

The Crucifixion of the Son of God

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 19:17-22
Preached on: Sunday, September 6, 2015

It is once again my great joy to be able to minister the word of God to you. Will you take your Bibles and turn to John 19. If you haven't been with us, we have been going through this Gospel verse-by-verse and this morning we come to verses 17 through 22. Before we look at them closely, let me prepare your hearts and minds by stating that this is perhaps the most monumental section in all of Scripture because it speaks of the crucifixion of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here we witness a stunning demonstration of human depravity which serves as a dark contrast to the dazzling diamond of God's love for sinners. A love that would provide a way for we as a sinful people to be reconciled to a holy God, frankly, a concept that most people in our world do not understand. And many people who do hear of that concept, mock it, they find it offensive, because they are spiritually dead and they have no grasp of the depth of their own depravity, nor do they have an understanding of the height of God's holiness and, frankly, were it not for God's grace, we would still be among them.

May I remind you the reason for which Christ died. He died to pay the penalty for sinners and to give those sinners who believe in him his righteousness. You must understand that sin is man's innate inability to conform to the moral character and desires of God. We are drawn to sin like a moth is drawn to a flame. Sin is the defining characteristic of our very nature. It's what separates the unregenerate from the life of God and makes that person an enemy of God, subject to the wrath of God. We know biblically that prior to salvation everything that we did, everything that we were was fundamentally offensive to God rendering us guilty before his bar of justice and damned to an eternal condemnation. Because of innate corruption, the unregenerate are unable to obey the essence of the first and greatest commandment, that is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and apart from the Spirit's work of regeneration in our life, we would remain spiritual cadavers. Dead in our sins. Unable to save ourselves. Without hope.

We must understand that because sin violates God's holy standard of perfect righteousness which is the very essence of his character, his justice must be satisfied and he cannot merely forgive sin because all sin must be punished otherwise there would be no justice in the universe and God would not be perfectly holy. Therefore an atonement had to be made. Atonement means to provide a moral or legal repayment for a fault or an injury. But sinful man could never atone for his own sin because he is guilty. He is sinful. God's holy infinite justice could not be satisfied apart from a holy and an infinite ransom, one that only God could provide.

We must remember that atonement requires two things: satisfaction and substitution. Satisfaction of the offended holiness of God that could only be accomplished by an

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acceptable, perfectly righteous substitute for the guilty party. But the question is what man could possibly meet that standard? No one save the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, what would appear to be an unsolvable dilemma was perfectly resolved through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary and as Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:4, because God is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, according to Romans 8:32, he did not spare his own Son but delivered him up for us all. You see, Jesus had to take upon himself the nature of a man to be punished in our place yet he also had to be God in order to endure the sufferings of all who would believe in him. Therefore as we look upon him in Scripture, we see that he was a son of a virgin according to the flesh but Immanuel, God with us, according to the Spirit and in our text this morning, we witness the great fulcrum, if you will, of God's redemptive plan that lifts sinners out of the pit of sin's condemnation and it is unimaginable to think that God loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, that is, the appeasement, the satisfaction of God's holy justice.

Now, I want you to remember before we look at the text closely that John's stated purpose for his Gospel is that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name. So all through John's Gospel, the focus is on the majesty and the glory of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, a theme that we see even in this account of his crucifixion. So it's my joy this morning to bring you to this text where, once again, we can see the majesty and the glory of Christ pictured really in two ways. We're going to see him 1. as the sacrificial lamb; and 2. as the sovereign King. And if I can add as a footnote, dear friends, if you understand this sacred unity that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was not only the sacrificial lamb but he is also the sovereign King, you will have the key to unlock the mystery of the universe and if you embrace this in saving faith, you will also have the key to eternal life.

