

## **The cross of Jesus Christ is the central event of all time, and it determines our eternal destiny.**

- It clearly shows us God's perfect holiness, the extent of our sinfulness, and the humble obedience of Jesus Christ in His sacrifice.
- When we look at Matthew chapters 26 and 27, we are stepping into some of the most sacred and important parts of the entire Bible. Jesus's death on the cross is the peak moment of Matthew's Gospel, the culmination of everything that has been building up.
- This is because Jesus came specifically to "save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). It's like reaching the highest and most awe-inspiring point in the whole biblical story.

### **This is the Significance of the Cross**

- We are cleansed from our sin – Justified (declared righteous). Sanctified (set apart)
- We redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, brought near by the blood of Christ
- We have access to the Throne of Grace by the Cross of Jesus

**Paul said I Cor. 15:3-4** - For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

**This is the Gospel: The Good News:  
The Best News, but it came at a price!  
O What a Savior!**

**1 Peter 1:18-19** - knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

### **Jesus endured the ...**

#### **Horror of Humanity**

Let's start with the raw brutality of what happens.

**Matthew 27:27** - <sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him.

#### **Blank Live - Horror of Humanity**

Notice that phrase: the whole garrison.

- Not just a few sadistic individuals. Not random cruelty. Matthew uses the Greek term translated "whole garrison" to describe the entire military unit, an organized body.
- What follows IS NOT spontaneous torture. This is an entire military unit engaged in official mockery – As one commentator put it – It's choreographed Humiliation!

**Matthew 27: 28-31** - <sup>28</sup> And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. <sup>29</sup> When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked (tense of verb is ongoing) Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup> Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they

had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

We read the beating that Jesus endured at the hands of the Roman Soldiers, but think back to what leads up to this...

### **Religious Leaders: Rejected and Conspired to eliminate Jesus**

### **Roman Officials; Tried and Sentenced Him**

### **Soldiers Mocked and Beat**

- It was the Roman custom to make the condemn carry their cross, at least the cross beam
- Verse 32

**Matthew 27:32-44** - Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. <sup>33</sup> And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, <sup>34</sup> they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink.

**Matthew 27:35** - <sup>35</sup> Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."

**Matthew 27:36-37** - <sup>36</sup> Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. <sup>37</sup> And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

**Matthew 27:38** - <sup>38</sup> Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. <sup>39</sup> And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

**Matthew 27:41-43** - <sup>41</sup> **Likewise** the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, <sup>42</sup> "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. <sup>43</sup> He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.' "

**Matthew 27:44** <sup>44</sup> **Even** the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

### **You see the Criminals reviling and insulting Jesus**

### **We talked last week about Judas, one of Jesus' disciples betraying Jesus**

### **Disciples: Denied and Scattered**

Consider, then, which character you most identify with in the passion narrative. Would it be...

- Peter denying – The Disciples Scattering? The Women weeping?
- We might identify with Peter's denial or the thief's plea for grace, but let's be reminded of a humbling truth: **if we don't see our own sin in the mob screaming "Crucify Him!", we misunderstand the necessity of the cross.**
- One commentator said, "Because apart from God's grace, this is where we would all be standing, and we're only flattering ourselves to think otherwise. Unless you see yourself standing there with the shrieking crowd, full of hostility and hatred for the holy and innocent

Lamb of God, you don't really understand the nature and depth of your sin or the necessity of the cross. (Mahaney, *Living the Cross Centered Life*, 87) (Platt, *Exalting Jesus: Mt. KL 6541-6554*)

I Echo the song, "*How Deep the Father's Love for Us.*"

- How deep the Father's love for us - How vast beyond all measure  
That He should give His only Son - To make a wretch His treasure  
How great the pain of searing loss - The Father turns His face away  
As wounds which mar the Chosen One - Bring many sons to glory

Second Verse

- Behold the Man upon the cross - My sin upon His shoulders
- Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice - Call out among the scoffers
- It was my sin that held Him there - Until it was accomplished
- His dying breath has brought me life - I know that it is finished

### **Jesus experienced the Horror of Humanity**

#### **Jesus demonstrated Humility of Fidelity**

- In Matthew 27, Jesus demonstrates profound humility through His unwavering faithfulness to the Father's will, even unto death on the cross (Matthew 27:38-50).

**Matthew 27:45** - <sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Psalm 22

What does that mean?

- God suspended "for a little while the favorable presence of grace and the influx of consolation and happiness." In other words, the Son's "sense of the divine love" was "intercepted by the sense of divine wrath and vengeance resting upon him" (*Elenctic Theology* 13.14.5).
- R. C. Sproul said of this statement "On the cross, Jesus entered into the experience of forsakenness on our behalf. God turned his back on Jesus and cut him off from all blessing, from all keeping, from all grace, and from all peace." ([Links](#))
- Jesus experienced the spiritual abandonment that our sins deserved, so that we never would have to. It was God's love and justice intersecting for our salvation.

**Matthew 27:47** - <sup>47</sup> Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" <sup>48</sup> Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. <sup>49</sup> The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." <sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

His **fidelity**—His steadfast loyalty and commitment to His divine mission and God's redemptive plan—is a central aspect of His humble submission and sacrifice.

- This quality stands in stark contrast to the betrayal, injustice, and unfaithfulness of humanity.

You see Jesus' Fidelity and Humility as he set aside...

- His heavenly glory; His divine prerogatives ... He set aside the voluntary display of his divine attributes and submitted Himself to the Spirit's direction.
- Scripture says, **2 Corinthians 8:9** - For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.
- Face to Face Relationship with the Father
- At 12 years old, He declared He must be about His Father's Business
- During his ministry – He did not move or speak without the Leading of the Father
- You may remember Luke 9:51 - "he set his face toward Jerusalem"
- In this verse we see Jesus' resolute, unwavering determination to travel to Jerusalem, fully knowing that it would lead to his betrayal, suffering, and crucifixion
- He prayed in the garden, "...not my will but Thine be done!"

