

“Serve The King”

Scripture: John 19:16-30

16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus, **17** and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. **18** There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. **19** Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” **20** Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. **21** So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” **22** Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, **24** so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

“They divided my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, **25** but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. **26** When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “**Woman, behold, your son!**” **27** Then he said to the disciple, “**Behold, your mother!**” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “**I thirst.**” **29** A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. **30** When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “**It is finished,**” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Gaze upon the crucified Messiah, the King who cares for you

Introduction: The TV series “The Chosen” has an interesting scene which recounts the nation of Israel in the wilderness during the plague of the snakes. The people were being bitten by snakes and were dying.

“The Chosen” used creativity to show what might have happened behind the scenes. They had a conversation played out by actors portraying Moses and Joshua. Moses was building the bronze snake in the tent and Joshua came in.

Joshua was upset. People were being bitten; people were dying. He confronted Moses about making the serpent, when Moses told him that this is what the Lord had commanded. Still, Joshua could not make any sense out of it.

We can see that perspective. People are dying from snake bites. Why put a snake on a pole for people to look at? What will that do? How will that help?

Jesus said that just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up. (John 3.14) Again, we might wonder, “Why? What is God up to that His Son, the Lord Jesus, would be lifted up to die on the cross?”

But just as those who gazed upon the bronze serpent lived, so all who look to Jesus as Savior and Lord will live spiritually. There is nothing in the world that we need more than to

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We have reached the account of the crucifixion. In these verses, John describes how the Lord Jesus was put to death. He refers to or alludes to the Old Testament a few times, but He also includes parts of the story to help you and me to integrate this account deeply into our hearts. First,

- **Gaze upon the crucified Messiah**

- John alludes to or directly mentions a number of Old Testament Scriptures in this passage.

- The first is that Jesus went out. We read more about this in Hebrews 13: “11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. 12 So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. 13 Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.”
 - In the Old Testament, the camp was kept clean. So, if someone was unclean, had leprosy, was executed, or relieved him/herself he or she would go outside the camp.
 - The sin offerings, after they were offered, were burnt outside the camp.
 - Jesus went outside of the camp, outside the city, which John mentions, though only in passing. He became sin. He became unclean. He took what we were (defiled) and what we deserved (death) upon Himself.
- John writes that Jesus was crucified. Crucifixion was a terrible way to die and was reserved for the worst of criminals. Deuteronomy 21 says 22 “And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23 his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.”
 - The man who was hanged was so accursed by God that if his body remained all night it would defile the land. Jesus became the curse for you and for me.
 - Then John refers directly to prophecy. The soldiers divided Jesus’ garment into four parts, but cast lots for His tunic. This is a fulfillment of Psalm 22, written about 1,000 years before Jesus: “16 For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet— 17 I can count all my

bones— they stare and gloat over me; 18 they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

- Finally, just before Jesus died He said, “I thirst”, and was given sour wine to drink. Again from Psalm 22: “14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; 15 my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.” Of course Jesus didn’t have to say He was thirsty to make it so. He was thirsty. But by saying it He was given wine to drink, the latter part of Psalm 69:21 was fulfilled - “21b and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.”
- **Application:** John writes at the end of his Gospel a sort of purpose statement of his book, “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” (20.31) So it is with these Old Testament allusions and prophecies. He is showing that in the death of Jesus Christ all the prophecies came true, and that we can trust all of our life and our eternity on the person and work of Jesus Christ. But there is more here. We are challenged to

- **Make Jesus your King**

- In the midst of these four allusions and prophecies, John gives about half of this account to two episodes. The first is the inscription.
- Pilate wrote, “The King of the Jews”, but many people wanted the charge against Jesus to say, “He claimed to be the King of the Jews”.
 - Even while He was walking to Golgotha with the cross; being nailed to the cross; and suffering incredible, unimaginable pain and incredible thirst, Jesus is still King.
 - **Application:** Jesus commanded His followers to take up their cross and to follow Him. He has invited you to become His bondservant, doing His bidding, dying to self. But He is not asking you to do anything that He was not willing to do Himself.
 - Are you hesitant to boldly speak the name of Jesus because of how others will respond, or think of you? Take up your cross, follow Him, die to self. He is King.
 - Are you unwilling to give up a sin, so unwilling that your heart has become hardened and you don’t even notice it anymore? It might be pride, looking down on others. It might be lust, and looking at pornography. It might be gluttony, eating more than you need. Take up your cross, follow Him, die to self. He is King.
 - Are you frustrated with living through this pandemic? Just waiting until things resume somewhat normally, whatever that may be? Do you look down on those who don’t want to wear a face mask, angered by what you would call a lack of caring for others? Do you look down on those who do wear a face mask, questioning their faith in God and in His plan? Humbly, take up your cross, follow Him, die to self. He is King.
 - Let Him lead and guide and direct. Don’t rebel against Him. We’re going to continue to experience living in this pandemic, unless God does

something drastic, for months, maybe even for another year or more.

This isn't wasted time; He is at work. He wants to work in you. Take up your cross, follow Him, die to self. He is King.

- The second episode concerns Jesus, when He gives His mother to John's care. From it we are challenged to

- **Know He cares for you**
 - When Jesus noticed His mother, Mary, and the disciple whom He loved (traditionally understood as the apostle John, the writer of this Gospel) said, "**Woman, behold your son.**" And to John, "**Behold your mother.**" John immediately took Mary into his home and cared for her.
 - See the tender love and care of the Lord Jesus. He was suffering spiritually, more than we can ever imagine. The perfect and sinless Lamb of God took on all of our sin. He was suffering bitter agony in His body, pain beyond what most of us will ever experience in our lifetime. Suffering emotionally and relationally, having been abandoned by most of the disciples. And in the midst of the pain and the suffering He sees Mary, He loves her, and He cares for her.
 - Mary would not have been important in the scheme of the Roman Empire or in Israel. As a woman, probably in her 40s or 50s and a widow, she would not have been important in society. And of course, she is the mother of Jesus, but I think there is more than that here. Jesus sees not only His mother, but a dear sister who believed in Him and followed hard after God, and a wonderful woman, and He cares for her.
 - **Application:** This, I believe, gives great hope to us. Imagine standing there, looking up at Jesus on the cross. Imagine Him looking at you, and know that as He cared for Mary, He cares for you.
 - Maybe you feel insignificant, unloved, invisible, unimportant, or glossed over. Not to Jesus. He sees and He cares. You might be frustrated that your voice is not heard or heeded. Know that Jesus cares for you.
 - Whatever struggle you are going through, however you are processing the COVID-19 experience, whatever problem you are having - a relational problem? A financial hardship? A long-enduring struggle with sin? Discontentment? Know that Jesus sees, that He knows, and that He cares.
 - Allow this truth, that He cares, to encourage you as you heed the call of Jesus, to take up your cross, to follow Him, and to die to self. He isn't just ordering us around. He is inviting us to die, so that we might live. To give up, so that we might gain. Because He loves us.

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If you don't know Jesus today, believe on Him. Receive Him as your Lord and King. Turn from your sin and trust Him and Him alone for life.

See Him as your King. Give Him the reins of your life. Let go, and let God.

Know that He cares for you. Know that He sees you, He knows all about our struggles, and He cares. His love is beyond anything we can imagine.

Amen.

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