

# Truth the Cross Reveals

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Date: 10 April 2022

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[ 0 : 00 ] Today, we're going to be in Luke chapter 23 as we take a little bit of a break from the gospel of John, but not a long break because on Easter we'll be back in John and I'm going to preach from John chapter 3 verse 16, a verse that many of you all no doubt are familiar with. But today as we think about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and as we prepare ourselves for next Sunday when we celebrate His resurrection, truly we celebrate that every day of our lives as those who have been born again.

But this is a fitting passage for us to draw our attention to the cross and to our Savior, to what exactly was accomplished there for us. So if you have your Bible, turn to Luke chapter 23 verses 33 through 49. If you don't own a Bible, there is a Bible in the pew for you to use.

And again, if you don't have a Bible, please take that Bible home with you today. It's a gift from our congregation to you in the hopes that you'll continue to be reading God's Word. Would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of His Word again in Luke chapter 23 beginning in verse 33 and going through verse 39.

And when they came to the place that is called the skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on His right and one on His left.

And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they cast lots to divide His garments. And the people stood by watching, but the rulers scoffed at Him, saying, He saved others, let Him save Himself.

[ 1 : 52 ] If He is the Christ of God, His chosen one. The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up and offering Him sour wine and saying, If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself.

There was also an inscription over Him, This is the King of the Jews. One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Him, saying, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us.

But the other rebuked Him, saying, Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.

And he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And He said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you will be with me in paradise.

It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

[ 3 : 01 ] And having said this, He breathed His last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, Certainly this man was innocent. And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home, beating their breasts.

And all his acquaintances, and the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? You know, my favorite time of year is this time of year.

It's spring. I love the weather, the cool mornings, and the cool evenings, which serve as bookends to a warm afternoon. Amen.

I love spring because it marks the end of winter. A time when plants wither, animals hibernate, and humans bundle up to stave off the cold dead of winter, waiting with eagerness for the rebirth that comes with another spring season and the new life that it brings.

You know, the seasons are God's creation. And they portray the same story that He has written for us in His Word. A story of life, of death, and of restoration.

[ 4 : 24 ] It's the story of how God's good creation fell under sin's deathly curse. It's the story of how sin's deathly curse was broken by the death of the one who is the giver of life.

It's the story of how the eternal, sinless Son of God added a human nature to His divine nature to bear the sins of His people on the cross, to redeem them by becoming cursed and crushed under the weight of His Father's righteous wrath.

It's the story of how His suffering and death on the cross has brought many sons and daughters to glory. Now, to someone who does not know this story, who does not know Christ, that statement might sound absurd.

You might wonder, how can anyone associate suffering and death with glory? Again, we can look at creation for an example.

In the fall, maybe my second or third favorite season, leaves change color, and they blanket the ground in a patchwork quilt full of shades of green and red and yellow and brown and orange.

[ 5 : 44 ] They are beautiful, but they're dead. In fact, their beauty is seen most vividly in their dying and falling off the branches which once held them.

God, our Creator, splashes His earth in the beautiful hues of autumn colors, a glorious and beautiful display of death, a paradox which is woven deep into the fabric of creation and is most gloriously displayed in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Christians know that Christ's death, though terrible, was done for their good. He died to save you. Your sins had to be dealt with and His death has secured your salvation because His death was a dying for you.

It was your punishment which He took. It was your death with which He died. And so our hymnals, unsurprisingly, are filled with songs that tell about blood, death, and sacrifice.

We sing, as we have this morning, about surveying the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died and a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins and sinners who plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

[ 7 : 18 ] We sing about how nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash away our sins and how precious is the flow which makes us white as snow. We sing that Jesus paid it all. All to Him we owe.

Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow. We know that the way of the cross leads home because there is power in the blood. And we sing about how our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

And so in this life we cling to the old rugged cross until one day we exchange it for a crown. To the outside world, our lyrics must seem gruesome and strange.

But for those who are in Christ, they contain glorious truth. The outside world might find the cross repulsive, but for those of us who have been saved, Christ crucified is what we preach and Christ crucified is what we praise God for as we sing about the wondrous love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

For the paradox of death and glory are at the heart of the gospel. And it is central to our faith. Christ died and rose again that by faith in him, though we die, yet like him we shall live.

[ 8 : 49 ] And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is that the cross reveals the truth about God and ourselves. The cross reveals the truth about God and ourselves.