So let's look at the context. You will recall that in the providence of God, the Jewish leaders in particular have ignited a firestorm of rage against Jesus. The Roman governor, Pilate, has repeatedly declared him to be innocent in the mock trials, but he had to do something to prevent a riot from breaking out. He had to do something to protect himself from losing favor with the people and perhaps even with Rome. Hoping the Jews would be willing to exchange the innocent Jesus for another prisoner which was their custom at Passover, Pilate had Jesus flogged with the lesser of three floggings that the Romans used, one used for lesser crimes that would also be accompanied by a warning. But after that first flogging, we know that the soldiers put a crown of thorns upon his head. They put a purple robe on his body. They put a reed in his hand to imitate the scepter of a sovereign king. The word says that they spat upon him and they would take that reed from his hand and then they would beat him on the head, driving the thorns deep into his skull. The pain had to have been excruciating. This beating, combined with the previous

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beating that he endured at the hands of the high priest, Caiaphas, rendered him now unrecognizable as a human being, consistent with what Isaiah said in Isaiah 52:13.

Now folks, it is in this condition that Pilate brings Jesus out to the Jewish mob, hoping that somehow they would look upon this bloody form and have sympathy. So at the end of verse 14, chapter 19, we read, "And he," Pilate, "said to the Jews, 'Behold, your King!' So they cried out, 'Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!' Pilate said to them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but Caesar.' So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified."

According to Matthew's account, it would appear that Jesus was then scourged the second time with the most severe verberatio flogging that the Romans used because Matthew indicates that Jesus was scourged after Barabbas was released and the sentence of crucifixion was ready to be carried out because the verberatio scourging was the most severe form of torture from which a man would never be able to recover, one that was reserved for a person about to be crucified. In fact, it was designed to be so brutal that it would hasten a criminal's death upon the cross.

Folks, let me pause for a moment and remind you that he bore all of this, he endured all of this suffering on our behalf, suffering that we deserve. It's hard for us to understand that because we've got a very high view of ourselves and a very low view of God but if we could really see the depths of our depravity and the heights of God's holiness, it would make sense.

So it is in this condition now that we come to John's account that we will look at more closely beginning in verse 17. "They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha." Friends, here we see 1. Jesus pictured as the sacrificial lamb. I want you to understand that although the text says they took Jesus therefore and he went out, ultimately it is God the Father who is in full control. We are reminded of this in Romans 8:32 where Paul says, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." And why was he delivered up for us all? It was because he was, according to Romans 4:25, delivered up for our transgressions.

So you must understand that here we really see Jesus as a willing sacrifice. In fact, the other Gospel writers tell us that the soldiers led Jesus away. He was led away by the soldiers so Jesus did not go kicking and screaming, nor did he exert his own power which he could have done. With a thought, he could have incinerated his enemies but he went willingly to die that we might live eternally. As Isaiah prophesied some 700 years earlier and as the nation of Israel will one day confess, according to Isaiah 53:7, "He was

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oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth." So you must understand that John is depicting Jesus being in full control of the situation. He is intent on doing the will of his Father, to give his life as a ransom for all whom the Father had given him in eternity past. You will recall in John 10, Jesus said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." He said, "No one has taken it away from me but I lay it down on my own initiative."

I want you to notice, again, verse 17, "They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross." It was the custom of the Romans for the condemned to carry the crossmember or the horizontal bar in Latin, the patibulum, to carry that on their shoulders to the place of execution where the upright beam of the gibbet was already anchored firmly into the ground and, of course, for the criminal to carry that through the crowds would be a horrifying spectacle that would basically communicate to the people, "Don't you dare cross Rome." Then when the victim would finally reach the place of execution, the place of final torture, he would be stripped completely naked as Jesus was and made to lie on his back on the ground so the soldiers could either tie or nail his outstretched arms to the patibulum that he had been carrying. And when this was completed, then the victim would be hoisted up to the vertical beam where the crossmember to which he was attached would be fastened. At that point, the victim's feet would be either tied or nailed to the upright in the vicinity of a small wooden ledge, the Romans called it a sedicula, and this was attached to the upright gibbet or the scaffold and this would allow the victim to support his body weight and thereby relieve the excruciating pain of the tearing muscles in his upper extremities. Perhaps you have hung for a little bit on something and you know how quickly that becomes extremely painful. This would also allow the victim to raise himself up so that he could get some air in his lungs that were being cut off by the diaphragm. Now, such a device may appear at first glance to be a merciful act but it wasn't. It was actually designed to prolong the torture.