***We see the humility and Fidelity in Phil. 2:5-8, where Paul says...***

***Philippians 2:5-8*** - Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.

***Think of it this way:***

***Jesus' Humility (Philippians 2:6-7):***

- Imagine someone who is incredibly powerful, like a king or queen with all the authority in the world. This person chooses to leave their palace, take off their crown, and become a servant, even a common person, just like us. They don't have to do it, but they willingly choose to, putting others first.
- That's what Jesus did. He was God Himself, full of power and glory. He had every right to stay in heaven and be worshiped. But instead, He didn't hold onto His high position. He willingly "emptied himself," meaning He set aside His divine privileges and became a human being, living a normal life, just like us. This was an act of incredible humility – stepping down from the highest place to be among us.

***Jesus' Fidelity (Philippians 2:8):*** Then, once He was here on earth as a man, Jesus showed complete faithfulness to God's plan. He was obedient to God, even when it meant facing the most difficult thing imaginable: death on a cross.

- The cross was not just a difficult death; it was a shameful and agonizing one. Yet, Jesus stayed faithful to what God asked of Him. He didn't turn back, didn't try to escape it, even though He could have. He was faithful, or you could say "obedient," all the way to that terrible death, because He knew it was the only way to deal with the problem of sin that separates us from God.

- So, at the cross, Jesus' humility meant He was willing to become human and suffer. His fidelity meant He followed God's plan perfectly, even through the most painful sacrifice, so that a way could be made for us to be right with God. It was all done out of love for God and for us (Romans 5:8).

### **Jesus Manifested Holiness of Divinity**

**Matthew 27:50** - And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

Matthew does not record everything Jesus said – Luke and John fill us in...

**Luke 23:46** – And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last. (Jesus was in fully control)

**John 19:30** - So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

- **Tetelestai** The debt is fully paid; the sentence is fully served; the victory is fully won.

Put together we see how the cross, while a horrific act of humanity, simultaneously reveals the perfect holiness of God and the divine nature (divinity) of Jesus Christ as He atones for sin

- The cross is where God's justice and His love perfectly meet, displaying His absolute moral perfection against sin and the divine essence of the one who bore that sin.

### **He Bore the Wrath Deserve! He Took Our Place - biblical Definition**

Penal substitution means Jesus took the punishment for our sin on our behalf. It's like this:

**Penal** = The penalty, the punishment for wrongdoing (our sins).

**Substitution** = Jesus stepped in and took our place to receive that punishment.

So, instead of us receiving the just penalty for our sins against God, Jesus stood in for us on the cross, enduring that penalty Himself

**Isaiah 53:4-5** - Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** - For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**1 Peter 2:24** - who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

**Repent and Believe in the Gospel** – Turn from Sin; Trust in Jesus' finished Work on the Cross; Confess Him as Lord of your Life; Calling on His Name for Salvation

- *"If you have not yet believed in Jesus, you can repent and trust Him today.*
- *Here's what that means – God, I Know I'm a sinner, I believe Jesus died for me. The best I know how I confess my sin to you. I turn from my sin. I call on Jesus to be my Lord and Savior.*

**Notice Matthew 27:51** – Matthew records many events that took place as Jesus was crucified – I want to close with what is believed to be among the most significant events not only in during the crucifixion, but the most significant in the history of mankind...

**Matthew 27:51** - Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;

### **We have Access to the Throne of Grace**

- For a Jewish audience, the tearing of the temple veil described by Matthew (Matthew 27:51) carried immense theological significance, symbolizing a radical shift in the relationship between God and humanity.
- The Veil – this curtain was like a giant wall, separating people from God's most holy presence.
- **Insert Temple Picture Here**
- This thick, heavy curtain separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (also known as the Holy of Holies). The Most Holy Place was considered the dwelling place of God's presence on earth, and only the High Priest was permitted to enter it, and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement, to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people (Leviticus 16:2-4, 34). The veil therefore represented the separation between a holy God and sinful humanity, a barrier that humanity could not cross on its own.

When Jesus died on the cross.

- The Bible says that at that very moment, that huge, thick veil in the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51).
- This wasn't just a coincidence! It was God Himself showing us something absolutely earth-shattering:
- **The wall is gone!** The tearing of the veil meant the barrier between us and God was removed. Jesus' death was the perfect sacrifice, paying for all our sins once and for all. We don't need a curtain, or a special priest, or yearly sacrifices anymore.
- **A new open door!** Now, because of Jesus, every single one of us can come directly into God's presence. The way is open! We can talk to Him, worship Him, and have a close relationship with Him anytime, anywhere.

It marked the moment God threw open the doors for us to come home to Him through Jesus!"

### **Access: It's ok... You're with me - Winter Jam**

**Hebrews 10:19-25** - <sup>19</sup>Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, <sup>21</sup>and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup>not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

1. **Draw Near to God with Confidence:** Since we can now enter God's presence through Jesus' blood, we should approach Him with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith (Hebrews 10:22). This means regularly seeking Him in prayer, worship, and study of His Word, knowing we are welcome.
2. **Hold Fast to Our Hope:** We are to cling firmly to the hope we have in Christ, the hope of salvation and eternal life, because God, who promised it, is faithful and will deliver (Hebrews 10:23). This encourages perseverance in our faith, even through difficulties.
3. **Spur One Another Toward Love and Good Deeds:** As believers, we are called to actively encourage and motivate each other to live out our faith through acts of love and service (Hebrews 10:24). This emphasizes the importance of Christian community and mutual edification.