

The Cross.

- It stands as the pivotal crux of history.
- Everything before this moment in history looked forward to what God would accomplish through the cross.
- Everything since that day looks back to what God completed and won for us upon the cross. Our future and eternity are determined by the work on the cross.

Pastor Britt's Opening Prayer:

Lord, thank You that You gave us Your Son to die for our sins. Lord, it so easy for us to say that but we don't always understand the depth and the scope and the reality of it. Speak to us today. Instruct us about what that means. Instruct us about the price that was paid, the truth of that, and the power of that. And now the forgiveness that is offered through that and the freedom that comes in that; the freedom not only to be forgiven but to forgive others, to lay down grudges, and hurts and pains, and rights and anger. To be delivered into a life of peace and joy that You promise for now and to eternity. We know that we are so messed up in so many ways. But, God You are perfect and You gave Your perfect Son to save messed up people. Lord, speak to us about how glorious that is. Speak to us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Mark 15: ¹⁵ Wishing to satisfy the multitude, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. ¹⁶ The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. ¹⁷ They dressed Jesus up in purple, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; ¹⁸ and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ They kept beating His head with rods, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. ²⁰ After they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him. ²¹ They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross. ²² Then they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. ²³ They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take. ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified Him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against Him read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." ²⁷ They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. ²⁸ [And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors."]

- If you have the NIV translation, verse 28 is not included in the text, but it is in the margin. Some of the manuscripts that the translators were using did not include verse 28. They chose not to include it, thinking that it may not have been in the original manuscripts. We'll show later why this is not a big deal.

Mark 15: ²⁹ Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. ³² Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!" Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him. ³³ When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" which is translated, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, "Behold, He is calling for Elijah." ³⁶ Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink, saying, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down from the cross."

- It was local folklore and a superstitious belief that Elijah the prophet would come and minister to those who were suffering righteously. The people's response was pure mockery, since Jesus claimed to be the Righteous King of Israel.

Mark 15: ³⁷ And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last. ³⁸ And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ When the centurion, who was standing right in front of Jesus, saw the way He breathed His last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

Review:

- Jesus had a total of six trials – 3 religious and 3 civil trials.
 - The trials culminated in severe beatings of Jesus before the religious leaders and before the Roman leaders.
- The Roman soldiers scourged Jesus. Jesus was stripped naked. His arms were tied around a post. The trained Roman soldiers took a cat-of-nine-tails, which was a leather whip with nine leather strands embedded with bits of bone and metal. They were trained to beat the victim from the back of the neck to the back of the knees. They were quite proficient at it. It was quite horrific. When a Roman soldier's whip ripped through his victim, he did it in such a way that the bones in the victim's back were exposed. After the beating that Jesus took, every vertebra would have been visible. His inner organs would have been exposed. His back would have been left as quivering ribbons of flesh. It was much more horrific than the movie "The Passion of Jesus Christ" portrayed it. Mel Gibson made a conscious decision not to portray the scourging as violent as it was.
- Jesus suffered horrifically before He even got to the cross. But, the worst was yet to come, upon the cross.
 - Though Jesus' suffering was horrendous, it was not meaningless.
 - Isaiah 53: 4-5 **Isaiah 53** ⁴ Surely our grieves He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.
 - Jesus carried away our grieves and our sorrows, which can be translated into sicknesses.
 - The New Testament applies the sufferings of Christ to both spiritual and physical healing.

- Spiritual - **1 Peter 2** ²⁴ "And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."
 - Peter quotes Isaiah 53:5 and applies it to our spiritual healing; our being renewed; our sin being removed and being able to live for righteousness.
- Physical - **Matthew 8** ¹⁶ And when Jesus had come to Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ and when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill ¹⁷ in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases.'"
 - The Holy Spirit, the author of the New Testament, tells us clearly that in the sufferings of Jesus, spiritual and physical healing is accomplished for the Christian.
- The ultimate fulfillment in everything to do with salvation will come when we see the Lord face to face. When we are in heaven, we will be completely free from the influence of sin, temptation and its destructive power. We will be completely healed and renewed in our physical bodies when we are given our glorified bodies, which are prepared for eternity.
- In this lifetime, we are free from the power of sin. We are able to ask the Lord to heal us physically. Sometimes He does. Sometimes He doesn't. But, He is able.

