

Jesus' Death, According to John**Introduction**

- On GF, Christians all over world gather under cross to watch Jesus die. Why we've come to church: to worship Jesus on day he actually dies to take away sin of world. Gruesome sight, filled with sadness and pain, but it's where Jesus' disciples want to be, where we need to be.
- Where Apostle John was. There at crucifixion; saw everything. In fact, none of other disciples are mentioned as being at cross, only John. So today, let's listen to John tell us what happened. Let's walk through events of GF in Jn 19, section by section, and witness Jesus' death, acc to John.

Two Others with Him - ¹⁷ *Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).* ¹⁸ *There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.*

- When child, always used to bother me when I would see, in church or somewhere on display, three crosses. Our church one; others, two criminals' next to. When younger, used to bother me, because I figured one of those side crosses really memorial to someone who went to hell. John doesn't tell us dialogue Jesus shared with criminals; know from other Gospels: one believed, paradise; other rejected, hell. So as child, used to wonder why we'd honor, with visual memorial, someone who went to hell.
- But then, when I read this verse and see Jesus on cross, right there in middle of these two sinful people, I realize: Jesus came to earth to be among sinners. Really only two types of sinners in this world: believe and don't believe. So now when I see, in church or up on display, three crosses, doesn't bother anymore, because now I know really I'm looking at story of salvation. In middle, Savior who died for me, everyone. One side, sad reality that many refuse to believe in Jesus. On other, that's me, us and all believers. We don't deserve grace, yet receive forgiveness of sins and promise of paradise from Savior who was crucified among sinners, for sinners, like you and me.

The King of the Jews - ¹⁹ *Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.* ²⁰ *Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.* ²¹ *The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."* ²² *Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."*

- INRI. When you see those letters above cross, Latin abbreviation for Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Pilate put placard above Jesus, in languages for everyone to read, to mock Jesus and to mock Jews. "Want king? Here's your king! Look at him now!" Mockery.
- So then, how utterly ironic it is that that sign was actually accurate! Jesus is our king. What do kings do? Fight battles to protect people. Our King Jesus fought the battle against sin, Satan, hell; fought it on cross. When died & rose, won victory to protect his people, so that sin, Satan, hell would never be our masters.
- Jesus is our king, the king of kings. INRI. Jesus of Naz, king Jews. Placard ironically accurate, isn't it? Meant to mock him. But by crucifixion he saved all of us. That's what makes Jesus our king.

His Clothing - ²³ *When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.* ²⁴ *"Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, "They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment." So this is what the soldiers did.*

- Tough Roman soldiers having little fun under cross: gambling for dying man's clothes. On one hand, insult to injury – "clothing worth more to us than your life." On other hand, to them, fringe benefit of job: soldiers got to keep last possessions of dying man, even clothes.
- May wonder why Bible includes this detail about Jesus clothing; maybe seems kind of trivial. Until realize God predicted/prophesied this very detail 1000 years before it happened. Ps 22 is where written, **"They divided...my garment."** Ps 22 also Psalm where we hear, **"My God, my God, why have you**

forsaken me?” Sang it last night at close of MT service. Psalm written by David, about GF, 1000 years before GF took place.

- This teaches us that God knew every detail of what would happen to Jesus on GF, even about clothing. In control whole time, even 1000 years beforehand. So it strengthens faith to know that Jesus’ death didn’t just happen on a whim, at impulse of Pontius Pilate. No, God ordained every detail of GF – all part of his plan – so that we all could have unshakeable certainty that our salvation comes through historical event of death of Jesus Christ on GF.

A New Family – ²⁵ *Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.* ²⁶ *When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,”* ²⁷ *and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.*

- Here Jesus, in sense, setting house in order; making sure mother Mary taken care of rest of life. Entrusting her wellbeing to John, standing there with her, and wrote this very account. Strikes me: this happened while dying on cross. In extraordinary torment, yet thinking of someone else, showing love to family.
- Even though we are not mentioned here by name, while Jesus was dying on cross, in extraordinary torment, he was thinking about you, as well. Had you on mind as hung on cross, because loves you. That’s why he let them crucify him in first place – thinking of family, church, believers, his brothers and sisters in Christ. As dying, Jesus was setting house in order, taking care of Mary, taking care of his entire family. Jesus loves you so much that, even during the extraordinary torment of crucifixion, he had family on his mind and was thinking about you.

Thirsting - ²⁸ *Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.”* ²⁹ *A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips.*

- I’ve been with people who are on deathbed. I’ve seen their lips pale white, tongue dry as sandpaper; seen nurses dab lips, tongue with wet cloth or small sponge to try to ease pain. Jesus was in pain when said, **“thirsty;”** part of his physical torment. Add to that, while on cross, also suffered spiritual torment, in hell, separation from heavenly father. But all that suffering almost over; all about to end in few short moments.
- So when Jesus took his last drink and received small measure of relief, that reminds me of relief that Jesus gives us to drink. Jesus suffered and died on cross so that we could drink deeply of water of life. Remember what Jesus told woman at well in Jn 14: **“Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst” (Jn 4:14).** Jesus will never leave us thirsting for God’s presence, the way he was left thirsting, because Jesus gives us the living water of his love, his forgiveness, his peace – water that quenches souls and wells up to eternal life; water that comes at no cost to us. Cost was being paid right here, on cross, so that we could drink the living water and never be thirsty again.

It Is Finished - ³⁰ *When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

- “Finished.” What was finished? Earthly life? Heartbeat? Torturous sufferings on cross? Yes: these all now finished. But not really what he meant. “It is finished; goal has been accomplished; end reached; what was ordained has now been fulfilled, completed, achieved; it is finished.” With these words Jesus was saying, “The entire bill of world’s sin, now paid in full. Entire plan of God’s salvation has now been accomplished. The promise of a Savior, first spoken in Eden, repeated by prophets and psalms, made flesh in birth of Christ, now fully fulfilled.” The Savior has saved! His work is finished; his job is complete; everything required of him has been met. “It is finished.” Then God died.
- Please take that personally. Please take GF, and everything Jesus went through, personally. God inspired John to write this account of Jesus’ death for your benefit, so that you could sit here tonight, on this GF, and every day of your life, and know with certainty that Jesus died for you. Crucified for you; earned forgiveness for you; opened heaven for you. Isn’t just story about death; story about love – Jesus’ love for you. That love doesn’t end here. Come back Easter, see love alive. But today, as you see Jesus bow head and give up spirit, take it personally – he did this all for you. Amen.