

The Death of Jesus

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[0 : 00] About a year ago, at this time, I was privileged to preach to you a message that concerned the last moments and words of the Lord Jesus on the cross. In particular, in John chapter 19, in verse 30, we saw the implications of the cry of Jesus from the cross of Calvary just prior to his death, when he cried out with a loud voice, it is finished. In the implications of that, we saw righteousness needed, and then righteousness procured for us, and then we saw redemption completed, God's holiness satisfied, and then we saw access to the Father being granted to us.

All that, of course, provided for us by the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus on our behalf. Today, I want us to step back just a little bit. No better time, I think, than the Thanksgiving week that we've just come through, to see some things that possibly and hopefully will enable us to be even more thankful for what God has done in sending His Son for us.

So we step back just a little bit, still at the cross of Calvary, and I want us today to see and focus in on the price that was paid by the Lord Jesus to provide the redemption that you and I have today. So turn with me in your Bibles, if you will, to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 27. Matthew chapter 27, and let me ask you to stand together with me in respect of the Word of God as we read together, beginning in verse 45. Matthew chapter 27, verse 45. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama thabakthoni, that is to say, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there when they heard that said, this man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran and took a sponge and filled it with vinegar and put it on a reed and gave him to drink. And the rest said, let me, let us see whether Elias will come and save him. And Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And of course, that's the time when he said, it is finished. Let's pray together, if you will, please. Father, thank you for your goodness and grace to us today and for the privilege of being able to come to worship you together. And now we come to this portion of our service where we open your word and let you speak to us through that. So I do pray that you'll open our spiritual senses today to be able to see and hear and understand what it is you specifically are saying to us individually and then collectively as well as a church. So I just pray that you'll add your grace to the message today and enable us then to respond in obedience to you. And we'll thank you for it in Jesus' name we pray for his sake. Amen. Thank you and be seated if you will, please.

From the outset of the life of the Son of God, Jesus met with opposition. Not only opposition, but in fact, at the announcement of his birth, you recall, his life was even threatened with death.

[4 : 05] In the opening pages of John's gospel, John declares to us, he came unto his own and his own received him not. Now there's a distinction put in here in the original wording of that passage. And this is what it says, he came to his own land and his own people received him not. Right at the outset of his coming upon the earth. Upon speaking of the necessity of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, of course, association with his death meant there. Jesus speaks that and many of those that heard that declared, this is a hard saying. Who can hear it? And then just a few verses later, the scripture says, from that time, many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more.

There are times even when the focus of the apostles was lacking. You remember that tremendous event in the ministry and life of the Lord Jesus and the apostles, Peter, James, and John in particular, at the Mount of Transfiguration found in Luke chapter 9, in verses 28 through 32, the scripture says, it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And behold, there were talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. And when

they fully awoke, they saw his glory and the two men that stood with him. I just always think that a tremendous travesty here. I know it was late in the day when they got there. They were tired. They were weary. They had been with the Lord Jesus, not knowing for sure what was going to happen up on the mountain with the Lord. They were heavy with sleep and they slumbered. But then when they awoke, they saw his glory. Then there was a time at

Gethsemane that's very familiar to us in Matthew chapter 26. He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Tarry you here and watch with me. And he went a little further and fell on his face and prayed saying, O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto his disciples and findeth them asleep. And saith unto Peter, What? Could you not watch with me one hour? Of course, there were three different occasions when that took place. And then we see Peter at the fire of coals in John chapter 18. Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas, the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. And they said,

Therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? And he denied it and said, I am not. Of course, again, three times by Peter. Then we see the anger of the angry mob here in Luke chapter 23.

Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them, but they cried saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why? What evil hath he done? I found no cause of death in him. I will therefore chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

[8 : 38] As trying and as difficult as all of that may have been, nothing compared to what was about to come. Again, in the garden of Gethsemane, as Jesus gets alone and prays to the Father. He said, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. When he said, let this cup pass from me, a possible allusion there to that very ancient method of punishing criminals. A cup of poison was placed in their hand, and they were obligated to drink of that poison. That's the way Socrates was killed.

He was required by the magistrates of Athens to drink a cup of the juice of the Hemlock. And there he died. Hebrews 2.9, in reference to that, says, But we see Jesus, who is made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. Habakkuk 2.16 speaks of the cup of God's wrath.

