

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

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Date: 24 May 2020

[0 : 00] Call upon him, know his saving, receive his gift of salvation. Let's go to communion together now. If you've got your Bibles, I'm going to read from John 19, verse 16 through 20.

It says this, And my theme is, when I survey the wondrous cross, when I survey the wondrous cross, it says this in John 19, verse 16, Then delivered he them therefore unto them to be crucified. That's Pilate. Delivered he them to be crucified. And they took Jesus and led him away. Verse 17, And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.

Excuse me. Where they crucified him and two other with him on either side, one and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross.

And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. This title then read many of the Jews for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city.

[1 : 16] And it was written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin, when I survey the wondrous cross. The Lord Jesus was taken up this hill, the hill called Calvary.

And they nailed him there to the cross. Different ones watched him there. They each surveyed the cross. They looked at the cross. They beheld the cross. And each one looked from a different angle, you could say.

Let's stand for a moment in their shoes as they see him there, as we survey the wondrous cross and the one crucified for us. Firstly, we see the disciples surveyed the cross.

The disciples surveyed the cross in grief. Of the twelve, only one stood by the cross, John. We read that in John chapter 19, verse 25 through 26.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister Mary, the wife of Cleophas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciples standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son.

[2 : 21] He was speaking about John, John the apostle, John the disciple. Others watched on, but only from a distance. And Luke 23, 49 it says, And all his acquaintance and the women that followed him from Galilee stood afar off, beholding these things.

They were surveying the cross, if you like, surveying the crucified one, our Lord and his crucifixion, but they were watching from a distance. Now for believers now, we view the cross not with grief so much as with appreciation.

For the precious blood that was shed for us. That's why we like to remember our Lord's death until he come, as he's instructed us to. We see Christ in love and mercy, dying in our place for our sin.

And for the saved, our salvation comes through his work of the cross. His work on the cross as our sacrifice was for our part. In 1 Corinthians 1, verse 18 it says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

So the disciples surveyed the cross in grief. Secondly, we see that there were some spectators. And the spectators surveyed the cross in mockery.

[3 : 37] Most of the crowd that day were there to mock and to scorn him. Maybe the spectacle of the day. It was the day's entertainment to go and watch the crucifixion. And some would have been there just as a curiosity, just as a kind of a way to pass the time, was to go and watch the crucifixions of the day.

And some would be there just to mock and scorn and laugh and deride. And Matthew 27, verse 39 it says, And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, you know, just sort of making fun. Making fun. And verse 40 and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

And they were there yelling and jeering and laughing. They shook their heads and made fun. It was all a big joke to them. And yet Christ bore those insults. He bore that injury for us, for them.

That we might turn from our sinful ways and trust him. And the crowd, though, still reviles him today, don't they? The crowd, the multitude, the majority, they still revile him, scorn him, disregard him.

[4 : 47] Don't give a thought for him. He was despised and rejected of men, the Bible says. And we esteemed him not. We didn't value him. We didn't esteem him. And he was made of no reputation.

You know, the world still mocks and hates Christ, doesn't it? We know people that hate God. They hate the church. They hate Christianity. They hate the Christ. They hate the cross.

The sinful still reject his hand of mercy. His love extended. They reject his pardon, his grace. They don't want it. They'd rather have their sin and turn aside and go their own way.

But 1 Peter 3 verse 18 says, For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

So we see the spectators surveyed the cross in mockery. Now we see another surveyor of the cross was the centurion.

[5 : 47] And the centurion surveyed the cross with regret. The soldiers who nailed him there, They were the ones who pounded the nails in. They were interested more in gambling for his garments.

Let's make something out of it. Let's get some gain for ourselves. Let's gamble for his garments.

And they were more interested in that as far as realizing who it was that they were killing.

And they offered him vinegar to drink. Then darkness covered the earth. And the earth began to shake and quake. One of the soldiers surveying the cross, He looked at it all, He looked on this scene from a different light now.

Matthew 27 verse 54 it says, Now when the centurion, This Roman guard, This Roman soldier, When the centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus saw the earthquake and those things that were done, They feared greatly, Saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Now the centurions, As they surveyed the cross with regret, As this one saw what was happening, He saw the atmosphere, He saw the darkness, He saw the earthquake, And he realized the enormity of this moment in time, And that he had shed innocent blood.

[7 : 13] He had wounded him and injured him. And the centurion surveyed the cross, And he surveyed that cross now with regret, For what he was guilty of.

