

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

It was 15 years ago, that the world was introduced to Mel Gibson's film, The Passion of the Christ.

I remember going to watch it at the movie theater on opening weekend.

I took my wife and my mom and I remember the long lines waiting that were waiting to be allowed into the theater for the next showing.

I also remember watching many people coming out of the previous showing sobbing.

There were people handing out tissues telling us to prepare for what we were about to experience.

That was the only time I ever saw that movie.

Did I not like the movie? I liked it. I thought it was well made. I thought Mel Gibson did a very good job.

Would I see it again? I would.

In fact, I know many churches that show it – especially during this week, as we memorialize His death and resurrection.

Maybe one day, we will show it here. Lord willing.

However, as our text takes this morning to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, I want to emphasize that there is more to the story than the extreme cruelty that Jesus Christ had to suffer.

The beatings He took, the mockery He endured, the scourging He withstood, the affliction that was placed on Him – all of that is only a small part of the story.

You see church, as we read our text this morning, we will see that the Cross of Jesus does not cry out for sympathy from us.

It is not about feeling sorry for Jesus. If we walk out of here today with simply feeling sorry for what Jesus endured then we missed the point.

The Cross of Jesus does however demand a response from you and me.

Let's pray...

[Mar 15:16-47 NKJV] 16 Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. 17 And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His [head], 18 and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. 20 And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. 21 Then they compelled a certain man,

Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. 22 And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. 23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take [it]. 24 And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them [to determine] what every man should take. 25 Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. 26 And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS. 27 With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. 28 So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors." 29 And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! [You] who destroy the temple and build [it] in three days, 30 "save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" 31 Likewise the chief priests also,

mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. 32 "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him. 33 Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" 35 Some of those who stood by, when they heard [that], said, "Look, He is calling for Elijah!" 36 Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put [it] on a reed, and offered [it] to Him to drink, saying, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down." 37 And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. 38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. 39 So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that

He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!" 40 There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, 41 who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem. 42 Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 44 Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. 45 So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. 46 Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had

been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. 47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary [the mother] of Joses observed where He was laid.

For the last two weeks, we saw Jesus enduring the kangaroo courts at the hands of the religious rulers as well as the gentile leaders.

Jesus has already been beaten twice, we read in our text last week about the scourging that He had to endure and I gave you guys some insight as what went on during the scourging as the flesh would be ripped off the body.

Jesus has been up for over 24 hours already.

And our text starts off this morning as He now endures a further beating at the hands of the Roman soldiers.

[Mar 15:16-18 NKJV] 16 Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole

garrison. 17 And they clothed Him with **purple**; and they **twisted a crown of thorns**, put it on His [head], 18 and began to **salute Him**, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

The Praetorium is a Latin word, it means headquarters.

So the soldiers now take Jesus to the Roman Headquarters in Jerusalem – also known as Herod's Palace.

And I asked you guys to underline the word "garrison" because once again we see the overkill in the handling of Jesus Christ.

Jesus wasn't going to go anywhere. He was not a threat to anyone anymore – especially after what He had just gone through.

So the soldiers cloth Him in purple – Purple was the color of royalty.

They place a crown of thorns upon the head of Jesus. After all, every king has a crown.

I am pretty sure that they didn't simply lay the crown on His head – they probably pressed in onto His head.

And the soldiers mockingly saluted Jesus as King of the Jews.

No longer was Jesus simply having to endure physical torture, now He has to endure psychological torture as well.

[Mar 15:19 NKJV] 19 Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him.

Jesus' head was already bloody and bruised from the strike to the face that He suffered at the hands of the temple guard. It was probably soaked in blood from the crown of thorns that was pressed onto His head.

Now the Roman soldiers take turns striking Him in the head with a reed stick.

Why would Jesus allow this???

He had the power and authority to stop all of this.

In the Gospel of John, John writes that when they came to arrest Jesus and Jesus reveals to the masses by saying I am he – everyone (the 600 plus soldiers and guards and religious rulers that came to arrest Him) fell back.

In the Matthew's account, after Peter slices the ear of Malchus off, Jesus rebukes Peter by telling him that if He wanted, He would be able to call upon 12 legions of angels. 72,000 angels were at His disposal.

