

**Luke 23: “44 Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. 46 And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'” Having said this, He breathed His last. 47 So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" 48 And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. 49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.”**

# **"Jesus Was Dead"**

**Today we come to the second of three sermons where we consider three simple words describing Jesus...**

- **Crucified, dead & buried.**

**Three simple words that we confess in the Apostle’s Creed. In the second portion of this historic creed we confess what we believe about Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of the Father. Confronting ancient Greek confusion about what is real, the Creed stresses the fact that Jesus was a real person in history... Something we must always stress today as well!**

**We confess that Jesus was born to a real mother named Mary; that He suffered under a real Roman Governor; & we later confess that He was resurrected and ascended to the Father’s right hand where He reigns and will come as the just judge of all. And there right in the middle are the three simple words that we are studying as part of our journey through Luke’s Gospel...**

**Crucified, Dead & Buried**

**Words that assure us that the penalty for our sins has been paid, that the wrath of God has been propitiated. Jesus came to save His people from their sins... AND HE DID!**

**Luke presents the simplest account of these final hours, but he clearly shows that Jesus was crucified dead and buried.**

- **We are focusing on the meaning of these simple words in these three messages and prayfully we will never allow ourselves to confess them casually!**

**Last week we saw how Jesus was crucified...**

- **The Old Testament and Jesus foretold how all this must happen, and in great detail**
- **Paul proclaims the cross as the power of God to confront both the Jews and the Gentiles.**

**What we will see this week is that all of the Gospels present the crucifixion of Jesus as a real crucifixion by clearly showing that Jesus was dead...Just as we confess.**

**Once again I have included the parallel accounts and while they all vary in details, they are united in telling us that Jesus died.**

**Another way to consider the importance of this is to say we are answering that great question asked in many American churches today...**

- **What would Jesus do?**

**It is in books and on jewelry and folks usually are focused on pretty trivial stuff...**

- **However, the Bible does answer the question in Romans 5 where Paul declares:**

**“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”**

**Luke in his orderly account has stressed that Jesus came to save His people from their sins and now confirms that He was willing to give His life to do so. The promise that God gave to Adam & Eve right after their fall into sin is fulfilled by His own Son on this cross: As Paul goes on to declare...**

**“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.”**

**That obedience meant going to the cross and dying as Paul explained to the Saints at Philippi...**

- **I want to consider Philippians 2 as we ponder this morning the mystery of God dying.**

**The whole point of the W.W.J.D campaign is to help Christians make the right choices, and Paul is focused on the same thing in this Epistle: In Chapter one he has rejoiced in their faith, told them not to stress about his persecution and challenged them to have conduct worthy of the Gospel of Christ... And that leads to the ‘therefore’ that begins chapter two:**

**Philippians 2:1 “Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”**

- **Paul wants the Philippians, and us, to be likeminded and it is to result in some practical living:**

**3 “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”**

- **We are to love our neighbors as ourselves... But where is this attitude to come from?**

**5 “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”**

- **Jesus puts others first and now He enjoys His victory...**

**9 “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

- **The Holy Spirit through Paul proclaims and glorifies the Son as Jesus said He would...**

-- **He declares that He is the Son of God, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity equal to the Father & the Spirit**

-- **He proclaims that He came as a REAL man who was willing to give His life on the cross**

-- **And He proclaims that this submission has won Him the victory**

- **As a result, every knee shall bow and tongue confess that Jesus is Lord!**

**We as creatures will never be able to fully understand the mystery of Jesus having two natures: How Jesus could be fully God & fully Man...**

- **But, we can certainly confess this truth and rejoice that He does**

- **Here at the cross we see His two natures most clearly**

The synoptic Gospel writers all tell us that as the death of God's Son approaches, the earth grows dark for three hours at the brightest point of the day... *[noon to three]*

The reference to the whole earth could mean the land of Israel as it does often in the Old Testament, but Luke says the sun was darkened which would imply an even broader event.

The important thing to remember is that whether local or universal it was a miraculous event...

People search in vain to find a "natural" explanation...

Like an eclipse which cannot happen when the moon is full as it is at Passover, nor could an eclipse last for three hours!

The Gospel writers also note earthquakes so what you have is the entire creation: The heavens and the earth reacting to the suffering and impending death of their creator!

- We should also see this as a judgment against the unbelief of God's people...

Darkness has fallen over the land as it did the land of Egypt when God poured out His judgment on Pharaoh. Matthew tells us that one result of the earthquakes was the opening of many tombs which would allow faithful Old Testament Saints to enter Jerusalem to demonstrate the power of God's victory after the resurrection of Jesus

- Heaven & earth, as well as the faithful Saints who have gone before bear witness to the fulfillment of Psalm 22 that we studied last week!

AND it is important to remember that God is still in control, even with Jesus here on the cross facing death. Jesus had declared to the religious leaders in John 10: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." Jesus then goes on to explain the power of His Sonship in verse 17: "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. "

- At this point, the Jewish leaders were very proud of the fact that they had convicted Jesus and demanded that Pilate put Him to death...
- Pilate washed his hands of the matter, but it was his order the soldiers were carrying out
- Roman soldiers had mocked and beaten Jesus, gambled for his cloths and now waited for their work to bring His death...

