

The Respectable Sin of Contempt Part 1

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[0 : 0 0] All right. Good to go back there? Okay. Let's open with a word of prayer here this morning as we prepare to hear God's word for us.

Our Father, we thank you that we've made it here safe and sound, and that we are grateful for the opportunity to hear your word in a world full of confusing messages, a world that more and more, as I see it play out in people's lives, I see that our world and our culture has become a factory of folly, a factory of thinking, living, behaving, that are destructive to us and dishonoring to you.

And so, Lord God, this morning I pray you may give us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand, all you have for us, the words of warning and the words of wisdom that you have given us so we may live in a way that honors you, that makes peace with one another, in a way that is healthy and right and whole.

And so, God, we come to you. I ask for your guidance and your help as I preach to remove whatever needs to be removed, to say what needs to be said, and, Lord God, may each one of us receive what we need to receive by the power of your Spirit.

Amen. Okay. All right. Well, glad you all made it out here this morning. This is going to be part one of a two-part series on what I'm calling the respectable sin of contempt.

[1 : 5 5] Now, think for a moment. What are your respectable sins? And so, what I'm talking about is those things that you know, hey, they're wrong, God calls me not to do this, or God's calling me to do something that I'm not doing, but you feel safe admitting to it.

Right? If you've got some friends around your place, you'd casually confess them in private conversation. Oh, yeah, I admit, I'm not thankful enough. I need to be more thankful.

Oh, I get angry sometimes. Yeah, ha, ha, ha, ha. Right? I need to pray more. However, the author, Jerry Bridges, he even wrote a book that he titled, Respectable Sins.

And he listed a whole series of sins that we as Christians in churches often will happily admit to, but deep down, we function as though they aren't a big deal.

And so, he wrote that book to call us out of our complacency that these respectable sins actually are a big deal. And so, today, I'm focusing on one particular sin.

[3 : 0 0] This is part one of a two-part series. And I think that the one we're talking about today is what I would consider to be the most respectable sin of all because it's a sin that is not just respectable, but in some cases highly prized, even in churches that otherwise seem to be bang on in their teaching, in their doctrine, in a lot of their behaviors.

And yet, sometimes there is a cancer in the middle of our churches, let alone in our culture, in which this sin is not only respectable, not only highly prized, but regularly televised and celebrated.

This week, and especially next week, this is likely the closest that I have come in years to preaching a fire and brimstone sermon. Okay? And I have to because that's the way the Bible handles this sin, with fire and brimstone.

And so, hey, for a cold winter day, you want a little bit of that fire and brimstone to warm your heart. God takes this sin really seriously. We dismiss it, but he takes it seriously, that respectable sin of contempt.

Did you know that there is an entire psalm dedicated to the experience of contempt? In other words, the experience of what it's like to receive contempt from other people.

[4 : 26] And this psalm speaks of how awful it is to be on the receiving end of this most respectable of sins. Psalm 123, you'll want to turn to that in your Bible.

Follow along as I read it. And this is basically going to be a jumping off place to many scriptures that we're going to draw on because the Bible speaks endlessly about this respectable sin.

So page 517 on the Blue Bible is our usher's handout. You'll find Psalm 123. Follow along as I read it. Psalm 123, a song of ascents.

Have mercy upon us.

O Lord, have mercy upon us. For we have had more than enough of contempt. Our soul has had more than enough of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud.

[5 : 50] This is the word of the Lord. The Lord is not silent about the respectable sin of contempt. He has much to say about it throughout the Bible.

My plan today is to conduct a survey of God's word. And this survey, by the way, I've just been hacking and slashing material out of this.

This is sort of a, we're reducing the Lord of the Rings movies from the extended cut down to the theatrical version, as Ryan put it. And it's still a lot. Because God's word gives us what we need to answer four questions for us.

First, what is contempt? Second, what are the tactics of contempt? Third, who are the targets of contempt? And then fourth, what is the impact of contempt?

Now, for most of us, this actually surprisingly may be new material. I was baffled to discover that, to discover, I don't know that I've ever heard a sermon on the subject.

[6 : 51] As I go through all sorts of counseling resources, it's almost never mentioned. But it turns out that we live in a world that is drowning in contempt. And even outside of the church, there is very little study of the subject among psychologists and sociologists.

But those who have studied it are sounding the alarm, just as Scripture has done. Because they see the same things that God does. They see that contempt is, in fact, not a respectable sin at all.

