



The Death of Shame

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Mark 15:22-32

Clint Pressley

*<sup>22</sup> And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). <sup>23</sup> And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. <sup>25</sup> And it was the third hour<sup>[a]</sup> when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup> And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." <sup>27</sup> And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup> And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save yourself, and come down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup> So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.*

*(Pastor Prays)*

Operation Overlord, as it was called, marked the beginning of the end of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi thugs. On June 6, 1944, Dwight Eisenhower gave the go-ahead for the largest amphibious attack in the history of mankind. Even if you don't like World War 2 history, you know the term D-Day. It was the Allied invasion of Normandy, it's across the English Channel. Once the Americans established a beachhead on the coast of France, they started the liberation of France, pushing the Germans out. It culminated at the end of August when they got to Paris.

What a great day that was. The liberation of Paris was a day of celebration. The French just went crazy. They're all excited, except for a handful of French women. You see, when the Germans occupied Paris, a few women in Paris started to be very friendly with the German Officers. And because they were so friendly with the Nazi officers, they received special favors. They had more to eat than anyone else. They were better dressed than anyone else. So much so, that the occupied people in Paris started to resent these women who were with the German officers. So, when the day came when the Americans started to push the Germans out of France, and once Paris was free of Germans, the citizens in Paris rounded up all of those female conspirators and, in a giant public display, shaved their heads in public to humiliate them in front of the whole world. In fact, the shaming of the French women is included in most World War 2 documentaries.

Shame. Shame is a powerful tool that the Romans, in this passage, knew far too well. We are now at the flashpoint. Verse 22 starts the flashpoint of human history. Jesus has been arrested. He was tried twice, once by the religious men, the Jews, in the Kangaroo court. And the second time by the Roman government. He now has been led to the worst shame. After being beaten and bloody within an inch of his life, he now has been stripped naked and taken outside of the city walls. And there he will be nailed to a cross. And so today, what I want to do is to look at his shame and be ashamed no more. Why? Because...

### **His Shame Guarantees Your Salvation**

What I'd like to do for the next few moments is, after reading the text and introducing it, I would like to go back through and do some interpretation. Let's just walk through it slowly, and I'll point out a couple of things that maybe you didn't see or maybe you will find interesting. And then, I'll come back and try to make some application.

Join me now in verse 22. We'll just walk through it. <sup>22</sup> *And they brought him to the place called Golgotha.* Mark tells us what that means *the Place of a Skull*. We don't really know why it was called Golgotha. There are some that say the rock formation there looked like a skull. If you go to the garden tomb, there you'll find a place where if you tilt your head just right and look at it with one eye and squint. Maybe you can see it looks like a skull. Or there is some speculation that this place was such a killing field that there were skulls all over the area. We just don't

know why they call it the place of a skull. Golgotha is an Aramaic word. When translated into Latin, it is where we get Calvary. When we sing about Calvary, we are singing from a Latin word that is the same word as Golgotha, the Place of a Skull.

It's a place that would be outside of the city walls. Inside Jerusalem, the Romans would not let you commit murder there, and you wouldn't commit an execution inside the walls. You need to do that outside the city. It's on a thoroughfare where people would walk by and see. So, when you came into this part of the world, and you saw somebody crucified, you would see on a plaque above them the description of their crime. And then you would think, I'm not going to do that. The Romans would use it as a deterrent. They took him outside to a place called Golgotha.

In verse 23, they offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. This is probably a narcotic. This is given, most likely not by the soldiers. This actually would be an act of mercy. A lot of scholars think this was Jewish women who would come because their heart might be breaking for the person that's being crucified. They want to keep him from hurting, so they try just to relieve his pain a little bit. Wine mixed with myrrh is a narcotic, and it would take the edge off. The other gospels tell us that Jesus tasted it and wouldn't drink it. He would feel every bit of misery. Jesus would not drink anything that would dull his senses.

In verse 24, there is a short phrase. <sup>24</sup>*And they crucified him.* There's a world bound up in that little phrase, and they crucified him. The Persians invented crucifixion, but the Romans perfected it. They had crucified thousands. At one point, a Jewish historian tells us that they crucified so many people during a rebellion that they ran out of wood to build crosses. The soldiers knew exactly what to do. Once they got Jesus to Golgotha, they would take the cross beam and lay him down across it. They would take one hand and stretch it out, and the Roman soldier would feel the wrist and find the bone right up under the wrist. Then, they would drive a large square nail right under that bone. They would then stretch the other hand out on the other side of the cross beam, again find the bone, and drive a nail right up under it. But the person wouldn't be pulled too tight. The soldiers learned, over the course of time, that if you stretch them out too tight, they won't stay alive very long. They leave a little slack so the victim would hang.

