



*EST FONDS VITAE*

## **DATE**

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October 7, 2018

## **SERIES**

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John: *That You May Believe*

## **TITLE & PASSAGE**

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Behold the Glorious Cross

John 19:16-30

## **OCCASION**

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A message presented by Pastor Marc Minter on the Lord's Day to the congregation of First Baptist Church of Diana, TX.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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From an earthly perspective, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is a gripping display of human depravity and lamentable circumstances. Many have seen Jesus as a pitiable historical figure, and His courage in death has earned Him some acclaim. However, there is far more to see here than may first meet the eyes. In this message, we shall consider the Gospel-writer's record, observing John's use of deep biblical imagery and emphasis on prophetic fulfillment. May God help us to see the glory of Christ upon the cross!

## **MAIN POINT**

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The cross of Christ is a glorious display, worthy of our devoted gaze.

EMAIL QUESTIONS TO [PASTOR@FBCDIANA.ORG](mailto:PASTOR@FBCDIANA.ORG)

## SCRIPTURE READING

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### John 19:16–30

16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus, 17 and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.

19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’”

22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.”

This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, 25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” 27 Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

## MAIN POINT

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The cross of Christ is a glorious display, worthy of our devoted gaze.

## MESSAGE OUTLINE

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- (1) SEVEN EARTHLY PERSPECTIVES
- (2) GAZING THROUGH BIBLICAL LENSES
- (3) SOME APPLICATION QUESTIONS

## MESSAGE

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### (1) SEVEN EARTHLY PERSPECTIVES

- **Banished Criminals**
  - “**he went out, bearing his own cross**, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha” (v17)
    - Jesus and the two criminals crucified beside Him, were banished to a humiliating death outside of the city (v20).
    - Each criminal was even doomed to carry his own “**cross**.”
      - The “**cross**” was likely the wooden beam that would serve as the horizontal piece of timber upon which the criminal would be crucified.
- **Shameful Punishment**
  - “**they crucified him, and with him two others**, one on either side, and Jesus between them” (v18)
    - Matthew and Mark both tell us that the criminals with Jesus were “**robbers**” (*lēstai*) or insurrectionists, the same as Barabbas (Matt. 27:38; Mk. 15:27; cf. Jn. 18:40)
- **Political Opportunity**
  - “**Pilate also wrote an inscription** and put it on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the **King of the Jews**.’” (v19)
    - Wanting to show his political and military dominance over the Jews, Pilate sarcastically ascribes the title “King of the Jews” to Jesus. In this way, he taunts the Jews with their own accusation and he symbolically demonstrates Roman power over the Jewish people by killing their “bogus king.”

- **Religious Scandal**

- “the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, ‘**Do not write, *The King of the Jews*, but rather, *This man said, I am King of the Jews.*’” (v21)
  - The chief priests are scandalized on two fronts.
    - One, the political scandal mentioned above – Pilate’s destruction of their “bogus king.”
    - Two, the Jews are indeed expecting a Messianic King!
      - But they are not expecting a crucified Messiah.**

- **Useful Indifference**

- “**When the soldiers had crucified Jesus**, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, so they said to one another, ‘**Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.**’” (V23-24)
  - Their indifference could not be better portrayed.
    - After nailing three men to wooden crosses, turning a deaf ear to the groans of dying men, these soldiers throw dice to see who might take a dead man’s tunic.
  - Their indifference was useful.
    - One can hardly imagine what a horror it was to see a crucifixion, and these men had managed many.

- **Earthly Loss**

- “**standing by the cross** of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene” (v25)
  - Unable to grasp the meaning of the cross, these women (especially Jesus’ mother) were lamenting the loss of this beloved man.
    - Carson: These “**women wait in faithful devotion to the one whose death they can still understand only as tragedy.**”
    - Calvin: These “**women beheld [the cross] in nothing but disgrace and cursing.**”

- **Miserable End**

- “Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), ‘**I thirst.**’ 29 A jar full of **sour wine** stood there, so they put a sponge full of the **sour wine** on a **hyssop branch** and **held it to his mouth**. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘**It is finished,**’ and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (v28-30)
  - This thirsty, dying man cried out for a drink.
  - A sponge of sour wine was lifted to Jesus’ mouth on the end of a flimsy branch.
  - With His last breath, Jesus spoke of His own demise.

From various perspectives, the cross of Christ is a scandalous, brutal, miserable, and failing scene.

It is no wonder that Paul said, “**the cross of Christ is folly or foolishness to those who are perishing...**” (1 Cor. 1:8).

## (2) GAZING THROUGH BIBLICAL LENSES

- **Jesus is the Banished Criminal**

- “**he went out, bearing his own cross**, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha” (v17)
  - See Jesus going “out”
    - He is going outside of the city, outside of the camp
    - Our biblical lenses might portray the imagery of the **Day of Atonement**.
      - On this most holy and bloody day of the year, the Jewish people were to select two perfect goats... one to die and one to be banished (Lev. 16:8-10)
        - The priest would lay his hands on the one to be banished, and confess the sins of all the people, imputing (as it were) the sins of the people to the goat (Lev. 16:21-22). Afterwards, the scapegoat would be hurried out of the camp, banished to the cursed wilderness.

