

What Happened | The Theology of the Cross: Understanding Calvary's Profound Significance

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[0:00] Talking on the theme of the cross, really what else can we talk about other than the cross? Our glory in the cross. And here's a picture of a young couple 12 years ago.

And you might notice behind them there's a garden tomb. And this is our trip of the lifetime. Our one and only trip, really. Our trip of the lifetime. And we were blessed to be able to go to the nation of Israel.

You might see behind us there, there's something significant. The wonderful significance there is of the garden tomb. The garden tomb. Here's a closer shot of it.

And, of course, we don't know for sure that this was the tomb of our Lord. But some ponder that it could be. Certainly in the context, it's in the location, the general location of Jerusalem.

And so the garden tomb is at a bus terminal just around the corner from where the garden tomb is. Really just a couple of minutes or so walk away is this rocky outcrop that has somewhat of a likeness to a skull.

[1:08] You could reflect, as this picture shows a bit more clearly. I mean, of course, there's been 2,000 years of erosion. So we're certainly not definitely sure that it was Golgotha.

But you could picture that whether it is or could be in the general location of Golgotha. So we're going to go to Golgotha today.

The place of a skull. The place of a skull is what it means. And really it is the most important message that I can relay to you is the truth that, as Paul relates, I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Can we reflect on Calvary today? Another word for Golgotha, for the place of a skull. Calvary. Can we reflect on the greatest love and the greatest sacrifice of all time?

Can we take it in for a few moments as we revisit the dread final hours of our Lord, as He tasted death for every man?

[2:12] It tells us that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. In the Garden of Gethsemane, which again is in the general proximity, amongst the olive trees, the Lord felt the wrath of God for the first time in eternity.

And the word Gethsemane is from two Hebrew words that mean oil press. The oil was produced as the olives were crushed by a stone roller.

The olives were crushed in this press. And from the crushing came that life-giving oil of the olive, olive oil. And in Gethsemane, as our Lord prayed before the cross, we know that our Lord was about to be crushed on the cross.

And He wept there. There was anguish. And He sweated, as it were, blood. We see Luke 22, 44, of our Lord in Gethsemane being in agony.

He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Some say this is a rare physiological phenomenon that can happen when someone is in so much stress and anguish that capillaries burst, and they literally sweat blood.

[3:31] It's called hematidrosis. I know we've got a doctor amongst us. He might be able to correct me on some of this afterwards. But it's apparently a medical phenomenon.

And we think of our Lord as all of His friends, the disciples, they fled into the darkness. They all forsook Him and fled. He was abandoned there and then bound like a common criminal.

The three religious and three civil, and all of them illegal. The Son of God was dragged before these mock trials. And He was mocked, slapped, punched over and over again, His face struck by cruel hands.

And then false witnesses spewed lies. But He spoke not a word in His own defence. At any time He could have called an army of angels to wipe them all out.

But He just took every punch, every slap, and every false accusation. At dawn they hauled Him before Pilate. His flesh already bruised from the night's beatings.

[4 : 36] And the Roman governor sought to be set free. But Christ, they wanted crucified. They wanted to kill Him. Pilate ordered them the scourging by the Roman soldiers.

These were experts in torture and death. And the Lord Jesus, He was stripped of His garments and bound to this whipping post, beaten over and over again. And as each stroke of the whip descended, it cut deeper.

Now more than 700 years before, the prophet Isaiah foretold how the Son of God would be beaten. So disfigured. It tells how they were amazed.

They were astonished at His visage, His face. It was so marred. Marred more than any other man. And His form more than the sons of men. His back became this raw, torn mass of agony. And this beating, the scourging, was nicknamed the half-death. Because half of the men who received it died from it. But not Jesus.

[5 : 41] He had more to endure. And think of it, friends, this morning, how our Lord suffered. His body convulsed, trembling beneath the merciless hands of the tormentors.

And when they had exhausted their cruelty, the soldiers then fastened a mock crown. They fashioned this crown, this twisted, razor-sharp, thorny crown.

Thorns were up to three inches long. And it tells how they laid it on His head. They plaited this crown of thorns. They put it upon His head.

