

A wooden cross is positioned vertically on the left side of the image, extending from the top to the bottom. The background is a soft-focus sky with light, wispy clouds. The text is overlaid on the right side of the cross.

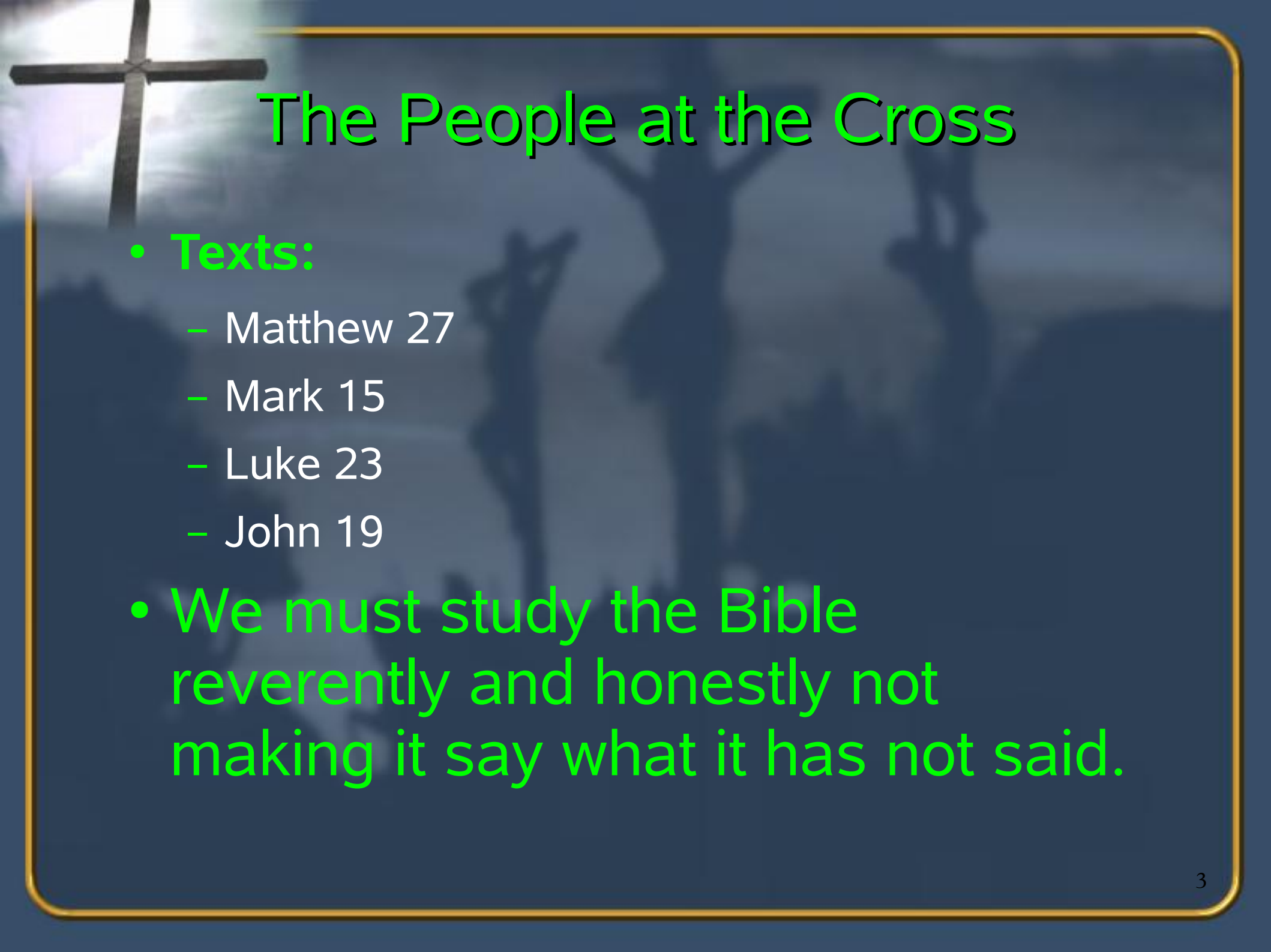
*The
Agony
& Glory
of
the Cross*

by Charles B. Hodge, Jr.¹

The People at the Cross



The People at
the Cross



The People at the Cross

- **Texts:**

- Matthew 27
- Mark 15
- Luke 23
- John 19

- **We must study the Bible reverently and honestly not making it say what it has not said.**

The People at the Cross



Some Who were
ABSENT



Some Who Were ABSENT

THE APOSTLES

- Eleven of the twelve apostles were not seen at the cross—only John was there.
- The apostles simply fled (Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:56; Mark 14:50).
- Even though they didn't show up at the cross, Jesus forgave them. . . .and us!