Our Lord invites us to come to Him and ask Him for healing.

- The wonderful thing is that we can come to Him and ask Him for that healing!
- The sufferings of Jesus Christ are not meaningless. They are not trivial. There is a healing accomplished through His sacrifice.

Mark 15: ²¹ They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross.

- The beating was so severe that Jesus (the man) was not able to carry His cross.
- They pressed into service a passerby called Simon of Cyrene, which was in northern Africa, or modern Libya. He was a member of the Jewish faith. He was in Jerusalem for Passover.
 - Roman soldiers were able to make anyone do whatever they commanded at anytime.
- Men, who were on the way to being crucified, carried a crossbeam, called the Patibulum. It weighed about 100 pounds. The vertical beam was already fixed on the ground. The victim carried the horizontal beam to the place where he would be crucified.
 - The Romans had the victim take the longest route around the city. They wanted the rest of the populous to know that Rome was in control. "You rise up against Rome and this will be your fate."
- Jesus had been up all night. He had wrestled with the reality of the cross in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had experienced Hematidrosis, an actual physical condition coming from severe stress. The blood underneath the skin comes up through the pores. He had been brought through 6 different trials, beaten severely and scourged. Jesus was in severe, critical physical condition.
- **John 19:17** tells us that Jesus was able to carry it for a ways, but was so weak from the beating that His strength gave out near the city gate.
 - Jesus collapsing under the weight of the cross, brings to mind **2 Corinthians 5:21** [God] made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
 - God made Jesus to be sin on our behalf. The physical beating, marring, and collapsing of Jesus is a picture of sin. It is a picture of the effects of sin.
 - **Isaiah 1** The Lord speaks about Israel. ² Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, "Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me. ³ An ox knows its owner, And a donkey its master's manger, But Israel does not know, My people do not understand."
 - Although God cannot be perplexed about anything, He expresses Himself to Israel in these terms, wanting them to see how unbelievable their rebellious behavior is.
 - **Isaiah 1** ⁴ Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him. ⁵ Where will you be stricken again, As you continue in your rebellion?
 - At this point in the passage, recall that Jesus had been blindfolded and those who had repeatedly beaten and taunted Him had said, "Prophecy. Who will hit you next?"
 - This is a picture of Christ becoming sin. Here is God's picture of sin, "Where will you be stricken next as you continue in your rebellion."
 - **Isaiah 1** ⁶ The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint. ⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil.
 - This is also a picture of sin. This is how God viewed Israel. This is the condition of the sinner from God's perspective; bruised, bearing welts and wounds.

NOTE: Perhaps this is the way you feel today. Things have gotten way out of control. You feel the horrible weight of sin on you. Things are such a mess. Your life is filled with lie after lie, situation after bad situation, bad move after bad move. You feel the *burden* of guilt and the weight of iniquity. You are collapsing, like Jesus was collapsing, under the weight of the Patibulum. **There is hope!**

- **Isaiah 1¹⁸ "Come now,**
 - The Lord says, **"Come!"**
 - A second ago, He has just told His children that they're dumber than an ox and a donkey. They are beaten, bruised and an absolute mess from head to toe. Their heart is sick from the effects of sin.
 - If it had been up to us, and our kids had acted like the Israelites, we'd probably retort with, "Get away from me. You make me sick!"
 - God is wonderful and loving. We may not view our sin in the same way. But, God sees the sickness and destructiveness of it. Instead of telling us to go away, He says, "Come."
- **Isaiah 1¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together,"**
 - As a parent, this is something we'd say to a child who has been chastised for being naughty. We see that they are loaded down with guilt, and we want to release them from it and restore them.
- **Isaiah 1:18b Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool."**
 - The Lord says, "Even though you are beaten, bloody, bruised and stained, I will wash you white as snow. I will cleanse you."
 - **But**, you need to recognize that you are a sinner for this to happen. Otherwise, you can't come and reason with a holy God. He wants to reveal some things for you. "You are a sinner and you've done wrong. I have not sent My Son into the world to judge the world but that the world might be saved through Him. I will remove the stains, the hurt, the pain, the aversion and the brokenness."
 - Perhaps you don't recognize that you are a sinner. Maybe you don't feel the weight of sin at all. You may be going through life not feeling guilty or feeling bad, thinking this is just the way it is.
 - This is the same place that Israel was in and God says, "You are dumber than an ox. You're dumber than a donkey."
 - You need to recognize the destructive nature of sin and then come to the Lord and be forgiven.