And they pressed it into His head. The spikes driving deep into His scalp. They beat it into His skull with a rod. Also, they used that to batter His face. Think of it, friends, of the love of our Saviour that took Him to the cross.

They draped over His roar, bleeding back a purple robe. A mockery. A mockery. Hail, King of the Jews! They scorned. They jeered. They spat upon Him, striking His face with their fists.

[6 : 44] And then they led Him away to die. They marched Him off to Golgotha, the place of a skull. The hill of the skull. And Golgotha is the Aramaic word.

Calvary is the Latin word. It means the same thing, the place of a skull. And a rough-hewn cross was thrust upon His torn shoulders. Think of it step by step, step by agonizing step.

He stumbled through the streets of Jerusalem, the jeering crowd lining the path to Golgotha's hill, carrying the instrument of His execution. Isaiah 53, Isaiah again foretells, He is despised and rejected of man, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised and we esteemed Him not. We should have regarded Him, but we esteemed Him not. Think of it.

If we had been at Jerusalem, along that walkway to the cross, along that pathway to the cross, along the street to the cross, would we have been in that number, despising Him, rejecting Him, mocking Him, spinning upon Him, scorning Him?

[7 : 57] I think I could have been in that number. I could have been the one that treated Him so, that disregarded Him, that despised Him, that esteemed Him not.

And there He was, weakened by loss of blood, and He collapsed under the weight, the place of the skull. They laid Him upon the cross. It tells there, when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, the place of a skull, there they crucified three times, driving the spikes through the flesh and bone, pinning Him to the work.

His feet were placed then together, and another nail plunged through them, fixing Him in place.

Then the soldiers lifted the cross upright, and dropped it into a hole.

This jolt would have sent unspeakable pain through His body. His torn flesh, stretching against the nails, with every breath, a new agony. Consider His intense agonies on the cross.

Friends here today, we should visit Calvary in our minds this morning, and consider the depth of our Lord's suffering, for me, for you. Why?

[9 : 11] For us. He freely went there. He could have called angels to rescue, to demolish His enemies, but no, He took every step to the cross.

With the joy set before Him, of our salvation, the depth of His suffering, the weight of sorrow, it was for you, for me. His body ravaged by the scourging, pierced by the nails, hung there, and yet, beyond the physical torment, what's more, is He also carried the crushing burden, of sin.

Not His own sin, for He was without sin, it was my sin, my sin, our sin. For ours He hung there, suffering. Every breath required Him to push up against the nails in His feet, scraping His shredded

back against the rough timber, and the jeers of the crowd mixed with the groans of dying men. And it tells how they passed by, reviling Him, cursing Him, hating Him, wagging their heads. He saved others, they mocked, but He cannot save Himself.

Think of the cross today. It was for me, for you. With every passing moment, the searing pain of the nails grew worse. The iron spikes had torn through His hands and feet, severing nerves and crushing bone.

[10 : 34] And every slight movement sent fresh waves of agony, surging through His limbs, radiating like fire through His shattered nerves. And His body sagged forward under its own weight, pulling against the nails, the raw wounds widening, the torn muscles screaming, an endless pain.

Breathing itself was a battle. The position of crucifixion forced the condemned to support themselves on the nails in their feet, just to draw air into their lungs. Every breath required Him to push up against the spike-driven feet.

And His back already shredded by the Roman scourge, scraped against the splintered beam with every tortured breath, that pain was excruciating. That's where we get the word excruciating, is through the crucifixion.

It gets excruciating, unrelenting, inescapable. And as the hours dragged on, a fierce and unquestionable thirst tormented Him. The relentless heat of the midday sun bore down upon Him, the blood lost, drying His mouth, His tongue swollen and cleaving to the roof of His mouth, His lips cracked, His throat burned.

Yet the only drink they offered was sour vinegar. It was mockery, not mercy. The sun blazed overhead, yet darkness crept over the land. Three hours of darkness, from midday to three o'clock.

[11 : 54] His wounds open and exposed began to fester, blood mixed with sweat, stinging and inflaming the raw flesh. Insects drawn by the scent of blood hovered about His face, crawling over His lacerated skin, yet He could not lift a hand to drive them away.

