

John 19:31-42

~ Jesus: Lord of His Own Burial ~

Introduction

John Flavel in his classic work *the fountain of life* writes the following words – he says:

*You've heard the last words of dying Jesus commending His spirit into His Father's hands. And now the life of the world hangs dead upon a tree. The light of the world, for a time, muffled up in a dismal cloud. The Sun of Righteousness set in the region and shadow of death. The Lord is dead, and He that wears the keys of the grave at His golden sash, is now Himself to be locked up in the grave. And all you that are the friends and lovers of Jesus, are now **this very day** invited to His funeral...*

That is what we have here in the closing verses of John chapter 19:

The death, the burial, and the funeral of the Son of God!

1st Corinthians

And at **first glance** it may seem like these verses are **inconsequential** to the overall theme and flow of John's gospel:

What in the world does the **burial** of Jesus have to do with the **atonement** of Jesus?

What does the death of Jesus have to do with the life of Jesus?

And it's actually something that Paul will answer in **1st Corinthians 15** – he says:

*For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...*

So Paul in presenting the **saving gospel** of the Lord Jesus Christ – sees the **burial of Jesus** as a **necessary aspect** to that gospel that we proclaim!

He refers to this as a:

First level doctrine – a first levelled principle – something that is **absolutely necessary** and **essential** to the Gospel!

And this is because the **wages of sin** is death – **Romans 6:23!**

The **life of the flesh** is in the blood of the sacrifice – **Leviticus 17!**

And the author of Hebrews says that:

Without the shedding of blood there is **no atonement** for sins – **Hebrews 9:22!**

And so we're **NOT just** talking about a **bridging verse** that **gets us** from the cross **to** the resurrection – but we're **talking about** an **essential aspect** of the gospel

Gazing upon the lamb who takes away the sin of the world!

Coming as it were **through the lens** of scripture and looking **by faith** on the one of whom they have pierced!

Main Point

And so the main point that I want us to see as we come to John 19 – is this:

Jesus Christ has tasted the sting of eternal death so that all those who believe in Him may taste the joy of eternal life

Outline

2-point outline:

The Lamb of God who is pieced (31-37)

The light of life that is buried (38-42)

John 19

So John 19 and let's begin at verse 30 where John writes:

Now when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said It is finished. Then bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. And since it was the preparation day, the Jews did not want the bodies to remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a special day). So they requested that Pilate have the men's legs broken and that their bodies be taken away...

Opening gambit

Jesus' death is an indication that the struggle of Jesus is now over...the war has been won – the battle is completed – atonement is made – God's wrath is satisfied – the devil is defeated – the way has been opened – and Jesus is now **in the presence of** His Father as He prayed in Luke 23:

Father into your hands I commit my spirit!

So the spirit of Jesus is now **sitting** in the presence of the Father:

But what about **His body** that remains?

What about **His body** that is hanging on a tree?

High & Holy

Well John tells us what the Jews wanted to do with the body of Jesus – verse 31 says:

It was the day of preparation, and the Jews did not want the bodies to remain hanging on the cross (for that Sabbath was a high & holy day). So they requested that Pilate have the men's legs broken and that their bodies be taken away...

There's actually a few interesting things going on here!

In Jewish tradition, the day **before** the Sabbath day (which was a Friday) was often referred to as **the Day of preparation**

This was the day when the Jews would prepare themselves for the Sabbath Day Rest!

And so according to Exodus 16 – Deuteronomy 21 – and various other places – they would prepare for this day by bringing in food – finishing off tasks – collecting lots of wood – cleaning up any jobs or **unfinished tasks** – in order to get **everything ready** to **enjoy** the Sabbath rest **the very next day!**

And so this preparation for sabbath **also included** the handling of dead bodies & putting them into graves!

Because handling dead bodies **on the Sabbath** was strictly prohibited in Jewish tradition!

High Sabbath

And so John says that this Sabbath **wasn't just** any regular/weekly Sabbath Day – but this was a high and holy Day which **coincided with** the Passover feast – this was a **once a year event:**

Making it an **extra special** *high & holy day* of the Jews!