Rather, as one psychologist puts it, contempt is a poison that also destroys the emotional and physical health of those who feel it. It is a poison.

So let's ask our first question. What is contempt? What is contempt? Let me run through a few different definitions. So first, a researcher on the subject of emotions named Paul Ekman, here is how he defines the way contempt shows up as an emotion.

Contempt is the feeling of dislike for and superiority, usually morally, over another person, group of people, and or their actions.

[8 : 05] The basic notion of contempt is, I'm better than you, and you are lesser than me. I'm better than you, and you are lesser than me.

Eventually, contempt becomes not just a judgment, not just an emotional experience. It becomes a way of life the more that we feed it, the more we develop it. Arthur Brooks, a social scientist, says this, Contempt is our habit of treating people who disagree with us not just as wrong or misguided in their views, but as worthless.

They are worthless. Now here, we have to pause for a moment, and I want to make a really, really important distinction, because it can be easy to confuse contempt towards someone with anger towards someone, because contempt and anger are often found together.

But when you watch the life of Jesus, you'll notice Jesus regularly shows anger towards the people he is confronted with. And yet, every time, if you read him carefully, you will find that Jesus shows anger without contempt.

In fact, his anger toward evildoers is mingled with grief, not contempt. It is a grief-stricken anger when he confronts the Pharisees, when he confronts the religious leaders.

[9 : 29] It is not a contemptuous anger, an anger of, oh, ha, you. Brooks, he explains the distinction to us.

He says, contempt isn't the same thing as anger. We often perceive anger as a destructive emotion, but it serves an important purpose. Think about the last time you were angry at someone.

Maybe you got in a fight with a friend or your spouse or a colleague. Were you hoping to erase that person from your life? Of course not. You wanted that person to right whatever wrong they'd done you.

That's what anger is supposed to do, help us resolve conflicts. Contempt is different. It involves anger, but it adds another emotional ingredient, disgust.

The result of combining these two feelings is akin to what happens when you pour ammonia into bleach. You get a dangerous, toxic compound.

[10 : 31] Because while anger says, I care about this, and I want to fix our relationship, contempt says, you are beneath caring about. It leads to permanent enemies, and it harms our happiness and our health.

So, contempt is a sin in the eyes of God, as we are going to see throughout this sermon. And even secular researchers recognize that it harms our happiness and our health.

So then, we have got to learn to recognize it. We need to know it. We need to know what it looks like in others, and we need to know what it looks like in ourselves. So that brings up our second question.

What are the tactics of contempt? What are the tactics of contempt? So we can break down the tactics into three categories. Physical tactics, verbal tactics, and nonverbal tactics.

Physical, verbal, and nonverbal. Let's talk about physical tactics first. Now, these ones are obvious. You don't need to be a rocket scientist to figure this one out.

[11 : 43] Contempt views another person as beneath you, lower on the ladder than you, functionally as less than human. And if someone is contemptible in your eyes, that frees you up, makes you capable of doing anything to them because they are less.

The physical tactics of contempt, then, include violence and murder. Think of Genesis chapter 4 when Cain became jealous of his brother Abel.

And so Cain attacked him. We read, Cain spoke to Abel, his brother, and when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, where is Abel, your brother?

He said, I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper? You can hear the contempt dripping off those words.

Am I my brother's keeper? That shows that Cain's murder wasn't a mere fit of passion. Cain held his brother in contempt.

[12 : 57] The physical tactics of contempt are obvious. They are violence, bloodshed, murder. That is contempt expressed to the ultimate degree. But just as terrible can be the verbal tactics of contempt.

The verbal tactics, the words we use. You've heard that children's proverb, sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. Come on, guys.

We all know that's wrong, don't we? The Bible, in fact, says the exact opposite. That proverb flies in the face of everything God has said.

Here is what the biblical book of Proverbs says, Proverbs 12, verse 18. There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Our words of contempt are like taking a sword and thrusting it deep into the soul of the other person. They inflict deep, lasting, sometimes lifelong wounds.

[14 : 02] They cause excruciating pain. I was watching a recent, I was watching a video recently, a video recording of some biblical counselors who were talking about how to care for victims of domestic abuse.

And one of the counselors, a woman named Joy Forrest, she made this statement that just, I had to write it down because it was so stunning. She said, I work with support groups full of women who've been abused.

and what they tell me is they would prefer to be hit than the mind games and the verbal assault that they endure on a regular basis.