And the crowd below, those for whom He suffered, mocked Him still, their laughter, and got separated from His Father. The weight of the world's crushing sin upon His spirit, a burden more agonizing than the nails, more unbearable than the scourge.

He, the sinless one, bore our guilt, my guilt, my shame, the guilt of all mankind. Every betrayal, every lie, every sin, every act of wickedness was laid upon Him, the Bible says.

And the sun darkened, the sky was dark, the heavens were mourning, and the sinless one. the sinless one, the sinless one, the sinless one, the sinless one, the sinless one. And in this abyss of sorrow, He cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Was a cry of desolation, of unthinkable pain, not just of body, but of soul. Time stretched. Minutes felt like eternity.

[13 : 08] After six hours, He declared the triumph of His suffering. Then at last He cried out with a voice that shook heaven and earth, It is finished! When Jesus had therefore received the vinegar, He said, It is finished!

And He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. His head fell forward, the earth trembled, the sky darkened. Then the temple veil was torn in two, from top to bottom.

The Son of God had given His life, and in that moment, the price of sin was paid. The work was done. The debt of sin paid, in full.

The gates of mercy were flung wide open for all mankind. His head bowed, His body wracked with pain, beyond all telling, fell still. The earth shook, the rocks split, the temple curtain now torn, from top to bottom.

Think of it, the wonder of it all. Creation itself trembled at the death of its maker. And yet, in that moment of death, there was victory. When He said, It is finished, it was a cry of victory, of resolution, of completion.

[14 : 22] The work was done, the finished work of the cross. The work was finished, everything that had to be done to save me, to save you, was done there, 2,000 years ago, not by any workings of our own, but everything that He has done.

And He, in His suffering, has redeemed the lost. The cross, once a symbol of shame, has become the throne of the King of glory.

What happened at the cross? Let's be encouraged this morning to truly treasure, to glory in the cross, to give praise for the cross.

This is kind of part two of what happened, what happened at the cross. We've seen the graphic reality of what transpired.

And, really, further from that, why was this necessary? Why was all this suffering necessary? And, again, to reflect on how I talked earlier about, some people can go to church morning, night, midweek, they can go to church religiously.

[15 : 36] As I recount to this example of someone who went to a Baptist church, a Baptist union church, where they couldn't really articulate how do I get to heaven?

How can I be saved? How can I have salvation? And, I'd hate that to be the case for anyone amongst our number that if someone was to ask you, how can I be saved?

that you would be very clear about that. How to be saved. And, really, that is the reason that the suffering of our Lord was necessary. So, we can be saved to pardon and to sanctify me.

As the song we just sang, we're not going to really unpack the sanctify part, we're just talking about the salvation part this morning and to recount really some Bible words, some Bible terminology and to try to understand those words and what happened at the cross.

So, let's look at the work of Christ and our salvation to understand the cross. To understand what happened at the cross, we need to understand the reason why we needed the cross.

[16 : 49] So, we're going to explore some different Bible, some key Bible words about the cross, about what it's all about that will help us to understand the purpose of the cross, what God did at the cross for you, for you, in prospect if you've yet to be saved and in retrospect if you are saved, to understand what God did at the cross for you, for each one of us, if we will, but receive it.

And, to understand the cross, we've got to think about the reason for the cross and the reason is sin. We know that sin is a reality. Sin separates man from God and man's problem then leads to God's solution.

Sin separates man from God. Isaiah 59 too it says, but our iniquities, your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear.

There's this barrier and it's called sin. Our sin separates us from God. Of course we see there that God, we see that our sin is there, it separates us and God here is holy, perfect, perfection.

And sin is this chasm, this barrier. And we're going to come back to this kind of picture later but we see that sin separates us from God. From fellowship with God, we cannot have fellowship to God and his perfection because sin is there.

[18 : 27] We just can't bridge that gap by any measure of our own, by any plank that we might try to put across the chasm. We can't bridge this barrier, this sin barrier.

But thank God, God in his grace and mercy has provided a way through Christ. Now of course for many of us these things are elementary but I don't want to take anything for granted this morning because it could be that amongst us there could be one who says, preacher I'm not sure that I'm a Christian.

I don't know how to get to heaven. This is going to unpack that hopefully clearly enough and simply enough that then you'll understand it and for believers that then you can articulate this you can tell others too.