Deuteronomy 21

And so the Jews **didn't want** the bodies of these men to be hanging on the cross as this would have defiled the holy land according to Deuteronomy 21 – which says:

*If a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body **shall not remain all night on the tree**, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. And you shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving to you for an inheritance...*

Religious Hypocrisy

So to leave these bodies hanging on the tree which was **a common practice** for the Romans to do – **in their minds** would have desecrated the Holy land and made their entire 7-day-festival **completely unclean** for them to engage in!

And **that's** rich isn't it – something **we've been seeing** throughout this section of John's Gospel:

This **foul – flagrant – & religious hypocrisy** that comes wafting through the hearts of these Jews! They are **consumed** with defilement of the holy land of Israel – while **at the same time** rejecting the Lamb to which the Passover feast is pointing toward!

Seeking to pursue all righteousness – while at the same time committing the **most unrighteous** act a Jew could ever commit!

Willing to spill **innocent blood** by having Him crucified – while sometime later rejecting the money that Judas tries to return (**the money that they paid for**) by refusing to have it be **put back into** the temple treasury!

I mean this is amazing hypocrisy for us to see!

Warning

And it's a **warning to us all** that:

The externals of religion are the easiest part of the Christian faith

In the **grand scheme** of religion getting yourself **to church** and opening the bible is really the **easiest part** of a Sunday morning!

To sit-down for an hour – to listen to the sermon – to stand during worship – to sing during **the** music – to nod and say amen is the easiest part of a Lord's Day service!

All of those things are easy to do **in comparison to** the heart transforming effect that gospel **should have!**

To the soul-satisfying action of obedience to Christ!

External/Internal

And this is where **faith comes into** religion where we **don't just** do the action of discipleship – but we experience the joy that comes with knowing our Saviour!

So friends **be very careful** with how you come into church on a Sunday morning merely doing the **external actions** of religious observance!

There are **countless thousands** who on this Lord's Day are gathered together in places of worship who are **dead as doornails** NOT expecting to hear the words of Mathew 7:

Depart from me you workers of lawlessness for I never knew you!

It's a terrifying reality and one in which John does **NOT** want you to experience!

One pastor writes:

True assurance of faith is a rare jewel that is seldom found on the path of least resistance...God tends to keep the treasure of Christian joy reserved for those who know it's value...

He goes on and says:

We must discipline ourselves daily, therefore, to NOT only imitate God but to experience the soul-satisfying enjoyment of knowing Him – of loving Him – of experiencing Him!

So friends this is a **warning to us all** that:

We can draw near-to the Lord **with our mouths** – and our hearts be **far from Him!**

The final state

And the reality is – is that this is **the last time** these Jews are ever mentioned in John's gospel – the **last time** John has anything to say about these Jews – and the very last picture we have **of these men** is this **permanent state** of rebellion and sin...

Almost like John is wanting to show us this idea that God has handed them over to their sin – rejection – and rebellion toward God!

And it's a warning friends – that God **will NOT tolerate** religious hypocrisy in the name of Christianity!

Crurifragium

And so they came to Pilate **in verse 31** requesting to have the legs of these men broken on the cross!

This is a method known in Latin as:

The Crurifragium

It basically refers to a **giant iron mallet** that the soldiers would use to **break the legs** of the men who were hanging on the cross so that they could NOT press down upon the nail in order to breathe!

So remember we said last week that **most victims** in crucifixion would die **NOT by** the loss of blood – **NOT by** the amount of pain – **NOT by** the shock of the body in being nailed to a tree – but they would die **most often:**

By asphyxiation!

By NOT being able to get air into their lungs in order to breathe!

And so in order to take a **simple breath of air** when hanging on the cross the victim would **push down** upon the nail that was permanently fixed into their feet and then they would elevate their body – to open their lungs:

In order to breathe!

And so the Romans came up with this **brutal idea** that if you could break the legs of the victims' (by shattering their shin-bones) – then it would be **impossible** to push down upon the nail at the bottom of the cross!

And this would **expedite the process** of crucifixion because the victim would pretty much die in the next several minutes by asphyxiation!

Jesus in Control

And so we read **in verse 32** that these Romans had it **down to a science** because apparently they started with the outside cross and worked their way inward till they reached the middle cross!