Once you have both wrists nailed to the cross, they would take the legs and bend the knees just a bit so they couldn't stand up straight. Bend the knees just a bit and then put the left foot over the right foot. Take that large square nail and drive it through the arch of the criminal's foot, nail it right to the cross. Once you have the victim on the cross, you then stand the cross up and drop it down into the encasement. The hands would start tearing a bit. The criminal is hanging there on the cross with just enough slack to make it very difficult to breathe. The victim would have to push up with his feet on the nail just to get some air. It gets harder and harder to do that, and over the course of time, maybe a couple of hours. The victim would not be able to get the carbon dioxide out, and the oxygen in and slowly begin to suffocate. Oftentimes, the heart would be surrounded by fluid. This is all bound up in the crucified.

Here is Jesus. What he is doing, to the very end, he's becoming sin. Here, he will give us the atonement. All of that is bound up in the phrase, they crucified him. While that's going on with Jesus on the cross, under the cross, which is not very high, you have the soldiers. They don't care what's happening to Jesus. They're bidding their time. They're playing a little game. They divided his garments among them. So, what you would do with the criminal, you would not be paid very much as a soldier, so you have the garments, the clothes that they were wearing. They are not going to need these anymore. So, the soldiers are gambling to see who would get the clothing. They don't know what they're doing, but this has been predicted several 100 years before in Psalm 22:18. I'll point that out later.

In verse 25, Mark gives us a time stamp. His time stamp is a little different than John's. John uses Roman time. When you read this, Mark is using Jewish time. Mark is good about telling us that this is going on in the morning. In verse 26, you have an inscription. When the criminal was executed, they nailed him to the cross, and then above his head, you would put his sentence. It told everyone that this is what he did. He was a robber, or he was a rebel. Maybe he was an insurrectionist or a murderer. And so above Jesus's head, Pilate wrote, King of the Jews. All four gospels tell us that Pilate did something. They tell us a little different in each one, but when we put it all together, the sign above Jesus said, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. If you come from a Roman Catholic background, you have seen the crucifix, and above the crucifix is the plaque that has INRI. That's Latin for Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. That's the sentence above his head.

You've seen the silhouette pictures of the three crosses at Calvary. Crucified with Jesus, there are two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. That is the fulfillment of Isaiah 53. Isaiah 53 tells us that he was numbered with the transgressors.

By the way, if you're on a cross, it's not like they're 8 feet above your head. They're slightly elevated but are close enough to hear. So the passersby, in verse 29, derided him. It's just the common folks who are wagging their heads and they're saying, save yourself. Or they're saying, you would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, come down off the cross. You see what they're saying. This is very similar to what Satan said to Jesus at the beginning of his ministry. Remember the story? Jesus is baptized; he comes up out of the water and goes into the desert to be tempted by the devil, and Satan tempts him with things like If you are. So now, near the end of his ministry, Satan sought to prevent Jesus from saving humanity. He seeks to prevent Jesus from being the mouthpiece of the common man. If you are the Christ, come down from the cross. The religious people get involved in verse 31. So, the chief priests and the scribes mocked him one to another. They're doing that within earshot of Jesus. They're saying he healed people; he was able to do that, but he can't save himself. Verse 32 says, <sup>32</sup> *Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.* Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

So, add insult to injury, he's had the common people, he's had the religious leaders, he has the soldiers throwing dice, and now beside him are two criminals, both of them dying, and they are heaping shame on Jesus. You see his shame. Let's look at his shame. It guarantees our salvation. Let me now make a couple of suggestions as to how to apply this passage. Let's just start at the very beginning. Here's the first one: #1

### **Stand with Jesus**

You're going to be tempted to blend into the crowd, to fit in with everybody, to fit with the culture. You're going to be tempted to back away from a radical commitment to Jesus Christ. But I want you to look at the cross and think to yourself, I'm going to stand with Jesus. I get that in verse 22. <sup>22</sup> *And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull).* So it's outside of Jerusalem, it's on a major thoroughfare. The writer of Hebrews picks up on this as he encourages this church, who's under persecution. He takes this scene right here

and listen to what he says in Hebrews 13:12-14. This is what the writer says. <sup>12</sup> *So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.* Here's the application. <sup>13</sup> *Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.* <sup>14</sup> *For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.* Let's go out there. If they hated Jesus, let's go out there where Jesus is. They'll hate us too. All of you, the students in middle or high school, are in some of the most formative, difficult years. You will be so tempted to not live your Christianity. And I would just say, from this passage, you go and stand out there with Jesus. If everybody hates you, if you don't fit in, if you miss out on all the fun you think you're missing out on, you stand outside with Jesus. If you're a college student, you stand with Jesus. Let's say that you are a child and you've given your life to Jesus; you're not yet in middle school or high school; let me just say to you, you stand with Jesus. Sometimes, people get out of college as a single man or woman; the temptations get even heavier because you feel like you might be missing out on something. You stand with Jesus. All of you who have families, moms and dads, with your children, I'm challenging you to make sure you stand and lead.

