

March 10, 2024

Call to Worship

Psalm 18 (Thanksgiving Psalm) v.1-3, v. 46-49

Hymn. Praise to the Lord.

Hymn. This is the Day.

Doctrinal Teaching on the Suffering of Christ

Isaiah 53:4-9 (The Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ)

Hymn. Holy, Holy, Holy

Hymn. All Hail the Power of Jesus Name.

Hymn. I Exalt Thee.

Offering and Prayer.

Pastoral Prayer.

Sermon Text. John 19:16-30|The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

'So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified. They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, "JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece.

So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill the Scripture: "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge

full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."

Q: What is The Magnitude of the Cross of Jesus Christ?

There were thousands of people executed during the Roman Empire by means of crucifixion. John Granger Cook, a professor at LaGrange College in Georgia estimates that between 200BC to the abolition of crucifixion in AD 337 the Roman's crucified approximately 100,000 to 150,000 people. **That's about 200 people crucified in the Roman Empire per year.** Q: Why has this Roman crucifixion, of Jesus Christ, stood the test of time as the most proclaimed message in all of human history? Q: Is there any message in human history more widely proclaimed and more widely known than the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ?

Today, As I am preaching the Crucifixion of Christ; I ask myself, What is the likelihood that anyone here has never heard the message of Jesus Christ and Him crucified?

I'm sure I can share some details today about that Crucifixion of Jesus that maybe you have never heard. Every year, I come to this time of the Crucifixion of Jesus and I learn new aspects to the events, new truths of application. **Not different ones, but deeper ones.** But I've yet to come across a person who has not heard of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

So, What is the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ?

The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ fulfills Prophecy.

In the life of Jesus Christ there are over 300 OT prophecies fulfilled. Over 300 prophecies revealed over 4000 years fulfilled in 1 person. A Mathematician determined that that would be a probability of 1 to 84 with 100 zeros. That is a number we cannot even fathom.

In the crucifixion of Jesus Christ alone, there are argued 28 OT prophecies fulfilled about Jesus in this very event.

These probabilities are unfathomable. We are not capable of understanding 1 out of 84 to 100 zero's. Our minds cannot reconcile such equations.

And that's the way it should be. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ is a fact that is not even humanly fathomable. To consider the factual basis of all of these prophecies fulfilled and for a person to genuinely care about the obvious applications **requires Divine Assistance.**

For you and I, to grasp the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, we need the help of God's Holy Spirit.

We shouldn't feel embarrassed about that. Every person who came to understand the magnitude of Christ in the Bible needed Divine Assistance to do so.

'Who do you say that I am' Jesus asked Peter 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God'" Jesus answered Peter 'Blessed are you for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.'" Matt. 16:17

The fact that knowing the Magnitude of Christ and Him Crucified, **is not humanly fathomable** is further exercised in the recording of Matthew in Matt. 27:51-52 'Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.'

5 humanly impossible things occur simultaneously at the death of Jesus Christ.

1. **The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.** Now it is possible to tear the veil in the temple but any reasonable person would acknowledge that it would be impossible to tear the veil in two from top to bottom in completion. The veil was 60' high and 30' wide. That would have to be a coordinated project. Not likely.
2. **The earth quaked.** Only God can cause an earthquake.
3. **The rocks were split.** Man can split rocks but not without applied effort and appropriate tools.
4. **The graves were opened.** But only those of the saints. Only God would know who are His and be able to open the graves of those who are His. Further...
5. **The saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the graves after His resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.** Q: Why is this not one of the most published events in world history? An earthquake that occurs simultaneously with Christ's death, that causes the specific graves of OT saints, causing them to stand up and walk around alive in Jerusalem appearing to many people?

So why is the Magnitude of these events not captivating the concerns of more people?

Knowing and Caring about the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ requires Divine Assistance.

To ignore a simultaneous earthquake along with the resurrection of numerous dead people walking through the city, the only way to miss the magnitude of such incredible events is to be completely spiritually blind.