At any time Jesus could have stopped scourging

At any time Jesus could have halted the trials

At any time, Jesus could have ended the mocking that He endured at the hand of the Roman soldiers.

But He chose not to.

[Jhn 10:17-18 NKJV] 17 "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Church: Jesus endured everything for the fulfillment of scriptures and because of the love that He has for you and me.

In verse 20, the soldiers take away the purple robe – it doesn't say anything about the crown of thorns – and they lead Jesus out of the city to the place where He is to be crucified.

Write this verse down: Leviticus 16:10

In the day of Atonement in the Old Testament, there were two goats, one was sacrificed as the sin offering for the people and the other goat, the scapegoat, was to represent the atonement (it is the

one that bore the sins of the people) and that one was always led out of the city, into the wilderness.

Now, it is important to note that the Romans did not invent the penalty of crucifixion, it had existed beforehand. However, they perfected it as a means to intimidate the people into doing anything that would offend Rome.

So when anyone was scheduled to be crucified, they would parade them across the town and as they were led to the cross, they would shout out the crime that the person had committed.

[Mar 15:21 NKJV] 21 Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

This Simon individual mentioned here in verse 21 was a pilgrim who had come into Jerusalem to partake of the Passover feast.

Remember, every male was required to eat the Passover in Jerusalem.

Because of the beatings and scourging that Jesus had endured, He was no longer capable of bearing the cross.

It has been estimated that the crossbeams that the prisoners were forced to carry weighed between 75-125 lbs. They would normally tie their hands to the beam that was carried.

I have two quick observations regarding Simon bearing the cross of Jesus.

1. Jesus did not bear His cross because it was not His – it was mine and it is yours. We are the ones that deserve to go to hell.
2. Second observation, bearing our cross sometimes means that we allow the cross to do exactly what it did to Jesus and allow it to bring us to our knees and allow another to bear it.

We find a Rufus in the book of Romans, someone who becomes really close with Paul. And many theologians believe that Simon's testimony influences his children in being leaders of the early church – that is why they are named here in the Gospel of Mark.

[Mar 15:22-24 NKJV] 22 And they brought Him to the place **Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. 23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take [it]. 24 And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them [to determine] what every man should take.**

We get the name Calvary from the Latin translation of the word Golgotha.

It is the same Latin root word where we get the Spanish word Calavera which of course means skull.

Once again, this place of skull or Golgatha or Calvary was outside the city.

In verse 23, when they approached Golgatha, they offered Jesus this wine/myrrh mixture, this was a sedative given to those that were about to be crucified as a show of mercy to help alleviate the pain that they were about to endure on the cross.

It would be the equivalent of giving someone morphine...

Jesus refuses.

His refusal meant He would remain in control of His mental capacities.

Nothing Jesus said or did while on the Cross could be attributed to an altered state of consciousness.

It wasn't "the wine talking."

Whatever strength He had could only be attributed to God.

Now, I want you to focus on verse 24 – especially the first 5 words.

And when they crucified Him,

Five words dedicated to the crucifixion.

Why no details???

The other gospels are the same way, very little detail regarding the crucifixion.

The epistles don't provide any other insight to the crucifixion as well.

Church, there is a reason for this.

You see, the emphasis of the Gospels and the Epistles is on the result of the work on the cross by Jesus Christ that day.

[1Pe 2:21-25 NKJV] 21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was

deceit found in His mouth"; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed [Himself] to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Jesus is stripped of His clothes and the soldiers cast lots to see who was going to get a souvenir of what had happened. (Psalm 22)

In verse 25, the soldiers place a sign with the charge that He was accused of. Remember, the religious rulers accused Jesus of being King in order that Rome might be threatened by Him.

And that was the charge: King of the Jews.

Now, in John gospel, he writes that the religious rulers complain about the charge. They wanted Pilate to change it, however Pilate wouldn't budge and said, "What I have written, I have written"

In verse 27 and 28 it talks about the two robbers that were crucified next to Jesus. (Isaiah 53)

From verse 29-32, we see that the crowd has not stopped mocking Jesus.

Telling Him to come down from the cross, to save Himself.

The religious rulers making the statement that He saved other but He Himself cannot save.

And they were right about Jesus saving others because...

