

The Cross of Jesus Christ

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”
I Corinthians 15:3

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”
Galatians 6:14

Introduction:

1. There is so much that could be said about the crucifixion – but we must limit our area of focus.
 2. We may understand the sinfulness of sin by considering the required sacrifice to appease God.
 3. We may understand the unspeakable gift of eternal life by considering the full cost Jesus paid for it.
 4. Paul had this subject as His constant theme . . . yet our flesh despises it as boring and irrelevant.
 5. Men glory in human achievement like an Ironman triathlon, but consider Jesus today (Heb 3:1; 12:3).
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- I. We are quite familiar with the physical and obvious aspects of our Lord’s crucifixion.
 - A. He was SCOURGED by the Romans who were known for efficient punishments.
 - B. He had a CROWN OF THORNS planted on his head and driven into his scalp with a reed.
 - C. He had His BEARD PLUCKED off His face (Isaiah 50:6).
 - D. His FACE WAS BEATEN by the hands and fists of Roman soldiers.
 - E. He was STRIPPED of His garments in public and exposed to all in total NAKEDNESS.
 - F. He was kept up all night WITHOUT SLEEP for torture and fraudulent trials to condemn Him.
 - G. He was forced to CARRY HIS OWN CROSS after being physically abused all night.
 - H. He had NAILS driven through His HANDS AND FEET into the wooden cross.
 - I. He was SUSPENDED ON THAT CROSS with those four nails supporting His body weight.
 - J. He was EXTREMELY THIRSTY from the hours of trial and torture and fluid loss.
 - K. He was fully conscious of pain by REJECTING THE SEDATIVE offered before the cross.
 - L. Though these physical sufferings are horrific, other men have suffered similarly.

 - II. We sometimes overlook the nonphysical and less obvious aspects of His crucifixion.
 - A. He was tortured in His soul with knowledge of the future (Matt 26:1-2; Lu 9:51-53; Joh 12:27).
 - B. He was neglected by the general ignorance of Judas and lack of comfort regarding his treachery.
 - C. His disciples slept instead of responding to His requests for alertness and prayer.
 1. This after the Last Supper where he intimately told them of coming trouble and death.
 2. This after Peter had grandly promised Him to remain faithful even unto death.
 - D. One of His closest friends betrayed Him with a kiss for a mere thirty pieces of silver.
 - E. His disciples forsook Him and left Him alone and defenseless with the angry mob.
 1. We read of no defense on His behalf as a listing of His good deeds and words.
 2. We read of no efforts to sacrifice themselves to save His life i.e. Secret Service.
 - F. He was forsaken by all His followers in His great hour of need. There was no rebellion for Him.
 - G. He was ridiculed and mocked and tortured about His true identity with clear evidence available.
 - H. He was unappreciated for the incredible amount of good He had done and taught for 3 ½ years.
 - I. He was disowned by a dear friend who denied Him three times with oaths and cursing.
 - J. He was humiliated with nakedness, mock titles, a purple robe, crown of thorns, and railing.
 - K. He was sarcastically mocked as a king even though He was the King of kings and Son of God.
 - L. He was dared by wicked and presumptuous men who knew nothing to prophesy of them.
 - M. He was tempted to revenge with twelve legions of angels for His rescue, but He did not.
 - N. He was rejected by His Own nation who screamed for a Roman oppressor to torture Him.
 - O. He was sacrificed in order to free Barabbas, a proven and convicted murderer and seditioner.
 - P. He was ridiculed as an imposter that could not possibly be known or helped by God.
 - Q. He was slandered by many false witnesses called against Him to lie rather than hear His truth.
 - R. He was despised with spit in His face though He sent His sun, rain, and fruitful seasons to them.
 - U. He was humiliated by two previous enemies - Pilate and Herod - becoming friends by His trial.

- S. He was deserted by the governor who knew Jesus was innocent and the Jews merely envious.
- T. He was tempted to accept a sedative offered before the cross. He drank rather of God's cup.
- U. He was nailed on by the two thieves whom were crucified for their evil deeds at His sides.
- V. He was ignored and not rescued, though there was darkness over all the land for three hours.
- W. He was shamed and tortured to suffer and die naked before His women friends and mother.
- X. He was humiliated by being crucified between two common thieves though being Lord of all.
- Y. He was suffering not for those who loved Him but rather for enemies that hated Him (Rom 5:8).
- Z. No man has suffered such nonphysical pain and suffering in such a short period of time.