Verse 33:

*But when the soldiers came to Jesus Himself, they **did not break His legs** since they saw that He was already dead...*

And this is **once again** another reminder of what John has been tell us regarding the **nature** and **character** of Jesus' death:

No one takes my life from me, I lay it down of my own accord... I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it back up!

Because Jesus has **been in control** of His death this entire time!

From His arrest in the Garden back in John chapter 18 – to His trial before Pilate – to His sentence before the Jews – to His crucifixion in this chapter – to **even** the moment that He chooses to die:

Jesus maintains **full & total supremacy** over every aspect of His life!

So that **even when** He's dying – even when He's **writhing** – even when He's hanging on a cross – verse 30 says:

*He gave up **His** head and He bowed **His** spirit...*

Like He's **even choosing** the moment He gets to breath His last!

He's choosing the moment He **gives up** His spirit to the Lord!

And so in verse 34:

*One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear making sure that He really was dead and He **wasn't just** pretending!*

This is a **popular theory** that Muslims and Jews will often come up with to deny the resurrection – they will say something like:

Jesus wasn't really dead – He was merely pretending to be dead!

Maybe He fainted – maybe He swooned – maybe He just appeared to be dead and then woke up later in the tomb and obtained super hulk strength and broke the stone and hulk-smashed His way out!

But John says that He's dead!

Like He's dead dead!

And you **have to understand** that the Romans were experts at this!

They were professionals at death!

This was their job!

And if a Roman soldier **didn't perform**/ if he **didn't accomplish** the execution then they would be the ones hanging on the cross!

They would be the ones on the chopping block!

And so they had to **get this right!**

Blood and Water

And so in verse 34 we read that:

*One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear and the moment they pierce His side John says that **blood and water** started gushing forth!*

And it's here that most preachers will **turn into** medical practitioners
and they will explain the pericardium – and the fluid sack surrounding the heart!

And maybe that's all that's going on – John is giving us **more evidence** that Jesus was really dead!

New Covenant

But you have to remember this is John's Gospel – and John is famous for **layers upon layers** of meaning!

And especially water in the Gospel of John has **significant meaning** – and specifically if you go to places like **Ezekiel 36 & 37** it talks about:

The promise of a New Covenant!

The Promise of a New Exodus!

Of forgiveness of sins!

Of a knowledge of God!

Of having access to God!

And being cleansed from our sins in a **full** and **final** way!

And it's a reminder you see that the New Covenant of Christ which speaks of both **water & blood** in the book of Ezekiel is being ratified!

It's being inaugurated!

Water symbolising His Spirit – symbolising new life – symbolising cleansing & washing & forgiveness of sins!

And all of that **flows from Jesus' side**!

Scripture Fulfilled

So that's **one layer** of meaning – and then the **second layer** concerns what John writes in verse 36:

For these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: ‘not one of His bones will be broken.’ And also, another Scripture that says: ‘And they will look upon the one they have pierced...’

The first one there is a quote from Psalm 34:

He protects all his bones; and not one of them will be broken...

Obviously, it’s a psalm of David and it speaks of the Lord’s **sovereign protection** over the righteous one who cry out to Him in faith – and in His affliction God saves David from the pit of despair!

And It’s exactly what happened to Jesus when He cried out on the cross:

My God my God why have you forsaken me...

And God fulfills that Scripture by **NOT allowing** Jesus’ bones to be broken!

I think it’s a reminder that God had **NOT forsaken** Jesus by fulfilling the Scripture of Psalm 34!

Zechariah

But the second Scripture that is quoted is from Zechariah 12:10:

And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only child...

Now what’s interesting about this is that God is the one who is speaking –but He’s speaking in this **1st Person & 3rd Person narrative** about the one whom they have pierced – and God says that:

They will look upon me, upon Him whom they have pierced...

So who gets pierced?

Is it God – or is it Him the King?

And the answer is **both!**

As it turns out that the pierced King is God Himself!

Exodus 17

And there's **another layer** of meaning in this text – if we go back to Exodus 17 with the story of Moses **striking the Rock** in the wilderness...

Before Moses strikes the Rock in Exodus 17 – God goes before Moses and says:

Behold I will stand before you there on that Rock that you strike – Exodus 17:6!