So we come to the text. Jesus went out bearing his own cross. Beloved, you must understand that these words are pregnant with meaning, rooted in the Old Testament Scriptures. That Jesus bore his own cross upon his shoulders was pictured in the story of Abraham who was asked to sacrifice his son, Isaac, in Genesis 22. There we read that Abraham was asked to take his only son and go to the land of Moriah which, by the way, would later become the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, and there offer Isaac as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, "of which I tell you." The text says that after they came to that place, according to verse 6, Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac, his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife so the two of them walked on together. In that text, we see Isaac as a type of the greater antetype, the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, like Jesus, Isaac carried upon his shoulders the wood that would be

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the instrument of his sacrificial death which, as you know, God ultimately prevented by providing a substitute that would be a picture of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me take you back to the scene with Jesus. The synoptic writers, Matthew, Mark and Luke, reveal to us the account of a man, Simon of Cyrene. Cyrene was a port city of North Africa where there existed a large Jewish community. He was probably a pilgrim that had come to Jerusalem for Passover and the synoptic writers report how the soldiers pressed this man into service to carry the cross for Jesus because by now he was so physically exhausted by the scourgings and the beatings and the thorns piercing his skull, the loss of blood, that he probably just collapsed under the weight of the crossbeam upon his shoulders. The soldiers' commandeering of Simon would have happened somewhere along the Via Dolorosa. You've heard of that in Latin; that means "the way of sorrows; the way of suffering." It's used to describe the path that Jesus walked on his way to his crucifixion. If you go there, as some of you may have been as I have, this probably happened at what they call the Fifth Station of the Cross. But it's interesting that John omits this report. In fact, he speaks very little about Jesus' sufferings because, once again, his focus is on the sovereign will of God the Father and the Son's obedience to that will along with the kingship of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel as we will see.

I also find it fascinating to note that Satan, the father of lies, inspired the second century Gnostic heretic Basilides to write in his commentary on John that Simon of Cyrene took Jesus' place and died on the cross in his stead. Maybe you haven't heard that before and you might say, "Well, I'm glad nobody believes that." Well, in fact, about 1.6 billion people do. Almost 24% of the world's population believe that because this is the common view of Muslims today.

As we look at the scene with Jesus, unrecognizable as a human being, carrying that crossmember, we have to ask the question, "Why such barbaric cruelty? Why such unmitigated evil? Why such demonic malice towards this man?" Folks, the answer is because this is Satan's hour. This is an hour of evil and darkness. Jesus spoke of this in Luke 22:53, remember, when Jesus told the chief priests and the officers of the temple and the elders that came to arrest him, "While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me," the idea being, "I wouldn't let you." "But," he says, "this hour and the power of darkness are yours." This was in fulfillment of what God promised in Genesis 3:15 where the serpent would bruise the heel of Christ, causing him to suffer, but Christ, we are told, will bruise the serpent on the head and give him a fatal blow. You see, none of this caught God by surprise. This was all part of his plan to bring glory to himself by redeeming lost sinners like you and like me and here we see Jesus suffering according to God's sovereign plan. As Isaiah said some 700 years earlier in Isaiah 53:10, it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief. I might add also that what Jesus is

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experiencing at this point will pale into insignificance to the pain that he will experience when the full wrath of the Father is poured out upon him for our sins, that will cause him to cry out with a loud voice, Matthew tells us, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Let's return to the text. Notice also it says Jesus went out "to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha." That Jesus was taken outside the walls of the city is also in keeping with Old Testament law and typology. You see, according to the Mosaic law that God gave to Israel, the bodies of sin offerings, that is, animals offered on the Day of Atonement, were not eaten but burned "outside the camp." You can read about this in Leviticus 4; Leviticus 16; other passages. You see, this symbolized the need to remove sin from the midst of the people so it is not by accident but rather by the sovereign will of God that we see Jesus, the ultimate and final sacrifice for sin, crucified outside the gates of Jerusalem. In fact, the writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 13, beginning in verse 11, "For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach."

