

**The Death of God (John 19:17-30)
That You May Believe: The Gospel of John
Southern Hills Baptist Church
December 10, 2017**

WELCOME

Welcome All. It is good to be with you in a warm room with God's Word. If you have your Bibles, and I hope you do, fire up that app or turn over to John 19. We will pick up in verse 17 in a few minutes.

INTRODUCTION

I know everywhere you look it feels like Christmas, and I am glad for that, but for the next hour I need you to reset your brain and lock in on Easter instead. As we continue our study through John's Gospel we find ourselves in the crucifixion account, considering the death of our Savior. Next week we will shift gears into Christmas, but this morning let's act like the weather earlier this week and pretend it is spring, deal?

Jesus' Life Built to This

This morning we are going to look at the moment that **Jesus' entire life was building towards**. As we talked about just 2 weeks ago, Jesus was a King who was born to die. This was His mission.

Central Moment of History

Now, Jesus' crucifixion wasn't just the central moment of His life, **it was the central moment, the defining moment, of all life and human history.**

Jesus' crucifixion was the moment...

- That **grace took on new meaning**
- It was the moment that **hope had a clear and definitive path blazed**
- It was the moment that the **depth and severity of our sinful state was revealed** to be far greater than we could have imagined
- It was the moment that **God's love proved itself to be amazing and overwhelming**

Feel the Gravity

So I ask you, as we prepare to read John 19 this morning, as we prepare to read of the death of Jesus, God the Son, I ask you to prepare your heart. Ready yourself to **feel the gravity of what we are going to consider. Feel the gravity of what God did for you. Feel the weight of the eternal victory that He secured.**

What else can I say to introduce today's passage?

- **God, Creator, Maker, Designer, Sustainer, the Self-Sufficient One who needs nothing and is completely satisfied in the Trinity, the Almighty, Sovereign One... He died for His rebel creation.**
- The **Righteous** took the penalty of the unrighteous.
- The **Author of Life** laid down His life
- The **Sinless One** sacrificed everything for traitorous rebels

Feel the weight of this as we consider John 19. Let's pause and ask that God would impress these truths upon our hearts that we may worship our Savior afresh for His mighty and sacrificial work on the cross of Calvary.

OPENING PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

We come to you this morning, asking you to do what only you can. Break through our hard hearts, slow down our busy minds, and speak to us through your Word. Open our eyes that we may see the shocking reality, the deep grace, and the radiant hope of what Jesus accomplished when He laid down His life. May we see the ugliness of what our sin brought about. May we see the intense beauty of Jesus' sacrifice. Cause us to rejoice over the eternal victory you secured through apparent loss. Lead us to taste and see that you are good.

We pray these things in Jesus' Name,

Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

Let's turn our attention to our text, John 19:16-30. Hear the Word of God...

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.

Isaiah 40:8

[8] The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Road Map

As I studied this passage this week I came across 3 different themes that popped up over and over again in this passage.

- The first and maybe the most obvious is the **suffering of the Son of God. Crucifixion was brutal**, it was meant to be so. We can't escape the gruesome details, nor should we.
- Secondly, as we have seen in the previous passages on Jesus' Passion, there is **striking irony** that is meant to floor us. Two weeks ago we considered how the Eternal Judge of all things was being judged by His own Creation. That kind of thick irony runs through the crucifixion account as well.
- Finally, as we witness the Son of God dying at the hands of rebel creatures I see incredible **victory. The cross looks like loss, but it is nothing of the sort. It is a victory of eternal and infinite proportions.** We will see a few examples of that as we work through our passage.

These themes are woven throughout our passage. Something I don't want to do is interrupt the flow and narrative of our passage so I can group these themes together so what we are going to do this morning is walk straight through this passage and as we do we will pick up elements of Jesus' suffering, the irony of His execution, and Jesus' eternal victory.

So with this in mind, let's begin to consider our text...

JESUS' SUFFERING – LAYING DOWN HIS LIFE

As we pick up in verse 16 we read that Jesus was delivered over to be crucified. **John has a tendency to gloss over some of the facts that would have been common knowledge to those living at that time.** Considering we don't live in the Roman Empire I'll take a moment to share what John assumes you know.

The Floggings

When John says that Jesus was delivered over to be crucified this means that Jesus' floggings have already taken place. **Before Jesus was crucified He was flogged twice.**

Flogging #1

Matthew spoke to one of these last week. The first flogging took place in John 19:1. John records this at a high level. **The first flogging that took place was a "I won't let you die, but I am going to leave you unrecognizable" kind of flogging.** It was a flogging that was intended to make a strong statement to the crowd that was on hand. They beat the tar out of Jesus. Jesus' hands would have been tied to a post over His head. They then scourged Him with a whips that had little pieces of bone, glass, and metal on the end in order to tear open His flesh on His back and sides.