So, **God Himself** offered to be struck **in the place of** His sinful/rebellious people **with the result of** water flowing out into the desert in order that He would save His **hell-bound people!**

That's why we sung this morning:

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure*

Seen His Glory

And once you see that there's also **another layer** of meaning that John decides to put **in verse 35** where John writes this:

*And he who **saw this** has testified so that you **also may believe**. And his testimony is true, and he knows he is telling the truth...*

Now why does John decide to put **that verse right here** in the middle of these other verses?

In the middle of this particular moment?

Like why did John decide to put that verse **right here** at **this particular juncture** while **staring at** the body of Jesus?

Because he could have put that verse in **any other** number of places in John – he could have put it with:

The feeding of the 5,000 – the water into wine – the walking on the water – the healing of the Son – the raising of Lazarus – the calming of the storm!

Like literally in **so many other** places of John – he could have said:

I write this so that you may believe...

But he didn't!

He put it here in verse 35 for all the world to see!

Why?!?!

Well one reason is that **the last time** John used that phrase:

*He who **saw this** has testified...we have witnessed...we have beheld His glory...*

Was **all the way back** in John chapter 1 verse 14 where John says:

*And the Word became flesh and He dwelt among us, and we have **seen His glory**, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth...*

And throughout John's Gospel what we've been learning is that the glory of God comes **through the death** of His Son – the glory of God comes **when Jesus is** crucified – it comes when **He is lifted up** on the cross for all men to see!

Because there's **no greater grace** – no greater **truth** – and no greater **glory** that has **ever been seen** than when Jesus was **set forth** on a tree to assuage **the righteous wrath** of His heavenly Father!

There is **no greater revelation** of the Father's love for the world than seen in the cross of Christ!

And that's the moment that **has come** for John!

And He says:

We have seen His glory!

And here it is!

The glory of the one and only Son from the Father **hanging there** on a tree!

Born Again

And then that brings up **the final layer** of meaning that John puts in at **verse 35**!

One pastor says:

I wonder if this was the moment standing at the foot of the cross – I wonder if this was the moment that John actually became a Christian...

Because isn't it interesting that when John writes this narrative, he uses that word **also** in verse 35 – he says:

*And he who saw this has testified so that you **also** may believe...*

That *also* is **so interesting** isn't it...

Because at the end of the book when John writes:

*Jesus did **many other signs**, which are not written in this book; but these things are written so that **you may believe**...*

John doesn't use the word ***also*** when he writes that!

The only time he uses that word *also* is in connection to Jesus' death here in John 19 – when **staring at the dead body of Christ!**

And so **it could be...** that John under the **inspiration of the Spirit** adds his **very own testimony** to this book at the **very moment** when he understands **the identity of Jesus** and believes!

And he says:

I am writing these things!
I am recording these things!
I am testifying to these things!

So that you may also believe **just like me!**

I wonder if that's the case!

It could be a reference to the thief on the cross!
It could be a reference to the Roman centurion!
It could be a reference to Nicodemus or to Jospheh in the very next section!

Or it could be John – the Apostle whom Jesus loved coming to saving faith!

Gospel Call

Friends whatever the case is – we cannot miss the **overall purpose** of why John puts this into his Gospel:

He says I am writing these things so that **YOU ALSO** may believe!

Like **YOU!**

YOU here this morning!

Us sitting here today!

Do **YOU** believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God?

Do you believe that He died for your sins?

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Saviour of your sins!

And that by believing do **YOU** have life in His name?

John wrote His gospel and the events of Jesus' death so that we would all come to saving faith in His name!

And wouldn't it be amazing if today was the day that you came to faith in Jesus Christ and believed!

So that's point number 1:

The Lamb of God who is pieced

Point 2

And that leads us into our second point this morning:

The light of life that is buried!

Verse 38:

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus—but secretly because of his fear of the Jews—he asked Pilate that he might remove Jesus's body. And Pilate gave him permission; so he came and took His body away. And Nicodemus (who had previously come to Him at night) also came, bringing a mixture of about seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes. And they took Jesus's body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the fragrant spices, according to the burial custom of the Jews. There was a garden in the place where he was crucified. A new tomb was in the garden; no one had yet been placed in it. So they placed Jesus there because of the Jewish day of preparation and since the tomb was nearby...