In fact, I used to work in a domestic violence shelter and one of the ladies says, sometimes I'll just go ahead and do something I know will make him hit me so that I know he'll leave me alone for a while.

that the words can hurt worse than fists. Is this not in line with what we are told in James chapter 3?

[15 : 05] So also the tongue is a small member yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire. And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.

The tongue is set among our members staining the whole body setting on fire the entire course of life and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird of reptile and sea creature can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers these things ought not to be so. Our tongue a wildfire a vicious untamed animal a deadly poison.

When the Bible speaks of contempt it speaks not only of cursing but also commonly uses words like scorn mockery ridiculing others putting them down with sarcasm getting in little digs at them insulting them laughing at them.

[16 : 34] In Psalm 44 the psalmist laments about the contempt he's received he says you speaking to God he says you have made us the taunt of our neighbors the derision and scorn of those around us you have made us a byword among the nations a laughing stock among the peoples all day long my disgrace is before me and shame has covered my face at the sound of the taunter and reviler at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

we not only wound others with contempt when we insult and mock them we wound them by labeling them you are a liar you're such a loser you're pathetic what a freak the author Winston Smith writes trait names and exaggeration communicate you're no more and no better than what you've just done you're no more and no better than what you've just done that's what labels do these labels of contempt on top of these we could list relationship patterns in which the subject of contempt is constantly being compared to other people constantly being interrupted constantly being ignored constantly being corrected constantly being patronized all of these are verbal tactics of contempt but contempt oh it's a clever emotion it's a clever practice it is at its most subtle and its most respectable when it goes underground you see contempt has its nonverbal tactics and these slippery little moves they give you the advantage of denying that you have any contempt at all what are you talking about why is that person overreacting what's their problem

I just said this here's what the psychologists I've quoted say about the nonverbal tactics of contempt that we sometimes consciously sometimes unconsciously sneak into our conversations our tones our postures our behaviors despising goes far beyond saying a hurtful phrase contempt contempt is also demonstrated through small signals such as the negative and sarcastic tone of the voice rolling of the eyes slightly raising the upper lip or relating from the deepest indifference acting as if that person did not exist common vocal signals of contempt are smug or disapproving sounds or tone of voice it's common to puff up one's chest have upright posture look down your nose at others and or roll one's eyes to this we could add the universal sign of contempt the smirk expressions like ha ha believe me long before these psychologists got to the scene the wise men and women of

God noticed that contempt can sneak in with nonverbal tactics and they called out our contempt in Proverbs chapter 6 we read a worthless person a wicked man goes about with crooked speech winks his eyes signals with his feet points with his finger with perverted heart devises evil continually sowing discord therefore calamity will come upon him suddenly in a moment he will be broken beyond healing so the tactics of contempt may be physical they may be verbal they may be nonverbal have you ever experienced any of these from someone else have you ever shown these towards someone else us we ask our third question who are the targets of our contempt who are the targets of our contempt

God's word speaks of four kinds of targets first just our peers those who are those who we view as being kind of on the same level of us as us these are simply our fellow human beings but we find ways to consider them less than us in some way or other that desire to elevate ourselves perhaps it is a sibling that we have contempt for perhaps a co-worker another church member maybe maybe it's your spouse in Psalm 31 David laments to the Lord about the way his neighbors are treating him he writes because of all my adversaries I have become a reproach especially to my neighbors and an object of dread to my acquaintances those who see me in the street flee from me your peers may be the target of your contempt those who are on the same social plane as you but the

[21 : 58] Bible accurately describes the real world because in the real world there's a second and far more likely target of contempt and that is our inferiors our inferiors a downward contempt for those who we think of as having a lower ranking and it's captured perfectly in James chapter 2 James describes this scenario of contempt listen my brothers show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory for if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say oh you sit here in a good place while you say to the poor man you stand over there or sit down at my feet have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts listen my beloved brothers has not

God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him but you have dishonored the poor man are not the rich the ones who oppress you and the ones who drag you into court are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture you shall love your neighbor as yourself you are doing well but if you show partiality you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors James speaks of partiality towards the wealthy the high status the popular ones at the beginning of this service Carl read a couple of passages from Luke chapter 18 where in one of them Jesus' disciples don't want him to spend time with the little children why they're not useful they're low in that culture children were low status what are they going to do for you