So we see our sin then we see grace. God in his grace and mercy has provided a way through Christ. Now grace the word it means getting something good that you do not deserve.

Grace is getting something good you don't deserve. It's God's unmerited favour we don't deserve it. We don't deserve heaven but he extends it as a gift.

[19 : 40] As it reads there we see for by grace are you saved through faith that trust not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works lest any man should boast.

It's like getting a big gift even when you didn't do anything to deserve it to earn it. Rather you probably did everything not to deserve it or to earn it that God would extend that gift.

So grace is there and grace is like a judge who forgives a debt instead of demanding payment. The judge he knows you're guilty but actually he gives you grace and he says you're free.

He extends forgiveness of your debt instead of demanding payment. And then we see further there's mercy as well. And mercy is not getting punished when you do deserve it.

It's not getting punished. It's like for children here when your mum doesn't punish you for breaking a rule she extends mercy. She says I'll be merciful to you.

[20 : 49] And Titus 3 tells us that it's not by works of righteousness that we have done but according to his mercy that he saved us. So mercy is God not giving us the punishment that we

deserve.

For example it's like if you could picture it a guilty man receives a full pardon instead of a death sentence. You know I've committed a crime that's worthy of death.

The wages of sin is death. I deserve the death penalty but the judge steps in our Lord Jesus and he takes the rat. He paid the death penalty at the cross.

He extends mercy and he extends full pardon and we can receive a full pardon instead of a death sentence. That's mercy. Amen. Thank God for mercy.

Amen. Praise God for grace and mercy. Consider also the work of the cross. How Christ accomplished our salvation. What happened at the cross?

[21 : 46] We're going to unpack a few big words, maybe unfamiliar words, and yet simple words really. I was preaching or talking at the doorstep to a young fella and trying to explain the substitution.

I use the classic soccer example. The coach sees one of the players on the field, they're lagging, they're flagging, they need to go back to the bench and they put the number up, don't they?

We're going to swap number two with number five. Number two comes off the pitch and number five comes on. It's a substitution. Number five is the substitute. They take the place of the one that comes off field.

Think of it in a spiritual example. Substitution, it means someone takes our place. Jesus took your place. He took your place.

Imagine you were supposed to get in trouble but your friend says I'll take the punishment for you.

That's what Jesus does, doesn't he? He takes our place. So substitution, it tells us in Isaiah 53, but he was wounded for our transgressions.

[22 : 55] He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement, the punishment of our peace was upon him. And with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, the Lord have laid on him the iniquity, the sin of us all.

So the substitute, Christ, took our sin and he took our place. his he suffered the punishment due to us for our sin that we deserved for our sin.

Another example you could reflect of how like a soldier jumps on a grenade to save his comrades. Substitution, substitution. He died in our place.

Think of it, what happened at the cross. This is what Christ has done as our substitute. He so loves you that he would take your place. The punishment due to you.

In love, Christ died for our sins. He died for sinners. What happened at the cross? Atonement happened. Atonement, this is a word where you can think of it at one with God.

[24 : 06] So we were far from God, now we made at one with God. And the Lord Jesus shed his blood to pay the price for our sin. He pays for sin.

Atonement means making things right between people and God after they've done wrong. It's fixing a broken relationship. So we were far far from God but now we are at one with God.

He pays for our sin. It tells how the blood makes an atonement for the soul. It's like fixing a broken friendship. And our Lord shed his blood to bring us this atonement.

When our Lord Jesus shed his blood it was the ultimate blood atonement. Of course in time past there was animals that had a picture of their sacrificing of that picture of the Christ to come as the fulfilment.

But the blood of sheep and of goats and bulls and such they could not bring an atonement to take away the sin of the world. He's the Lamb of God it tells us that takes away the sin of the world.

[25 : 10] John the Baptist says behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. So the Lord Jesus he paid for our sin to restore us to God. And atonement restores that broken relationship between God and humanity.

For example in the Old Testament a lamb was slain sacrificed for sin. Now Jesus what happened at the cross the Lamb of God was sacrificed cross.