**God puts before you the same choice that He gave to Israel:
 "If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land.
 But, if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword. "
 Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. (Isaiah 1:19-20)**

- Sometimes we do not realize the effects of sin. Hopefully you will realize, as you begin to think about the suffering of Jesus, that God **made Him sin**.
- All sin is against God and He is desperately calling for you to be forgiven and washed white as snow.

Mark 15:²² Then they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

- Golgotha - the mountain where Jesus was crucified (aka Calvary). In Latin, it is called Calvarias from the word *calva*, which means a skull.
- There are two possible locations for the place where Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem
 - The Church of Holy Sepulchral
 - Gordon's Calvary - discovered in the 1800s. It fits the biblical description of Golgotha.
 - It is outside the city walls and stands along a major highway. (The Romans crucified people at major intersections for all Roman citizens to see.)
 - Near that mountain, a few feet away, there is a garden tomb.
 - It looks like a Skull, though weather and time may have affected the way it once looked 2,000 years ago.
 - It's interesting that right below it is an Arab bus terminal. Arab buses are constantly coming and going, people filing in and filing off, literally at the foot of the mountain!



- **It is an amazing picture of people's hearts today.**
 - It is a historical reality and fact that Jesus died upon the cross and it may have been there at Gordon's Calvary. Yet, you can see people passing by it, going along with their lives, too busy to stop and ponder that pivotal historical event that occurred there and what it might mean for them today.
 - The world **reset** its calendars at the birth of Jesus Christ! There was **before** Christ and there is **after** Christ! The cross stands as the pinnacle if that separation!



Mark 15: ²³ They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified Him.

- From Jewish writings, the Babylonian Talmud: Sanhedrin 43a, we know that in that culture pious women of Jerusalem would go to people who were going to be crucified and offer them this mixture of myrrh and wine.
 - Myrrh was a plant's sap, which had anesthetic properties. It had a narcotic effect. It would numb the senses. It would disorient the victim and take away the sting of the crucifixion.
- These women took their cue from Proverbs: 31:6a which says, "Give strong drink to him who is perishing..."
 - Jesus refused to drink this cup that would remove the sting.
 - Recall that in the Garden of Gethsemane (**Mark 14:36**), Jesus had prayed, "Father, if there is any way, remove this cup from me." Jesus was speaking of the cup of the suffering of the cross to save the world. "Nevertheless, Thy will be done." (**Matt 26:42**)
 - Jesus submitted Himself fully to the will of the Father. He had committed Himself to follow through with the Father's will. He refused to dull the effects of it. He refused to take the easy way out. He refused to take the path of least resistance.

There are two important lessons for us from this passage:

- Jesus was willing to do everything that it took to accomplish our salvation, our healing, our cleansing, and our renewing. He took upon Himself every bit of the full brunt of the cross.
- When we are called to go the way of the cross, surrendering and laying down our lives, someone will **always** come along and offer you a short cut. The easy way out. The compromise. The thing that will numb it just a little bit.

The suffering of Jesus Christ is not senseless.

It accomplished salvation for us.

- Isaiah 53:10** "But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief, if He would offer Himself a guilt offering on behalf of the many."
 - Without context, this seems morbid and perverse. However, the context of this passage explains that Jesus would accomplish forgiveness for us, because the Lord **loves** us so much.
 - This word "love" is so powerful, yet it can be abused and be meaningless for some.
 - The expression of God's tremendous love is that He Himself became a man. He draped Himself in humanity. He subjected Himself to the torture of man. He had His body broken and His blood spilt upon the cross to accomplish the work needed for you to know your Creator. **This is the very expression and essence of love!**

- Jesus said, "Greater love has no man than this, than that he'd lay down his life for his fellow man." (John 15)

Jesus laid down His life for us.

