

Introduction:

1. It is a moment in history that must never be forgotten. It is an event that was recorded in the Holy Scriptures with great detail. I'm referring to the death of Jesus. How often do we think about the death of Jesus? When was the last time we took the time to go and survey the old rugged cross?
2. It is a tough road to travel, but it is one that we need to travel often. Our brother Alan gave us some thoughts with respect to the death of Jesus. Tonight, I want us to spend some more time in the shadow of the cross. As we look back at the cross, our lives should certainly be changed forever. But will they? Are they? Let's revisit the dark hour of our King and see what we can learn when we survey the old rugged cross. Open your Bible to Matthew 27:23-54. When you survey the cross and death of Jesus what do you see? I see...

The Lesson:

I. Suffering

- A. Just a quick reading makes it clear how much Jesus suffered for mankind.
 1. The suffering that Jesus experienced can never really be fully understood. While we have these words to help us understand, it is impossible for us to truly grasp the suffering the Son of Man endured. He experienced **the suffering of...**
 - a. **Being hated** by those around Him, Matthew 27:23-26. The people hated Him so much that they were willing to let a criminal go instead.
 - b. **Physical Pain** that is unimaginable, Matthew 27:26. They beat Him repeatedly. He experienced great pain before His back even touched the cross.
 - (1) We hate it when we get cut with something.
 - (2) Imagine the pain He experienced by a crown of thorns, Matthew 27:29.
 - c. **Emotional Suffering** with the words, accusations thrown His way, Matthew 27:39. He endured the suffering of the criminals that hung on either side of Him.
 - (1) What about His clothes being taken from Him, Matthew 27:35? Can you imagine how they made Him feel?
 - (2) What about being exposed and having bystanders looking at you and doing nothing to help you?
 2. When I survey the cross of Jesus I see so much suffering.
- B. The pain of being on that cross for even a few minutes would have been excruciating.
 1. When I think about the hours that He was on the cross, I feel absolutely terrible for the things that I complain about.
 2. What we experience in our lives is nothing compared to what Jesus endured on the cross.

II. Sacrifice

- A. When I think about all of the suffering that Jesus endured, I also think of something else.
 - 1. Jesus didn't have to go through with any of this! He didn't have to come to earth and be born by Mary. And yet He did, Luke 1:33-35.
 - 2. He didn't have to live a life subjected to Mary and Joseph, Luke 2:51. And yet He did.
 - 3. Jesus didn't have to put up with His apostles who were stubborn, reckless, and sometimes just plain foolish, Matthew 16:5-8; Mark 9:34. And yet He did.
- B. Yet the greatest sacrifice was that He would allow wicked men to put Him to death.
 - 1. This did not have to happen, John 10:17-18. None of this had to happen. But it did.
 - 2. Jesus would sacrifice His life. He would willingly lay it down. He would allow wicked vile men to spit in His face. Why would He do all of this?

III. Savior

- A. When I survey the cross, I see the Savior of the world.
 - 1. This is why Jesus suffered. This is why Jesus sacrificed everything. He died so that we might be freed from our sins. He died to pay the ransom for our sins, Ephesians 1:7. He paid the only price that could be paid. He was the perfect offering, 1 Peter 2:20-22.
 - 2. Jesus saved us from the worst kind of weight we all experience: SIN! People get so...
 - a. Caught up with the financial debt and the weight they carry because of it.
 - b. Caught up with the extra weight they carry physically.
 - 3. But let's be sure that we understand the worst weight to carry is the burden of SIN. You can become debt free and lose 50 pounds, but if you haven't taken care of the weight of your SINS, you will still feel burdened. Only Jesus can relieve you of that debt. Why? Because He suffered on the cross. Because He sacrificed His life, so that He might save you, no wait, US from SIN!
- B. When we survey the cross hopefully we see the solution to the problems this world has.
 - 1. The problem of racism is tied to the sin of PRIDE, HATRED, and a lack of LOVE.
 - 2. The problem in many marriages is often connected to the sin of SELFISHNESS.
 - 3. The problem in many local churches is often the sin of BITTERNESS toward each other.
 - 4. Jesus came and died to deliver man from the bondage of sin! When I survey the cross I see a Savior! Now let me end with a question for all of us.

Conclusion:

- 1. What does Jesus see when He surveys our CROSSES? Jesus had a cross to bear and we do too, Luke 9:23-24. It is a cross we must pick up daily! Jesus is looking at us. What does He see with us and our crosses?
- 2. Will Jesus see us suffering for Him? That's what He did for us. We must do the same, Matthew 5:10-12. As we suffer for Him, let us draw strength to do so by continuing to survey His cross. Let us suffer for Him with JOY!

3. Will Jesus see us sacrificing for Him? That's what He did for us and we must do the same. Will we sacrifice for Him no matter what? Jesus sacrificed to the point of death. It's not enough for us to sacrifice, but then stop when it becomes inconvenient. Here's a question to ask people you study with, and a question for us to consider: "Will we follow Jesus no matter what?" If we can get to YES, then the things that we think are tough (severing a relationship, mending relationships, stopping a habit) all become much easier. Maybe we don't sacrifice as much as we should, or with the right mindset because we haven't surveyed the cross as much. Maybe we will not sacrifice our feelings, our rights to help our brothers and sisters in Christ, because we have forgotten how much Jesus has sacrificed for us! What will Jesus see when He surveys our cross?
4. Ultimately, will Jesus see that we are living like we are saved? Will He see that we are set apart and striving for holiness, 1 Peter 1:13-15? That's what this is all about. Jesus gave up everything for our Salvation. Let's be sure that we do the same for Him! Let's show others that Christ is truly living in us. Let's show Jesus that we are truly taking up our crosses and living for Him.