- Oh, don't we see Christ fulfilling both of these images?!
  - Jesus is condemned by the sin of all His people, the sheep for whom He is laying down His life (Jn. 10:11).
  - Jesus is the scapegoat too, sent outside the camp/city, becoming a curse for those He graciously redeems (Gal. 3:13).
  
- See Jesus “bearing his own cross”
  - He is carrying the wood upon His shoulders, stepping towards the sacrificial hill
  - Our biblical lenses might picture Isaac, carrying the wood upon which he was to be sacrificed.
    - **Abraham and Isaac** walked together towards the place where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac.
      - The Scripture tells us, “**Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son**” (Gen. 22:6).
      - Then Isaac cried out to his father, “**Behold, [you are carrying] the fire and [I am carrying] the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?**” (v7).
      - And Abraham replied, “**God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son**” (v8).
        - And, you know the story... Just as Abraham raised the knife to thrust it into his own son, God stopped his hand and showed him a ram that would take Isaac's place on the alter (Gen. 22:11-13).
    - Oh, don't we see Christ fulfilling both of these images as well?!
      - Like Isaac, Jesus is carrying His own instrument of death (v17).
      - But unlike Isaac, Jesus receives no rescue... there is no ram to take His place... He is the fulfillment of that imagery too! He is the substitutionary sacrifice!

- **Jesus is the Shameful Sufferer**

- “**they crucified him, and with him two others**, one on either side, and Jesus between them” (v18)
  - See Jesus being counted among the transgressors
    - Our biblical lenses might see the imagery of Isaiah’s “**Suffering Servant**” in Isaiah 53.
      - “**He [the Suffering Servant] poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors...**” (v12).
      - “**They made his grave with the wicked... although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth**” (v9).
    - Oh, don’t we see Christ as this Suffering Servant?!
      - Isn’t Jesus numbered among sinners here?!
      - Isn’t Jesus wrongfully condemned as a wicked man?!
        - But let us not forget the purpose of Jesus’ condemnation!
          - “**He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors**” (v12)!

- **Jesus is the True King**

- “**Pilate also wrote an inscription** and put it on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the **King of the Jews.**’” (v19)
  - See Jesus proclaimed King
    - For **the second time** in John’s Gospel, we are told that someone spoke more than they knew.
      - First, it was **Caiaphas**, who was high priest that year.
        - He said that it was better for Jesus to die than for the whole nation, and John told us that this was actually a prophetic word declaring Christ’s substitutionary work for all “the children of God” (Jn. 11:49-52).
      - Second, and here, **Pilate** is declaring Jesus “King of the Jews” in three languages, Latin, Greek, and Aramaic.
    - The trilingual notice is simultaneously common and unique.

- Common: there is often a notice placed on the cross of those who are crucified so that the ‘whole world’ will be warned not to be like the criminal.
- Unique: the title given Jesus, before ‘all the world’ is “King of the Jews,” and this is highly significant.
- The Messiah is “King of the Jews”
  - When King David of old wanted to build God a ‘house,’ God answered him by saying that it was God who does the building of Kings and kingdoms. God said, “**When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom... I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son... And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.**” (2 Sam. 7:12–16).
  - This very word is that which the author of Hebrews quotes at the beginning of his message. He says of Jesus, “**He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’? Or again, ‘I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son’?**” (Heb. 1:3–5).
    - There are many more Messianic prophecies, but we can see that a worldly governor (Pilate) was telling the whole world the truth about Jesus as “King of the Jews.”

- **Jesus is the True Messiah**

- “the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, ‘**Do not write, The King of the Jews, but rather, This man said, I am King of the Jews.**’” (v21)
  - See the Jewish People reject their Messiah
    - John told us this would happen: “**He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him...**” (Jn. 1:11).

- The Scripture tells us that this was the normal response from the Jewish people of God on earth.
  - The chronicler tells us, “they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets” (2 Chron. 36:16)
  - And God said, “In vain have I [disciplined] your children; [for] they took no correction; your own sword devoured your prophets like a ravaging lion” (Jer. 2:30).
- But here, we see the ultimate offense – **Crucified Messiah!**
  - “Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor. 1:22–25).
- Friends, do you see Christ as glorious here?!
  - Is this crucified Messiah an offense to you?
    - Is this dying Savior foolishness in your eyes?
    - Was your King the object of humiliation?
  - Or do you see the glory of God in Christ upon the cross?

- **God is Sovereign over Every Detail**

- “**When the soldiers had crucified Jesus**, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, so they said to one another, ‘**Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.**’” (V23-24)
  - See God’s sovereignty in prophetic fulfillment
    - John tells us the reason he included this detail, “This was to fulfill Scripture...” (v24), and then he quotes Ps. 22:18.
      - A portion of Psalm 22: “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs encompass me; a

company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet— I can count all my bones— they stare and gloat over me; **they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots**” (Psalm 22:14–18).