He did it willingly.

It restored us back to God the Father.

The result of His suffering bought us eternity in heaven.

And so, it pleased the Lord.

- Eph. 5:2** "And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."
 - God is so in love with us that when His Son died upon the cross it was a fragrant aroma in anticipation of you being forgiven and being in heaven for eternity.
- Hebrews 12:2b** "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and Perfector of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 - What parent wouldn't go through untold suffering, if it would save his or her child from death?
 - You are God's child. He formed you in your mother's womb. And, but for the joy set before Him, He despised the shame, because that was the **only** way you could be forgiven.
- Jude** ²⁴ "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy," ²⁵ to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."
 - Jesus knew that the cross was the **only way** to accomplish this for us!
 - One day we will stand before an absolutely perfect, holy, scary, gnarly God!
 - Even the angels are scared and in awe of the greatness of God. The seraphim stand at the presence of God and have six wings! With two they cover their eyes for they dare not look upon the holiness of God. With two wings they cover their feet as a sign of humility. With two they fly. They sing 24/7 for all of eternity, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!" They never cease to sing it!
 - In Isaiah 6, Isaiah witnesses in a vision the reality of heaven. When he heard these creatures sing this anthem, their voices were so powerful that it shook the stones of the temple.

**Because of what Jesus did on the cross for us,
we will one day stand in front of God blameless and with great joy!
We will not be covering our eyes or covering our feet.
The Bible says we shall be made higher than the angels!**

Mark 15: ²⁴ And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take. ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified Him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against Him read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." ²⁷ They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. ²⁸ [And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors."]

- It's possible that scribes, who wanted to simply tell us as a commentary what we would already know about scripture being fulfilled, later added verse 28.
 - In Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection, He fulfilled over 300 prophecies that had been foretold in the Old Testament.
- In verse 24, they divided His garments. It was normal for Roman soldiers to crucify people naked. The Roman soldiers could divide amongst themselves any of their belongings. It is quite astonishing that Psalm 22:18 prophesied of this very detail 1,000 years before Christ (BC)! Hundreds of years before the cross was ever used as a means of execution.
 - **Psalm 22:** ²⁴ "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within me."
 - As the victim hung on the cross, all the weight of his body was placed upon his diaphragm. The victim was able to inhale but he were not able to exhale. He died of suffocation. To exhale, he had to lift himself up pushing on the nails on his hands first and then the nail on his feet. Eventually, his elbows and shoulders became dislocated and he died of suffocation on the cross. If the Romans wanted to quicken the death, they would break the legs of the victim. This is what they did to the two thieves, who hung on either side of Jesus.
 - **Psalm 22:** ^{15a} "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws;"
 - In another gospel, as He hung on the cross, Jesus said, "I thirst."
 - **Psalm 22:** ^{15b} "and Thou dost lay me in the dust of the earth." ¹⁶ "For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet."
 - This prophecy meant nothing when this was written 1,000 years before Jesus Christ was born. Crucifixion had not been invented yet.
 - **Psalm 22:** ¹⁷ "I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; ¹⁸ they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."

NOTE: God wants you to know: The Cross Was Not A Mistake! It Was Not An Afterthought!

God purposed it from the very beginning of time to accomplish your salvation and forgive you of your sins. It is so important that you read your Bible and see the fulfillment of the prophecies for yourself.

Mark 15: ²⁷ They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left.

