

# The Death of Jesus

Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37;  
Luke 23:46; John 19:30

*“And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ Having said this, He breathed His last” (Luke 23:46).*

What does Christianity have that other religions do not and cannot have? Jesus Christ and His cross! We cannot fully understand the cross until we stand under it. God cannot and will not save man apart from Christ and His cross.

If His cross was necessary, so is ours. For those who live in Christ, the judgment is already past. To those outside salvation, the judgment is yet to come. God has given us Jesus; we give Jesus back to God through Christlike living. Jesus was not on the cross for just six hours; He was on that cross for thirty-three years. Likewise, our salvation is not for a moment, but for a crucified lifetime.

Some speak of “cheap grace,” but there is no “cheap grace.” God’s grace comes to us only through our obedient faith. Grace does not overlook, evade, forget, or repeal God’s truth, wrath, or punishment. Grace absorbs the price, penalty, and punishment for sin. Every impenitent sinner and every sin is punished—either in Christ or in hell. The only thing Christ gives out is crosses; the only thing the church has to give out is crosses. The church, sadly, is trying to give out everything except crosses. Everything of God is in Christ, not out of Christ.

## Jesus Died

God, being God, cannot die—yet Jesus died! Concerning His death, we must know that He died and why He died (for our sins). Scholars are more interested in how He died. We know that Pilate was shocked at how quickly Jesus died (Mark 15:44). Still, he did not doubt that He was dead. The other two being crucified had to have their legs broken to bring their deaths (John 19:31–34). The Holy Spirit thought this was good information for us. Otherwise, it would not be part of the Scriptures. The Bible never says that Christ lived for us or worked for us, but the Bible emphatically declares that Jesus died for us. The cross provides God’s answer to the problem of sin.

Some think Jesus died from exhaustion. He had been put through a grueling experience. He had been deprived of sleep, barely fed, and brutalized in both Jewish and Roman trials. One scholar concluded that Jesus had walked 2.6 miles during these trials. Do not forget the harsh scourging. Exhausted, Jesus was unable to carry His cross. He chose when He would die, and He chose when to be resurrected. Jesus had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it back (John 10:15–18). Jesus had control over His own execution. Having said, “It is finished!”—having met God’s total demand—Jesus bowed His head and gave up His spirit (John 19:30).

Others think Jesus died from a broken heart. He was physically depleted. He was emotionally drained. His greatest agony was in Gethsemane. Luke tells us that His sweat became like drops of blood (Luke 22:44). Such is a rare phenomenon (called hematidrosis or hemohidrosis). Jesus was to receive God’s holy anger poured out upon Him. One apostle had betrayed Him, another apostle had denied Him, and the remaining apostles had deserted Him. Humanly speaking, Jesus had been left alone. “He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11). He was crucified in God’s chosen city, Jerusalem. Jesus even rejected the mild analgesic offered early in the crucifixion process (Matthew 27:34).

Still others think Jesus died from a ruptured heart. His quick death does indicate a catastrophic terminal event. He was crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5). Few men were more mistreated than Jesus. Whether He died of cardiac rupture or of cardiopulmonary failure, the vital fact is that He died,

not how He died. Roman guards did not leave their victims until they were sure death had occurred. Jesus died!

### **Jesus Died for Me**

Pilate would not have released the body for burial unless he was sure Jesus was dead (Luke 23:50–56). He never doubted that Jesus was dead. That Jesus died is historical (abstract). That Jesus died for me is personal (salvational). It is not enough to believe that Jesus died; I must believe that Jesus died for me! Everything Jesus did on the cross, He did for me! This is the gospel. Hear it! Believe it! Obey it (2 Thessalonians 1:8)! Preach it (Mark 16:15, 16)! God loves me! God wants me (John 3:16)! Sing it. . . . Shout it. . . . “I have a Savior!” The US has the Declaration of Independence; Christians have the Declaration of Dependence. Salvation is not something you do; it is Someone you receive (Matthew 11:28–30).

I have been saved.  
I am being saved.  
I will be saved.

Remember this: Preach the gospel to yourself every day. It took a cross to save us; it takes a cross to keep us saved. Ponder the sovereignty of grace.

You cannot earn grace—it is a gift.  
You cannot buy grace—it is not for sale.  
You cannot merit grace—it is unmerited.  
You cannot repay grace—it creates no debt.  
Grace changes everything—it brings salvation!

Jesus died for my sins (1 Corinthians 15:1–4)! A little girl heard a sermon on the cross. She told the preacher, “You must love Him more than anything else in the world, since He’s done all that for you.” Yes, we do!

Unmerited love is not unconditional; sinners cannot be saved remaining in the “far country” (Luke 15; KJV). Salvation is not by works of merit, yet Christian love is expressed in good works (Ephesians 2:8–10). Authentic love makes demands; its conditions are not for the childish. Christianity is a gift, not a bargain. It cost Jesus His life; it will cost us ours. Grace is not a genie in a bottle; grace is a cross. Discipleship comes with an awesome price—your life. One thing that Jesus did not say on the cross is “Mine.”

Who crucified Christ? I did! Who nailed Jesus to the cross? I did! We cannot understand what Christ did for us until we grasp what we did to cause it! Sin is eternal and heinous; it separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1–3). Christ did for us what we could not do. Apart from Christ, we can only die in our sins. Peter accused his audience of murdering Christ (Acts 2:22–36). They had done that physically; we have done it spiritually. We must grasp the depth of sin to accept the glory of grace. If people have not been converted to Christ, they may think they have tried Christianity and failed; in reality, they have not tried it at all. To give yourself and your children a future, give them a cross. The crucifixion explains the creation! We should remind ourselves, “Because of me it had to be.”

*The cross . . .  
there is no other way!*