III. Satan and the demons of hell attacked Him without mercy in an incredible, yet invisible, conflict.

- A. We are ignorant of the great conflict between spirits in high places (Ep 6:12; Da 10:20; Jude 9).
- B. We do not respect Satan, when God looses him (Job 1-2; I Chr 1:1; Zech 3:1; Luke 22:3,31-32).
- C. Satan's demonic host is the most unified and efficient hostile force in the universe (Matt 12:26).
- D. Animosity and conflict between Satan and Jesus was prophesied very early (Genesis 3:15).
- E. Recall the subtle, arrogant, and malicious efforts to tempt Jesus to sin (Matthew 4:1-11).
- F. Satan only left Jesus "for a season" after the temptation in the wilderness (Luke 4:13).
- G. The hour of the power of darkness is a foreboding description from Jesus (Luke 22:53).
- H. Jesus knew the conflict with Satan was coming and told His disciples of it (John 14:30).
- I. It was the time for Satan to be cast out (John 12:31; 16:11). Was he happy with this change?
- J. Satan is filled with such malicious hatred for Jesus Christ regardless of the future (Rev 12:12).
- K. As the elect angels cannot believe salvation for men, Satan cannot stand salvation by a Man.
- L. And he knew that Jesus Christ was manifested to destroy him and his works (I John 3:8).
- M. If we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, what did Jesus have to wrestle with? With principalities, powers, the rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places (Ep 6:12).
- N. "[Deliver] my darling from the power of the dog" refers to the singular dog Satan (Ps 22:20).
- O. "Save Me from the lion's mouth" refers to the roaring lion Satan (Psalm 22:21 cp I Peter 5:8).
- P. He was strengthened in the Garden by an angel (Ma 4:11 cp Luke 22:43-44 cp 22:53 cp Jude 9).
- Q. They have no pity; they did not consider Him; they did not comfort Him; they tortured Him.
- R. If they could just get Him . . . to curse God . . . to beg for mercy . . . to quit . . . to be afraid . . . to ask for help . . . to use His Strength to deliver Himself . . . to violate a Scriptural promise . . . to retaliate against His persecutors . . . to ask them for help . . . to speak against the elect.
- S. No man has ever even imagined, let alone endured, such a spiritual conflict for His soul.

IV. But most of all He became sin for us and God His Father forsook Him.

- A. We must here admit Paul's description of the incarnation as a great mystery (I Timothy 3:16).
 - 1. Jesus had a human spirit subject to all our temptations yet without sin (Heb 2:18; 4:15).
 - 2. Jesus had a Divine Spirit, Which was the Word of God and the Everlasting Father.
- B. Remember clearly that no man has ever had a relationship with God as did Jesus of Nazareth.
 - 1. He was One with His Father (John 10:30; 17:20-26).
 - 2. He always pleased His Father (John 8:29 cp Matthew 3:17).
- C. Many, many martyrs have died more painful deaths with joy and singing from God's presence.
- D. It pleased His Heavenly Father to bruise Him, put Him to grief (Isaiah 53:10), and forsake Him.
- E. He became sin for us (II Corinthians 5:21) as our iniquity was laid on Him (Isaiah 53:6).
- F. He became infinitely **guilty, fearful, lonely, condemned** for the first and only time in His life.
- J. He suffered these things in infinite quantity and quality though for a very finite period of time.
- G. He suffered the equivalent of an eternity in hell for all the elect in a few hours (Cp Matt 7:23).
- H. Yet, we must acknowledge that He was in the presence of God that very day (Luke 23:43,46).
- I. No man can weakly imagine the spiritual pain and suffering of this part of the cross.

Conclusion:

- 1. "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." Song of Solomon 5:16
- 2. What will you do for Him? Love Him? Believe Him? Be baptized? Testify? Crucify your flesh?
- 3. May Jesus Christ be praised! But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.