He had shed innocent blood. He had wounded him and injured him. He saw now that Jesus was more than a man. And as a centurion, This man was captain over a hundred soldiers.

He was a man commissioned with authority, And given a place of leadership. And here he was now, As he stood here, And this man of authority, This man of power, And he stood here fearing greatly.

He was struck with terror. Perhaps this pagan soldier, Had also commanded the soldiers, That had scourged and mocked him. Perhaps he was part of that too. The brutal torture and torment, As the military superintendent of the execution, He saw that Christ was, Who he had said he was.

And perhaps at this instant, The centurion, Actually trusted Christ personally, And was saved. Another one who surveyed the cross, Is the thief.

[8 : 24] The thief surveyed the cross, As deliverance. There were two thieves, One either side, Crucified at the same time, As our Lord. One joined the crowd, And mocked him, And the other for a time, But then this one realised, His sinful state, And who Jesus was.

And he cried out, For deliverance. This one who, Was worthy of his punishment, Of the cross, That he was on, And was party to, Some of that, Scorning of Christ.

Even then, On the cross he turned, And trusted. In Luke 23, 42 it says, And he, The thief, Said unto Jesus, Lord, Remember me, When thou comest, Into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou, Be with me, In paradise. And that moment, That eye blink, That moment, He trusted.

And Jesus said, Today you will be with me, In paradise. Even today, We can make the same, Plea for mercy, And we can, Utter the same cry, Lord.

[9 : 38] That's what he called Jesus, He said, Lord. Luke 23, 42, He said unto Jesus, Lord, Remember me. And, We can cry out, As the thief, We can see our lost condition, As he did.

And we can experience, The same deliverance. Friends, We want to survey the cross, Don't we today? To take a look, To take a look back in time, To even as it were, Stand figuratively, Reflecting, Right now, About the cross, And what it means.

Not the cross, As a piece of wood, That we venerate, As some would mistakenly do, As if the cross, As some magical, Symbol of itself. No, It's about, Who gave his life for us.

That's what it's about. When we say, We survey the cross, We're really reflecting on, That one, Who was the crucified one. That's what we're thinking about today. And if we're willing to call upon him, We will receive the same deliverance, As the thief did.

It says, Romans 10, 13, For, Whosoever, Wow, That's, Everybody, Isn't it? Whosoever will call, Upon the name of the Lord, Shall be saved.

[10:50] Whosoever shall, Call upon the name of the Lord, Shall be saved. You know, If you're, One who's maybe in the, Kind of, A bit, A bit to undetermined, Undecided, Make today the day to decide.

Don't put it off. Trust him now. Trust him right now. Right, Right now, With your heart. And survey the cross. Let us survey the cross. Let God's saving power touch your life today.

Friends, Just to, To repeat, When I survey the wondrous cross, It's about, We're going to sing that shortly. And I know there's different versions, And some prefer one against the other. But, It's the words that count.

It's the words that matter. And when I survey the wondrous cross, The disciples surveyed the cross in grief. Their Lord was taken and brutally injured, And taken from this planet in death.

And then, Of course, We know he rose again. The grief was changed to joy. The spectators surveyed the cross in mockery. And people still do that today. They mock the Christ. They don't trust him.

[11:48] The centurion surveyed the cross with regret. He was party to his murder. He was party to the injury of our Lord, The hurting of our Saviour.

He surveyed the cross with regret. And the thief surveyed the cross as deliverance. So, Friends, Let's survey the cross as it were. As we, You know, Might want to partake some bread and cup at this time.

As our Lord says, Remember me, Until I come. And that's what we want to do. We want to remember the cross. We want to survey the cross. We want to take on board what the cross means for every one of us.

And what it means is our saving. It's our salvation. And we don't want to miss that. Let's be reminded of that. Always reminded. Always mindful of that. And let's join together as we sing.

When I survey the wondrous cross. When I survey the wondrous cross.

[12:54] On which the Prince of Glory died. My riches gained.

I count but loss. And poor contempt. On all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, That I should boast. Save in the death.

Of Christ my God. All the vain things That shall be most.

I sacrifice Them to his blood. See from his head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love Flowing go down.

[14:10] Did e'er such love And sorrow meet All arms compose So rich a crown.

Were the whole realm Of nature mine And were an offering Far too small.

Love so amazing So divine Demands my soul My life My all By all You