- Friends, do you see that God’s sovereignty is intricate, not distant?!
  - What could be less significant than Roman soldiers casting lots (like rolling dice)?
- Ah, but God intends for us to see Christ as glorious here!
  - He is not merely a sufferer upon the cross; He is the glorious Son of God, who is working all things according to plan!

- **Jesus’ Death Conquers Death**

- “**standing by the cross** of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene” (v25)
  - See Jesus glorified in death
    - In John’s Gospel, the pivot of Jesus’ earthly ministry from preaching and working miracles (performing signs) to heading towards the cross comes when “some Greeks” come to see Jesus.
      - It was then that Jesus said, “**The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit**” (Jn. 12:23-24).

- **Glorious End**

- “Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), ‘I thirst.’ 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘It is finished,’ and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (v28-30)
  - See Jesus intentionally fulfill prophecy
    - Again, John tells us Scripture is fulfilled, but this time it is by Jesus’ request... “I thirst” (v28)

- “They gave me poison for food, and **for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink**” (Psalm 69:21)
- See Jesus as the Sacrificial Lamb
  - “they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth” (v29)
    - Hyssop was the branch used for ceremonial cleansing.
      - The Psalmists prayed a prayer of repentance, saying, “**Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow**” (Psalm 51:7)
    - Hyssop was the branch used to apply the blood of the Passover Lamb to the doorposts of the Jewish homes.
      - “**Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin**” (Exodus 12:22).
- See Jesus proclaim His work completed
  - Jesus said, “**It is finished**” (v30)
    - This single Greek word “*tetelestai*” is a financial term.
      - A brief definition would be “paid in full”

The cross of Christ is a glorious display, worthy of our devoted gaze.

#### **(4) SOME APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

1. Do you see Christ as glorious upon the cross?
2. Do you devote your gaze to this glorious display?
3. Will you live in the brilliant light of the cross of Christ?

- a. Resting in Christ...
- b. Humbled by Christ...
- c. Joined to Christ...
- d. Awaiting Christ's return...

## **SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR THIS PASSAGE/TOPIC**

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*The Last Words of Jesus* by John MacArthur

<https://www.gty.org/library/bibleqnas-library/QA0110/the-last-words-of-jesus>

*The Crucifixion* by Bob Deffinbaugh

<https://bible.org/seriespage/44-crucifixion-john-1917-37>

*Death of Christ: Fact or Fiction* by Wil Pounds

<http://www.abideinchrist.com/messages/jn19v31.pdf>

*Sympathy and Supremacy at Calvary* by John MacArthur

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/43-109/sympathy-and-supremacy-at-calvary>

*The Great Cross-Bearer and His Followers* by Charles Spurgeon

<http://spurgeongems.org/vols28-30/chs1683.pdf>

## A HARMONIZING TIMELINE FROM JESUS' ARREST TO HIS CRUCIFIXION

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- The general flow of timeline seems to go as follows.<sup>1</sup>
  - Night **Arrest** (Jn. 18:1-12)
  - Questioned by **Annas**, the religious “mob boss” (Jn. 18:12-14, 19-23)
  - Questioned before **Caiaphas** and **Sanhedrin**, the official **Jewish trial** (Mt. 26:57-68; Mk. 14:53-65; Lk. 22:66-71; Jn. 18:24)
  - Brought to **Pilate**, the Governor or Procurator of Judea, the **first time**, starting the **Roman trial** (Mt. 27:11-14; Jn. 28-38)
  - Interrogated by **Herod**, the Tetrarch of Galilee (Lk. 23:6-12)
    - Interestingly, this Herod was the son of *Herod the Great*, who ordered the murder of every boy in Bethlehem 2-yrs and younger. And he happened to be in Jerusalem for the time of the Jewish Passover.
  - Brought to **Pilate** the **second time**, where Pilate reluctantly passes condemning **judgment** (Matt. 27:15-31; Jn. 18:38-19:16)
  - The **crucifixion** (Jn. 19:17-30)

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<sup>1</sup> Carson, in his commentary (the Pillar New Testament Commentary), says, “There are several ways by which the diverse Gospel accounts of Jesus’ passion, especially his arrest and trials, can be brought into a single story-line. There were two trials, one Jewish and one Roman. The former began with informal examination by Annas (18:12–14, 19–23), possibly while members of the Sanhedrin were being hurriedly summoned. A session of the Sanhedrin (Mt. 26:57–68; Mk. 14:53–65) with frank consensus was followed by a formal decision at dawn and dispatch to Pilate (Mt. 27:1–2; Lk. 22:66–71). The Roman trial began with a first examination before Pilate (Mt. 27:11–14; Jn. 18:28–38a), which was followed by Herod’s interrogation (Lk. 23:6–12) and Jesus’ final appearance before Pilate (Mt. 27:15–31; Jn. 18:38b–19:16). Other reconstructions are possible, but this one usefully co-ordinates the biblical data.”