Jesus that partiality was a form of contempt and Jesus really tore into his disciples for that and then perhaps it is not your social inferiors that are the targets of your contempt perhaps it is your moral inferiors again as Carl read in Luke chapter 18 the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector what does Luke say Jesus was telling that parable to towards those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and treated others with contempt oh I'm better than that person oh that guy that sinner unless we look down our noses at young and immature Christians you know they just don't have the knowledge and experience I have they don't know their doctrine they haven't been around church they don't know how this works in

Matthew 18 Jesus says this see that you do not despise one of these little ones for I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my father who is in heaven don't you dare despise them so that second target of contempt may be our inferiors and then ironically a third target of our contempt may be our superiors rather than looking down and gloating at those who we consider beneath us not at our level we may look up at those above us and try to bring them down with a bit of contempt Paul Ekman describes what he calls this upward contempt sometimes people in subordinate positions may feel contempt towards those who have a higher social political or legal ranking some examples include the potential contempt teenagers may feel towards adults workers for their bosses or prisoners for their guards consider this story of contempt from second

Samuel chapter six king David no higher status than king right he is leading the procession in which the ark of the lord is being brought into the city of Jerusalem but his wife Michael looks with contempt on his behavior as he leads the procession as the ark of the lord came into the city of David Michael the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw king David leaping and dancing before the lord and she despised him in her heart and David returned to bless his household but Michael the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said how the king of Israel honored himself today uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants female servants as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself and David said to Michael it was before the lord who chose me above your father and above all his house to appoint me as prince over

[27 : 28] Israel the people of the lord and I will celebrate before the lord I will make myself yet more contemptible than this and I will be abased in your eyes but by the female servants of whom you have spoken by them I shall be held in honor and Michael the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death how often have I seen people I know and love even Christians posting on social media right Facebook and Twitter random comments under things and flowing from their keyboards are expressions of hatred and contempt for a figure in authority over them how many Canadians have I seen expressing contempt for Justin Trudeau how many Americans have I seen expressing contempt for Donald Trump or Joe Biden or any number of other political figures oh this contempt is loved and celebrated in many quarters it'll get you friends it's delightful and it feels really good consider that children may show contempt for their own parents

Proverbs 23 verse 22 warns listen to your father who gave you life and do not despise your mother when she is old a treatment of our parents especially as they age we can consider look on them with contempt Paul warns against showing contempt for authorities in the workplace especially when they're believers 1 Timothy chapter 6 those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved here's an interesting thing too believe it or not this warning against contempt extends all the way up to the heavenly places and our attitudes to spiritual powers and authorities in the book of Jude we are warned about people who show contempt for angels and spiritual authorities yet in like manner these people also relying on their dreams defile the flesh reject authority and blaspheme the glorious ones but when the archangel Michael contending with the devil was disputing about the body of Moses he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment but said the Lord rebuke you but these people blaspheme all that they do not understand and they are destroyed by all that they like unreasoning animals understand instinctively see Jude's grief stricken anger if the archangel

Michael himself won the highest status of all God's creatures he refuses to show contempt for even the devil himself then what right do you and I have to show any contempt for any authority in heaven or on earth we must not target our superiors with contempt contempt and fourth and finally we must especially not target our God with contempt we must not target our God with contempt this is expressly warned against the scripture more times than we could ever count in the strongest possible terms numbers chapter 15 the people of Israel are warned against sinning against God with an attitude of defiance and contempt the phrase that is used is with a high hand the defiance and contempt that particular kind of approach to God it reads the person who does anything with a high hand whether he is native or a sojourner reviles the Lord and that person shall be cut off from among his people because he has despised the word of the Lord and has broken his commandment that person shall be utterly cut off his iniquity shall be on him consider those consequences for despising the word of the Lord that very phrase despising the word of the Lord that was used intentionally by the prophet Nathan when he confronted