People might have heard of this term of course it's used routinely the term scapegoat scapegoat. We could use that word in modern settings of someone who takes the blame for others.

They take the blame for others. The scapegoat is the one who takes the blame so that others go free. So you might think back in your school days there's some innocent student oh we'll blame Freddie we'll blame Freddie he'll be the scapegoat we'll blame him while the real culprits get free and Freddie becomes the scapegoat Jesus what happened at the cross became the scapegoat

taking the blame he was blameless he was innocent he takes your blame and mine so that we can go free it's like when a brother or sister gets in trouble for something you did I know when we were young parents our two sons Peter and Stephen they used to have these little squabbles and who was the one who usually got the blame Peter got the blame but most of the time it was Stephen's fault they blame one another and one cops it they're the scapegoat they take the blame and it's not really fair it's not fair at all it's not fair at all that

Jesus takes the blame is it that he's your scapegoat but he willingly is and so this word scapegoat it comes from the Old Testament talks about this goat that was symbolically burdened with Israel's sin and sent away Leviticus 16 talks about the scapegoat presents it it's going to make an atonement and then they let it go into the wilderness think of our Lord he was let go into the wilderness he was outside the gate he bore our sins and he takes them away that's what Jesus can do that's what happened at the cross what happened at the cross it can happen for you at the cross that Jesus can take your blame the sinless one made sin for you what happened at the cross propitiation happened at the cross now another big word not a common word propitiation so let me help explain that as best as I can understand it propitiation means making someone who is angry happy again it's like when you do something nice to calm down someone who's upset with you you calm them down you make up and the sacrifice of Christ satisfied

[28 : 22] God's wrath against our sin in 1 John it tells he is the propitiation for our sins not for ours only but for also for the sins of the whole world it means the sacrifice of our Lord turns away God's wrath so God's angry at our sin and he's rightfully so he's righteously angry we've broken the commandments we deserve punishment we deserve God's anger against us but Jesus cops it the Lord Jesus takes the wrath the Lord Jesus takes God's anger and the Lord Jesus' death has satisfied God's justice so it means that the debt or punishment that we were due has been fully paid God's justice is fully met in Christ so the Lord Jesus he's made satisfaction it's like if you owed money and someone paid the whole bill for you they've taken it away the debt collector's been fully paid leaving nothing owed and so the Lord Jesus he absorbed

God's wrath so we wouldn't have to so with the picture there you could compare propitiation someone has made a comparison that you could compare propitiation with how a lightning rod absorbs the storm's strike and protects the house see that so really every modern building has got the lightning rod on the roof and when the storm comes and the lightning strikes it strikes the lightning rod and the lightning rod takes the brunt of that electricity that lightning it takes the force of that and the house is safe it's the same with God's wrath that he is the one who takes the wrath of the father the Lord Jesus took that and protects us from it he saves us from God's wrath from God's anger the Lord Jesus has absorbed God's wrath against you against you and against your sin so that you won't have to face

God's wrath now the Bible it says flee from the wrath to come we should be afraid of God's wrath God's anger he's rightfully angry at our sin but thank God Christ has taken God's anger and he's made it so that it's not against us anymore he's taken it away he's removed it just like the lightning rod takes away the danger and protects the house what happened at the cross here's another truth expiation now again it's not a word we might use too often although you might have an expiation notice when you when you're parked illegally and city of playford slaps an expiation notice on your car it's this sense of it's something wrong that you've done an expiation it's something that an expiation means wiping that away the wrong things that we've done so like erasing a mistake on a piece of paper so it's completely gone and that's what the

Lord Jesus has done at the cross really you could use the word forgiveness really what happened at the cross is forgiveness you've got complete and absolute forgiveness a removing of all your guilt because of what Christ has done at the cross he can remove our guilt and our sin as far as the east is from the west as far as the east is from the west so far have he removed our transgressions our sins from us the wonderful truth here is that the Lord Jesus offers a free and full forgiveness it's a full pardon it's a complete pardon you don't deserve!

