

The Things We Must Believe

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- [0 : 00] Over the time that we have, I'd like to look at this portion of Scripture, and to look at, in particular, the portion from verse 21 to the end of the chapter.
- There is, as you know from this narrative, very little detail specifically about the crucifixion itself. Mark doesn't tell us very much. All that we can see about the crucifixion itself is what we have in verse 24, and when they crucified him, they divided his garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take, and then 25, now it was the third hour and they crucified him.
- But there are many things connected with the crucifixion of Christ to which we must give our attention, because there is much here for us to know and to learn and to believe about the cross of Jesus Christ.
- Things we must believe if we're not saved. Things we must believe if we're not saved. You must believe.
- You must be born again. And for the Christian who knows Christ as their own Saviour, many things that we must know and believe to enable us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
- [1 : 48] Many, if not all, of the things that I'm going to raise are not only necessary for us, but they're also rooted in the Old Testament Scriptures.
- The verses that we sang in Psalm 22 give us a flavour of that. The details surrounding the cross of Christ are rooted and fixed in the Old Testament Scriptures.
- And it reminds us, because we need to be reminded, that the cross of Jesus Christ was always part of the plan of God.
- It was always part of the plan of God. So I want to look quickly at ten details surrounding the cross and to work our way through them quickly.
- Ten details. And to raise some points around these details. The first thing I want to look at is at verse 23.
- [3 : 00] A cup rejected. A cup rejected. Why did they offer him wine mingled with myrrh to drink?
- Why did they offer that to him? You know, as well as I do, I'm sure, that this particular mixture was a crude painkiller to impair the senses.
- And to impair the suffering. It was designed specifically to dull the pain and the misery and the intensity of what the person was suffering.
- There was a sense in which it was almost intoxicating. Intoxicating. Intoxicating. Intoxicating. And why did they offer it to him? Why did he reject it?
- He rejected it because he was drinking another cup. He was drinking another cup. A cup which we read of in chapter 14 and at verse 34.
- [4 : 13] When we read that narrative in the garden of Gethsemane. At verse 23.
- Then he took the cup. And if you read through that whole narrative. From the Lord's Supper and then into Gethsemane.

You see that in Gethsemane he was drinking another cup. My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even to death. Stay here and watch.

Verse 36. Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will.

He was drinking another cup. A cup over which he agonized in the garden. It was the cup of the Father's wrath.

[5 : 16] The cup of condemnation. But the scriptures teach us that he was drinking it consciously. On the cross of Calvary he was drinking it down to the very last drop. At Gethsemane the cup was presented before him.

On the cross he had to drink it all. And he drank it consciously, intentionally and willfully. And nothing could diminish his suffering.

Nothing could diminish his suffering. So when he refuses. When this cup which they gave him to drink.

Wine mingled with mir. When he refuses to drink it. He is saying to you. And to me. I will take the punishment.

[6 : 21] I will take the judgment. I will take the condemnation. I will take it all. In all its fullness.

In all its fullness. And I will take it. In obedience. To the will. Of my Father. A cup.

Rejected. Secondly. A garment. Divided. At verse 24. And when they crucified him. They divided his garments. Casting lots for them to determine.

What every man should take. The Roman soldiers. Divided his garments. He was stripped. And when our Saviour was hanging on the cross.

He was naked. Naked. The epitome. The expression. Of humiliation. And degradation.

[7 : 26] And it drives us back to the Garden of Eden. It drives us back to Adam and Eve. Before the fall. They were naked. But there was no shame.

And humiliation. Because there was no sin. They were in a state of innocence. But we see that that didn't last so long.

We see them after the fall. And they were in a state of sin. After the curse entered in. They were naked.

And were ashamed. Because they were guilty. Guilty. The humiliation. And the shame. Of nakedness.

Here is the Saviour. Bearing our shame. Bearing our humiliation.

[8 : 24] Bearing our guilt. Bearing our curse. But the wonder of it. Is that he was clothed.

With our nakedness. But we. Might be clothed. With his. Righteousness. Is it that.

A wonder. Is it that. A wonder. That. This. Saviour. Should exchange. The glory. Of a heavenly temple.

For the shame. Of a wooden cross. Of a wooden cross. The German theologian.

Krimacher. Writes. This. That. When Adam and Eve. Sinned. And they went to hide. In the garden. At least. They had a tree. To hide behind.

[9 : 23] When Jesus. The son of God. Went to Calvary. He had no tree. Or anything. To hide behind. He was hung on a tree. Hung on a tree.