As Jesus told Nicodemus, in order to see the Kingdom of God, 'you must be born again.' John 3

NOW, I will say that I am at a loss of something else. I have never come across a person, that has never heard about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, BUT, I have come across many people who could CARE LESS about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Now that is an entirely different purpose of preaching the message of the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ!

Anytime, you preach you have to consider who you are communicating with and what's the purpose of preaching the message? Is it to inform? Is it to reform? Is to persuade? OR is it to dissuade? Is it to build or is it to break?

Do the people not know OR do they not care? Do they know and care, but don't know how to integrate what they know into their life; that's pastoring by the way. It's called Pastoral Theology, the practical application of the theoretical knowledge.

Even still, if they know, and if they care, and if they are properly motivated, THEN, what is there left? Only to do. Only to do something about this message now.

And I believe that's what I want to put more of a focus on today than really much of anything else. If we know that Jesus Christ was Crucified, and if we care that Jesus Christ was crucified, and if this works on our hearts with the proper motivation, THEN what does that actually leave us with?

If we know, and we care, then what is it that we are to integrate and do?

It becomes very simple; we are to live this message. Our lives are to be merged into the personhood of Christ.

This action on the cross is the great transitions of personhood. At this moment in Christian history, all of our sin, all of our unrighteous character, is transferred onto the person of Christ and Christ pays the penalty for our personal sin.

THEN, at the moment of faith, God no longer sees us as the person of sin, instead, God now sees us as Christ.

No, we are not Christ, but we are not cloaked in the righteousness of Christ because of this of the crucifixion of Christ.

2 Cor. 5:21

What should we do about the magnitude of the Crucifixion of Christ?

I read the excerpts from a series of sermons dated in September of 1680 by John Owen titled **Dying Comfortably.**

Owen preached three consecutive sermons from 1 Cor. 15:31, opening up Paul's statement '**I die daily.**' Q: Do we die daily? Paul did.

During the sermons, Owen, who is known as the tallest Redwood of all the puritan forest, gets intensely personal with his hearers.

Owen's, as if preaching to himself, was preparing for his own death that took place only three years later.

During the preaching of this intense sermon series, other noteworthy men passed on to eternal glory; Thomas Goodwin, Stephen Charnock, Matthew Poole, Theophilus Gale, Thomas Brooks, all dying during his sermon series.

Owen's explains that Paul's statement, '**I die daily**' is a testimony to the stability of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the dead. Both, events happening here in John 19.

It was this faith that carried him through all kinds of difficulties.

Q: What is the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ?

I believe that it is the cross of Jesus Christ that can inspire us to endure all kinds of difficulties and like Owen states, the cross of Jesus Christ, teaches us to die daily.

Before the Cross was piece of jewelry, it was an instrument of cruelty.

Before the Cross was a symbol of our hope, it was a symbol of harshness.

Before the Cross was our confidence of eternal life, it was a concoction of exacting agony.

Owen's, concludes that it was the duty of all believers to prepare themselves to die, cheerfully and comfortably.

Owen's conceded that our life and death is solely submitted to the Providences of God. And our troubles come only in our fleshly rebellion to His Providential plans.

Look at the life of Jesus Christ here, starting in the garden in John 18, Jesus Christ passively obeys God's will by submitting Himself to the plans of evil men.

Q: What do we make of such a man? Pilate even asks in response to this 'Where are you from?'

Pilate has never seen such behavior. That an innocent man submits to a wrongful sentencing.

Personally, In considering the circumstances, Of course things like death and all the things surrounding death concern us. We get scared about illnesses. We get concerned about potential accidents.

We get pensive about loved ones dying. But all of these concerns are already known by God and the Bible consistently reveals to us that God's knowledge in all unfortunate circumstances for His people, ultimately work out for their personal good.

In Owen's sermon series, he outlines a few primary things he says are important with regard to our death and the death of others, which we actually see in the death of Christ here.