Highly Significant

Now again when you first read these verses – it seems to be that John is just **filling in** the details of how Jesus got **from** the cross **to** the tomb so that he can **set up** the resurrection!

But on closer inspection there seems to be a lot going on here is highly significant to the story!

Joseph

So first he mentions this guy named Jospheh:

Jospheh of Arimathea!

Now Arimathea was **NOT** his **last name** – but Arimathea was the place where he was from!

Jospheh was such a common name back in these days that people were often distinguished by their **location** – or by their **profession** – sometimes even their **spouse** or even **by their mother!**

So sometimes you had:

Mary the wife of Clopas

Mary Magdalene

Mary the Mother of Jesus

Mary the mother of James

Jesus of Nazareth

Mary of Bethany

Alexander the Coppersmith

And in this case we have:

Jospheh of Arimathea

4 Gospels

And so **what do we know** about this man named Jospheh:

Well, we know that in **Mark 15** it says that:

He was a member of the ruling counsel of Jews – He was a Pharisee from the Sanhedrin!

Matthew 27 tells that:

He was a rich man with an empty tomb!

Luke records him as:

Looking for the Kingdom of God!

And John says that:

He was a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ!

And so in **all 4 Gospel accounts** he is recorded as the one who collects the body of Jesus taken off the cross – and so John says that:

For fear of the Jews he was **secretly a disciple of Jesus** – secretly believing Jesus – and secretly living for the Lord!

But see **something happened** on the cross where Jospheh went from being:

A **secret disciple** of Jesus – to a **bold** disciple!

A **secret** disciple to an **open** disciple!

In fact, I love the way that Mark describes his transformation – he says:

*Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Sanhedrin who was looking forward to the kingdom of God, came and **boldly went** to Pilate...*

I love that!

He boldly went to Pilate!

No more hiding!

No more fear!

No more playing games!

He boldly goes to ask for the body of Jesus making himself known as:

A disciple of Christ!

In fact the gospels say that it's **his tomb** that Jesus is **finally buried in!**

Which also completes **another portion** of Scripture – in Isaiah 53:

And they made His grave with the wicked [that's the 2 criminals] and with a rich man in his death [that's Joseph].

Nicodemus

So we've got Joseph – and then we've got Nicodemus!

And we remember Nicodemus from John chapter 3 – he comes to Jesus at night probably again **for fear of the Jews**:

And probably because darkness was a **reflection of** Nicodemus' heart!

John 7

But then in John chapter 7 we see the **tides of his heart** changing as he begins to **step up** against the Sanhedrin and says that:

*We need to give this Jesus guy a **fair hearing** in order to hear Him out!*

Let's hear His testimony and see what He's got to say!

John 19

And now in John chapter 19 – we see Nicodemus **NOT just** standing up for Jesus but he's **actually helping** with the burial process of His very tomb:

This is something that **only a disciple of a Rabbi** did back in these days!

And so **it's almost like** John is showing us this *slow & gradual* progression of Nicodemus being *wooed & won over* through *the effectual calling* of the sovereign Holy Spirit...

King's Burial

And notice also **the description** of the burial in verse 39:

Nicodemus brought a mixture of about seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes...

75 pounds that's about 34 Kilos of spices!

You **didn't need** that much spice to bury just one person!

Typically, you would use between **1 to 5 pounds** of spices – but Jesus received **75 pounds** of spices!

Indicating that this was a royal burial!

You would only use that much spice when burying a King or person of notable status!

So this is a burial that is fit only for a King!

Garden

And notice also **the location** of this tomb and where He is buried – In verse 41 John says:

*And He was **buried in a Garden***

Now remember John's favourite book of the bible is the book of Genesis – and he's already mentioned that:

Jesus' arrest took place **in a Garden** in John chapter 18!

Mary is going to mistake Jesus as a **Gardener** in John 20!

And now in John 19 – John mentions that Jesus' Tomb is located in a Garden – because:

NOT only is John pointing us back to the book of Genesis – but he's also communicating that **in**

Jesus Christ – in His death and in His burial:

God was forming a **new creation!**

A new humanity!

