

**Sermon Series: Do You Believe**  
**VGroup Sermon Study Guide for: The Meaning of the Cross, Matthew 27: 27-54**  
March 24, 2024

**Helpful Tips**

1. Randomly assign the scripture readings to different people in the group. This gets them into God's Word.
2. Generate conversation through questions. Let the group know you will be randomly asking people questions if someone does not immediately respond. Make this lighthearted and read the room. Some people could get very uncomfortable, and others just need a kind nudge to start talking.
3. It is ok if you do not finish the lesson. If people are reading God's Word and conversing, then do not rush through the end. If conversation is getting off track, then bring them back in and go to the next step.
4. Watch the sermon before you prepare and look at any of the background notes provided for you.

**Scripture Passages:** Matt. 27:27-54 (break this up among the group), Hebrews 13:11-14/ Romans 5/ Matthew 16:24/ Matthew 26:52-54/ Romans 5:8/ Mark 14:36/ John 10:18/ Hebrews 7:27

**Starting the Conversation: (use the following questions to get people talking)**

1. Does anyone own a cross? (piece of art, jewelry, woodwork, etc.)
2. Why did you purchase it?
3. How can something that is a picture of execution be a symbol we like to display?

**Central Point:**

Today in our passage of scripture we are going to take a closer look at the death of Christ on the cross. There has been a lot of deferent speculations about it and what it means for people. But I do not want you to base your trust in what you think about the cross or what I think about the cross.

***Bottom Line: Examine what the Bible, God's Word, has to say about the cross.***

**Background:**

John the Baptist said "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" *John 1:29*. So we know why Jesus came. We know from *John 3:16* "For God so loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. Jesus came to deal with sin; He came rescue us. Let us make sure we understand what His death means to you, to me, to all who call on the name of Jesus.

**1. The Place of the Cross, Matthew 27: 33**

A place of death outside the city walls, Golgotha, or the Skull Place. It was on Mount Moriah. The Temple built by Solomon was there. King David came to purchase property to have sacrifices to God. God spoke to Abraham, there telling him to kill Isaac, his son.

**(Get someone to open up and read Hebrews 13:11-14)**

Hebrews 13: 11-14

<sup>11</sup> The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. <sup>12</sup> And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people

holy through his own blood. <sup>13</sup> Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. <sup>14</sup> For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

You have a location of death determined by Romans near the location of spiritual sacrifice established by God. Both locations would have been known to all.

Questions to Ask:

1. Why is the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross so important to the Christian faith?

(Get someone to open up and read Romans 5)

2. Where were you when you chose to die to Christ? What do you think that means to “die to Christ?”

(Get someone to open up and read Matthew 16:24)

The place of your cross matters to you and those you share your faith journey with. What were you doing? Where are you now? Just a few things that need to be pondered to witness to others.

## 2. The Pain of the Cross, Matthew 27: 35-49

(Get someone to open up and read Matthew 26:52-54/ Romans 5:8)

Matthew 26: 52-54, Jesus willingly took all your sins.

Romans 5: 8, We live by God’s standards, not governments, not self, not friends, not neighbors any influence that can hinder you from God’s way makes you fall short of the standard. God’s grace continues to mature us.

Discuss the dying process of crucifixion. (Give an explanation for the leaders)

Discuss the coaching staff way verses the players way. (Give an explanation for the leaders)

For Jesus it was more than physical pain. He accepted all the sins of the past, present and future. We all have experienced physical pain, mental pain, emotional stress. The mental / emotional pain can cause physical pain. Easy to see why Jesus asked if there is another way. But he took it all.

(Get someone to open up and read Mark 14:36)

Mark 14:36

“Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

Questions to Ask:

1. How do you give your pain to Christ now?

### 3. The Power of the Cross, Matthew 27: 50-54

Get someone to open up and read John 10:18)

John 10: 18

<sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Remember that the curtain in the Temple separated us from God. The high priest had to bring a sacrifice to atone for our sins and the sins of the people.

Get someone to open up and read Hebrews 7:27)

Hebrews 7: 27

<sup>27</sup> Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. Jesus sacrificed for all sins once for all when he offered himself.

At Christ death, the curtain was torn all the way through and from top to bottom. Jesus, the final sacrifice, took sin and suffering for anyone who ask for and receives Christ.

It can be tough to discuss the sin of a sinner, relate to the sinner how Christ took the sin away and tore open the curtain to God for all who will believe.

Questions to Ask:

1. How do you explain the power that Christ unleashed to a non-believer?  
Can you explain it to a believer?
2. Pastor talked about the monkeys who will not let go and end up getting captured. Are you holding onto something instead of accepting Christ as your savior and Lord?
3. Are you a believer, what are you holding onto that keeps you from accepting all Christ has for you?
4. Are you trapped in between wants verse needs? Godly verse worldly? Your standards or Jesus’?

**Conclude:** As we enter into Holy Week, we must do so with gratitude towards what Christ did on the cross. Thank God each day for the sacrifice He made in our place. Remember, it should have been you, but Jesus stood in your place. If you have not given your life to Jesus then there is no greater time than today.

**Challenge:** 1. Die to self and follow Jesus. 2. Who do you know that needs to give their life to Jesus? Write down that name and quietly spend time in your group praying for those people and praying that we would follow God’s command to share the gospel with them and invite them to church this Easter.

**Announcements:** Easter Sunday – Invite Family and Friends

Blythewood Campus: 3 Services – 7:30a/9a/10:30a – try to attend the 7:30am or 9am if possible, to allow more room for guests at 10:30am

Downtown Campus: 10:30am