The initial lashes would have caused deep bruising and small gashes in His back, causing blood to ooze out, but with each additional lash the scourge would dig deeper, starting to reach muscles and arteries, intensifying the pain and causing blood to spurt. By the time they were done Jesus' back would have been in ribbons, ribbons of flesh and skin hanging from His back. The guards would have then untied Jesus allowing Him to collapse in a pool of His own blood.

Additionally, they put a crown of thorns on His head, mocking Him and inflicting pain. They beat Jesus with batons over the head, driving those thorns into His head.

Unrecognizable

After this was all done, Jesus was unrecognizable. **His face was bruised and swollen from all the blows** He had taken from the rods. Likely His eyes couldn't even open at this point. He faced was caked with blood that had run down His face from those same blows and the wounds from the thorns. Fresh blood continued to pour down over His face. **Jesus' back was shredded, bleeding and open.** He was weak from blood loss and likely in a haze from the concussions He suffered. This was flogging 1.

Flogging #2

The second flogging took place after the crowd continued to coldly call for His crucifixion. **The second flogging was a, "I'm going to beat you and now I don't care if you die in the process" kind of flogging.** They continued to scourge Him with a whip, tearing Him open even further. They continued beating Him with rods and fists. The blood loss at this point would have been incredible. The pain, excruciating and unrelenting.

Carry His Cross

Jesus was a bloody, mangled spectacle. As was the Roman custom, Jesus was commanded to carry His cross to the place of crucifixion. Now, we often imagine Jesus carrying the full cross, but that wasn't the case. He carried the horizontal beam on His back. The vertical beam would have been there waiting for Him. This death march, where Jesus carried His own instrument of death in His bloodied and beaten state was meant to be a walk of shame and serve as a message to the people that crossing the Roman Government was a deadly mistake.

Take Up Your Cross

When Jesus commanded His followers to take up their cross and follow Him, this is the image He had in mind, is it what you have in mind? It is a death march and Jesus is calling us to die to ourselves!

He Went Out – Jesus' Willingness

Take note of what John says in verse 17, "He went out." John continues to communicate the willingness of Jesus to walk towards the cross.

- Even after the lies and slander of the false trial.
- Even after the betrayal of His people.
- Even after the violent and brutal beatings.

He. Went. Out. What kind of love is this?

Collapsing Under the Cross

John doesn't record this fact, we see it in the other synoptic Gospels, but Jesus, weakened by the intense beatings He had taken and the dramatic blood loss He had experienced, collapsed under the weight of the cross He was carrying. The Roman guards compelled a man from the crowd named Simon of Cyrene to carry Jesus' cross for Him the rest of the way.

Calvary

The place of Jesus' crucifixion was to be at Golgotha, or in the Greek, "Gulgotia," which means place of the skull. In Latin the place was named, "Calveria," which is where we get the name **Calvary.**

So Little Description of the Crucifixion

It was here at Golgotha, at Calvary, that Jesus was crucified. **Something I found surprising as I considered this passage was just how little this was described by John.** There are no details given, just that Jesus was crucified. This is attributable to the fact that crucifixion needed no

description in John's day and age. It was a public spectacle that everyone knew and dreaded. No details were needed because you couldn't live in the Roman Empire and escape its awful reality.

The Horrible Details

We have a basic understanding of crucifixion because of Jesus, but we don't live in the Roman Empire so the horrible details are lost on us. So let's consider what it was exactly that Jesus endured on the cross.

Nailing Jesus' Arms to the Cross

The horizontal bar of the cross would have been laid on the ground. Jesus with His twice shredded back would have been laid on top of it, with the beam running along His shoulders. They would have stretched Jesus' arms out from end to end. The guard would have then begun feeling for the space between the bones in the wrist. This is where the nail would be driven through in order to hold Jesus up on the cross. Upon finding it, they would have held Jesus down and taken a large metal spike and begun to hammer it through Jesus' lower wrist and through the cross. The spike would drive through the wrist easily with the force of the hammer, but getting the spike into the wooden beam would take repeated blows.

Cries of Pain from the Creator

Could you imagine hearing the cries of anguish and pain from Almighty God? From our loving Creator?

