

**SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JESUS**

**SUBJECT: THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS**

**SCRIPTURE: MARK 15:20-39**

**SERMON NO. 32**

### **Introduction**

For many, the cross is nothing more than a piece of jewelry that is used to adorn the ear or the neck. For some, the cross is a symbol designed for worship; they kneel before the cross and pray to it as if it contained supernatural power that wards off evil. *To others...*

**The cross is offensive and foolish. (1 Cor. 1:23). But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.** “Stumbling block,” meant a trap or a snare. The Jews could not conceive of the Messiah being nailed to a cross! They literally stumbled over the cross! The Greeks considered the cross to be “foolishness”, which gives us the English word “moron”. The Greeks looked at the Savior dying on a cross and declared it to be “moronic foolishness”. *For a few...*

**The cross is an object of power and wisdom. (1 Cor. 1:24). But unto them which are called, bith Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.** Paul says that those who understanding the true message of the cross, that it is not weak or foolish but the power of God and the wisdom of God. It is the power of God because through the cross God forever destroyed the kingdom of Satan and broke the grip of sin. It is the wisdom of God because in the cross, God used a tool that neither man nor

devil could have ever foreseen to accomplish salvation for His people.. Love..

The message of the cross is not a weak message, nor a foolish message. It is a message filled with the awesome power and wisdom of Almighty God. *The Message Of The Cross was....*

**I. A MESSAGE OF TORMENT (20, 24-25).** And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. 24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. 25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

**1. The message of the cross is a message of pain, suffering and death.** The death Jesus died was a horrible, painful excruciating death. If you take the worst pain you have ever experienced and multiply it 100 times you still will not come close to the pain Jesus endured on the cross.

**2. When Isaiah looked into the future and saw the death of the Messiah, He said (Isa.52:14).** Many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more then the sons of men. His face became so marred, so disfigured by the all night beatings and scourging that He was barely recognizable.

He had been arrested, tried, convicted and beaten by the Temple guards; He had been taken to Pilate where He was abused by Pilate's soldiers: He was Beaten, spit upon, his beard pulled out and crowned with thorns. He was sentenced to die and suffered as He carried His cross along the Via Dolorosa, which means The Sorrowful Way, which was 650 yards long. The cross bar on his cross weighed 110 pounds.

The cross is not a trinket to be worn without thought. It is not an emblem to be used to ease our superstitions. It is not an idol to be worshiped. It is a symbol of God's love for us. Therefore, let us glory in His cross, and praise the Lord for what He did for us, for it is the doorway into life for all who know Jesus as Savior. *The message of the cross was...*

**II. A MESSAGE OF TRAGEDY (31-32).** The chief priest mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. 32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.... *As Jesus hung on that cross, giving His life for the lost...*

**1. His enemies circled Him like a flock of hungry vultures.**

They hated Him so much that they even made fun of Him as He died, telling Him to come down from the cross if He was really Who He claimed to be. The religious leaders were guilty of mocking their Messiah as He died on the cross.

**2. The tragedy in the cross is seen in two different ways.**

1) It is seen in the attitude of the Jews toward Jesus. He had come into this world as their Messiah. He was the embodiment of all the Old Testament prophecies. He came to redeem them and to usher in the kingdom of God. They were looking for a conqueror, not understanding that their King had to die before He could reign.

Jesus entered this world for the purpose of going to the cross. The Jews could have received Him, but they rejected Him instead. They confirmed their rejection by their words and deeds. What a tragedy!

2) It brings the depravity of man into sharp focus. The true character of the human heart is revealed by the actions of the lost

people at Calvary. Their actions remind us that man is hopeless apart from God's intervention. Your reaction to the cross reveals the condition of your heart! *The message of the cross was...*

**III. A MESSAGE OF TRANSFER (33-36).** And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" 35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold he calleth Elijah. 36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, let alone; let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

**1. God turned the lights out on the cross.** It is as if God was saying, "*You have mocked Him enough!*" But, during those hours of darkness, Jesus suffered the worst of His torments. For, it was during those dark hours that your sins and mine were transferred to Him, **2 Cor. 5:21** *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

**2. All the pain of Hell and the wrath of Almighty God fell upon the Lord Jesus Christ.** He literally took our place on that cross. He died our death; He suffered our Hell; He paid our price!