All four of the gospels describe Jesus' death in great detail. This morning we are going to primarily look at Luke's account of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

And in doing so, in looking at his account of the brutal death of God's only son, the Holy Spirit enables us to peer into the heart of God the Father and our sinless Savior, Jesus Christ.

And so my hope is that just as when the sun shines on autumn leaves which drape the ground and fill our eyes with their striking colors, so this morning the Holy Spirit will shine the truth conveyed by the cross on you.

That you would behold the glory of Jesus Christ there. That if you are a believer, my hope would be that this time that we have together will be used by the Holy Spirit to produce within you a worshipful heart, an increased desire to live your life for Christ knowing what he's purchased for you and what he has prepared for you in heaven.

[ 10 : 13 ] If you are an unbeliever, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes to the truth and that your heart will receive it. That you will know the truth about God and the truth about yourself and that you would trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior today.

And so today our passage provides us with three truths which the cross reveals. But in order to behold the glorious good news of the cross, we must look at the bad news which made it necessary.

And that bad news is contained within that first truth. The cross reveals the truth about humanity's sinfulness. The cross reveals the truth about humanity's sinfulness.

Again in verse 33 it says, and when they came to the place that is called the skull, there they crucified him and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. The place of Jesus' crucifixion was called the skull.

A fitting name, no doubt for a terrible place. We don't know for sure where that place is exactly in Jerusalem or exactly why it is called the skull.

[ 11 : 27 ] The traditional site of Christ's crucifixion is obscured today by a Roman Catholic church. What we do know is that it was customary for the Romans to crucify their victims in an elevated place so that their victim was in full view of everyone traveling in and out of town.

And so the place where they crucified Jesus may have been called the skull because of its geographic formation. It looked like a skull or others believe that it derived its name from the fact that there were so many crucified remains left over and accumulation of skulls in this place that they called it the skull.

Whatever the case might be, it's not nearly as important for us to know where that physical location was as it is to know that this was the place where the author of life gave his life as a ransom for many.

Execution by crucifixion dates back to the 6th century B.C. when it was apparently conceived as a brutal form of punishment by the Persians. But by the time of Jesus' death, the Romans had viciously perfected it.

Since Christ's death, there has been a lot of study that has been done on the physical aspects of crucifixion. The Romans would severely beat their victim prior to crucifying them.

[ 12 : 58 ] They would chain them either to a stump or to a pole and lash their bodies with whips which they embedded with pieces of jagged rock and bone.

And so as they whipped the victim, the victim's skin would be ruptured. The jagged rock and the jagged bone would pierce their flesh and as the whip was pulled back, it would remove chunks of their flesh.

The victim would be whipped in this way from the back of their neck to the back of their knees causing contusions and lacerations that went down deep into the fabric of their muscles.

The victim would then be ordered to carry their cross or at least the cross piece across their back, on their neck, on their shoulders as their arms were tied to it.

Then once they arrived at the place of crucifixion, they would be thrown on their back. Their wrists would be driven into the cross piece with tapered iron spikes five to seven inches long.

[ 14 : 09 ] The impaled victim would then be lifted up and the cross piece would be attached to the upright post. Then the feet were nailed together with the knees bent.

The sagging position of the body made it impossible to breathe steadily. The victim would have to push up on their wounds, on their feet, in their wrists in order to breathe, meaning that each breath brought excruciating pain.

After time, the victim, if they had not died by suffocation or blood loss, would have their legs broken and they would suffocate in just a manner of minutes.

Then to ensure that the victim was truly dead, a Roman soldier would take his spear and jab it in an upward angle into their side. And the resulting flow of blood and water confirmed that indeed that victim has succumbed to the execution and the excruciating pain that the crucifixion brought.

In the English language, the most extreme word used to describe pain is the word excruciating. that word is derived from the Latin *excruciat*, meaning out of the cross.

[ 15 : 35 ] Needless to say, no one survived crucifixion. And in its cruelty, we see the depths of humanity's depravity to use his God-given intellect to devise such a torturous, punishing death.

And to handle the Son of God, the word who became flesh in such a way is abominable. But worse than that was the repulsive way in which Jesus was mocked throughout the painful process.

The depths of humanity's depravity is revealed in the blasphemous way in which they ridiculed and cursed the Son of God. Two other men died with Jesus that day, but Jesus, no doubt, was the main target.

