviour who paid that penalty on the cross.

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