So what is pictured here in Jesus going outside the city is the need for believers to join him outside the camp even of this world; to sever our relationships with all of the world's unholy systems and unholy practices; to separate ourselves from the world and not let the world conform us into its image and so forth. Moreover, I might add that this also pictures the end of the Levitical system. You remember in Matthew 5:17, Jesus said, "I came to fulfill the law," literally, "to fill it up," and we know that his sinless life fulfilled the moral law. His judgment upon Israel for rejecting their Messiah fulfilled the judicial law. And finally, his atoning work on the cross fulfilled the ceremonial law so all of the ceremonial regulations, all the dietary restrictions, all of the Sabbaths of which there were 11, all of those things that were merely symbols and pictures pointed to Jesus, the Messiah, illustrating God's plan of redemption, all of that is over now. Now in Christ they are no longer necessary. That which was pictured became a reality. He was the Incarnation. He was the personification of the ceremonial law which Paul tells us in Galatians 3:24 was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that by him we might be justified by faith; but after faith has come, we no longer need a schoolmaster. Therefore Paul will tell us in Romans 7:4 that we were made to die to the law through the body of Christ.

So Jesus, it says, "went out to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha." By the way, in Latin it's called, Calvary. The exact location is unknown. It is believed to either be a site where there is a rock formation that resembles a

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skull to this very day called Gordon's Calvary; it's north of the city. Or perhaps west of Jerusalem and I think that's probably where it was at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was built by Constantine the Great in 325-6.

So notice again, rather than focusing on the physical sufferings of Christ and the staggering wickedness that would motivate people to do such a thing, John continues to focus on the majesty and the glory of the Son of God. He simply says in verse 18, "There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between." Now folks, one again, we see a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. They crucified their Messiah, the one promised and predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures. You will recall that over 1,450 years before Christ, in the 40th year of Israel's wanderings after they left Egypt, God brought a terrible judgment upon Israel because they complained about the mediatorial ruler that God put over them, Moses. In Numbers 21:6, Moses writes, "The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died." Now, of course, this brought great conviction to the people of Israel and they therefore confessed in verse 7, "'We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you,'" Moses, "'intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us.' And Moses interceded for the people." Then because of God's great mercy upon sinners, the Lord heard their confession and he responded to Moses' intercession and in verse 8 and following he said to Moses, "'Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live.' And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived."

You see, God intended that scenario to be a typological prediction of a coming Savior. In fact, John tells us that Jesus reached back to this very incident in John 12:33 to "indicate the kind of death by which He was to die." In John 3:14, Jesus said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." And in John 8:28, Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He." Isn't it sad the Jews were so blinded by their sin they refused to see who Jesus really was? Little did they know that by asking the Romans to kill him, they would actually be fulfilling Old Testament prophecy. You see, the Jewish form of execution was stoning and typically what they would do is throw a person off of some kind of a cliff and then pelt them with stones until they died, but the Roman form of execution was not laying a man down but raising a man up, lifting a person up in crucifixion. In fact, in John 12:32, for a third time in John's Gospel, Jesus indicated the kind of death he would die saying, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

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Another amazing prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion is found in Psalm 22, so interesting, a Psalm written by King David about 1,000 years before it happened. In fact, David had no knowledge of crucifixion because it didn't even exist in that day. The opening words of Psalm 22 are the exact words Jesus spoke in the hour of his greatest anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" which parallels Matthew's record in Matthew 27:46. And in Psalm 22, for example verses 6 through 8, we have a record of the kinds of insults that Jesus endured on the cross. There the inspired David said this, "But I am a worm and not a man, A reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, 'Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.'"