it but he extends! it's like how a judge not only pardons a criminal but he erases his record it's like God wipes it from his memory banks in the sense he doesn't hold sin against us because it's completely gone when you're born again you can think well that was the old me I'm a new man now and you're so completely forgiven that there's no record held against you anymore the Lord Jesus another thing that happened was redemption what Christ has accomplished he set us free redemption it means to be set free after being trapped or in trouble now of course we could think of

a common example that you hock something down at the pawn shop like at cash converters and then you've got to go back and redeem it to get it back so maybe you get in some strife and you take your kids bicycle down to cash converters and they give you some money for it but then if you want to take it back you've got to go down to cash converters and pay money to get that property back and that's what the

[33 : 20] Lord Jesus has done he's redeemed us there's redeeming and we could also think of the picture of old times when there were slaves and slave markets of someone paying to set someone free to pay someone's liberty this is what happens sometimes where a slave was purchased and the slave master set them free they just paid for them to be set free and it tells of our Lord in whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace so redemption is about buying back something that was lost or enslaved and that's what happened at the cross that Jesus paid the price to free us from our sin for example as I say you might buy back a pawned wedding ring that you want to get back you got to pay make a payment just as Christ purchased us with his blood what happened at the cross another word is ransom ransom is the price you pay to free someone so there's a lot of talk at the moment of ransoms of people that are held hostage and of paying a price of setting people free ransom is the price paid to free someone so if a kidnapper takes someone they demand a ransom there's a money that has to be paid to rescue them and of course we know that the life of

Jesus is the ransom price that saves those who call upon him as it tells us in Mark 10 for the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life his!

a ransom for many so the ransom is the price paid what happened at the cross is Jesus is the ransom price he's the one who pays the ransom he is the ransom his own suffering and death pays for our release again you could think about how a prisoner is released someone pays his bail the ransom Jesus is the payment Jesus paid our ransom himself he is the ransom what happened at the cross another term is justification here's another result for those of you who would believe in the work of Christ on the cross for you and he's dying on the cross for your sin another result is justification it means that we're declared righteous before God justification means being declared right or innocent it's like a judge saying here's my verdict you are not guilty even though you did something wrong it's therefore being justified by faith we have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ he declares you righteous you're free to go you're righteous because because of what happened at the cross because of the work of Christ on the cross we declared righteous before God because of Christ's sacrifice and it's like the guilty man who stands before the judge but because of another's payment he is declared innocent what happened at the cross justification another result another big word here imputation so another result for those who believe is imputation now it means that you get a credit a credit is given so at the cross Christ gives you his righteousness his righteousness is credited to you it tells us here 2 Corinthians 5 for he God the father made him Christ to be sent for us Christ who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of

God in him imputation means putting something on someone else so it means Jesus' righteousness is put upon you you're clothed with his righteousness another example you could reflect how it's like a billionaire transfers his entire fortune into the bank account of a beggar it's just bang wow that's nice credit you get a credit there's an imputation that's what happens when you trust Christ as your saviour a transfer happens an exchange a great exchange the transferred life they're talking at the moment in the middle east about the exchange aren't they exchanging the hostage for the prisoner mind it doesn't seem fair does it you get three Israelis for a few hundred Palestinians there's a transfer it's not always fair is it it's not always a fair exchange but think of the example of

[38 : 11] Christ that there's an exchange of one for all of humanity what an exchange what a transfer all of our sin placed on him his righteousness placed on us this great exchange some are caught at the transferred life we can know the crediting of Christ's righteousness to our account and our sin credited to Christ what happened at the cross another result is reconciliation for you that believe we're brought into relationship with God reconciliation what a beautiful word that that we can become friends after a fight when two people who are upset with each other forgive and there's a joining together again and 2 Corinthians tells us that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself reconciliation you can know reconciliation with God that fractured relationship where God is so far far away he can be very very close close to your heart and reconciliation is that broken friendship healed when one party reaches out in love that's what

Christ has done at the cross that's what happens at the cross we can know that restoration of relationship with God and furthermore we can know regeneration as well what happened at the cross regeneration I like the example of caterpillar changed into a new form of life from one creature into another creature the Bible says if any man is in Christ he is a new creature a new creation old things have passed away the caterpillar all things become new the butterfly it's a new life isn't it? the regeneration we're made spiritually alive that's what happens at the cross as the Lord Jesus says you must be born again going to church is good religious works good works living right but you must be born again Jesus says except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God we must be regenerated we must have that regeneration that new life regeneration means being made new like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly a brand new start a brand new heart it's a new life and when we trust Christ because of what he's done at the cross friend you can be saved this morning you might have walked in this building and you might have said preacher I don't know that I'm a Christian I don't know that I'm going to heaven I don't know for sure that I'm going to make it I hope I am I think maybe I am but I'm not sure that I am you can leave this building here this morning and know for sure yes