Senior adults, one of my favorite preachers is Jonathan Edwards. When he preaches *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, he goes through and just addresses everybody. And when he finally gets to the old people, he addresses them, too. He says, if you're a senior adult here, it's not over. You stand with Jesus. You don't get to coast just because you got a little bit older; you stand for Christ. No compromise, no yielding, no shame. You stand with Jesus, full submission at any cost. Stand with Jesus. That's verse 22. Let me give you a second thing: #2

### **Trust that he knows**

He knows your specific, unique condition. He knows your specific, unique needs. I get that in verse 23. They come to him, and as an act of mercy, and they offered him wine mixed with myrrh. It's a narcotic to dull the pain. They did that so he would not suffer as much. It would be very easy to take that and dull some of the pain. But Jesus refused it. Why? Because he would not have his senses dulled. He would feel every ounce of pain. He would not turn any suffering away. He felt everything. Sometimes, you'll be tempted. You will think people don't know what I'm going through. I want you to come to verse 23, and you look there at Jesus. He turned away that which would make him more comfortable so that he would know what you're going

through. Whatever pain, whatever suffering, whatever shame, whatever betrayal. Let's just say you are walking through some sort of anxiety, and it feels like you are alone. You go here to verse 23. Jesus pushed the wine and the myrrh away so he would feel every bit of that. We sometimes use the word empathy. It's a dangerous word. Empathy. Let me just say that Jesus is empathetic for a reason. He's not just empathetic to feel what you feel. He's empathetic for a reason: that empathy is going to redemption. All of it. Everything you've dealt with, all the temptations. If you've been addicted to a substance and you're coming off of that and you have the withdrawals and you think, the cross can't speak to this right here. God forbid, you have been a victim of abuse. You can go to the cross and see Jesus, and he can heal. Maybe you've done something really terrible, and everybody knows about it. I want you to go there and see the cross. See Jesus and the shame he's enduring. He takes the shame for you. You struggle with whatever sin you've got, jealousy or anger. I want you to go to the cross and trust that he knows. That's verse 23. Stand with Jesus. Trust that he knows: #3

### **Trust the Bible**

We trust the Bible here at Hickory Grove. This is why we do expositional preaching. Expositional preaching is really nothing more than reading the text, explaining the text, and applying the text. It is just studying the Bible. That's why the sermons feel sometimes like a little bit of a Bible study. Look at verse 24. When I read it to you, I pointed out Psalm 22. It really is exciting to read that. <sup>24</sup>*And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take.* Look at the soldiers and what they're doing in verse 24. They think they're acting freely. They don't know that 700 years before, David in Psalm 22:18 wrote, <sup>18</sup>*they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.* David wrote that before the Roman Empire even existed. And here are these soldiers who think they are in control, and they are doing nothing more than fulfilling the providential hand of God. So, I'll give you that to say: you can trust the Bible.

Each week, we use four categories to explain the gospel - God, Man, Christ, and Response. The Bible tells us that God is a God of holiness that created all of us. The Bible tells us who men and women are, what it means to be a man, and what it means to be a woman. It tells us that we are sinners. The Bible tells us the expectations that God has. The Bible tells us how to become a Christian. Sometimes, we'll use the five words that describe being a Christian. We are saved by

God's grace through faith in Christ, according to the Bible, to the glory of God. Or if you want to say it like this, God created you in his image, but the image of God in you is disfigured by our sin. That sin has separated us from God. God, in his goodness, gives us Christ, who is all God and all man. He lived perfectly and died on the cross to take the wrath of God. They buried him, and three days later, God raised him from the dead. He has ascended into heaven. And if you believe Jesus did that for you, that's how you are saved. You trust that he did that for you. That's what the Bible teaches.