Now, we see the obvious parallel of that account in Matthew 27, beginning in verse 39. Here's what Jesus actually endured, "And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads and saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, 'He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him; for He said, "I am the Son of God.'"

It's interesting as well in Psalm 22, David went on to describe some of the unimaginable physical torments that the Lord would endure on the cross. In verse 13 he says, "They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me." Then in verse 18 he says, "They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots."

This speaks of what John described in our text in John 19, notice verse 23, "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts," by the way, that would be his head covering, his belt, his sandals and his outer robe. Then it says, "a part to every soldier and also the tunic." The tunic was what was worn next to the skin. John says, "now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be.'" Then John says this, "this was to fulfill the Scripture: 'They divided My outer garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.'" There he quotes Psalm 22:18. "Therefore the soldiers did these things."

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Beloved, don't you see this? John, once again in this account, is magnifying the majesty and the glory of Christ, emphasizing that he is the Messiah of Old Testament Scripture. He is the one who was predicted. You see, this was crucial for evangelism in that day as it is in this day. He wanted the Jews and he wanted the proselytes to understand that the sufferings of Jesus fulfilled the will of God. That every detail of the Messiah's life and ministry and death and exaltation were all part of the Father's perfect plan, even down to the soldiers' casting of lots for his tunic. In fact, Proverbs 16:33 tells us that the Lord is even in control of the outcome of the casting of lots. Isn't that interesting? There we read, "The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD."

Now, go back to John 19:18, "There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between." It's interesting, Matthew tells us that these men were robbers which fulfills Isaiah's prophecy that was written 700 years earlier. Isaiah 53:12, there the prophet predicted that Messiah would be "numbered with the transgressors." Beloved, I hope you see this. If you don't, I don't know else to present it to you. Over and over we witness the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy which is one of the greatest testimony that the Bible is indeed the inspired, infallible, inerrant, authoritative, all-sufficient word of the living God. No other religious document that claims divine inspiration contains any prophecy in it because if it did, the prophecies would not come true because they weren't from God. They would simply be from the imaginations and the musings of man, therefore their claim to divine inspiration would easily be proven false when the prophecies didn't come true. But not so the word of the living God contained in the canon of Scripture because it was written by God who has ordained the end from the beginning.

So here in this historical eye-witness account of Jesus' crucifixion, we clearly see that God the Father is in full control of every detail. We see how God the Son is accomplishing the will of his Father. He is fully completing every aspect of the outworking of the counsels of the Triune Godhead decreed in eternity past. The Holy Spirit wants us to understand that not one single word of God will ever fail and therefore that disfigured human being, that victim hanging upon that Roman cross, was indeed who he said he was, the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, of whom the prophets spoke. And you must understand that, indeed, he was the sacrificial lamb that was pictured in the story of God's intervention in Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, but Jesus was not only pictured as a lamb in Scripture, he is also pictured as a lion, the lion of the tribe of Judah, one of the earliest titles of the Messiah that we find all the way back in Genesis 49:8-12.

You see, this speaks of his fierceness and his strength that the world will one day witness at his Second Coming. In fact, in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, John is given a vision in Revelation 5:5. He sees what happens in heaven and there he writes, "Weep no more.

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Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." If I can digress for a moment: the scroll is a reference to the title deed of the universe and the seals that secure the scroll that must be opened, that must be broken, symbolize the pre-kingdom judgments that God will pour out upon the earth in the future tribulation before he establishes his millennial reign. And in that text, hearing of a lion, John turns to see a lamb, literally a little pet, a pet lamb, and this pictures what had to happen with the Jews. God required the Jews to bring in the little Passover lamb into their house and to love it for four days, essentially making it their pet and then they would have to sacrifice it. We see all of this was a picture of Israel's true Passover lamb, God's Son. They took him in. They praised him. They wanted to make him king, but only on their terms. And then they viciously killed him.