Some Who Were ABSENT

MARY, MARTHA & LAZARUS

- Jesus loved them (John 11:5).
- These three are not mentioned as being at the cross, at the tomb, or in the upper room (Acts 1:13, 14).
- Had these three already been hurt too much (John 11:1–44)?
- Was it too risky to stay with Him?



Some Who Were ABSENT

PHYSICAL BROTHERS of Jesus

- They were in the upper room in Acts 1, but they were not at their mother's side at the cross.
- John stood there, but they didn't (John 19:25–27).



Some Who Were ABSENT

BARABBAS

- We would call him a terrorist (John 18:39, 40).
- Pilate was shocked that the Jews chose to release Barabbas rather than Jesus (Matthew 27:15–22; Mark 15:6–13).
- *What do you think Barabbas should have done?*



Some Who Were ABSENT

OTHERS HEALED by Jesus

- *Were they there?*
- *Were the people of Nazareth there?*
- *Were they too embarrassed or too ashamed to be present?*



Some Who Were ABSENT

MALCHUS

- God in His Bible gave nearly as much space to Malchus as to the initial creation of things (see John 18:1–11).
- Jesus’ “motley crew” had two swords (Luke 22:38) and Peter used one to lop off Malchus' right ear (John 18:3-8).
- Caiaphas, the high priest and Malchus’ master, had to see that ear every day.



Some Who Were ABSENT

JUDAS ISCARIOT

- His name is synonymous with “traitor.”
- Jesus allowed Judas to approach Him, and even kiss Him (Luke 22:47, 48).
- Through all of the arrest, Jesus was saying in several different ways, “*Don’t do this—run, Judas, run.*”
- The only conclusion we can draw from this is that **Judas** was a *successful hypocrite*.



Some Who Were ABSENT

JUDAS ISCARIOT

- The other apostles said, “*Is it I?*” not “*It is Judas*” (Matthew 26:21–25).
- Judas had taken the “morsel” (John 13:21–26) but the other apostles didn't know.
- Jesus knew that Judas had allowed the devil to enter his heart, and He called him the “son of perdition” (John 17:12).
- John later said that Judas, the trusted treasurer, was a crook and had stolen from the apostles' money bag (see John 12:1–6).



Some Who Were ABSENT

JUDAS ISCARIOT

- Satan “entered” Judas (Luke 22:3; John 13:2).
- Jesus told Judas as he moved toward his terrible deed to “act quickly” (John 13:26–30).



Some Who Were ABSENT

JUDAS WAS BLESSED

- He was with Jesus for three years & had special privileges, yet he failed to benefit from them.
- He could not *learn*; he could not *admit error*; he could not *repent*.
- To be blunt, Judas could not *accept Jesus' grace*.
- Peter could! Judas had *regret from* pride, not *repentance through* grace.



Some Who Were ABSENT

JUDAS WAS WARNED

- Months before the betrayal, Jesus said, “Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?” (John 6:70).
- Judas feared life more than death.
- He committed suicide—a *permanent solution to a temporary problem*.



Some Who Were ABSENT

JUDAS ISCARIOT

- What is the lesson for us?
- If Jesus cannot save all, neither can we!
- Jesus summed it up tersely: “It would have been good for that man if he had not been born” (Matthew 26:24b).

The People at the Cross



Some Who were
PRESENT



Some Who Were PRESENT

THE WOMEN

- Sympathetic, heartbroken women (Luke 23:27–31) wept for Jesus; but, Jesus warned them to weep for themselves because Judgment was coming to Jerusalem (A.D. 67–70).
- Mary, the mother of Jesus
- Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9)
- Mary, the mother of James and Joses (Mark 15:40).



