COLOR OF CYPRESS HEARTWOOD NO INDICATION OF DURABILITY

Southern bald cypress is about the most variable in color of any of our native woods, and in different localities is known as red cypress, yellow cypress, white cypress, and black cypress. There is a rather prevalent belief that cypress with dark colored heartwood is the most durable, but the opinion of the U. S. Forest Products Laboratory is that as far as durability is concerned the color of the wood makes very little difference. In service records obtained by the laboratory, any difference in the length of service of red cypress and yellow cypress appears to be due entirely to a difference in the amount of sapwood in the timbers. Cypress trees with light colored heartwood usually have more sapwood than those with dark colored heartwood, and sapwood is not resistant to decay.

The important thing if durability is desired appears to be to select the heartwood of cypress regardless of its shade.