- It was not unusual to be crucified with two robbers. Except that this was prophesied about Jesus 700 years before Christ (BC)!
 - **Isaiah 53:12** "Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors."
 - With each detail of His crucifixion, Jesus continues to fulfill prophecy. God wants you to know it was no mistake.
- Mark 15:** ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified Him.
- The Jewish method of reckoning time started from sun-up to sundown. At sun-up they began to count the hours and at sundown they began to count the hours again. A new day began at sundown. Sun-up was 6 am to 6 pm. The third hour equaled 9 am. Jesus was crucified upon the cross at 9 am.
 - This detail here is as if Mark is writing, "I remember the exact time. It was 9 am, when they nailed Him to the cross."
 - It is difficult for us to understand the simplicity of this statement, "They crucified Him" without wanting more details. But no details had to be given. The people of that time, the culture of that time, had all seen these horrific executions. Cultured Romans would not even say the word "cross" or mention crucifixion. The Gospel of Mark was written to the Romans. There was no need to go into specifics.
 - It's hard for us to imagine the terrible physical pain and suffering that Jesus endured upon the cross. His back had been shred to pieces. His hands and feet were pierced with nails. He had a crown of thorns affixed to His head. He had to push down on His open wounds to catch His breath.
 - The Latin word *excruciat* was taken from this event. It means "out of the cross." It is the root word from which we get the word **excruciating**. This is what Jesus experienced on the cross: excruciating pain.

**What Jesus experienced physically is nothing compared to what He experienced spiritually.
Jesus, perfectly holy and sinless, had to experience the weight of our sins upon Him.**

- As a Christian you know something of what the weight of sin feels like. It's that sickening feeling that comes upon you, when you've done something wrong or have been exposed to a horribly sinful situation. That's when we run to the Lord and ask for **forgiveness** and most of all **cleansing**. Even us, fallen sinful people, know the weightiness of sin. Now think about Jesus.
 - Jesus was absolutely sinless, undefiled, perfectly holy and innocent. He hated sin with His entire being. He is a perfect holy God from all time. Evil contradicted His character. He rebelled against darkness and He was repulsed by impurity.

All the repulsiveness of mankind's sin was placed upon Jesus, on the cross.

Sin was not placed in Him!

There was no sin in Him. There could never be any sin in Him.

Sin was placed upon Him!

We have sin in us. (Romans 7)

- Jesus took the weight of sin off of us and placed it on Himself. We may have sin in us until we see the Lord face to face, but the weight of it has been removed. The weight of sin is what was placed on Jesus.
- **Isaiah 53:6** "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."
- **Isaiah 53:12** "He bore the sin of many."
- **Gal. 3: 13** "He became a curse for us."
- **2 Corinthians 5: 21** "He was made sin in our behalf."
- **1 Peter 2:24** "He Himself bore our sins on the cross."

Jesus hated sin the most and it was poured in full measure upon Him.

But, as if that wasn't enough, He also had the full wrath of God directed at Him!

- It is the most horrible feeling to have the wrath of someone you love and respect fall upon you. There is the clash of personality, the sinking feeling of separation and the heartbreak of feeling their displeasure!
 - Jesus Christ is God Eternal. He and God the Father are always One. But, as sin was placed upon Jesus, separation took place and Jesus had to experience alone the wrath that was directed towards Him from His God and Father.

Mark 15: ³³ When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" which is translated, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

- Jesus was quoting Psalm 22 14-18. Any Jew who heard Him say this would have known that He was quoting Psalm 22. They didn't have verse and chapter then. If a rabbi wanted to bring a scripture to mind, he would have had to quote it.
- In a very real way, Jesus was making note that there was now a separation between Him and God, as He took the wrath and the weight of sin.

Quote from Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology: p 576 – 577

Psalm 22:1-2 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? Oh my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest."

In quoting this psalm, he is quoting a cry of desolation that also has implicit in its context an unremitting faith in the God who will ultimately deliver him. Nevertheless, it remains a very real cry of anguish because the suffering has gone on so long and no release is in sight. With this context for the quotation it is better to understand the question 'Why have you forsaken me?' as meaning, 'Why have you left me for so long?' This is the sense it has in Psalm 22. Jesus, in his human nature, knew he would have to bear our sins, to suffer, and to die. But, in his human consciousness, he probably did not know how long this suffering would take. Yet to bear the guilt of millions of sins even for a moment would cause the greatest anguish of soul.

To face the deep and furious wrath of an infinite God even for an instant would cause the most profound fear. But Jesus' suffering was not over in a minute – or two- or ten. When would it end? Could there be yet more weight of sin? Yet, more wrath of God? Hour after hour it went on – the dark weight of sin and the deep wrath of God poured over Jesus in wave after wave. Jesus at last cried out, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' Why must this suffering go on so long? Oh my God, my God will you ever bring it to an end?