He bore the brunt of the people's derision. And in the ridicule of Him, we see sin at its apex, blasphemy at its pinnacle, as sinners sneer at the Savior, finding enjoyment in chiding the incarnate God, the true King of kings and Lord of lords, blaspheming the one whom they ironically accused of blasphemy.

Prior to His arrival at Calvary, the Roman soldiers mocked Him with a satirical coronation after they beat Him. They draped Him in a robe made of wool that no doubt would have irritated His fresh wounds.

[ 17 : 16 ] Then they twisted into a crown some thorns and they placed it on His head and they hammered it in with a stick into His forehead which was hypersensitive from that morning where, if you recall, He was in such despair that He sweat drops of blood from His forehead in the Garden of Gethsemane.

You know, as I was thinking about this, if it were me, I'd be tempted to take one of them out. I wouldn't be able to but I'd think, you know, I'm going to get in a couple of blows before this all comes to an end and maybe it would be better to die here than suffer on the cross but Jesus is not like me.

Thank God. He's different from us. Instead, on the cross, the first words Luke records Jesus' uttering is a prayer and it's a prayer request and it's a prayer not made for Himself but for His enemies in verse 34.

Jesus prays, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. It was a prayer which was answered both during Jesus' crucifixion and in the aftermath of His resurrection when thousands came to faith in Him in Jerusalem.

Many of those who had wanted Him to die but at this point the crowd consisting of four distinct groups hated and hurled abusive, blasphemous words at Him.

[ 18 : 44 ] The first group that Luke records was the common people in verse 35 they are the people who stood by watching. You'd think that this group would be more sympathetic to Jesus.

After all, just a few days before they hailed Him as the Messiah and were ready to make Him their king as He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and as they shouted Hosanna, Hosanna.

But He refused to be the kind of king that they desired. During His trial before Pilate their leaders persuaded and stirred them into a frenzy as they demanded for Jesus' crucifixion.

While Luke records that they stood and watched, Matthew adds that those who passed by derided Him wagging their heads and saying, you who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days save yourself.

If you are the Son of God come down from the cross. That was the first group. The second group were the rulers of Israel recorded in the second half of verse 35.

[ 19 : 49 ] The rulers scoffed at Him saying He saved others. let Him save Himself if He is the Christ of God. And so the force with which these two groups ridiculed Jesus, blasphemed Him, was actually predicted back in Psalm 22, 7 through 8.

All those who see me mock me. They make mouths at me. They wag their heads. He trusts in the Lord. Let Him deliver him. Let Him rescue him for He delights in Him.

Those were the first two groups. The third was the Roman soldiers who cast lots for His clothing and who continued to mock the notion that Jesus was any sort of king in verses 36 and 37.

The soldiers also mocked Him coming up and offering Him sour wine and saying, if you are the King of the Jews save yourself. Unlike the other times when they offered Jesus something to drink, here they pretended that the sour wine was royal wine and they offered it to Him as if He were a king to add to His humiliation.

In verse 38 it says that there was also an inscription over Him that said, this is the King of the Jews. Now that was the work of Pilate and that was His revenge on the Jewish leaders who had forced Him to order the execution of a man whom He knew to be innocent.

[ 21 : 20 ] They wanted the sign changed to be read only that He claimed to be King of the Jews. But Pilate refused. He used Jesus' death to mock the Jews, the chosen people of God.

Jesus was met with rebukes from not only those who pleaded for His execution but also by those who were being executed with Him. And they composed the fourth group.

Matthew and Mark note that at first both of these criminals were hurling abuses at Jesus. But here Luke focuses solely on the one who ultimately rejected Him in verse 39.

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Him. Are you not the Christ? Save yourself. And so as Jesus hung on the cross His ears were filled with a cacophony of insults intended to bring Him shame.

In fact, the Romans would strip their victims of their clothing in order to bring them shame. Which calls to mind Adam and Eve when they fell into sin in the Garden of Eden they immediately became aware of what?

[ 22 : 33 ] Their nakedness and their shame. And ever since nakedness has been associated with moral guilt and it's symbolic of shame before God.

they unsuccessfully tried to make coverings for themselves from fig leaves but that would not work and so God killed an animal sacrificing its life to clothe them and make them coverings to cover and hide their shame.