Not Stretched Too Tight

This would be repeated on Jesus' other arm as well. While doing this they would make sure that Jesus' wasn't stretched too tightly as they would want to give him the flexibility to move a bit so they would allow Him to catch His breath and thus extend His suffering and time of death.

Lifted Up, Nailed Feet

Jesus would have then been lifted up, with the horizontal beam being put in place on the vertical beam. Jesus' feet would have been placed one over the other so that one spike could pin them both to the cross. The spike would have gone through the arch of each foot.

Hanging on the Cross

Jesus was suspended, hanging by nails to a wooden cross. **As Jesus hangs His weight is primarily suspended by the nails in His arms. He feels ever millisecond of this** as pain shoots through His arms. The Median Nerve, one of the major nerve lines in the arm is capturing all of this. All the while Jesus is hanging from His arms He is struggling to breath.

Pushing Up on His Feet

The longer Jesus hung on the cross the more His shoulder begun to slip out of joint, causing greater pain and agony. As this built He would look to transfer His weight to His feet, pushing up on the nail that went through the arches of His feet, pushing that spike around in His open wound, tearing His flesh slowly.

All the Pain

All of this required a great deal of strength to endure. There wasn't just the pain of the spikes or the dislocated shoulders, but muscles were burning and cramping. Breathing was labored. Jesus had little strength to give after the floggings, but all of it was required to hold on to life for any amount of time.

Suffocating

Over time though the shoulders would be fully dislocated. The legs would fully give out from utter exhaustion. **This means that Jesus' weight would have been born by His chest, which would have made breathing impossible.** He would have been able to take breaths in, but He would have been unable to exhale. Jesus would have had to muster strength in His legs to take the pressure off His chest to exhale. Over time this would become impossible as the body simply shut down and Jesus would have died from blood loss or suffocation.

Summary

This is what John meant, when he said in verse 18, "There they crucified Him."

Remember 2 Things

As we consider the intensity of this suffering that Jesus experienced on the cross please remember 2 things...

He Didn't Deserve This

First, **Jesus did this for you. He didn't deserve this. He didn't need this. He didn't have any sins to atone for. He was righteous. He was beloved by the Father. He was and is Eternal God. He needs nothing. He is complete within the Trinity. He did this because you are incomplete.** You are worse than incomplete, you are a rebel, who as sinned against the Holy God of Creation. You live in an enemy state and the Eternal Judge will righteously judge your sin accordingly. Jesus drank from this cup that you may not have to. Jesus took what was yours.

The Worst was Coming

Secondly, remember this, **this suffering we just described wasn't the worst of what Jesus endured. Jesus would also bear the wrath of God that was due us for our sins.** That was far worse. This physical death we see here was meant to paint a picture of suffering and it does that, but the suffering Jesus would endure as the righteous indignation and wrath of God was poured out on Him as He stood in our place was infinitely worse. If this image of crucifixion shakes you know that it is only the beginning of what Jesus tasted on your behalf!

What's Your Response?

What is your response to the reality of Jesus' death on the cross?

- **Is it humbling?** Does it remind you of how wicked your sin was and how great a price it required to be paid for?
- **Are you in awe?** Are you overcome by the reality that your God, your King, your Maker died for you? Are you confounded by the depth of love that is on display here? Are you stunned by the flood of grace that Jesus demonstrates?
- **Are you thankful?** Do you see all that Jesus gave you and want to give all you have back to Him? Does Jesus' laying down His life motivate you to give your life as a living sacrifice for Him?
- **Do you want to tell others?** Jesus has given the most incredible gift ever imagined, we see that so clearly in the cross, are you ready, are you excited to tell others?

There is a reason the cross is so central to our identities as Christians. It is striking. It is both hideous and stunningly beautiful all at the same time. **It should be impossible for a believer to come and sit before it and leave unchanged. I pray that is the case for us this morning.**

Let's continue on in our passage...

IRONY – THE RIGHTEOUS BETWEEN THE UNRIGHTEOUS

As we continue in verse 18, as Jesus is hung on that horrible, life-giving cross, He is hung between two criminals. I have to believe as John records this detail that he had Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 in mind, which prophesied this of Jesus...

Isaiah 53:12

[12] Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Psalm 22:16

[16] For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet

Jesus was numbered with the transgressors. Evildoers encircled Him. **The great irony of this image is that though Jesus hung from a cross as an evildoer in the company of other evildoers, Jesus had never done evil in His life.** The sad picture we should see here is that a Righteous man is dying an unrighteous death with two unrighteous men.

Faced Temptation, Never Sinned

Jesus faced every temptation that we face, yet He did so righteously, never giving in to sin, always honoring God.