So John says in the next verse of Revelation 5, verse 6, "and between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing as though it had been slain." Dear Christian, please understand this: you will never have an understanding of the word of God, of God's plan for the ages, unless you understand that the Lord Jesus Christ was both the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah. You must understand that God's plan for the ages requires two things: it requires a sacrificial lamb to redeem the elect and it also requires a sovereign lion to restore the kingdom, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, the one who will conquer. The root of David, by the way, being another messianic title that we read about in Isaiah 11:1-10. You see, the lion anticipates that this person, the Lord Jesus, would be a descendant of David and reign in an eternal Davidic dynasty.

So in the account of Jesus' crucifixion, John is careful to picture both the Lamb and the Lion who will be the greater son of David who will reign in the promised Davidic dynasty that will have no end. This brings us to our second and final point this morning. We've seen the sacrificial lamb but also John reveals him as the sovereign King. Look at verses 19-22. This is truly fascinating. You see, normally the Romans would have someone walk before the condemned person carrying a placard that would have inscribed upon it the crime that that person had committed but in Jesus' case, he committed no crime. Repeatedly Pilate declared him to be innocent. So out of his disdain for the Jews and, I believe, in an effort to mock them and maybe gain a little revenge on them for forcing him to somehow sentence this innocent man to such a hideous death, notice what happens in verse 19, "Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, 'JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.' Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek." You see, from Pilate's perspective, to have this written in three languages was necessary to ensure that the entire populace could understand the nature of the crime that warranted such a punishment, but from God's

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perspective, God wanted everyone to know the truth and that is that Jesus, the Nazarene, was and is indeed who he says he was and is, the King of the Jews and one day the entire world will know that.

I find it fascinating, don't you, to witness the way God uses the malice of wicked people to accomplish his purposes? So consistent with Pilate's intentions, this title infuriated the Jews. Not only did it make them look bad because, my goodness, to have a king like that? He must have a pretty pathetic nation. But also he said that he was from Nazareth. You see, that was a huge insult to the Judeans. Nazareth was just an insignificant, rural, Galilean village whose inhabitants would be considered to be uneducated, unsophisticated type of people. It would be, if you will, like New Yorkers mocking those of us from Joelton or Ashland City or something like that. That's the idea.

"So," verse 21, "the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews"; but that He said, "I am King of the Jews."' In other words, "Make him out to be an imposter. He's not our legitimate king." But Pilate is not going to have any part of that and, "Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.'" Well, folks, there on that Roman cross hung the Lord of glory, the one that we give homage to because, indeed, he is our Savior and our Lord and I hope and I pray that each one of you have bowed the knee to Jesus. If you haven't, I pray that you will do so today. Confess him as Savior and Lord. And may I challenge each of you believers, folks, once again we've seen that God is in complete control of history and what he has said in his word is going to be fulfilled literally and the question is: are you living in light of his return? And may I challenge you to get serious about the word of God. Isn't it amazing to see the complexity of the word of God and yet the simplicity of it? And to think how we spend so much of our time on things that are eternally inconsequential. And yet we know that it is the truth that sanctifies us. Not error, not ignorance, it is the truth that sanctifies us, that makes us more conformed into the image of Christ so that we can enjoy more of his fullness in our life.

So may I say very practically: do everything you can, folks, to take advantage of every opportunity that you have, certainly here at Calvary Bible Church. Take advantage of every opportunity to learn the word of God, to be a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth so that you will understand it, so that you will know how to apply it to your life, so that you will know how to teach it to your children, so that you will enjoy all that the Lord wants you to enjoy because we are united to him by his grace.

Will you pray with me?

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The Crucifixion of the Son of God

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 19:17-22

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Father, thank you for these eternal truths. I pray that by your power and by your grace they will bear much fruit in every heart for Jesus' sake that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. Amen.

We pray you have been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at otcr.org.

Website: otcr.org

Online Sermons: otcr.org/content/sermon/1199/The_Crucifixion_of_the_Son_of_God.html