He was made a public. Display. A public display. Of his. Of. The shame.

And the. Humiliation. And the degradation. Of one. Who was bearing out. Guilt. Bearing out.

Cursed. Cursed. Is everyone. Who hangs. On a tree. On a tree. Bearing out. Shame. And. And. Nakedness.

But. Bearing it. So that we. Might be clothed. With his. Whighteousness. Thirdly. There is a charge.

[10:21] Fixed. To the cross. A charge. An inscription. And the inscription. Of his. Accusation. Was written above.

The king. Of. The Jews. A charge. Or an accusation. Fixed. To the cross. Pilate.

Had asked him previously. Are you the king. Of the Jews. Jesus. And that. Encounter. With Pilate.

Ended up. With Pilate. Ordering this. To be written. Now there is a real sense. In which. He was mocking. Jesus.

But there is also. A real sense. In which. He was mocking. The Jews. Because. He hated. The Jews. And it was. Mutual. It was mutual.

[11:17] Behold. Your king. He said. To the Jews. To the chief priests. And the scribes. And. The Pharisees. Behold. Your king. This.

Man. Who is standing. Before you. This man. Your king. Mocking. The Jews.

The wonder. Of it all. For us. Is that he. Is indeed. Outking. He is indeed. Outking. Not only that.

But he is the king. Of kings. And he is the lord. Of lords. And to add. To the. Accusation. And to the indignation.

He is crucified. With. Two robbers. One on his right. And the other. On his left. So the scripture. Was fulfilled. Which says. And he was numbered.

[12:16] With the transgressors. With the transgressors. The word. Is a strong word. A very strong word. In our day.

They might. Be called. Terrorists. Terrorists. They might. Be called terrorists. For what.

They do. These people. Weren't just robbers. They were thieves. And they were murderers. And these.

Were the men. These were the men. With whom he was. Identified. And the Jews.

Didn't think very much. Of them. Because they crucified them. For their crimes. And they didn't think. Very much of Jesus. Because they released.

[13:18] Another terrorist. Barabbas. In place of Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

A charge. An accusation. A fixed. But we have to remember. That hanging there.

On that cross. He was. Was the one. To whom our sin. Was imputed. the guilt of our sin imputed to Jesus he was made sin for us he was punished he was punished in our room and in our place he was condemned that we might be justified cursed that we might be blessed naked that we might be clothed he bore a crown of thorns that we might bear a crown of glory mocked that you might be honoured and forsaken that we might be reconciled to God the wonder of the cross of Christ fourthly we read of a challenge uttered a challenge uttered and in this we see three different groups three different groups at verses 29, 31 and 32 and the challenge was this you who destroy the temple and build it in three days save yourself and come down from the cross and there were three groups there were those who passed by likewise the chief priests also mocking among themselves what the scribes said he saved others himself he cannot save and there were the two thieves even those who were crucified with him reviled him at the end of verse 32 three different groups the wonder is of those who were mocking him and especially from the thieves the robbers the terrorists that one of them was saved one of them was saved the dangers of a crowd the danger of a crowd a mob mentality mocking him building up amongst themselves this this and as it were almost almost encouraging themselves to mock him and to have this kind of mob mentality and the wonder of it is that they say these things he saved others he saved others himself he cannot save they were saying it again and again and some of them had seen his miracles they had witnessed his miracles and they're bargaining they're they're issuing this challenge to him if you come down we'll believe if you come down trying to bargain with God

I hope that you've never done that that you've never tried to bargain your way to heaven to say to God well if I if you save me or if I do this and this and this that you somehow I'll manage to get in to heaven we can never bargain with God and we can never challenge God who are we who are we to challenge him who are we to challenge him and when you take this narrative here in Mark and when you look at the other narratives in the other gospels in Matthew Luke and John and if you take them all together a picture emerges of this challenge and that picture of the challenge is this that they were questioning the father's delight in his son questioning the father's delight in his son and similarly we see

Satan in chapter one of Mark his gospel and at verse 11 just as soon as the father had declared his love the scriptures tell us that he was immediately driven to the wilderness to be tested by Satan to cast doubt on that relationship between the father and the son to cast doubt on that declaration that the father had made this is my beloved son this is my beloved son you are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased the father delights in the son and here is Satan and here are all of these people and just as we saw in the morning you see here