So here we see Jesus taking that cup for us. The whole world here is represented as standing guilty and condemned before the tribunal of God. Into every man's hand is placed that cup, and he was obligated then to drink that cup. You and I included. But Jesus enters and takes from the hand of every man that cup, and there he drinks himself the poison of every man's cup, thus tasting and suffering death for every man. That death that every man must himself have undergone. Now in Luke chapter 22, verse 44, And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. See the intensity on this third occasion of his praying at Gethsemane.

Oh, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.

Realize that the punishment of crucifixion was established in order to make death as painful and as lingering as possible. So crucifixion, in that crucifixion, the one crucified may have hung on that cross for a number of hours, even a number of days, as we'll see in just a moment.

[11 : 39] It was an unimaginable anguish and human suffering that took place there until consciousness then finally failed. Jesus himself faces humiliation prior to his crucifixion, and at that time, hanging on the cross. The false accusations brought by the religious leaders of Israel.

Then the taunting of the ignorant. And they passed by and reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise, the scripture says, also the chief priests, mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, himself he cannot save.

If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God. Let him deliver him now, if he will have him. For he said, I am the Son of God, that found in Matthew 27. For three hours now, the Savior hung on the cross. It was midday.

The sun was covered in darkness from the sixth hour to the ninth. Three hours of darkness not only affected creation, but realize something with me, Jesus entered at that point into darkness, body, soul, and spirit. It was a time of suffering, suffering the like of which you and I could never, ever

enter. It was suffering of physical life, but it was suffering as well as the soul and the spirit in relationship to God. Have to remember and recognize that when Jesus hung on the cross, that hanging on the cross, that death that he paid for us, affected and was concerned in that relationship that he himself had with the Father. We'll see that more specifically in a moment.

The greatest of all anguish and suffering that came to Jesus on the cross of Calvary is stipulated in that cry that he offered up. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

[14 : 24] The term forsaken, the word used in the original means to abandon, to desert, to leave in straits, to leave helpless, leave destitute, leave in the lurch, let one down. All of those meanings fit together in that phrase that Jesus uses. Why have you forsaken me, abandoned me, left me in the strait?

The cry was addressed to the two other members of the Trinity. God the Father had abandoned and deserted him. And that was seen by the fact that our Lord Jesus asked the question, and seen also in the fact that as that question was asked, there was no answer given to the question by the Father. The fellowship that had always been in existence from eternity past between the Father and the Son is now broken.

Our Lord's Prayer was unanswered. But if you turn to Leviticus chapter 5, in verse 11, the unanswered prayer was predicted in type in that passage. There an offerer that was too poor to bring a blood offering could bring a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, just enough to bake one day's serving of bread.

The giving up of the flour typified the giving up of life, and that of course points to the death of our Lord. The poor offerer then was forbidden in that passage to include frankincense with the flour. Frankincense, a type of answered prayer. So flour without frankincense speaks of our Lord's death and unanswered prayer. The sin of man had been laid upon the Son of God, and he was now made a curse for us. But not only did the Father abandon him, the Holy Spirit did as well.

[16 : 36] And that for the same reason. In his incarnation, Jesus had a human body, a human soul, and a human spirit. The human spirit was energized by the Holy Spirit throughout his earthly ministry. As we said before, everything that Jesus did in his earthly ministry, he did in his humanity that was then in a dependence and in the energy of the Spirit of God. It's that energy in his humanity that allowed the Lord Jesus to offer himself upon the cross of Calvary and become the sacrifice for sin for all of mankind that was sufficient for the atonement of sin. Hebrews 9.14 explains to us, How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offer himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead work to serve the living God?

But now, in the hour of his most dire need, the Spirit of God has left him helpless and in the lurch. He abandoned the Son just as surely as God the Father abandoned him. In Leviticus 5 again, verse 11, the offerer is also forbidden to include oil in the fire, or in the flower rather. Oil, of course, is a type and scripture of the Spirit of God. No oil in the flower speaks of the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit's sustaining presence while our Lord was suffering on the cross. Now, in Psalm 22, verses 1 through 18, we find a prophetic picture of our Lord's suffering on the cross. It was the time that his human spirit was devoid of the life-giving ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit ceased to keep alive in divine life the human spirit of the Lord Jesus. That human spirit, as sinless as it was and continued to be, now faced death. And that was because the life-giving power of the Spirit of God ceased to energize his human spirit. 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 18, Peter writes to us and says, For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh. Recognize it was a prolonged abandonment. As Jesus cried out in the daytime from 9 to 12 o'clock in the morning and in the night season, 12 to 3 in the afternoon, he cried out, but God the Father would not hear him. My God, my God, why?