Hebrews 4:15

[15] For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

A World Willing to Kill its Only Righteous Man

This image should make us sorrowful. **We live in a world that took the only righteous and perfect man and murdered Him. He loved all perfectly. He was gracious and generous. He never hurt anyone. He cared for the broken. He obeyed the law. And we killed Him.** How deadly, how blinding is sin? We live in a wicked world and we need Jesus to give us new eyes to see and new hearts to live.

IRONY – THE TRUE KING MOCKED FOR HIS KINGSHIP

Continuing in our passage, as Jesus hung between these two criminals, Pilate had a sign placed on the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." This sign was written in 3 languages, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin, so that all may read. The sign that Pilate hung had multiple purposes...

- **Charges** - The sign was meant to communicate the charges brought against Jesus for insurrection, as Rome wouldn't allow any king by Caesar.
- **Mock the Jews** - The sign also was meant to take a jab at the Jews and we see how it worked with their response. Pilate mocked them by calling Jesus their king when they wanted nothing to do with Him.

- **Mock Jesus** - The sign was also intended to mock Jesus Himself and we can read others scoffing at the idea of Jesus as king in some of the synoptic Gospels.

Divine Purpose

The sign had one more purpose however, but this purpose wasn't Pilates, it was God's. The sign was also there to serve as a testimony to the truth. **You see, the great irony of this image is that while the world mocked Jesus and the idea of Him being King as He hung on that cross, He was and is exactly that.**

Philippians 2:8-11

[8] And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. [9] Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, [10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Everyone will one day bow before Jesus. His name is above every name. Everyone will one day confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. King of kings. Lord of lords.

Death Purchased a Kingdom

Yet, the world mocks Jesus. They laugh at the idea of Him being King as they see a weak man who would soon be dead. In reality, this death was purchasing His Kingdom and would be the reason that they would one day kneel before Him as Lord. How could a dying man be King, the world asks. God responds by sharing that His death purchased His Kingdom.

VICTORY – GOD'S WORD IS TRUE – JESUS' CLOTHES

Picking back up in verse 23 we read that as Jesus hung on the cross the soldiers went to work at deciding who would get to keep His clothes He would leave behind. They divided up all the pieces that were there equally, but Jesus' tunic remained the one extra item. Rather than cutting it up and ruining it they decided to cast lots, or throw dice, to decide who would keep it.

Fulfilled Prophecy

The significance of this can be found in how it fulfills prophecy of Jesus given by David back in Psalm 22. Listen to verse 18...

Psalm 22:18

[18] they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

This is astounding. David's penning of this prophecy took place about 1,000 years prior to Jesus. Everything that was going on here was out of Jesus' control, right? He didn't decide to be crucified. He didn't decide His death would come at the hands of the Romans. He didn't influence the guards to divide up His clothes or decide on ownership of the last piece by casting lots.

In Control of it All

What this reveals is that God is ultimately in control of all of this. **Jesus has not been overcome, He is right where He wants to be.**

The Power of God's Word

This also shows us the power of God's Word. **What He says, happens. God knows all that is to come in the future because He is the One who wrote it. History, past, present, and future is His.**

STORY – JESUS' CARE FOR HIS MOTHER

As John continues on, he records a picture of Jesus' selfless love. Here is Jesus, hanging on a cross, gasping for air, muscles burning, in excruciating pain from the floggings and the nails that suspended Him and where is His head? He is thinking of His mother. Listen to what Jesus says once more...

John 19:25-27

[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.

Mary, Jesus' mother, along with a couple other ladies and the Apostle John are all standing near by, watching the unthinkable happen as Jesus dies. As Jesus looks over at them Jesus sees His mother who would be left alone without Him, indicating that His father, Joseph, had likely already passed away. Thinking of His mother's well being Jesus tells Mary to look at John and see her son and for John to look at Mary and see his mother, indicating that John was to care for Mary going forward.

Beauty of the Selfless

Again, the beauty here is that Jesus' love is so selflessly displayed. **In a moment where most of us would have any trouble thinking beyond ourselves, Jesus is locked in on caring for others.**

What a beautiful Savior we serve!

VICTORY – GOD'S WORD IS TRUE – SOUR WINE

Now, saying anything for Jesus at this point would have taken great effort. His mouth was likely dry from dehydration and the dry climate. Thus Jesus asks for a drink. Someone standing near by, likely one of the soldiers, complies and dips a sponge in sour wine and raises it to Jesus on a branch.