A new redeemer that would save the human race!

Jesus would be a **new Adam** that would come up out of the tomb!

Lifted Up

And now put all of these things together – where you've got:

- John
- And you have Joseph
- And Nicodemus
- And the thief on the cross
- And the Roman Centurion

All of them are **coming to faith** after the fact that Jesus is lifted up on the cross for all to see!

Which remember is exactly what Jesus had told us was **going to happen** back in John 12 chapter verse 32:

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to myself!

And now we find that when Jesus dies on a cross – all of these men are coming **out of the darkness**
and into His marvellous light!

It's the glorious good news of the gospel!

The gloriously good news of His **death – burial** – and His resurrection we are going to see **next week!**

Exodus 12

But there's still just **ONE MORE LAYER** that I want us to see!

And this is the **final layer** of meaning that I want us to see – as we come to a close I intentionally **skipped over** probably the most significant part of His death back in verse 33!

So go back to verse 33 where it says about the soldiers:

*But when they came to the body of Jesus, they **did not break His legs** since they saw that He was already dead...*

And then down in verse 36 John says:

*That they did this **so that the Scripture might be fulfilled saying: not one of His bones will be broken...***

Now again why is that a significant sign in the gospel of John?

Why is it significant that they did NOT break any of His legs!

Well because you have to understand that – that this Scripture NOT only comes from Psalm 34 but primarily from **Exodus chapter 12!**

In the story of the Israelites when they are told **what they are to do** on the night of the Passover meal when the angel of death would **pass over** their homes killing every **first born male** living in the land of Egypt!

*But if you would **take that Lamb** and smear its **blood over your home** then your first-born male would be **saved and spared** from the wrath of God on the basis of this **Lamb!***

And so in Exodus 12:46 God says to Israel:

*And it [speaking of the lamb] shall be eaten in one house; and you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, **and you shall not break any of its bones***

Now granted that is a **very small detail** in a long list of commands that are given to the Israelite people – **but for John** in **NOT seeing** any of His bones being broken is an **amazing revelation** who

He is!

He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Angel of Death

And you have to understand just how **deeply engrained** the Passover feast and the **symbolism** of that night was **in the mind of** a Jew celebrating Passover!

Passover Night

I mean just think about what that would have meant for a family living in the land of Egypt!

Let's say you have a Mum and a Dad – and they have **6 kids** and the oldest boy is Joshua – little Joshua!

And so Mum and Dad **hear the instructions** that the Lord gave on this very night and they **look at little Joshua** their 12 year old boy and they see that:

Joshua is going to die and be killed by the angel of death!

But then they hear **the other instructions** that the LORD gives to go out into the field and to find a Lamb without spot, without wrinkle, without blemish...

And so the dad takes little Joshua **out into the field** to find this lamb; one without spot or wrinkle or blemish...

And they bring the spotless lamb **back to the house** and with little Joshua standing at the door with his siblings:

Little Seth
And Piper
And Eli
And Noah
And Scarlet

All standing together they watch their dad **slit the throat** of this little spotless lamb and he begins to **smear its blood** over the doorway of their home:

And they wait!

They go inside – and they eat the meal – and they sing some songs – and they read the word – and they pray!

And as they're doing that they begin to hear **the blood-curdling screams** echoing throughout the land of Egypt – echoing through their walls – and down their corridors and they **look at the lamb** – and they **look at their boy** – and they **look at the door** – and see the blood and they **start to see realize:**

Little Joshua is safe **under the blood!**

And that Lamb has died **in the place of** their son!

And He saved form the wrath of God!

And Joshua is saved from death!

Because he is **under the blood** of this little spotless Lamb!

And he's safe!

Jesus the Lamb

And that's what John sees as he looks up at the legs of Jesus **NOT being broken!**

THAT'S WHAT JOHN SEES AS HE LOOKS UP AT JESUS ON THE CROSS!

Jesus is the Lamb of God who saves!

It's the message of the Gospel friends!

Conclusion

I was telling Han on Saturday after the prayer meeting that it wouldn't be a Rhoi sermon without finishing with a Spurgeon quote!

