

“The Crucifixion, Part 1”
(John 19:17-30)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. Last week,

We saw Jesus’ willingness to suffer
At the hands of His own people *for us* –
They condemned Him in their court for blasphemy,
And charged Him before the Roman court with treason.

We saw His willingness to suffer
At the hands of Pilate *for us* –
Pilate had Jesus scourged,
He humiliated Him,
And condemned Him to death,
Even though he knew Jesus was innocent,
To save his own position.

Jesus submitted to this for us,
Because He loves us –
Because the Father chose us
And gave us to Him as His reward –
Because this was the only way
He could save us.

2. But we also saw

That this was God’s plan all along:
Jesus had to be condemned;

He *had to die*;

And it couldn't have been by the hand of the Jews –

The Jews stoned their victims –

It had to be by the Romans –

He must be lifted up on a cross,

That He might draw all men to Himself –

Those the Father had given Him

From every nation under heaven.

B. Preview.

We come now to His execution

At the hands of the Romans:

The crucifixion.

There's too much here to look at in one sitting,

So we'll divide this into two parts:

1. From the crucifixion to His death;
2. And from His death to His burial.

This morning, let's consider seven things:

1. The place of His crucifixion.
2. His company in crucifixion.
3. The charge against Him in crucifixion.
4. His possessions gambled for in crucifixion.
5. His care for His mother in crucifixion.
6. His bearing God's wrath for our sins in crucifixion.
7. And finally, His death in crucifixion.

II. Sermon.

A. First, let's consider the place of His crucifixion.

We read in verse 17, "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."

Notice first that Jesus *carried His own cross*.

We know from the other Gospel accounts

That as He continued to the place of crucifixion,

His strength began to fail,

So that they eventually pressed Simon the Cyrene

Into carrying His cross (Mark 15:21).

But it was important that Jesus carry it at the beginning

To fulfill the type He gave us so long ago in Isaac.

As we read earlier,

When Abraham was called by God

To sacrifice his son on Mount Moriah,

He placed the wood for the sacrifice on Isaac's back

And had him carry it up the mount.

Isaac's sacrifice was a picture of what Jesus would do years later,

When He would carry the wood for His sacrifice

To the place of His execution.

That place was called the Place of a Skull –

In Greek, it was called kranion,

From which we get the word cranium;

In Latin, it's called calvaria,

From which we get the word Calvary;

And in Hebrew, Golgotha –

All which mean “skull.”

It was called by these names

Because the side of that hill looks like a human skull.

Apparently, it was a well-known place,

Which is why the evangelists point it out.

The place that reminded of death,

Was the place of His death.

B. Second, we see His company in crucifixion.

We read in verse 18, “There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.”

When they arrived at Golgotha,

They crucified Him:

Crucifixion is a form of capital punishment,

Where the victim is either tied or nailed to a cross

And then left to hang there for several days

Until he dies from exhaustion or suffocation.

In Jesus’ case, nails were used.

Peter preached on the day of Pentecost:

“This *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death” (Acts 2:23).

There were two others crucified with Him:

As we saw before, they were insurrectionists, like Barabbas,

Who were likely arrested in the same insurrection.

The Jewish leaders had convinced the people

To ask for Barabbas’ freedom, instead of Jesus’,

And so Jesus was now taking the cross meant for him.

In both of these things,

Jesus' crucifixion fulfilled what He said

Through the prophets so many years ago:

David writes in Psalm 22:16, "For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; *they pierced my hands and my feet.*"

And Isaiah writes, "Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, *and was numbered with the transgressors*; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors" (53:12).

This not only shows us that the Bible is God's Word –

Since only God can tell the future –

It reminds us what Jesus

Was willing to go through for us

Because He loves us:

That He would be considered a criminal,

That He would be executed for a crime He didn't commit,

Between two who deserved death.

C. Third, we see the charge against Him in crucifixion.

We read in verses 19-22, "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.'"

This inscription was the charge Jesus had been found guilty of:

He was *the King of the Jews*.

It was written in three languages –

Hebrew: the language of the country;

Latin: the language of the Romans;

And Greek: the common language of the people –

So that all could read it.

When the Jews saw it,

They immediately wanted it changed:

“Don’t write that He *is* the King of the Jews,

But that He *claimed to be* the King of the Jews.”

Pilate wasn’t the least bit inclined to give into them,

Since they had forced him to crucify Jesus.

He meant this as an insult – as repayment for their threats.

And so he left it as it was: “What I have written I have written.”

But let’s not forget, what Pilate wrote is true:

He is their King.

He is the Christ God sent into the world to save them,

And yet they executed Him.

John writes, “He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11).

If the world treated Jesus like this,

How can we expect them to treat us?

Jesus reminds us that this is the price

We must be willing to pay to follow Him –

Even as He was willing to pay it

Out of His great love for us.

D. Fourth, we see His possessions gambled for in crucifixion.

We read in verses 23-25, “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.”