Fulfilled Prophecy

Once again the significance of this account is that it is here to prove God's Word true and point to Jesus as the True Messiah.

Psalm 22:15

[15] my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

David's prophecy speaks to Jesus' great thirst in His death, and just as prophesied Jesus, in His thirst asks for a drink.

Headline News

Asking for a drink isn't normally headline news, but it is when it was prophesied of 1,000 years earlier about a specific point and time in someone's life.

IRONY – THE POWERLESS IS POWERFUL

As we look at Jesus in this moment we see yet another ironic scene. **Jesus hangs in agony at the end of His life and is so seemingly powerless that He isn't able to get Himself a drink on His own.** He has to ask for help. This is the scene that so many scoffed at as they looked at the inscription above Jesus, calling Him, "King." Kings are powerful, but this man is powerless, or so it seemed.

Powerfully Pursuing in Powerlessness

So the irony of this scene is that in what appeared to be Jesus' most powerless state, He was at His most powerful, securing something only He could purchase. Jesus was working history's greatest miracle, purchasing history's greatest salvation, by powerfully hanging on that cross in apparent powerlessness. Though Jesus looked weak, and physically He was, Jesus was infinitely strong at the same time.

- Only He could bear this burden.
- Only He could complete this mission.
- Only He could bring salvation.

VICTORY – IT IS FINISHED – MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

After Jesus drank the wine and wet His lips, he cried aloud, "It is finished!" and passed from this life. These last words are not words of defeat, but words of victory. The phrase "It is finished" in the Greek comes from one word and I would suggest to you that the Greek word carries deeper meaning that this one phrase captures. The idea of the word is two-fold. It carries the idea of completeness, as our translation indicates, but more than that it communicates that a task, a mission, a purpose is complete.

Completed God's Mission

In other words, Jesus is saying, in His dying, He has completed the mission God gave Him.

Complete Atonement

In His death Jesus atoned for the sins of any and all who would believe in Him...

Hebrews 10:12-14

[12] But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, [13] waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. [14] For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

It is finished. Atonement has been made.

Complete Victory of Satan

Satan has also been defeated...

Hebrews 2:14

[14] Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

It is finished. Satan, God's enemy, has been forever defeated in the death of Jesus.

Complete Propitiation

In Jesus' death God's wrath has been satisfied.

Romans 3:23-25

[23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24] and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, [25] whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

It is finished. The wrath of God has been poured out on the sins of those who have repented of their sins and put their faith in Jesus.

CONCLUSION

The cross looks like abject defeat, but in reality it is the greatest victory.

The cross looks like death, but in it we find the hope of life.

The cross looks like shame, but through it Jesus will be given a name above every other name, all will bow before Him, all will call Him Lord, His enemies will be made His footstool.

How Will You Respond?

Let me close this morning by asking you, how you might respond to Jesus and His work on the cross? Jesus laid down His life that He might accomplish something. His life was the only requisite payment, the only suitable sacrifice to atone for our sins. You see, our sins, they are great, they are many, they separate us from God, they incur God's just wrath. We cannot stand under such a penalty. More than that separation from God is separation from beauty, pleasure, and truth.

Jesus Bought What We Need

Jesus through His sacrificial and substitutionary work on the cross purchases reconciliation and forgiveness that our sins wouldn't eternally damn us, that we wouldn't have to stand under the impossible and crushing weight of God's just wrath.

Believe in Jesus!

Jesus invites you into the gift of this salvation. He offers it freely to all who would believe in Him, to all who would put their faith in Him as Lord and Savior. If you are here and you have not done that, would you be willing to leave your sin and run to Jesus for mercy? He offers it abundantly and it is your only hope when you stand before God one day.

Christian, How Are You Impacted?

Christian, I want to ask you, how are you impacted by the reality of the cross?

- **Is it humbling?** Does it remind you of how wicked your sin was and how great a price it required to be paid for? It was your sins that required the suffering we considered this morning. You, I, brought this upon Jesus. He did this for us.
- **Are you in awe?** Are you overcome by the reality that your God, your King, your Maker died for you? Are you confounded by the depth of love that is on display here? Are you stunned by the flood of grace that Jesus demonstrates?

- **Are you thankful?** Do you see all that Jesus gave you and want to give all you have back to Him? Does Jesus' laying down His life motivate you to give your life as a living sacrifice for Him?
- **Do you want to tell others?** Jesus has given the most incredible gift ever imagined, we see that so clearly in the cross, are you ready, are you excited to tell others?

Oh, the cross of Christ, what horrid ugliness and unending beauty!

Let's pray.