Then at last Jesus knew His suffering was nearing completion. He knew he has consciously borne all the wrath of the Father against our sins, for God's anger had abated and the awful heaviness of sin was being removed. He knew that all that remained was to yield up his spirit to His heavenly Father and die. With a shout of victory Jesus cried out, 'It is finished!' (John 19:30). Then with a loud voice He once more cried out, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!' (John 10:17-18), and then he voluntarily gave up the life that no one could take from him and he died. As Isaiah had predicted, 'he poured out his soul to death' and 'bore the sin of many' (Isaiah 53:12). God the Father saw 'the fruit of the travail of his soul' and was 'satisfied' (Isaiah 53:11)."

- Everything. Every sin. Every bit of guilt. Every wrong thing. Jesus took it upon Himself. And, God was satisfied. **Satisfied!**

NOTE: Christian, you have to absolutely know for certain today that God is satisfied with you. Any anger, any wrath that should be directed toward you, Jesus took it upon the cross. He took it all. Jesus said in the end, **"It is finished!"**

God is not mad at you. He is not sad about you. Jesus dealt with your sin upon the cross so that God might be glad with you and satisfied with you, in order that you might have intimacy of relationship and love with a Holy God.

***This is what Jesus Christ did upon the cross!
It is absolutely unbelievable and indescribable!***

- It had been dark for three hours, from noon till 3 pm. It is believed that it was at that time that God was pouring upon Jesus the sins of the world. This is why it went dark. In mourning and in judgment, the very sky went black as Jesus took the black weight of our sin.
 - This was foreshadowed in Exodus 10, when one of the last plagues that came upon Egypt was darkness over the land for three days. After that, the Passover lamb was sacrificed and Israel was delivered. Likewise, when Jesus took our sin, it went dark for three hours. After this, the Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, was crucified and we were delivered from sin, delivered from shame and delivered from guilt.

Mark 15: ³⁷ And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last. ³⁸ And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

- **Hebrews 10:19-20** "Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh."
 - The veil of the Temple was torn from top to bottom. As Jesus' flesh was torn, the veil of the Temple that separated the people from God was torn in two forever, never to be repaired.
- **Hebrews 10:21-22** "And since we have a great priest over the house of God, Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

A Special Message from Pastor Britt:

The cross of Jesus Christ is a horrendous historical fact, but it is the most wonderful thing that ever took place. Now, you have assurance of forgiveness. Now, we have to enter into the presence of God with boldness.

It is so important that you read the word of God daily. Every day the enemy will suggest to you that you are not forgiven. You are guilty. He will try to put the weight upon you. People will try to put the weight upon you. You will try to put the weight upon yourself out of some kind of sick sense of religiosity. It is a shame to hold against yourself what Jesus Christ buried in the deepest sea, and removed it as far as the east is from the west. In the same way that we have been forgiven, we should forgive others.

The cross not only dealt with what you did wrong, but with what was done wrongfully to you. Jesus had all wrong done to Him. Yet, He surrendered every right and took every beating. The way of the cross is to surrender and to forgive.

The Promise of the Cross

Abundant life, a crown of life, a heavenly home, a new name, answers to prayer, assurance of faith. Cleansing, clothing, comfort, companionship, deliverance, divine sonship, everlasting life, fellowship with God, fruitfulness, the gifts of the Spirit, glory after death, God's care and protection, growth, guidance, hope, inheritance, joy, knowledge, freedom, peace, power, renewal, rest, restoration, resurrection, rich rewards, spiritual fullness, spiritual healing, spiritual light, spiritual treasures, strength, temporal blessings, understanding, wisdom and victory through the cross of Jesus Christ!