Those who did the work of crucifying,
Had the right to plunder their victims –
Dead men no longer needed their belongings:
And so they divided His outer garments among themselves.

But when they came to His tunic,
They saw it was seamless:
It was woven in one piece,
Which took a great deal of time and skill,
And also made it valuable –
It’s possible that one of the wealthy women,
That Luke tells us about,
That followed and supported Jesus,
May have given it to Him (Luke 8:1-3).

So they decided not to tear it,
But gamble to see who would have it;
And in so doing, they fulfilled what David wrote in Psalm 22:18, “They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

Several prophecies were fulfilled in His crucifixion
That, humanly speaking, Jesus had no control over –
This wasn’t collusion on the part of Jesus and His disciples:

God was fulfilling all He had promised
To bring us life through the crucifixion of our Lord.

Notice also at the end of His life,
How little our Lord actually possessed:
Just the clothes on His back.

He continually practiced what He preached (Matt. 6:25-33).

If we could only learn to follow His example

And be content with the same,

We would avoid a number of the enemy's snares,

And be better able to advance God's kingdom.

Paul writes, "If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" (1 Tim. 6:8-10).

E. Fifth, we see His care for His mother in crucifixion.

We read in verses 25-27, "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*."

There were three women standing near the cross:

Mary, His mother;

Mary, the wife of Clopas, His mother's sister –

Or more likely, her sister-in-law:

That is, Joseph's sister,

Since it's unlikely that Mary's parents

Named two of their daughters Mary –

And Mary Magdalene,

The one from whom Jesus had cast out seven demons.

The only disciple we see at the crucifixion is John –

The rest were still in hiding.

And yet these women were there.

Perhaps they weren't as well-known,

Or perhaps their love for their Lord

Was stronger than their fear of man,

Which is what our Lord desires of us all.

When Jesus saw His mother and John –

The disciple whom He loved –

He said to Mary, "Woman, behold your son!"

His relationship with her

As that of a mother to a son

Was now coming to an end.

And so He points to John

As the one who would now be a son to her –

He also said to John, "Behold, your mother!"

To indicate that His will for him

Was that he should now care for her.

Maybe her other children weren't yet believers,

And Jesus wanted her to be cared for

By someone that belonged to Him.

But the point is, Jesus –

While He was undergoing the excruciating pain of crucifixion –

Wasn't concerned for Himself:

He was concerned for His mother –

That she be cared for.

This is what it means to serve one another:

It means to lay aside our own desires and needs,

To minister to the needs of others –

That's what Jesus calls us to do.

And in case we think

We're going to lose out if we do this,

We need to remember what our Lord said,

“If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all” (Mark 9:35).

There's no better way to minister to the needs of our own souls,

Than by ministering to the needs of others.

F. Sixth, we see His bearing God's wrath for our sins in crucifixion.

We read in Matthew 27:45-47, “Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 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?’ And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, *began* saying, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’”

John didn't record these words of our Lord,

But we believe it was at this time

That the Father laid our sins on Jesus,

That He was alienated from the Father in His human nature,

And that He experienced His Father's full wrath –

Jesus literally went through hell on the cross.

This is why Jesus was nailed to a cross:

To show that He was under the curse of God –

That He was bearing the curse

That Adam's sin had brought on us.

Paul writes, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us – for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE’ – in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:13-14).

This is why Jesus sweat blood in the garden:

It wasn't because of the injustices,

It wasn't because of the abuse,

Or the rejection, or the scourging,

Or the mocking,

Or even the crucifixion-

It was because He had to face the full brunt

Of His Father's wrath against sin.

Only a God-man could do this and survive.

Only a God-man, through His sufferings,

Could satisfy the debt we owed to God.

This is the only way our sins could be paid for.

We could have suffered for an eternity

And never begun to pay our debt:

But Jesus could pay it and did on the cross,

Because of His great love for us.

G. Finally, we see His death in crucifixion.

We read in John 19:28-30, “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."

This also was a fulfillment of prophecy.

David writes in Psalm 69: 21, "They also gave me gall for my food and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

But after they gave Him the vinegar –

When this last thing was done to Him –

He said, "It is finished."

His work was now complete.

The Scripture had been fulfilled,

And so Jesus bowed His head

And gave up His spirit.

No one took His life –

He gave it for our sins.

When they will come to Him later,

Pilate will be surprised by the fact

That Jesus was already dead.

He was dead,

Not because the crucifixion killed Him,

But because He willingly laid down His life.

Jesus paid the price –

He gave up His life –

Because of His great love for you,

So that you might live –

That He might rescue your soul from hell.

And now He claims His right over you –
He calls you to give your life up to Him in return.

Have you done that this morning?

Are you trusting Him?

Are you following Him?

If not, Jesus calls you to do so now.

You have nothing to lose but hell.

And you have everything to gain – especially heaven.

Give yourself to Him,

Follow Him,

Love and serve Him,

And you will experience the full blessing of His love.

This evening, we'll consider what happens

From His death to His burial.

But for now,

Let's prepare to come to the Table

To remember His death for us.

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