On the cross humanity stripped the Son of God of His clothes they stripped Him of His flesh and with their abusive insults they attempted to strip Him of His dignity and the pleasure that they took in all of this reveals the depths of humanity's sinfulness as does the sacrifice of Jesus.

The Bible says that there is no remission for sins without the shedding of blood. Your sins great in number are all committed against an infinite creator.

your infinite creator the infinite creator and could only be overcome by the death of an infinite Savior. God sent His Son to die and Jesus the eternal God willingly gave His life His blood so that you who believe in Him will be forever clothed in His righteousness and have infinite life and peace with God and so we should rejoice with Isaiah as he says in 61.10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord my soul shall exult in my God for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.

[ 24 : 25 ] Do you treat your sin as if it's no big deal? Have you been fooled into believing that deep down inside you're basically a good person?

The Bible reveals the truth. The Bible says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God Romans 3.23 and it says in Romans 6.23 for the wages of sin is death.

Do you realize the depths of your own depravity? Do you know that you're a sinner? Let me ask you a few questions.

Have you ever stolen anything? Have you ever lusted after anyone in your heart? Have you ever hated someone? Have you ever told a lie?

Have you ever used God's name in vain? If so, then by your own confession you are a thief, you are an adulterer, you are a liar, you are a murderer, you are a blasphemer.

[ 25 : 35 ] You're guilty. You stand condemned before a holy God. So what can you do? Well, many hope that they've done enough good things to exceed their bad deeds in order to appease God, but that won't work.

So pay attention to this next truth. The cross reveals the truth of unmerited salvation. The cross reveals the truth of unmerited salvation.

In an ironic turn of events, as Jesus was being mocked because he could not save himself, it was in his not saving himself that he saved others. The one who gives life and is life died that those who are dead may live.

In a short time, one of the thieves crucified with Christ went from hurling abuses at him to trusting in him.

And his encounter with Christ reveals the truth that salvation is not based on human merit. As the other criminal joined in mocking Jesus, listen to what this criminal said in response in verse 40.

[ 26 : 48 ] he rebuked him saying, do you not fear God since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly for we are receiving the due reward for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.

And so at some point, God opened his heart to the truth and miraculously, powerfully, sovereignly, instantly, granted him faith and eternal life.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, he was rescued from spiritual darkness and eternal separation from God. In a moment, he was the unmerited recipient of light and life.

In an instant, this wretched sinner went from blaspheming God and revealing the depths of his depravity to rebuking his fellow criminal for doing that very thing.

Why? Well, as he endured the physical trauma of crucifixion, his heart was transformed. First, by recognizing the judgment of God, which he understood that he rightly deserved and which Jesus

did not.

[ 28 : 01 ] He was convicted by the Holy Spirit that he was a violator of God's law. By his own admission, he realized that the sentence that was handed down by a human judge was fair.

But more than that, he realized that he was about to endure the eternal sentence of a divine judge, a punishment which he likewise justly deserved, but that would have eternal implications.

He was afraid not of those who could destroy the body, but of him who could destroy both body and soul in hell.

Conviction produced within the heart by the Holy Spirit produces a holy fear of God. And that holy fear of God leads to repentance. Like the prodigal son in Jesus' parable recorded in Luke 15, this man came to his senses.

He admitted that he was a sinner and he acutely understood that while justice operates in the world of sinful man, as Hebrews 10 31 says, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, whose justice is righteous.

[ 29 : 15 ] And so in holy fear, in conviction, in repentance, he turned to Jesus with a request.

Recorded in verse 32, he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And how would Jesus respond?

Are you kidding me? Weren't you just making fun of me? I've never seen you in church. I've never seen you come whenever I spoke.

You haven't repeated the sinner's prayer. You haven't taken communion. You haven't taken any theology courses. You've never read Wayne Grudem's systematic theology.

Look, you're so sinful that even these sinful people know that you should die for what you've done. Look at you.

[ 30 : 16 ] Pathetic. Living your life in sin, causing all of this trouble, and now, and now, at the last moment, you're going to turn to me and ask for me to forgive and save you.

Jesus didn't say that. And this thief knew that he wouldn't. Why?

Because he heard Jesus pray, Father, forgive them. And so he turned to Jesus, humbly, with nothing to give, with nothing to offer, besides a heaping pile of rancid sin, with a simple request, remember me.