[Click here for a list of "The Promises of the Cross" with accompanying scripture references!](#)

Pastor Britt's Closing Prayer:

Lord, we thank You for the cross. How unbelievable! How unfathomable! How wonderful! Right now, we agree together in prayer and ask You Lord, if there is anyone who does not recognize that they are a sinner who needs to be saved, that at this moment You would break their hearts and their will, and that You would invite them to salvation and that they would come and say, "Jesus, I understand now what You did. Thank You for taking my place. Forgive me." And at that moment, thank You God that You'll save them. We agree in prayer and ask You to save every single person here.

If this is you today, you **must** confess with your heart, "God I'm a sinner. I **am** wrong. But, You are right. Thank You for what Jesus did. Forgive me, God." That moment, God forgives you. He gives you all the Promises of the Cross. He begins a process in your life of renewal. And then after this life, you have the promise of eternity with Him, which is perfection beyond imagination. You will be before Him. Blameless and with great joy! Human words can't get to how great the Father's love is for us.

Worship the Lord and thank Him for the cross, in praise, in prayer and in communion. Celebrate and thank the Lord in remembrance of what His Son Jesus Christ did.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the fact that Jesus died upon a cross so significant? Would it have changed anything if the Jews had been successful at killing Jesus during the many times they tried to stone Him?
2. Why is the manner in which Jesus suffered and the way that He died so important for our salvation? How can understanding its significance strengthen our stance against the forces of evil?
3. What does it mean for you to know that some of the last words of Jesus on the cross are, "Paid in Full"? Why do you think that some people tend to forget this statement and believe they have to pay the debt for themselves? What can you do when the weight of sin becomes overbearing?
4. Can you explain the passage from Isaiah 53:10 that states, "**But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief, if He would offer Himself a guilt offering on behalf of the many.**" Can you explain how the brutal horrific sacrifice of Jesus could have possibly have pleased the Lord?
5. Gordon's Calvary is situated in a very busy intersection. The single most important event in history may have taken place at that very site. Yet, "life goes on". Except for tourists, most people no longer look up nor contemplate what the crucifixion of Jesus Christ might mean for them today. Most hearts have grown calloused to that event, which caused the afternoon sky to darken for three whole hours. Few people stop to think about the sacrifice that was made by the Living God on their behalf. There are many Christian signs and markers, including silver chains and crucifixes, which have

become casual objects that no longer have significant meaning for the observer (or maybe even the wearer). Can you think of any others? Why do people want to negate Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

6. Pastor Britt keeps pressing us to heed the desire of the Holy Spirit. To continue in the Word and read our Bibles daily. Why is understanding the power behind and memorizing the Word of God so important in the fight against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms?

The Promise of the Cross

Abundant life	John 10:10
A crown of life	Rev. 2:10
A heavenly home	John 14:1-3
A new name	Isaiah 62:1-2
Answers to prayer	1 John 5:14
Assurance of faith	2 Timothy 1:12
Cleansing	John 15:3
Clothing	Zech. 3:4
Comfort	Isaiah 51:3
Companionship	John 15:15
Deliverance	2 Tim. 4:18
Divine sonship	1 John 3:1-2
Everlasting life	John 3:16
Fellowship with God	Matt. 18:19
Fruitfulness	John 15:4-5
The gifts of the Spirit	1 Corinthians 12
Glory after death	Matt. 13:43
God's care and protection	1 Pet. 5:6-7
Growth	Eph. 4:11-15
Guidance	Isaiah 42:16
Hope	Heb. 6:18-19
Inheritance	1 Pet. 1:3-4
Joy	Isa. 35:10
Knowledge	Jeremiah 24:7
Freedom (Liberty)	Romans 8:2
Peace	John 14:27
Power	John 14:12
Renewal	Titus 3:5
Rest	Heb. 4:9, 11
Restoration	Isaiah 57:18; 1 John 1:9
Resurrection	Rom. 8:11
Rich rewards	Matt. 10:42
Spiritual fullness	John 6:35
Spiritual healing	Hosia 6:1
Spiritual light	John 12:46
Spiritual treasures	Matt 6:19-20
Strength	Phil. 4:13
Temporal blessings	Matt. 6:25-33
Understanding	Ps. 119:104
Wisdom	James 1:5
Victory	1 John 5:4

From The Complete Book of Lists by H.L. Willmington. Promises to the Believer.