Owen's says that **the primary importance is the constant exercise of faith** with respect to the resigning of our departing souls into the hand and sovereign will of God.

Look what it says about Christ's actions at His death, 'He bowed His head and gave up His spirit'
John 19:30

Friends, that is EXACTLY what Christ does here! Did the Roman's kill Christ? Did the Jews kill Christ? Did God have His own Son put to death? The answer to all of those questions is Yes.

The Jews and the Romans are the Proximate Cause of Death, but God is the Ultimate Cause of Death because God has designed this whole plan of redemption.

Jesus Christ is giving us a textbook Christian example of the Ministry of reconciliation.

"He..gave up His spirit" – they didn't take it. They didn't break it. They didn't shake it. They didn't make it. They couldn't fake it. CHRIST had to give it up!

Christ gave up His life for YOUR LIFE!

What is more important to you in your life, than your life? Honestly, probably nothing.

In **Luke 23:46** Jesus states it this way **'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.'** – quoting **Psalm 31:5**

Q: Do you know that God has promised to keep you from death, until He brings about your death?

Phil 1:6 'be confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ.'

1 Cor. 1:8 'who will confirm you to the end'

Ps. 138:8 'the LORD will accomplish what concerns me'

It should be learned and never forgotten that Christians are immortal. It actual strikes me as odd, how little it is expounded.

First, Christians are immortal in the sense that God has determined every day of their life. Second, they are immortal in the sense that Jesus Christ is on the cross paying the deed for eternal life.

Q: What is the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Chirst? **Eternal life.**

Q: How often do we live with a lack of confidence and a lack of stable freedom, thinking that we are going to lose this or that, or stand to gain one thing or another, as if we can change the direction of the winds of God's Providence?

I'm not so sure if people are uninformed about it, forgetful about the fact that God is in control, or if they are actually just in rebellion to it.

We see here in John 19 that Caiaphas and Judas and Annas played a religious role in the death of Christ.

We see that Pilate played a political and judicial role in the crucifixion of Christ.

We see that the Soldiers unwittingly played an active role.

But think about this.

Faith is the access point to eternal life.

Thomas Watson. The Covenant of Grace.

Q: What is the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ? It is God's Covenant of Grace.

In Thomas Watson's, Body of Divinity, he presents the question: Did God leaven all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

The answer; No! God entered into a covenant of grace to deliver the elect out of that state, and to bring them into a state of grace by a Redeemer, that Redeemer is Jesus Christ.

This Covenant of Grace is called many things, but Chief of which we call the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. It is called the covenant of peace in Ezekial 37:26 because it seals up reconciliation between God and humble sinners.
2. It is called the covenant of grace for a variety of reasons.

BUT, what is the condition of this covenant?

The main condition of the covenant of God's grace is FAITH!

Watson says that it is faith that is the humblest of all Christian virtues because we could boast in our repentance, we could boast in our works, but if it is faith that activates the covenant of God's grace, THEN where would we boast?

For FAITH is not even a work, it is a gift. AGAIN, the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Christ is a matter of Divine Assistance.

IF a person does not have the faith to believe...then they will not understand any of these things that pertain to the Christ.

But now we come to what I would say is the most important aspect of the magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

It is called Union with Christ. Christian's have Union with Christ.

For you to understand the significance of the Crucifixion of Christ you must understand Union with Christ.

Union with Christ.

Substitutionary Atonement.

What is the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Christ? The great transfer of debt. The great exchange of good for bad. BUT it is not merely that.

Is the cross an act of Divine Injustice? It is if you do not develop the system completely.

'by one man's obedience the many will be constituted righteous' 1 Cor. 15:45

So let's look at what happens at the cross. What are the technical aspects that happen at the cross.

The Doctrine of the Union of Christ.

Union with Christ is the matrix out of which all other salvation doctrines flow.

In order to understand the Gospel we have to understand our union with Christ.