And Jesus said to him, truly I say to you, today, you will be with me in paradise. What an astonishing statement.

And with that statement, Jesus revealed that salvation is totally unmerited. It is a gift of his grace. Jesus' statement also invalidated the Roman Catholic teaching of purgatory and eliminated any system of works-based righteousness.

[ 31 : 40 ] He wouldn't be given a place, this thief, in God's kingdom, in the nosebleed section somewhere, you know, way up there because you just barely made it in here at the last moment. So just, you sit way up there.

No, Jesus said, today you will be with me. You will be with me, fully and completely forgiven, fully and completely with Christ as a full citizen of his eternal kingdom, completely clothed in the righteousness of his Savior.

If you think that Christ's treatment on the cross towards the thief was unfair, then I doubt that you've ever experienced his grace.

I read this quote recently, in fact, my wife Danny posted it. I don't know who wrote it, but it's great. I want to share it with you. How does the thief on the cross fit into your theology?

No baptism, no speaking in tongues, no mission trip, no volunteerism, and no church clothes. He couldn't even bend his knees to pray.

[ 32 : 55 ] He didn't say the sinner's prayer, and among other things, he was a thief. Jesus didn't take away his pain, heal his body, or smite the scoffers. Yet it was a thief who walked into heaven the same hour as Jesus simply by believing.

He had nothing more to offer than his belief that Jesus was who he said he was. No spin from brilliant theologians, no ego or arrogance, no shiny lights, skinny jeans, or crafty words, no haze machine, donuts, or coffee in the entrance, just a naked dying man on the cross unable to even fold his hands to pray.

You know, one of those who we think would have a front row seat in Christ's kingdom if such a thing existed would be someone like Martin Luther, the great reformer. We think about all the many ways he was used by the Lord to bless the church, but when he died, his friends found stuffed in one of

his pockets a handwritten note which simply read in Luther's own handwriting, we are all beggars. This is true. Have the cravings of your flesh been satisfied? has your sin really given you the hope and the peace that you maybe pursued it for?

Jesus Christ is the bread of life and he is the only one who can nourish your famished soul.

[ 34 : 39 ] Salvation is unmerited. you just turn in repentance and faith to him. The third truth that the cross reveals is that of God's love through Christ's sacrifice.

The cross reveals the truth of God's love through Christ's sacrifice. Look again at verses 44 and the beginning of verse 45. It was now about the sixth hour and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour when the sun lights failed.

God the Father now takes center stage in the crucifixion of his son over the course of these final three hours. From the sixth hour which was noon to the ninth hour which was 3 p.m.

when the sun should have been at its apex as the light of the world was being slain God the Father turned the lights out. and in the minds of the Jewish people who suddenly found themselves engulfed in darkness at a time when they should not have been their minds would have been filled with images from the Old Testament scriptures that would have caused them to tremble.

For in the Old Testament though God is frequently associated with light he is also frequently associated with darkness. For example in Genesis 15-12 it says there as God appeared to Abraham as the sun was going down a deep sleep fell on Abraham and behold dreadful and great darkness fell upon him.

[ 36 : 17 ] One of the plagues that God brought upon Egypt was darkness so thick that it could be felt in Exodus 19. The Jewish people knew that supernatural darkness was associated with divine judgment.

Joel 2 Amos 5 Zephaniah chapter 1 this was why their sinful rejoicing was replaced with guilt induced mourning when the darkness finally lifted after Jesus died in verse 38 and all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle when they saw what had taken place they returned beating their breasts because they understood what had happened.

That darkness was not caused by God's absence. That darkness was caused by his presence in full judgment in vengeance and in fury infinite wrath moved by infinite righteousness released infinite punishment on God's only son who because he was infinite was able to absorb it all enduring a hell on earth for those whom he saved.

God is omnipresent. People think that hell is a place where God is not but that is not the case. In hell God's presence is felt in his fury in his anger towards sin towards those who have rejected him. What is absent from hell is God's grace his love his comfort and his peace. You understand hell is not Satan's kingdom. It is not a place where he rules in torments.

[ 38 : 01 ] It is a place reserved for him and those who rebelled against God with him. It is a place reserved for his eternal torment. And so if Jesus was to save you from your sins he had to endure the full suffering that would have otherwise been endured by you apart from your faith in him.

And so this moment had to both involve the punishment of God as well as the absence of his comfort. And that truth gives context to Matthew's record of Jesus' words as he shouted from the cross as he approached death in Matthew 27 46.