For the past six months, we have seen Jesus heal leprosy and the blind and the demon possessed.

And they were also right about Jesus not being able to save Himself...

Because if He had come off the cross, He could not have saved you or me.

It wasn't the nails that held Jesus upon the cross. It was His love for and for me. Amen.

[Mar 15:32 NKJV] 32 "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

The sceptic is always going to say, "If I can see it, I will believe it."

However, that is not the Lord's way.

The way of the Lord is always if you believe it, then you will be able to see it.

Judas saw the miracles of Jesus Christ.

Pharaoh the plagues descend upon Egypt.

The Children of Israel saw the Red Sea part before their very eyes and they saw the manna fall from the sky.

The problem is that they never had faith. They truly didn't believe.

The bible says that without faith, it is impossible to please God.

(Hebrews 11:6)

[Mar 15:33-34 NKJV] 33 Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

For three hours, there was total darkness. Why?

In the book of Exodus, before the first Passover Lamb was killed, the entire land was covered in darkness for three days. (Exodus 10:21-22)

Which of course symbolizes the darkness that would descend upon the land as the Lamb of God was slain.

Because the people had no desire to see spiritually, God prevented them from seeing physically what was really taking place on the Cross of Calvary.

It is after the three hours of darkness that Jesus cries out in His native Aramaic “My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?”

(Psalm 22)

This is the point where all of our sins were placed upon His shoulders and not only was there a separation of fellowship from the Father but also the actual outpouring of the Father’s wrath upon Him as a substitute for all of humanity.

We read this verse last week. I will read it to you.

[2Co 5:21 NKJV] 21 For He made Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

In verse 35,36 the people think that Jesus is calling upon Elijah and they continue to mock Him as we see in verse 36 as they await a visible sign.

[Mar 15:37-38 NKJV] 37 And Jesus **cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. 38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from **top to bottom**.**

I asked you to underline Jesus crying out – John tells us in his gospel that Jesus cried out “It is finished”

The three greatest words spoken in the history of humanity, Jesus had finished the work of redemption on Calvary.

It was not a cry of agony but one of victory.

Noticed that the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom, this is the veil that separated God from the people. Only the High priest would be able to go into the Holy of Holies once a year -

Because of what Jesus, we can all come to Him. We can all have fellowship with Him.

It wasn't man that tore the veil, from the bottom up – it was God.

This church is called grace – it is free. But it is not cheap as it cost Jesus everything to open the way to the Father.

That is why we don't sew the veil up again with legalism and rules and regulations.

It is finished!!!

[Mar 15:39 NKJV] 39 So when the centurion, who stood

opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!"

I am pretty sure this centurion had been a witness to many crucifixions in the past.

And I am pretty sure he had never witnessed one with the dignity that Jesus demonstrated on the cross.

In verses 40 and 41 we see the women that stayed with Jesus while He died.

Where were all the men???

[Mar 15:42-47 NKJV] 42 Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 44 Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. 45 So when he found out from the centurion, he

granted the body to Joseph. 46 Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. 47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary [the mother] of Joses observed where He was laid.

In this last portion of our study this morning, we are introduced to Joseph of Arimathea, Joseph was a closet Christian, he was a member of the Sanhedrin.

And I want to focus on him.

He was a rich man – fulfilling (Isaiah 53:9) Jesus was buried in the grave of a rich man.

But seeing Jesus upon the cross changed him.

And he does something very bold. He asks for the body of Jesus Christ.

1. He was not a relative of Jesus

2. His request would probably be denied on principle since Jesus had been executed for treason.
3. As a Pharisee, he would risk ceremonial defilement by touching a dead body.
4. He would no longer be a secret disciple, people would find out what had happened to the body of Jesus.

Joseph has watched Jesus openly die on a cross for Him.

And now it has been recorded for eternity that Joseph was the one who openly stepped up and claimed the body of Jesus.

He was willing to place the body of Jesus in his own tomb.

I told you at the beginning that the cross demands a response from us.

Are we simply bystanders or do we step out in boldness and proclaim as our Lord and Savior.

Joseph responded to the work on the cross.

The disciples responded to the work on the cross as they spread the gospel in the early church.

What kind of response have we given to the cross???

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