I've trusted Christ yes I've trusted Christ he died on the cross for my sin I've trusted him and I know now that I am born again I have new life Jesus has changed me from the inside out he's made me spiritually alive when we trust Christ and his work to save us we can be spiritually reborn a regeneration happens new life like a dead plant springing to life God gives new life to the sinner friend here this morning you can know for sure yes I know for sure now I've trusted Jesus I've trusted Jesus you might want to go to someone if that's you here this morning go to someone you trust that you know is for sure as a Christian or to a trusted worker in the church and say look I want to make I just want to settle this with God I want to do business with God this morning I want to settle my account with God I want to get right with God and you can do that right here right now simply by faith as you trust him and receive his gift eternal life it's new life and what's more what happened at the cross adoption happens at the cross because of the cross we made children of God it's like you can I don't know if this might be your case that you might be one who's been adopted think of it the one who's adopted you loved you so to actually want you that's Jesus wants you the father God the father wants you he wants you and it's like when someone who didn't have parents is given a loving home of course we know that it's by adoption that an orphan is legally made part of a loving family they are legally family not blood and flesh family but just as precious and as real and as true legally made part of a loving family that's what happens when we get saved when we're born again we're born into the family we brought into a new family the family of God it tells how we've received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba father it's a very colloquial term it's like daddy it's like this real closeness that that he's become a daddy by faith God the father can be your father by faith God makes believers his children through Christ what happens at the cross adoption and because of the cross too nearly there I know it's been a long one because of the cross we can know mediation so Jesus is the mediator it says between God the father and men it says that he's the mediator he's the go-between he intercedes for us because of the cross he can affect that that interchange between you and the father and mediation is when someone helps two people stop fighting and be friends again isn't it you get two kids arguing and the teacher hopefully works it out that they've stopped arguing and

[43 : 59] Jesus is the go-between between God the father and man it's like how a lawyer represents a client before a judge the Lord Jesus intercedes for us it's because of the cross because of the cross we can know covenant to a strong promise between two people or groups think of the covenant that you have with God you know we've just had communion talks about the the new testament the new covenant in my blood the new transaction it's this covenant this promise between two people because of the cross we brought into that new relationship we brought into covenant with God it's a promise it's like your wedding vows you make a promise it's a commitment isn't it this is the promise of God and he's the mediator of a better covenant this covenant this binding agreement between God and man the new covenant sealed by Jesus's blood it's what happened at the cross what happened at the cross God makes covenant and Christ's sacrifice guarantees us eternal salvation the last one that happened at the cross really of you could probably probably add another quite a few more no doubt but what happened at the time of the cross the veil was torn from top to bottom

God's hand torn from top to bottom wasn't someone pulling it from underneath wasn't men pulling it apart God himself tore it apart with his mighty hands and the veil of the temple was torn something remarkable happened now we have direct access to God think of it you have direct access to God you don't to go through some priest or through some religious rituals or through some convoluted means you've got direct access you've got a he's on speed dial he's there you can go straight to the father straight to the father we can boldly approach onto the very throne and it's like this locked door is now suddenly wide open and we can freely enter in Christ has affected this for every believer for you that believe because of the cross what happened at the cross he's made the way open for you there's no barrier now there's nothing to stop you from going straight to God direct access to the very throne room the throne of his grace and to sum things up what happened at the cross and why should we care bear with me just going to quickly recap I know we've covered a lot of ground here but these are important terms some may be unfamiliar but very important terms so just to quickly recap sin separates us from God but grace and mercy prevails that