About the ninth hour that last hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice Eli Eli lama sabachthani that is my God my God why have you forsaken me?

This was the cup that he pleaded with the father in Gethsemane to remove if possible. Yet it's the cup that he willingly and lovingly drank to purchase your salvation.

crucifixion was excruciating but nothing is worse than experiencing the forsakenness of God that Christ felt as he was crushed for your iniquities.

[ 39 : 36 ] As the darkness of God's wrath filled the land Luke records next in verse 45 that the curtain of the temple was torn in two. And so as the priests were slaughtering the Passover lambs they would have been stunned to suddenly hear the curtain separating the holy place from the holy of holies torn in two from a place where God's presence was thought to dwell.

It was completely torn signifying that the atonement was complete that through Christ permanent access to God was opened that the new covenant was ratified in his blood rendering the temple and those animal sacrifices obsolete.

Verse 46 then Jesus calling out with a loud voice said father into your hands I commit my spirit and having said this he breathed his last.

Now many people died of crucifixion from suffocation and so as Jesus has endured the cross here it's amazing that he is able to find the strength to fill his lungs with air one last time as he calls out from the cross and says father in your hands I commit my spirit and what that indicates to us is that God the father and God the son were in complete control over all of these events and knowing that he had sufficiently atoned for the sins of his people he committed his spirit to his father signifying that communion with him had been restored and then in verses 47 through 49 now when the centurion saw what had taken place he praised God saying certainly this man was innocent and all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle when they saw what had taken place returned home beating their breasts and all his acquaintances and the woman who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things Luke records the reactions that many people had to the cross on that day and I ask you right now what reaction do you have to it has the Holy Spirit revealed these truths to you that you are sinful that salvation is unmerited that in the cross the Lord endured the wrath that you should have endured for your sins and in the cross we see the love of God willing to put his own son to death that through faith in him we may have peace with God forever will you come to Christ like the centurion and declare surely this is the son of God or will you feel bad for Jesus will you mourn!

[ 42 : 44 ] but not repent and walk away you know we know that the cross is not the end of the story I used to always get in trouble in my preaching class in seminary because we had to preach the gospel at the end wherever we were you had 35 minutes and when that buzzer went off at 30 you better preach the gospel and so one bad habit I always had is I always left Jesus on the cross I would forget that on the third day he rose again and so my teacher would always say well you left Jesus in the tomb again I'm not going to leave Jesus in the tomb today because the tomb is not where Jesus is at he died he atoned he sacrificed he endured for you and on the third day he rose again as proof as the first fruits he is the son of God he is the savior of the world his atonement is complete and sufficient and if you trust in him you have been saved you have peace with

God and you will likewise experience a resurrection from the death too thank God for the Lord and what he's done for us Martin Luther said our Lord has written the promise of resurrection not in books alone but in every leaf and springtime so as you go out and you look at the Lord's creation especially now you be reminded that death and the death of Christ is beautiful but there's life for those who believe in him and so the main point of application for this morning is this trust totally in the truths revealed by the cross trust totally in the truths revealed by the cross you are a sinner Christ is a great savior and if you trust in him you will be saved completely totally three application questions for our community groups to discuss tonight question number one question number two what does the thief's conversion on the cross recorded in verses 40 through 43 reveal about salvation how should

Christians interact with those they think are too far gone or too sinful to be saved how should Christians interact with those they think are too far gone or too sinful to be saved and then finally what do the final three hours of Jesus life recorded in verses 44 through 49 reveal about God's hatred of sin and love for sinners that he saved what do those verses reveal about God's hatred of sin and love for sinners that he saved let's pray heavenly father we rejoice and the great love that you have that you would send your only son to die on the cross to atone for our sins Lord we are more sinful than we would like to admit God none of us has done enough good to ever merit your favor

Lord if we were going to be saved it had to be Jesus it had to be him and we are so thankful that in your love and in his willingness he came to die that through his death our sins have been covered in his atoning blood and in his life in his resurrection Lord we have proof to know that by faith in him we have peace with you we have life that begins now and stretches into all eternity God you should be greatly praised for what you've done Lord may we live our lives doing just that giving you glory in all things as you've done it all Jesus has paid it all all to him we owe Lord may that be the anthem of our lives in

Jesus name we pray amen