But that's not all it does. I hope that you're consuming the Bible because it is food for your soul. The Bible is strength for your heart, so you can make it. The Bible is light for your path, so you know where you're going. The Bible is healing for your injuries. The Bible is there to help you think correctly. The Bible is there to guide you in Christ's likeness. The Bible is going to make you wise. If someone calls you a fool, start reading the Bible; you won't be a fool anymore. Read the Proverbs over and over. They will make you wise. The Bible will help your vocabulary. You can always tell somebody who has been going to church their whole life, they know the jargon. The same is true when it comes to reading the Bible. Your vocabulary will start to change. So what do we do? We trust. We trust that he knows; we trust the Bible. Let me give you another thing to trust. Here's the fourth point: #4

### **Trust his mercy**

I want you to trust his mercy. It's bound up right there in verse 24. And they crucified him. There's the Gospel of grace, and there is the mercy. Why is Jesus crucified? It's not as an example. It's not a tragedy, and that he became a martyr. He's crucified as a substitute. He died in our place. Do you understand the word mercy? You need to understand that we, as sinners, deserve the wrath of God, but the wrath of God has been put on our substitute Jesus. He gets the wrath; we get the mercy. Mercy is you not getting what you deserve. Grace is you getting the blessings more than you deserve. So, if you take a coin that has two sides, one side is mercy, it tells us that you don't get the hell you deserve. The other side is grace. You get the blessing, the heaven, that you don't deserve. And that is the coin of salvation, right there in front of you. There with mercy is the love of God, and that's why we can preach God's love for

you and God's forgiveness given to you at the cross of Jesus. That's why we can have hope for people. That's why you have people you're praying. You're praying and hoping because of the cross. That's why we believe that marriages that have been completely wrecked can be reconciled. Why? We have hope in restoration. That's why some of you, even when you are in the depths of despair, can still see joy out there coming because you believe that Jesus died in your place. You believe that God raised him from the dead, and your life is bound up in Jesus. We trust his mercy. Let me give you a fifth point: #5

### **Know the Gospel**

We are to know the gospel. I want you to actually know what the gospel is. Let me show where I get that in verse 26. <sup>26</sup>*And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."* What you have right there is Pilate putting the sentence on Jesus. This is why he's being crucified. Because he is the King of the Jews. What's amazing is that this Roman Pontius Pilate wrote down a truth that he didn't believe. You might say it another way. Pilate wrote more gospel than he ever knew. Let me say it another way. Saying it is not the same as believing it. Saying that you believe in God, saying that you believe that Jesus died on the cross, and God raised him from the dead, saying it is not the same as believing it. What did James say? Even the demons believe and shudder.

Do you know that there is a kind of faith that does not save? There is a faith that doesn't save. Greg Gilbert wrote a little black book called *What is the Gospel?* I think he has a good way to explain it, so we'll use his categories. First, God is the holy Creator. Man is a sinner is the second category. Man is separated from God. The third category is Christ. Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He lived in our place and died in our place. God raised him from the dead. There's the gospel. And the way it becomes yours is the 4th category. That is to repent and believe.

Now I feel like I need to put another category on it. God, Man, Christ, Repentance, and I'll add fruits. I want to be careful not to preach work-based salvation, but what I do believe is if there is salvation, there is evidence. What did James say again? Faith that has no works is dead. I want you to know the gospel. Not just the prayer. I want you to know it. In fact, we'll push this a little further: #6

## Trade shame for humility

I won't go back through it, but you saw it in verses 28-31. You have the passersby, you have the scribes and the Pharisees, and then you have the two thieves on either side of him putting shame on Jesus. Sometimes, the shame we get is what we actually deserve. I opened up with an illustration of the women in Paris spending time with the German officers, and then we saw the shame they deserved; they were traitors. If we were to take all of our sins and project them on that screen and put your names there for the world to see, or if our thoughts were printed out, think of the shame. Just in the last couple of weeks, there have been so many pastors in the world that have fallen into sexual sin and immorality. And it just grieves me.

Think of the shame involved. That shame should drive us to say, I would never do that. It should bring humility that says if it were not for the grace of God, that could be me. So, you go to the cross, and you take your shame, and you put it at the cross. And what you get is humility, and it makes you thankful for grace. Let me give you one last point, and we'll call it a day: #7

## Never give up

If you have a prodigal, some of you moms and dads, never give up. I get this from that last sentence at the end of verse 32. Mark tells us those who were crucified with him also reviled him. Now Luke picks up the story, and he tells us in Luke 23:39-43 the story of the thief on the cross. Let me read that for you. <sup>39</sup>*One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!"* <sup>40</sup>*But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"* <sup>41</sup>*And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."* <sup>42</sup>*And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."* <sup>43</sup>*And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

At the last moment, after he had already said terrible things. I don't know what it is that clicked, but at some point, he believed. Now, you see that he did not pray the sinner's prayer. He was not baptized. He didn't go through the categories, God- Man-Christ. He didn't do any of that. What you have is the unbelievable, overwhelming grace of God shining on this man's life, and Jesus saved him. Never, ever, ever stop praying. Never stop witnessing. Never stop loving that

one that you think is gone forever. Maybe you're the prodigal. Maybe you're the one that somebody's been praying for. Maybe you're the thief on the cross, and you need to hear that his shame has guaranteed your salvation.

*(Pastor prays)*