Spurgeon has this **awesome sermon** that he preached on the dying thief.¹

Remember when Jesus died on the cross, he was **NOT only** dying for us in a supernatural way – but dying in Barabbas' place in a physical way!

He took the cross that was reserved for Barabbas' crimes!

And so **many have speculated** that the 2 criminals that were crucified next to Jesus may **very well** have been two of Barabbas' accomplices with his insurrection & murders!

And so we know the story that one of the thieves is **hurling insults** at Jesus and **deriding** Jesus – and mocking Jesus – while the other simply looks at Jesus and says:

Jesus remember me when you come into your Kingdom!

And Jesus turns to the man and says:

Today you will be with me in paradise!

And so Spurgeon has this awesome sermon called ***The Believing Thief*** where he says this:

¹ <https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/spurgeon/Christ's%20Words%20from%20the%20Cross%20-%20C.%20H.%20Spurgeon.pdf>

The dying thief was our Lord's last companion on the earth and His first companion when walking through the gates of paradise... who is this man that enters the pearl-gate at the same moment as the spotless King of glory? Who is this favoured one of the Redeemer? Is it some honoured martyr? A faithful apostle? A patriarch, like Abraham; or a prince, like David? No...It's not.

*So behold and be amazed at sovereign grace. He who goes in at the gate of paradise with the King of glory **is a thief**, and one who was saved in the article of death....saved in **no lesser way**, and received in no meagre style...*

*It's as if Jesus said to all of heaven 'I bring a sinner with me and **he's a sample** of all the rest...'*

Spurgeon says:

A specimen of what Jesus meant to do – as is the sample such is the bulk...

I love that!

Jesus took this man into the gates of heaven **as a specimen** of all the rest!

An example of what He's going to do throughout all of human history!

And as this man feels the **crushing blow** of his legs being taken out from under him – and then he feels his **lungs burning** with pain as he asphyxiates on the cross!

And as he's dying with this searing pain of his legs & lungs – he has the **words of Jesus** ringing in his ears:

Today you will be with me in paradise!

And that is the promise of salvation that we have here friends!

God has been saving sinners through the blood of the lamb for 2,000 years friends!

And the **great promise** – the **great hope** of this entire section of John is that:

Jesus Christ the Lamb of God has tasted the sting of eternal death so that all those who believe in Him can taste the joy of eternal life!

All those who believe in Him **by faith** will be spared the burning flood so that Jesus Christ dies in the place of sinners!

He did it for John – He did it for this thief – he did it for the disciples – He's done it for countless many in this room!

And He can do it for you!

Come to Him – See His wounds – Look to His side see the blood and be saved!

John 19:31-42

Discussion Questions

[Read John 19:31-42].

Main Point: *Jesus Christ has tasted the sting of eternal death so that all those who believe in Him may taste the joy of eternal life!*

Q1. How many sermons have you heard on the burial of Jesus? – Why do you think that is? – In your own understanding how integral is the burial of Jesus to the gospel message? **[Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; See also Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:22].**

Q2. How does the burial of Jesus relate to the concept of atonement? – In what way does Jesus' death connect with the life He offers believers?

Q3. [Read verse 31]. How does the behaviour of the Jewish leaders reflect religious hypocrisy, and what warnings can we take from this? – What external practices might we focus on in our faith that could distract us from true heart transformation?

Q4. [Read verses 32-33]. How do the unbroken bones of Jesus fulfill Old Testament prophecy and why is that significant for John? **[Cf. Exodus 12:1-51 (especially verse 46); see also Psalm 34:19-20].**

Q5. [Read verse 34]. Is there anything significant about blood and water flowing out from the side of Jesus? **[Cf. Ezekiel 36:22-32; Jeremiah 31:31-34].** – What else could John be showing us about this?

Q6. [Read verses 36-37]. Reflect on the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10 & Exodus 17:1-6. – What did these Scriptures mean for John? **[See verse 35].** – What do these Scriptures mean for us as we reflect upon Jesus' sacrifice?

Q7. What does Joseph of Arimathea's bold request for Jesus' body signify about his journey of faith? – How does Nicodemus' gradual progression to discipleship mirror the journey of many believers today?