

The God Who Is

Jesus, Our Substitute on the Cross

John 19:1-30

Background

In this passage from John's gospel, we will be looking at the final hours of Jesus' earthly life. He has already said good-bye to His disciples, been betrayed by Judas, captured by the Roman guard, and spent all night being attacked in illegal judicial proceedings. His friends have abandoned him. He has been beaten. He is, no doubt, worn out. But now the day has broken, and the only thing left before Him is the cross. The Apostle John gives us an intimate look into the events surrounding the greatest sacrifice ever made.

Read John 19:1 -30

Contrast Pilate with Jesus in this passage. Who seems more under control? Who seems to be truly in charge? Why do you think this is?

The title Pilate puts over Jesus' head on the cross (vv.19-20) were meant to be sarcastic. How does it become ironic instead?

While on the cross, Jesus is recorded saying seven different things. Three of these sayings are recorded in John's gospel. First, in vv.26-27, Jesus says to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to "the disciple whom He loved" He said, "Here is your mother." What did he mean by this? What does this show you about Jesus? [Bonus question: Do you remember who "the disciple whom Jesus loved" is?]

Next Jesus says, "I am thirsty." Why does He say this (v.28)?

The Old Testament contains hundreds of prophecies concerning the life of Jesus, all written hundreds of years before His birth. There are over 30 just about His death! (For two other prophecies about Jesus' death that are fulfilled in John 19, read vv. 23-24 and 31-37.) Why are the prophecies (and their fulfillment) important? What do they say about God?

Speaking of the Old Testament, the death of Christ took place during the time of the Jewish, Old Testament Feast of the Passover. What is the significance of this?

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Lastly, Jesus said, “It is finished.” (v.30) What was finished? Why did He say that?

What exactly was Jesus accused of and found guilty of? (v.7)

The religious leaders of the day had been following Jesus around the clock for months, trying to catch Him in the act of a sin, and trying to trip Him up with tricky questions. After all that time, this “sin” was the only thing they could find Jesus guilty of. If someone followed you around 24 hours a day for a couple of years, what kind of things would you be found guilty of?” (Think about this quietly for a while—you don’t have to answer out loud!)

Why was it important that a sinless man die on the cross, and not just anybody?

How does it affect you emotionally that Jesus died on the cross in your place?

Passages For Further Study:

Matthew 27

Mark 15

Luke 23

(For a great study, examine all seven of Jesus’ sayings on the cross!)

Colossians 2:13-15

Hebrews 9:15-28;

10:5-14

Questions for personal reflection

1. In 2 Corinthians 5, Paul writes this: “God made Him who had not sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God...Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.” How does this passage affect you?

2. Take time to thank God for the gift of His Son, who was killed for you.

“There is a God we want, and there is a God who is—and they are not the same God.

The turning point of our lives is when we stop seeking the God we want and start seeking the God who is.”

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