Christ would come and provide the way of salvation his substitution Jesus took our place Jesus took your place as the substitute he shed his blood as the atonement as the scapegoat he took the blame and he removes our sin as the propitiation he takes the penalty he takes God's anger against sin and he brings redemption he's the ransom the very payment was his very life that he would affect your release from the chains of sin and that prison cell of your sin that you can know a setting free redemption and you can know his redeeming his justification you can know his imputation in that he credits his righteousness unto you think of that and further there's a new relationship it's what happened at the cross reconciliation there's no divide there's no no tearing apart there's a bringing together you can be reconciled with God and you can have new life you can have regeneration that you can be made born again a new creature in

Christ and you can be adopted into God's very family that you as much as you know we weren't of the of the the Jewish nation of the Jewish people that there's no barrier now for Gentiles for anyone worldwide to be adopted into the very family to be made children of the living God that you can have that new relationship to be adopted as God's children and given direct access now to and you've got all these benefits God's mediation the mediator you can go to him at any time not some human mediator but Christ the Savior can be your intercessor and you can go to the father through him you've got full access there's no barrier you can have all of this it's what happened it's what happened what happened at the cross at the cross all of these truths can you take hold of them this morning and people are often illustrate as we started off of this gulf of sin between us and God this gulf this sin as was in the middle there this chasm and Christ bridges the sin by the cross he bridges that gulf of course we see all have sinned come short of the glory of God the wages of sin is death but the gift of

God is eternal life and then it says as many as received him to them gave he the power to become the children of God even to them that believe on his name as many as received Christ you can cross that bridge you can go from from lost to saved you can go from the lost estate of sin of separation from God to fellowship with God you can cross over and there's a Bible verse that tells us that John 5 24 it says that we passed from death unto life look at that so that chasm of sin he bridges it Christ what happened at the cross our salvation is affected if we cross over we pass from death unto life so no longer are we in the situation of death under the death penalty headed to the eternal death the second death of hell now we have heaven we have eternal life and we can pass over notice it says that it can happen for you that believe some people think well I've kind of try my chances hope that I'm going to get to heaven no you can know for sure that you've passed from you've passed from from death unto life when you trust Christ what happened at the cross when you trust Christ you pass over from death unto life so you can say for sure I'm on this side now there's no going back I passed over not in the death side anymore I passed over to the life side and you can know for sure you passed from we can cross over and be saved it's what happened at the cross and one last thought I was touched with this thought about salvation the speed at which salvation is granted some might think well okay I'll go to church and I'll learn more I'll learn about the Bible I'll learn about God I'll kind of study it and study it and study it and maybe one day no now is the time today is the day of salvation don't put it off it it horrifies me really when we when we're door knocking witnessing to people and they and they kind of have this blase attitude oh yeah

[51 : 25] I'll think about it or I'll I'll get around to it now today is the day of salvation if you can just clearly see Christ died for you then trust him trust him don't put it off you can pass over now you can pass over this very moment from death unto life if you simply trust Christ simply trust him because

there's no guarantee of it of tomorrow the Bible says don't boast about tomorrow you may never see it and but the good news is the truth of the speed of salvation whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved there's a granting of salvation that moment that eye blink that you believe that moment of faith that you trust Christ that you call upon him that moment this change happens and you passed over salvation happens the moment that you believe in Christ you are saved at that moment it's just like when a drowning man grabs the life preserver isn't it when they grab a hold of that life preserver they're saved will you lay hold on Christ today will you lay hold upon him and trust what happened at the cross that it was for you this is not just theoretical what happened at the cross for other people it's what happened at the cross for you if you will believe by grace you're saved through faith trust him simply believe let us pray Lord we thank you that your word tells us of the graphic reality of the cross and we've heard of the horror of it

Lord the shock factor of the cross and we wonder why was it necessary and we know it was for me each one here each one of us here Lord God we know that it was for each one of us here if we would but believe it we can receive all of these wonderful truths and that can be a reality for us in the here and now and for the hereafter from this moment forward we pray I pray right now Lord for anyone here present if God's touched you and you would say you would say to to me preacher I I walked into this building and I wasn't saved and if God's moved on your heart today to trust him then don't delay do that right now do that right now move us Lord that we might know more about the wonder of Calvary and also now hopefully we'll have some thoughts about how to present it to others to about what happened at the cross that is such a beautiful thing we thank you for it in Jesus name amen