Some Who Were PRESENT

THE WOMEN

- **Salome, the mother of James and John** (Luke 24:10; 8:3)
- **Joanna** (Luke 24:10; 8:3).
- **The women from Galilee** (John 19:25; Matthew 27:56; Mark 15:40–47; Luke 23:49, 55, 56; 23:27–31).



Some Who Were PRESENT

SIMON OF CYRENE (Matthew 27:32;
Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26).

- When the humanity of Jesus failed, Simon was there.
- Mark said Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21).
- He may have been the father of the Rufus whom Paul mentioned in Romans 16:13.



Some Who Were PRESENT

SIMON OF CYRENE

- Many identify him as a Christian prophet who is named as Simeon in Acts 13:1.
- There were Cyrenians in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:10).
 - There were preachers from Cyrene (Acts 11:20).
 - Prophets from Cyrene called by God to start mission work (Acts 13:1–4).
 - Did Simon later become a Christian and teach his sons to be Christians?



Some Who Were PRESENT

THIEF on the CROSS (Luke 23:39–43).

- The thief was saved.
- Some cry, *“The thief was too bad, too fallen, too late, and too far gone.”*
 - While on earth, Jesus had the power to forgive sin (Matthew 9:4–6; Mark 2:8–11; Luke 5:23, 24).
- *“But he did nothing,”* you say.
 - He did what he could.
 - He confessed faith, rebuked sin, defended Jesus!



Some Who Were PRESENT

- *“He was saved without baptism,” you say.*
 - No one knows whether or not the thief was baptized, since “all Judea” obeyed John the Baptist’s baptism (Matthew 3:4–6; Mark 1:4, 5).
 - Religious folk rejected both John and his baptism (Luke 7:29, 30).
 - Publicans & harlots accepted John’s baptism.
 - Jesus and His apostles, later, were baptizing more people than John was (John 4:1, 2).
 - John thundered out at the Pharisees and the Sadducees because of their rejection of his baptism (Matthew 3:7–12).



Some Who Were PRESENT

- The thief died under the law of Moses, but we live under the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2).
- When the thief died, Jesus had not been raised from the dead; He had not given His Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20; Mk 16:15, 16).
- At this time, the Holy Spirit had not come; people had not been commanded to be *baptized* to become Christians.
- The church had not been established. (*That happened on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:36, 37.*)



Some Who Were PRESENT

THE CROWDS (Matt 26:65–68; Mk 14:64, 65; 15:29–36).

- Gawkers walked by, watching & ridiculing those being crucified as a blood sport.
- Experiments were encouraged:
 - “Come down. . . .”
 - “Stay put. . . .”
 - “Give Him some cheap vinegar. . . .”
 - “Maybe Elijah will come!”
 - What a SHOW!



Some Who Were PRESENT

THE CROWDS

- Today, the world is filled with protesters but where were they when Jesus needed them?
- “His blood shall be on us and on our children!” the crowd had cried (Matthew 27:25).



Some Who Were PRESENT

THE ENEMIES

- With pride they said, “*We took care of that!*”
- They thought they had won their victory *through Rome.*
- Little did they realize that God would destroy *them through Rome in AD 70.*



Some Who Were PRESENT

ROMAN SOLDIERS

- Barbaric events demand barbaric people.
- They mocked Jesus (Matt 20:17–19; 27:27–31; Mk 10:32–34; 15:16–20; Lk 18:31–34; Jn 19:1–6).
- They beat Jesus.
- They crucified Jesus.
- They gambled for His clothes (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; John 19:23, 24).



