



Power of the Cross

G. David Tidwell

As some of you know, I lead a small e-group as a part of the church that my wife and I are a part of. Approximately a month ago, I felt led by the Holy Spirit for us to begin taking Communion together as a part of our meetings. To say that each time we have done so has been moving and powerful would be an understatement. This has led me to go deeper in some study of all that Jesus endured in those hours between His arrest and ultimate crucifixion. Even as I sit here trying to share this message with you I find myself having to stop, in awefilled silence, without words as images of His beaten, tortured and brutalized body come to mind and I am overwhelmed with adoration and gratitude for this humble and kind man, who bore every bit of what He suffered for ME! Believe me, I will not go into detail describing all that He endured. However if you are interested, I will have resources at the end of this message that you can access should you be interested in learning more.

Isaiah does such a beautifully agonizing prophetic description of all that Jesus would endure.

*He was despised and abandoned by men, A man of (Lit pains) great pain and familiar with sickness; And like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we had no regard for Him. However, it was our sicknesses that He Himself bore, And our pains that He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, Struck down by God, and humiliated. But He was (wounded) pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our (peace) well-being was laid upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed. ' **Isaiah 53:3-5***

Let's look a little closer at what Isaiah describes -

Despised	Carried our pain
Abandoned	Wounded (Pierced) for our offenses
A man of great pain	Crushed for our wrongdoing
People hid their face from looking at him	Punished for our peace and well-being
Bore our sicknesses	By His wounds (stripes) we are healed

David also powerfully describes all that Jesus would endure -

*But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help. **Psalms 22:6-7, 14-18, 24***

Compare these now to Matthews account -

*Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. **Matthew 26:65***

*All the people answered, "His blood is on us and on our children!" 'So he set Barabbas free for them; but after having Jesus severely whipped (scourged), he handed Him over to be crucified. ' Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. **Matthew 27:25-31***

*'From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). ' **Matthew 27:45-46***

While it does not reference how it would have impacted Jesus in the physical these last two statements by Peter and Paul had to have been emotional and spiritually agonizing.

and He Himself (offered up) brought our sins in His body up on the (Lit wood) cross, so that we might die to (Lit sins) sin and live for righteousness; by His (Lit wound; or welt) wounds you were healed.

1 Peter 2:24

*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. **2 Corinthians 5:21***

Speaking of mental emotional and spiritual anguish, that actually started before any of the physical suffering, let us remember what happened as he prayed in the Garden prior to His arrest -

*'He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. ' **Luke 22:41-44***

Yet, despite the agony that He was already experiencing and what He had to lay before him, what did He do? He obediently submitted to the will of the Father. Even now, as I reread those verses, a part of me wonders if having surrendered His will to the Father and fully accepted what was to be, was His anguish and travail in prayer on our behalf? It would not be the first time that He had specifically prayed for future believers. His agony was knowing the martyrdom and persecution that so many would face for the sake of His kingdom.

What craziness that a man would willingly and voluntarily allow himself to experience such unspeakable treatment and malalignment. What was His motivation? Why?

*'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ' **John 3:16***

*'By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ' **1 John 3:16***

LOVE

His motivation can also be summed up in this passage -

*'Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. **For the joy set before him he endured***

the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ' Hebrews 12:1-4

What was the “joy set before Him?” In short, “our salvation” and the “restoration of our relationship with Him.”

Okay, now that we have a little bit of an understanding of all that he suffered and endured and His “Why”, let us consider some specifics of what all of this means for us?

Look again at 1 Peter 2:24 and 2 Corinthians 5:21.

- He bore our sins in His body so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness.
- He literally became sin on our behalf so we could become the righteousness of God.

Think about that for just a moment, He who was the epitome of “The Righteousness of God” because He WAS God, took on Himself ALL sin, becoming the sin offering for every sin that has been or ever will be committed. He did so so that we who were “still afar off” and “enemies of God” could be called the very thing that He was voluntarily giving up, “The Righteousness of God.” In addition, because He bore our sin for us we now have the power and authority to die to sin and live our lives in righteousness and right standing with the Father.

As the Jews sing during Passover, that “would have been enough,” but there is so much more that His suffering and death on the cross did for us and I want to dig a little deeper into some of those other specifics.

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15

We can be assured that between his temptation in the wilderness and the days leading to His death and resurrection, as this verse states, Jesus was tested and tempted in any and all ways that we have been or ever will. What does that mean to us in the midst of the battle and struggle that we face? He understands, He has been there, He knows the way through if we will only set our eyes on Him and follow.

Let me wrap-up with another quick look at Isaiah’s prophecy of all that Jesus would endure and specifically what that suffering means for us.

He was despised and abandoned by men, A man of (Lit pains) great pain and familiar with sickness; And like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we had no regard for Him. However, it was our sicknesses that He Himself bore, And our pains that He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, Struck down by God, and humiliated. But He was (wounded) pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our (peace) well-being was laid upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed. ' Isaiah 53:3-5

Again, He was despised, abandoned, rejected by men and a man that endured great, physical, mental and emotional pain. Thus, He is able to understand and support us when we endure such treatment.

- *Bore our sicknesses* - Jesus accepted upon Himself the punishment for our sins and transgression including our sickness, disease, and anxiety. He took it upon Himself so that we do not have to.
- *Carried our pain* - He carried, suffered and endured our pain, suffering and sorrow. This does not mean we will never experience these things. However, when we do, we can give them back to Him and He will give us peace and comfort by the Spirit in the midst of whatever we are facing,
- *Wounded (Pierced) for our offenses* - He took upon himself desecration and defilement of our rebellious and unfaithful and willful transgression of what we know to be right and in according to His will.

- *Crushed for our wrongdoing* - He was beaten so bad the He was unrecognizable, they pierced His side. Not only that He was mental and emotionally crushed by how He was treated, the abandonment of His followers and ultimately, even the Father turned His back on the sin that He bore. He did all this as the punishment of our guilt for our moral perversity and choosing sin over righteousness.
- *Punished for our peace and well-being* - Jesus was rebuked, punished, and corrected so that we might have peace and be found to be whole and complete in Him. We find safety, security and prosperity in dependence on what He has already done for us.
- *By His wounds (stripes) we are healed* - Because of the scourging and resulting bruises, stripes and welts upon Jesus' broken and disfigured body we are not only healed physically, we are restored to a state of righteousness and right relationship with Him. Where sin was the disease, Jesus the marks on his body are the proof of the cure.

My friends, I hope and pray that during this season, you will pause and with a humble and grateful heart consider just how much you are loved by God. Stop and imagine for a moment, what anguish did The Father experience as He looked on as Jesus, His only son, was enduring all that we have discussed here. How amazing the love that Jesus has for YOU that He willingly suffered and endured all these things.

While all His suffering and even His death appear to be a defeat they are actually the greatest of all victories. I hope and pray that this lesson will encourage and empower you to stand and keep standing, to walk and keep walking in the midst of perilous times as you learn to walk in and apply all the “power of the cross.”

“HE IS RISEN, HE IS NOT HERE!!”

G David Tidwell
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Additional Resources

Jesus' Crucifixion from a Medical Standpoint -

<https://scientistsforjesus.wordpress.com/2013/11/12/jesus-crucifixion-from-a-medical-standpoint/comment-page-1/>

The Physical Effects of the Scourging and Crucifixion of Jesus

<https://catholicinsight.com/2025/04/19/the-physical-effects-of-the-scourging-and-crucifixion-of-jesus/>

The Crucifixion | A Medical Perspective

<https://youtu.be/T-EVfxABSOU?si=fr3AXHN1T88deFDz>