Why hast thou forsaken me? Why have you abandoned me? I'm glad that in the passage of 1 Peter 3, 18, when he said he was put to death in the flesh, that's not where he stops. Again, for Christ also hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, made alive in reference to the Spirit. When Jesus prayed that he might be raised from the dead in Psalm 22, the Holy Spirit had already returned to make alive again his human spirit. That prayer was then answered by the Father. Sin had been paid for, before the atonement was looked upon as complete. It is finished, he said. And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. So the fellowship between God the Father and God the Son is now again restored.

[20 : 49] And that before the Son of God died on the cross, before, as the Scripture says, he gave up the ghost. Now take note with me the phrase, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Even in the time of being abandoned by the Father and by the Spirit, Jesus still claimed the relationship between he and his heavenly Father. When he said, my God, he didn't say, oh God, he said, my God, claiming that relationship continually in spite of being abandoned. My God, my God, my Elohim, if you will, in the Hebrew, Greek, rather. My Elohim, my strong, faithful, covenant-keeping God. You see, that's how Jesus saw him as the Father. And likewise then, Jesus remained faithful in his trust in the Father's loving kindness and in the Father's promises to him. He knew resurrection was going to come. So as a result of that, Jesus himself remained faithful to everything that the Father had in store for him, even in death.

The Apostle Paul, in the book of Philippians chapter 2, speaks of that, you remember, as speaking of the fact that he took off that outward form of deity, put on the outward expression of a servant, went to the cross, and died an obedient death. And then Paul says, wherefore, as a result of that, God hath highly exalted him, and given him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Now, his faithfulness, the Father's faithfulness, and the faithfulness of the Son to follow the will of the Father, even to the cross of Calvary, and even to the cross of abandonment, should and will engender our faithfulness to him. Hebrews 12, verses 1 and 2, seeing therefore we are encompassed about with such great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside the sin and the weight that thus so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, doing what? Looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. Looking unto him, watching him, seeing him, following him, letting his faithfulness engender our faithfulness. Hebrews 13, verses 5 and 6 say, let your conversation or your manner of behavior be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have, for he hath said, get this, I will never leave you, nor forsake you, nor forsake you. Amen? Jesus was abandoned on the cross, but he will never abandon us, and never leave us, or forsake us. An expanded translation of that from Kenneth Wiest says, for he himself has said, and the statement is on record. I like that. He said it, and it's on record.

I will not. I will not cease to sustain and uphold you. I will not. I will not. I will not let you down. So that, being of good courage, we are saying, the Lord is my helper. I will not fear what men shall do to me. And then we see the admonition, if you will, for us to remain steadfast in the sure and steadfast hope that God has given us. And that sure and steadfast hope is an anchor of the soul. In Hebrews chapter 6, verses 10 through 20, and let me read it lengthy, but let me read it to you. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which you have showed toward his name, in that you have ministered to the saints and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that you be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise. For when God made promise to Abram, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, he, that's Abraham, obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater, an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife, wherein then God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel. I like that. God was not just satisfied about showing that, but he said he was more willing, willing more abundantly. He had a super abundant willingness for us to know the unchangeableness of what he had promised. And so he said, he then, as a result of that, confirmed it all by an oath, that by two immutable things, that those two things are the fact of his giving the promise, and the second one is the fact of him swearing by himself, because there was no greater to swear by. By those two things then, which were unchangeable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might then have strong consolation or encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whether the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Boy, there's so much in that.

[27 : 57] God himself has sent a son. His son for us is the anchor of that hope. That anchor is steadfast, and it is sure, if you will. So that those that flee to the cities of refuge, remember those from the Old Testament, if someone had put to death by ignorance or by mistake or accident, whatever, he could run to the high priest at that city of refuge and be freed then from the penalty of

death for himself. And what the apostle here is saying, those then that have claimed Christ have run to their high priest, Christ Jesus. And I want you to remember here, he says it is that high priest that is entered into the veil, the holy of holies, the most holy place, the place of God's dwelling presence with his people, there presenting himself as the sacrifice for our sins, so that he then, as the rock, could be our sufficiency, our steadfast, our sure anchor of the soul.