Some Who Were PRESENT

ROMAN SOLDIERS

- However, one Roman centurion watched intently and spoke truly, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54; see Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47).
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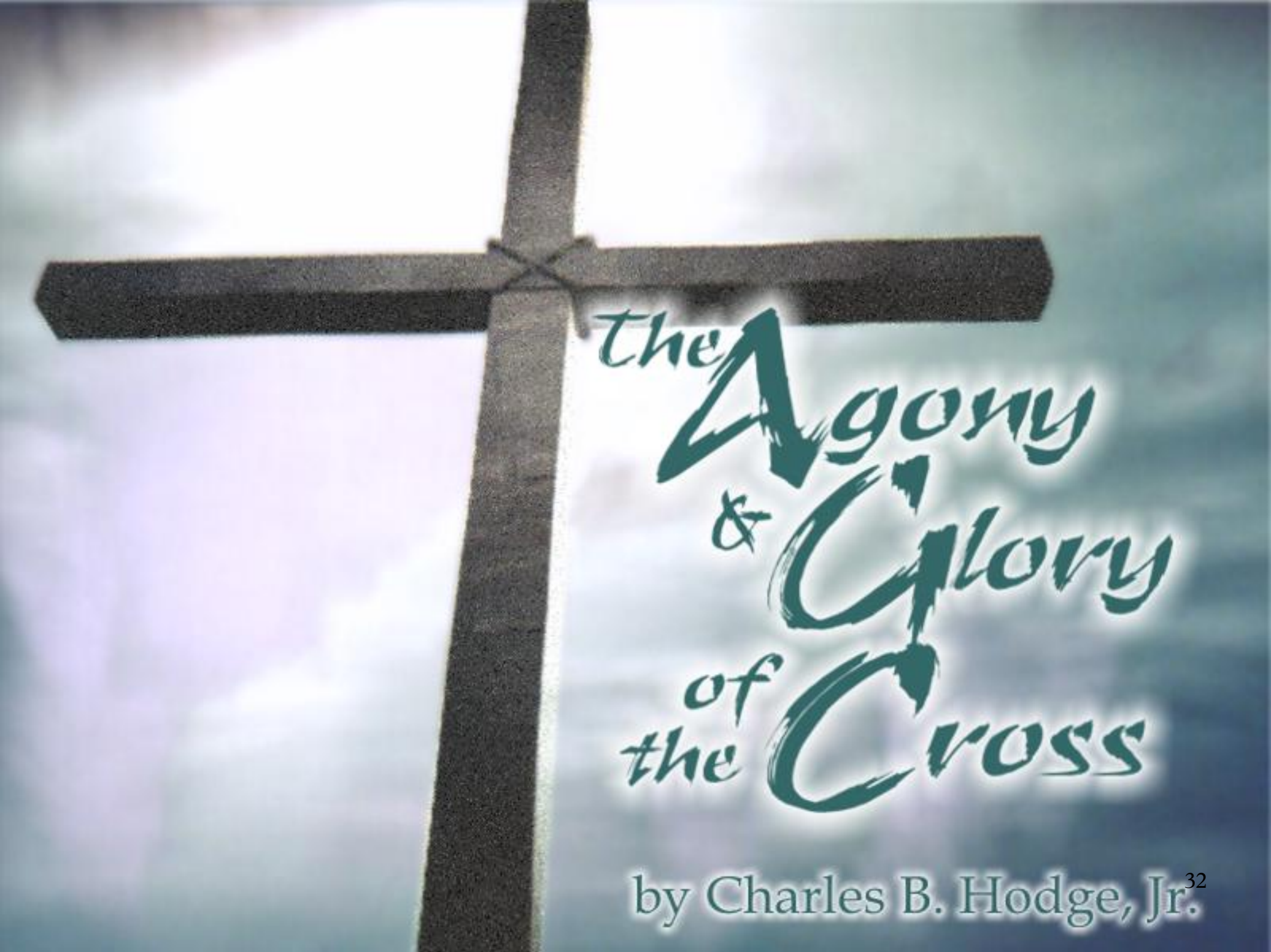


DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who was noticeably absent from the cross when Jesus was crucified? Why?
- According to the Scriptures, how should we view Judas' role in betraying Jesus?
- Consider those who were at the cross. Why were they there? What relationships did they have with Jesus? How did the crucifixion impact them?
- Discuss the thief on the cross who was saved. How are we like him? How was his situation different than ours concerning salvation?

A large, dark wooden cross is the central focus, set against a background of a cloudy sky. The cross is made of two thick, weathered wooden beams. The text is overlaid on the right side of the cross.

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