King David over his sin 2 Samuel chapter 12 he says why have you despised the word of the Lord he's reminding David of Numbers 15 he says why have you despised the word of the Lord to do what is evil in his sight you have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife it is no wonder that David in Psalm 51 says to the Lord against you and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight because the sin of contempt against the Lord eclipses even these horrible sins of adultery and murder in 2nd Chronicles chapter 36 the people of Judah are condemned because of the contempt they showed toward the Lord the Lord the God of their fathers sent persistently to them by his messengers because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place but they kept mocking the messengers of God despising his words and scoffing at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people until there was no remedy you must not show contempt for your peers or your inferiors or your superiors but above all contempt for the living God must be removed amputated from our life at all costs why does the Lord speak so strongly against the respectable sin of contempt it is because this sin has an enormous impact we don't want to believe this but it does that leads to our fourth and final question what is the impact of contempt what's the impact of contempt and I want to make this clear my purpose here is twofold number one if you have experienced contempt for others and you have been told it's not a big deal especially by the person showing you contempt it is a big deal if you felt like it hurt that's because it does if you felt like it cut you to the heart that's because it does and then second if you've shown contempt to others and thought it was not a big deal listen to these impact statements these victim impact statements that the Bible gives us to let you know here is what your contempt does consider the impact on others in general we'll allow the social scientists and psychologists to explain why exactly contempt is so destructive here's what one says experiencing contempt increases anxiety depression and jealousy it harms our sleep quality and it causes a comprehensive degradation of our immune systems you actually get sick more often and more seriously but this isn't just the case when you are treated with contempt it's also the case when you treat others with contempt a psychologist named John Gottman has spent 40 years studying marital reconciliation and is arguably the world's leading expert in what makes relationships work in fact he can sit down with a couple for just one hour and after listening to them talking about their relationship he can predict with 94% accuracy whether they will divorce within three years what's the giveaway indicators of contempt sarcasm sneering hostile humor

and especially eye rolling if you want to destroy your marriage the fastest way to do it is with contempt the surest way to do it is with contempt you want to destroy any relationship in your life contempt is the poison pill that will do it that is the impact on others in general if that's the impact on others in general let's now consider the impact of contempt on our inferiors those who are beneath us socially or legally consider the cry of the lowly and afflicted that we've already read from Psalm 123 have mercy on us oh Lord have mercy upon us for we have had more than enough of contempt our soul has had more than enough of the scorn of those who are at ease of the contempt of the proud that is their lament the grief they pour out to the living God consider the impact of contempt on Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem as they were mocked by their enemies

[37 : 21] Nehemiah chapter 4 now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall he was angry and greatly enraged and he jeered at the Jews and he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria what are these feeble Jews doing will they restore it for themselves will they sacrifice will they finish up in a day will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish and burned ones at that you just hear all the sarcasm Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him and he said yes what they are building if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall hear oh God for we are despised turn back their taunt on their own heads and give them up to be plundered in a land where they are captives do not cover their guilt let not their sin be blotted out from your sight for they have provoked you to anger in the presence of the builders the grief the pain

Nehemiah feels and the people of Judah what effect might this respectable sin have on those who are weak and poor and lowly and despised one psychologist explains the damage that contempt can do here is what it does the despised person understands that nothing is expected from him looks or derogatory comments aimed at showing him that for us he is nobody this leads to a decrease in self-confidence and a sense of incompetence when treated as someone inferior he can begin to feel like someone inferior that generates a self-fulfilling prophecy these people not only lose confidence in themselves but also lose the ability to self-regulate their emotions and behaviors which will lead to new conflicts as they are more likely to break the rules finally if nobody cares about me it doesn't matter what I do that's the thought that he's established in his mind contempt will drive a person to despair that is not merely the invention of modern psychology that is not merely some sort of victim mentality it is the clear teaching of scripture consider the words of Psalm 69 you know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor my foes are all known to you reproaches have broken my heart so that I am in despair

I looked for pity but there was none and for comforters but I found none contempt for our inferiors has a terrible impact on them perhaps it has had a terrible impact on you consider too that our superiors are also affected by our contempt towards them perhaps we think oh they are the ones in a position of power and authority they are the privileged ones so who cares they are impervious I can't affect them so I will just show contempt towards them your superiors are not impervious to our tactics of contempt as a pastor I recognize that I am in a position of authority and believe me being on the receiving end of contempt never fails to cut me deep

I wonder how the apostle Paul must have felt when he heard the ridicule being directed toward him that ridicule that he describes in 2nd Corinthians chapter 10 for they say his letters are weighty and strong but his bodily presence is weak and his speech of no account imagine how he must have felt when he heard the report that that is what people in his church were saying about him even David though he was king suffered contempt and he lamented to God over the contempt he received from others in Psalm 22 he writes about the worthlessness even someone in as high position as he is would feel worthless when he was mocked he says I am a worm and not a man scorned by mankind and despised by the people all who see me mock me they make mouths in me they wag their heads he trusts in the