Steadfast, could not be made to totter or be swayed. If stepped upon, it could not be discouraged. That's the hope that we have in the person of Christ Jesus. Fastened securely to the rock that's within the veil for us. He goes there, not as the representative of the people, but as the forerunner. Remember in the Old Testament economy, when the high priest entered into the holy of holies, he went in as a representative of the people to perform the duties of sacrifice, presenting the blood of the slain animal before the mercy seat, as a representative of all the people.

But Christ Jesus, our great high priest, did not go into the heavenly holy of holies as our representative. He went in as the forerunner, meaning there's more that will be coming to step into the presence of the very God that sits in the holy or dwells in the holy of holies. That's you and me, privileged with the presence of God within our lives, that we can live every moment of our day walking in the presence of God, because Jesus, as our forerunner, has entered into that place. Now, he goes on and says he comes not under the order of Melchizedek as high priest, but not under Aaron as high priest, but under Melchizedek, who himself has an unending priesthood. You talk about being safe and secure in the hope that God has given us. Not a hope-so type of balance of probabilities, but that steadfast, secure understanding and knowledge that it is going to come to pass.

[31 : 32] Now, that should engender our faithfulness, our own faithfulness unto the Lord, to be faithful in the calling that he has given to us. If there's anybody here unsaved today, never trusted Christ as Lord and Savior, let me say to you, that abandonment of the Lord Jesus on Calvary's cross was for you. For all of us, you included. And I want to encourage you to recognize that.

And recognize that because of his love for you, he's done everything necessary for you to have eternal life. Be freed from the penalty of your sin and be given righteousness, which is the righteousness of Christ and be made righteous before the Father. I encourage you to do that. Now, what about those of us that have been saved and we're secure in that in our heart and mind? We're confident of that.

Remember, his faithfulness is to be a pattern for our faithfulness. In 1 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 2, the Apostle Paul writing to the church at Corinth, he wants to remind them, he says, moreover, it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful. We've been saved by the grace of God. God's placed into our hands responsibility. And we're to be great stewards, good stewards, faithful stewards of everything God has placed to our account to be able to satisfy whatever his will is for our life. Then in 1 Peter chapter 4, verse 10, Scripture says, as every man hath received the gift, that is the gift that God has given to you, the divine enablement, even so minister the same one to another. As good stewards of the manifold grace of God. God didn't just put you here to have a good time.

Amen? God put you in this place to use you, to be stewards of whatever he has placed in your responsibility toward the people of God in his body, in the church. And that's what Paul or Peter is saying here.

Whatever that gift is, and to whatever degree God has given that to you, minister the same one to another. Be faithful to what God has gifted you in doing and given you to do. Because you are stewards of what?

[34 : 31] Stewards of the manifold grace of God towards you. And in that light, again in Paul's second letter to the church of Corinth, he writes to them. Of course, you remember the church of Corinth was a very carnal church.

Had everything spiritually it needed, but a very carnal church. And the apostle Paul says, We then as workers together with him, that's with Christ, beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain. Yeah. Everything that Jesus went through. Everything that he suffered in his humanity. And in particular, that time of separation between him and the Father for those hours he hung on the cross.

He did for you and I. Part of God's grace given to us. Paul admonishes, don't receive the grace of God for nothing. Amen? Let him satisfy through you everything he has determined to do in and through you. And by the way, to you. You know, before he can really accomplish what he wants

through us, he has to accomplish what he wants to us, in us. It's one thing for him to die for us, to free us from the penalty and guilt of our sins, which he has done. And we're grateful for that. But that's not where the work stops in our lives. We must continually be at that point in our lives where we're willing for God to do that work of molding us, shaping us, ridding us of those things that hinder the purposes of God from being utilized in our lives.

[36 : 39] Don't let the grace of God given to you be in vain. Satisfy every aspect of what God has for your life that he wants to accomplish for his kingdom purposes. Let's pray together. Father, thank you again for your loving kindness. Father, we thank you for your mercy and your grace that you've given toward every one of us.

Thank you for your grace that you've given us. Thank you for your grace that you've given us. Thank you for your grace that you've given us. We didn't merit it. But you did it because you love us. Thank you for refreshing our minds to the price that it was paid by the Lord Jesus and by you to bring to us that redemptive purpose, to make it so complete so that our redemption is completed. So Father, I pray God now that as you have been speaking to our hearts through your word today, that you will then enable us not only to understand what you're saying to us, but to be able to respond to you in obedience.

So give us that grace at this moment, and we'll thank you and praise you for what you do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.