However, the truth that Jesus proclaimed to Pilate applies just as well to all of them...

- They had no power that was not granted to them by His Father
- AND even with all their efforts it would still be Jesus who laid down His life after the wrath of God had been fully propitiated

All of Adam's race must die because they are under sin and there is NOTHING they can do to avoid, delay or advance our appointed time

It was not so with the Son of God

He was not forced to die, even with all that had been done to Him.

- Jesus would lay down His life for the sheep as He promised...
- And this is what we clearly see in each of the Gospel accounts:

**Matthew says, “Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His Spirit”**

**Mark says, “Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.”**

**John says, “So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” and bowing His head, He gave up His Spirit.”**

**And it is Luke who shows us this most clearly when he gives us the words that Jesus uttered after He had cried “It is finished:”**

- **“And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, ‘Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit.’ Having said this He breathed His last.”**

**Amidst the darkness and earthquakes the Son of God proclaims “It is finished” the wrath of God has been fully propitiated. And then He quietly commits His spirit to His Father... And lays down His life as He promised He would**

**From that first promise in the Garden of Eden until the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus at the end of time, this is the real answer to W.W.J.D....**

- **The answer we proclaim each week here at His Table**
- **And as we saw last week, we proclaim it in all its power!**

**As promised, Jesus has saved His people from their sins**

- **God is now OUR Father and sees in us only the righteousness of His beloved Son**
- **The Seed of the Woman has defeated the seed of the Serpent and his demonic rule over the nations has ended!**
- **The nations now belong to Jesus and His Body the Church!**

**Amidst the darkness & earthquakes of that fateful day we also see this confirmed by something that Luke mentioned back in verse 45...**

- **“and the veil of the Temple was torn in two.”**

**The sin of Adam separated him and all his heirs from the presence of God This is seen and clearly demonstrated with the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and the Temple:**

- **NO ONE could enter God’s presence except the High Priest and then only once a year with the blood of the sin sacrifice**

**The veil that was torn with the death of Jesus was there to separate God’s people from God’s presence... There was a wall of separation because of sin AND the veil was there to protect them from God’s righteous judgment. BUT now Jesus has saved His people from their sins and they can boldly enter God’s presence... [Explain the veil and its being torn]**

- **The Temple veil was a powerful reminder of the problem of sin in the Old Testament**
- **Now it’s being rent shows the power of the salvation that Jesus has brought.**

***Your homework can be to read the Book of Hebrews this week with all of this in mind.***

**The writer of the Hebrews fully explains how the tabernacle and the temple were carefully designed to represent the real throne room that Jesus would enter. If we skip ahead just a bit in the story of salvation, John gives us the heavenly view of Christ’s ascension which we find at the end of the Gospel accounts and the beginning of the Book of Acts...**

In Revelation 4, John has been taken to God's throne room where he sees the right worship of God. We see the coming of the victorious Son in chapter five: A victor who has solved the problem of sin and comes as the lamb that was slain...

Revelation 5:1 "And I [John] saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." 6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a **Lamb as though it had been slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

- This is the New Covenant in Christ's Blood as Jesus said to His disciples!

*[Our Covenant Renewal Worship is patterned after Hebrews & Revelation... mention worksheets]*

So here is the answer to that popular question of W.W.J.D. Jesus was crucified, die and buried, so He could be raised in the power of His resurrection and ascend to the right hand of the Father...

Jesus has demonstrated the kind of love and leadership that He now demands from us: We must take up the cross and follow Him, we must be willing to die to self if we are to rightly serve the King of Kings

- The Lion of the tribe of Judah came before His Father as the Lamb that was slain

This is why we should not be ashamed to confess those three simple words about our Savior:

- Jesus was crucified, dead & buried!
- To the world, this sounds like pretty 'bad news.'
- However, as we learned last week, Paul declares the cross as the power of God to defeat the wisdom of this world

The world cannot proclaim such things about their heroes...

Think of all the attention that the King of Pop has gotten these past few weeks, and yet at the end of the day Michael Jackson is dead and buried.

Michael Jackson has no power to raise himself up and his fans must now deny the reality of his death by repeating over and over that he lives as long as they remember him or that his music is eternal!

**This is NOT what we proclaim at this Table about Jesus week after week!**

**We proclaim His death until He comes because He did lay down His life for His sheep and He had the power to take it up again!**

**Jesus had the power to “redeem us to God” by His blood, “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation!”**

**And finally, the reason that we are commissioned after feasting at this Table each week is because He has made us kings & priests to our God**

- **Kings and priests that reign on the earth!**
- **Kings & priests who are to carry out the vision given in Psalm 22 that we studied last week:**

**“All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to Jehovah.**

**And all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the kingdom is Jehovah’s, and He rules over the nations.”**

**Brothers & sisters the Bible makes it very clear what Jesus did...**

- **The proper question we should now be asking is “what does the Lord require of us,” as His priests and kings?**

### **Communion Meditation:**

**Hebrews 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.**