Lord let him deliver him let him rescue him for he delights in him contempt for our superiors has a terrible impact on them too perhaps in your status as a parent as a business leader as an elder or ministry leader perhaps it's had a terrible impact on you and let us consider finally that we've gathered here today to honor Jesus Christ as Lord but it was Jesus Christ who suffered the deepest contempt that any human being ever endured when considered that he left his throne and his kingly crown when he came to earth and though he was fully God worthy of all worship and adoration and though he was a perfect sinless wonderful man he descended to the place of lowest shame

[43 : 08] Isaiah chapter 53 we read this prophecy about him he was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and is one from whom men hide their faces he was despised and we esteemed him not consider the final hours of his life go in your mind's eye go to Gethsemane see that he is surrounded by a mob of armed guards they have come to arrest him as though he were nothing but a common criminal Jesus said to them have you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs to capture me come and see how he is dragged before the Sanhedrin all the physical tactics of contempt are used against him some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him saying to him prophesy and the guards received him with blows now the men who were holding

Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him they also blindfolded him and kept asking him prophesy who is it that struck you and they said many other things against him blaspheming him come and see how he is brought before King Herod and then before a battalion of Roman soldiers who unleash on this man every tactic of contempt they have ever gathered Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him then arraying him in splendid clothing he sent him back to Pilate and the soldiers led him away inside the palace that is the governor's headquarters and they called together the whole battalion and they clothed him in a purple cloak and twisting together a crown of thorns they put it on him and they began to salute him hail king of the

Jews and they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him and when they had mocked him they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him and they led him out to crucify him consider how he was subjected to the ultimate form of contempt people have suffered greater physical pain than is experienced in a crucifixion but there is no greater form of contempt that has ever been invented than crucifixion on a Roman cross hear how they stripped his clothes from him and put him on public display and spoke of him as he suffered in agony they crucified him and divided his garments among them casting lots for them to decide what each should take and it was the third hour when they crucified him and the inscription of the charge against him read the king of the

Jews and with him they crucified two robbers one on his right and one on his left and those who passed by derided him wagging their heads and saying aha you who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days save yourself come down from the cross so also the chief priest with the scribes mocked him to one another saying he saved others he cannot save himself let the christ the king of israel come down now from the cross that we may see and believe those who were crucified with him also reviled him at this lowest point Jesus Jesus was the object of the world's contempt so that even the criminals on either side of them themselves being crucified themselves in the lowest place of contempt even they considered him to be lower speaking to him with this respectable sin of contempt shall we ever harbor contempt in our hearts when it is contempt that broke the heart of christ consider then there is hope there is hope for you who are guilty of contempt and there is hope for you who have suffered contempt from others because the contempt that

Jesus suffered is brought to an end in Acts chapter 4 we read these words that his apostles spoke to the authorities who crucified him they said this Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you the builders which has become the cornerstone he is seated at the right hand of the throne of God crowned with glory and honor no more contempt for our Lord next week we will learn we will explore this more we will learn about the deep heart problems what is it about our hearts that we hold on to contempt when it is so awful why do we justify it what's going on in our hearts we will learn about what the Lord plans to do with those who show contempt and we will learn how the

[49 : 28] Lord calls us to respond whether we ourselves are guilty of contempt how the Lord calls us to respond when we have received contempt but I want to let you know that right now we know that at the cross the Lord Jesus Christ has fully and finally dealt with contempt once and for all we live in a world that does not know what to do with contempt that is buried in contempt that is generating contempt at an incredible degree there is no freedom from contempt in our world but at the cross our Lord has done what we could never do he is crucified contempt and it will be removed for all time from his kingdom and so there is no more contempt for those who are in Christ Jesus there is coming a day when you who believe in him and have put your faith in him will be utterly free from contempt our God and our father we long for that day we thank you that because our

Lord Jesus Christ took the penalty for our sin and our contempt we ourselves have been set free from the penalty of this most respectable of sins God I thank you that through the work of your Holy Spirit you are freeing us from the power of contempt over us it's power to come out in our words our actions you are freeing us from its power over us from others and Lord we ache for the day when you will rid us from the presence of contempt Lord Jesus come soon we cannot rescue ourselves from it we live in a culture that the more it tries to remove contempt the deeper it sinks into it we are at your mercy

Lord have mercy upon us oh God have mercy upon us for you've had more than enough of contempt we look to you and we look to you with hope because you are the God who grants glory and honor to your son Jesus Christ to all who call in his name amen