[19:42] Satan as it were fanning the flames of that doubt and questioning that relationship what was Satan trying to do he was trying to cast doubt and he was trying to take him away from his mediatorial duty and from his obedience to his father almost as if he would say to him you go back where you belong how is it that you are here how is it that you are here you of all people taking him away from his mediatorial duty as prophet priest and king to be a perfect and complete saviour for sinners like you and like me but nothing nothing would deter him it is written it is written and it is written here for us that we might believe that we might believe not be among those who challenge and who bargain with God fifthly we'll see here that the sky was darkened at verse 33 now for the sixth hour had come there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour this was a supernatural darkness darkness it was more than an eclipse than sort of eclipses that we get in our day and that people seem to make much of but it just gets a little bit darker this was a supernatural darkness

Amos 8 and 9 speaks about this it will come about in that day he's speaking about the day of the Lord or the final day of the Lord it will come about in that day declares the Lord God that I will make the sun go down at noon and make the earth dark in broad daylight and there's no doubt that Amos' prophecy was defined to emphasize the terror that it would be for wicked men to face the judgment of God and the wrath of God Amos' words point us to the cross they point us to this judgment but they also point us of course to the final judgment the day of judgment now when the sick there came there was darkness over the whole land this was

Passover season and the Jews would be aware that before the first Passover darkness came over the land in the form of the curse of God upon his enemies it was the ninth plague I believe it was going through the plagues just now in the services this was the ninth plague in Exodus 10 21 to 23 and it was a supernatural darkness as I said it could be felt it could be felt and the scriptures speak to us but now Christ himself speaks of it but now is the hour and the power of darkness the power of darkness the power of judgment there was an external darkness and that external darkness was symbolic of an internal darkness an internal darkness in the experience of the saviour of the saviour here on the cross the son of god his perfect son the son of his love is the one who is alone and who's going to face the terror of that darkness alone ask ask any of god's people have they ever faced the terror of god have you ever faced the terror of god the answer of course is no why have we ever faced the terror of god because here is the son of god in our nature in our room and in our place facing the terror of the judgment of god against our sin the full force of the wrath of god the great explorer of shatterton sailed the endurance to antarctica he was going to the south pole but he got stuck for months on ice months he was saved of course but he was asked when he was rescued what was the worst thing what was the most testing thing about those months that you were stuck in the ice and shatterton said the worst thing the most testing thing was the darkness the darkness here is the judgment of god on him and not you and me sickly the great cry of dereliction the great cry of dereliction at verse 34 which is translated my god my god why hast thou forsaken me this great cry at the ninth hour at the time of the evening sacrifice he doesn't cry out what people are doing to him he cries out about what god the father is doing to him

and the essence of the cry of dereliction is this what god thinks of sin the essence of the price that Jesus paid for my sin and yours the very lengths the very depths to which he went it wasn't a cry of misunderstanding or protest or self pity or despair or doubt it was none of these things there was never a termination of the union between the father and the son that is an indissoluble union i and the father are one he declares himself not a termination of the union between the two natures he always remained fully god and fully man although there was a separation between his body and his soul which is death there was never a termination of the love of the father for the son his love burned as intensely as it ever did in the darkness of

Calvary you could almost say that he never was the father more pleased with him never did the father love him more because he laid down his life for his enemies for his enemies my god my god he cries in Gethsemane and the first and last words from the cross he was able to call god his father but here the cry is my god my god this was the cry of the substitute and sin bearer of his people the one who was made sin for us it wasn't a termination of his personal loneliness because he wasn't tainted with the stain of

[29 : 42] Adam's guilt it was a cry of our substitute and sin made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of god in him in him and he endured in that moment in those hours in those three hours he endured forsakeness forsaken the commentator Hendrickson said hell came to Calvary that day and the saviour descended into it and bore its horrors in out stead the words my god my god why hast thou forsaken me should be so precious to every christian precious him forsaken so that we wouldn't be forsaken by god that we wouldn't be forsaken by god nothing but silence nothing but silence how could he bear it well he could only bear it because of who he was who was to repair the breach between god and man when god had declared so clearly that there is no righteous no not one who was going to stand in the gap who was going to right the wrong of our rebellion and our sin when only god himself could find within himself an answer to the problem and that answer is jesus the word became flesh the second person of the trinity became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory the glory of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth and out of his fullness we have received out of the fullness we have received because of what happened here we have received out of the fullness the unsearchable fullness and riches of god's grace and grace for grace how could he be it only because of who he was the god man the god man he uttered another cry of course it is finished the significance of that being this amongst other things that here is the one who came back from that darkness and from that forsakenness and from all that that entailed who came back and in full self-control summoned

death not overtaken by death and hell and the grave never never but he summoned it to do his bidding it is finished father into your hands i commit my spirit it is finished he knew precisely what was going on and the death was not in a sense a result of the cross but a sign of his victory over sin and death a sign of his victory over sin and death seven a veil was torn verse 58 so then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom we know that there were two rails in the temple one at the entrance and one separating the holy place from the holy of holies and that curtain was not just a curtain apparently it took 300 men to lift it and it was up to four inches thick and the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom and the letter to the