Paul puts this way, it is our union with Christ 'that is the source of every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies' Eph. 1:3

John Murray, the great Scottish theologian that taught at Princeton Seminary put it this way 'the believer's union with Christ is the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation' – it is the unifying principle of all soteriology spanning from eternity past to eternity future.

Oneness. Unity.

John 15:1-7 'I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit'

John 17:20-23 'I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us'

Q: What is Jesus praying? That we would be in God and in Christ? – nearly 143 times in Paul's 13 Epistles, Paul writes about being 'in Christ'.

This is the identity of a Christian. – **By the way**, being called a Christian during the early church wasn't really a term that was used so much during the time of the NT, but later it was used that way. And the core theme of using the term was that a person's identity was now shaped by the person of Christ.

Terms change over time. It's like how we understand the term, Puritans, today. The term Puritan during the era of the Puritans was more of a curse than a complement. OR how a person might use the term Fundamentalist today. It's more of an insult than a term of respect.

People today hate the idea of fundamentals and act as if fundamentals is radical when in reality, fundamentals are not radical nor are they higher level, fundamentals are basic.

And the reality that fundamentals have become viewed as radical or extreme is just another

But it is a basic fundamental of the Gospel that if you have come to faith in Christ you are in Union with Christ.

What is the magnitude of the Cross? It is this that Christ has made a provision making union with God and union with Himself available.

If you are a Christian I can actually tell you what the remainder of your life will look like. I can tell you what the Holy Spirit of God is going to do in your life until you pass into eternity.

Final take-away.

What is the Magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ?

There is a near endless amount of things that we could say about the magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

I could spend a month relating the OT prophecies to the cross.
I could spend another month

But I'm just going to give this one application today. Just this one.

Turn to Romans 8. Looking at v. 31-39 – We have Victory in Jesus Christ.

How in the world, is anyone going to separate you from the love of God?!
How in the world, is anyone going to bring any legitimate accusation or complaint against you if you are in Union with Christ?

Two men looked out from prison bars, one saw the mud the other saw the stars.

Friends the twilight is upon us, the Son has died, and the sun has set.

In the coming week, we will see that the Son who has died, will be set in a tomb. Presumably, dead once and for all.

Have you died with Christ? Are you in Union with Him? Because I will tell you, there is very GOOD NEWS coming.

Friends this is NOT Sacramental Theology. This is NOT Christian Mysticism. This is UNION WITH CHRIST by FAITH ALONE in HIS Death.

Now I understand, you and I don't always feel like we are in union with God's love. BUT, friends, we do not live by how we feel, we live by FAITH!

Now I also understand, that you might get blamed for things you did not do, Friends, **YOU ARE IN UNION WITH CHRIST!** Take heart, He's being blamed for everything He didn't do!

But the baseless and senseless claims are not relevant.

The Gospel.

Friends there are many people that hold events, large public events, and at those large public events talk about Christ.

I'm not against events, I'm not against large public events, I'm not against the idea of a man

Pastoral Prayer.

Hymn. Thy Word.

Benediction.

Closing Prayer.

Small Group Questions.

1. What is the magnitude of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ?
2. What does it mean that we are in Union with Christ? Ref. John 15:1-7, John 17:20-23, 1 Cor. 1:10, Gal. 3:26-29, Phil. 2:2
3. What does it mean to have our identity in Christ? Consider Paul's 143+ statements of being 'in Christ' and how did his life play out.
4. Have a discussion about the Order of Salvation and comforting each other as we live our our Christian life.

The order of salvation is – Regeneration/New Birth (Jn.3) – Justification/Imputed Righteousness (Rom. 8) – Sanctification (1 Thes. 4) – Glorification (Eternity in Heaven)

Recall – New birth is not an experience, it is a revelation of faith and repentance given by the Holy Spirit to know Christ rightly and obey Him surely. Conversion 'experiences' are not validation of new birth, faith and repentance and remaining in an abiding faith is solid evidence of new birth.