**3. Those who place their trust in Christ for salvation are delivered from the debt of sin and hell.** Our sins were transferred to Him at the cross; when we receive Him into our hearts, His righteousness is transferred to us.

**4. If you are lost today, you are under the wrath of God, John 3:18; He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed**

in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **Rom. 10:13**; For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

**The assurance of Christ to keep us John 6:37.** All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He will take your sins away and give you His righteousness in return! *The message of the cross was...*

**IV. A MESSAGE OF TRIUMPH (37-38).** And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

**1. These verses record the death of the Lord Jesus.** After six hours on the cross, He dismissed His Spirit when He knew that the price for sin had been paid and God was eternally satisfied. Friends the Jews did not kill Jesus; the Romans didn't kill Jesus! No one killed Him, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, so that sinners might be saved. He died when it was time for Him to die, and not a second before.

**2. The words of Jesus from the cross were not the words of a "victim" but the shouts of a "victor"!** He did not say "I am finished"! He said, "It is finished!" *When Jesus died on the cross, His death signaled the defeat of three terrible enemies of lost humanity.*

**1) The defeat of Satan** – When Jesus died on the cross, His death spelled the doom of Satan's dominion in this world, **Heb. 2:14** *As children are Partakers of the flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*

**2) The defeat of Sin** – When sin entered the world it brought with it death, devastation and damnation. Jesus forever did away with sin when He died on the cross. **Heb. 9:26.** He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

**3). The defeat of Separation** – Sin had separated the sinner from God, **Isa. 59:2a.** Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, The death of Jesus broke down the wall of separation erected by sin and serves to bring those who trust Him back into fellowship with God. **Rom. 5:10** We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son... we shall be saved by his life. Jesus is our Savior and Mediator. He has bridged the gap between us and God, **Eph. 2:13.** In Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

**3. The moment of ultimate triumph.** In His death, He conquered all the enemies that were destroying those trapped in their sins! There is “Victory In Jesus”. *The message of the cross was...*

**V. A MESSAGE OF TESTIMONY (39).** When the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

**1. The cross of Jesus was a place of testimony.** It was here that God made His greatest declaration of love for lost humanity, **Rom. 5:8;** God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us. When Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, He helped one man and his family. When He healed the lepers; delivered the demoniacs; opened the blind eyes and healed diseased, twisted bodies; He was helping one person and one family at a time. When He fed the 5,000 thousand, He helped 5,000 men plus women and children. But, when He died on the cross, Jesus was making a difference for every one who would

look to Him by faith. It wasn't just one man; but it was "whosoever will." He could have saved Himself, but He stayed on the cross to save sinners!

**2. His death was not in vain!** The very day Jesus died we know that a lost thief repented, trusted and was saved, **Luke 23:40-43**. That same day a hardened, pagan, Roman military officer was convicted and converted as he gazed at the scene before him, **Mark 15:39**.

His death made the difference in my life. I will never forget the day when He saved me by His grace. The salvation that He so freely extended and I so gladly received was made possible by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

**3. The cross of Christ still trumpets the love of God for lost sinners.** In our day, the testimony of the cross has become muted by the siren call of this world and its pleasures. But, for those who will hear the testimony of the cross and will heed its message, will find that there is power in its message.

#### **Conclusion:**

What is the cross of Jesus to you? It is merely a piece of jewelry? Is it just a religious symbol you hang over your bed to keep the devil away? Or, is the cross the "power of God unto salvation"? If you will heed the message of the cross, you will find that salvation is still available. You will find that God can still save souls; change eternal destinies and transform sinners into saints of God. Today would be a good day for you to heed The Message Of The Cross!