Hebrews tells us that Jesus is the veil is flesh he is the priest offering his own blood within the veil to make atonement for sin to satisfy divine justice he is the propitiation for our sins appeasing the wrath of God and securing mercy securing mercy and opening up for us a new and living way through the veil that is his flesh a new and living way into the presence of God it there is a truth proclaimed at verse 39 so when the centurion who stood opposite to him saw that he cried out like this and breathed his last he said truly this man was the son of

God here is a Roman soldier a centurion a gentile a gentile what's important about that well this is why it's important because there's a sense in which he is the first one on this new and living way opened for both Jew and Gentile opened for sinners opened for you and me without discrimination the gospel is offered to all to all how many crucifixions had this centurion seen how many deaths had he taken part in how many people had he killed but there was something different about this man something different about this man he sees

Jesus die and he concludes truly this man was the son of God Dr.

[38 : 05] Martin Lloyd-Jones reminds us of this that when we look at the cross God is not asking us to pity Jesus Jesus is not the one who needs pity sinners who continue under the just judgment of God are the ones who need the pity and if Jesus has borne all our condemnation all our eternal punishment all our hell what awaits those who reject him he has borne the darkness and the isolation and the condemnation and the wrath do you think you can really stand before the judgment seat and make a kiss for yourself you can't you can't this man this

Christ this saviour he demands your obedience in fact I would go further he demands your repentance he demands your life he demands every inch of it every millimeter of it he demands it this is the reality of the call and the cry of the cross he demands it that you believe in him and remember this that every person in the whole world is commanded to believe it's not optional for people to believe they're commanded to believe now I'm just trying to run through this the time is moving on there is a body buried at verse 43 Joseph of Arimathea a prominent council member who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God coming and taking courage isn't it remarkable the sovereignty of God isn't it just remarkable normally the bodies would be left to rot and to decay a warning to the Jews not to defy or to rebel against Rome but God has a man prepared for all eternity

Joseph of Arimathea looking for the kingdom looking for the kingdom but he counted that nothing compared to the kingdom he counted it as nothing and there are others there who also counted it as nothing the women the women he went in to ask for the body of Jesus and he handed the body to Joseph and he laid him in the tomb and Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph observed where he was laid this prominent council member and these women at verse 40 there were also women looking on from afar among whom were Mary

Magdalene Mary the mother of James the less and of Joseph and Salome they were there for a reason they were there they were witnesses that he really died that he really died but they themselves were waiting for the kingdom they believed in Christ they believed in Christ and they were witnesses that he really died and there's almost a sense in which as one commentator reminds us that Mark is setting the stage for the resurrection for the bodily resurrection of Jesus finally there is a tenth point and that's the first verse we started with but verse twenty-one then he compelled a certain man

Simon and the father of Alexander and Rufus as he was coming out of the country and passing by to bear his cross cross we are also reminded to deny ourselves to take up or to bear out cross and to follow Jesus what compels us to follow Jesus what compels you to follow Jesus if you're a Christian well it's because of what he did for me on the cross of Calvary as we see the suffering saviour and as we've seen it in the nine things that are here and these are just some of the things that are here there are many things here this is just one narrative but as we look at the saviour what compels us it must be love it must be his love his love constraining us his love constraining us so that we would not do our own will or follow our own will but his love thy will be done so what do we think of this love do we esteem that love so highly that we will follow after him denying ourselves bearing the cross and following after

[45 : 13] Jesus that love that is so amazing so divine that demands my life my soul and my all and what of you as you look on the cross of Calvary what do you see who do you see what do you feel what do you think of this man if you're not a Christian don't leave your salvation for one minute long and if you're a Christian rejoice rejoice for what God has done and in God's great plan and God's way of reconciling sinners to himself and God's great plan to take us home to be with

Christ which is far better Amen may the Lord bless these thoughts for his own word do not speak