

# John 19:16-37 - The Crucifixion according to John

Saturday, April 14, 2012

9:05 AM

## a. Sermon Introduction

- i. I like reading good books
- ii. At one time or another, most of us have read at least one good book
  - 1) And, if you've made it to middle school or high school, you've probably taken at least one literature course, studying how good books are written
- iii. Personally, I love reading a good book, I'm not much for studying how they are written
  - 1) Although I have had to take my share of literature courses in the past, so I've learned a few things about books
- iv. So, when you have a good book, there is usually a theme or a couple of related themes that are running through the book
  - 1) But there is some tension associated with this theme
  - 2) Then, at the climax of the story, the tension reaches its highest point, but then is resolved
  - 3) At the climax, you have the themes of the book coming together with tension, that provides the excitement of the climax and then they resolve at the end
  - 4) So, remember, you have those two things coming together in the climax, continuing themes and tension

## b. Passage Introduction

- i. This morning we are looking at John 19:16-37, which is the account of the crucifixion
  - 1) We've been going through the book of John at Gloria Deo, and now we've reached the climax
- ii. So, we see that the book of John is a good piece of literature, it is a good story
  - 1) I hesitate to use these words in a way, because often emphasizing that the Bible is a story is used to undermine the factualness of the Bible
  - 2) So, when I say that the book of John is a story, I mean it is the most true story ever told and it is the factualness of the story that will affect our applications at the end
- iii. But, it is a story, nonetheless, it is literature, and we can examine it like literature
  - 1) So, I want us to look at how the themes of John continue into the crucifixion - this is the continuity of the climax with the rest of the story
  - 2) I also want us to look at the themes that John weaves into the crucifixion that have not appeared elsewhere in John - this is the tension at the climax
  - 3) So, we'll start by looking at two new things John introduces at the crucifixion that don't appear elsewhere in John
  - 4) Then we'll continue looking at two things John stresses in the crucifixion that continue themes that have persisted throughout John

## c. Read John 19:16-37

## d. Some Caveats

- i. The crucifixion is the heart of Christianity, there is no way I could possibly begin to cover every aspect of the crucifixion in one lifetime, must less in one morning
- ii. The application of the crucifixion is the entire Bible, there is no part of the Bible that does not find its motivation or its basis at the crucifixion
- iii. So, before I start preaching, I want to note, I am not trying to exhaustively preach the crucifixion, there will be aspects that I will not cover, there will be applications I cannot list this morning
- iv. This morning, I just want to look at what John's emphasis is here, which is why we are looking at it like literature
- v. And, I am convinced that John's emphasis is the gospel, so I am simply going to preach the gospel out of the crucifixion according to John
  - 1) I'm going to preach the gospel because I know there are unbelievers among us who need to hear the message of the cross
  - 2) I'm going to preach the gospel because I know that those of us in Christ still need to hear and apply the gospel - we never grow out of these great truths
- vi. So, I'm not going to preach anything that most of you probably don't already know, I'm just going to preach the things you've heard over and over again, because they are the message of Scripture

**e. Proposition and Outline**

- i. **Proposition:** John records the crucifixion of Christ in such a way as to emphasize the core truths of the gospel of the cross and we must respond to this gospel.
- ii. **Outline**
  - 1) The Crucifixion Was: The King Being Crucified
  - 2) The Crucifixion Was: The Purpose and Plan of God
  - 3) The Crucifixion Was: The Love of Christ Displayed
  - 4) The Crucifixion Was: The Guiltless for the Guilty
  - 5) Applications

## 1. The Crucifixion Was: The King Being Crucified

### a. The theme of kingship appears fairly suddenly here in John

- i. The word king/kingdom only appears in John 21 times
  - 1) Matthew on the other hand has king/kingdom 75 times
- ii. 15 of those times are during the trial and crucifixion of Christ (1 1/2 chapters)
  - 1) 1 reference/chapter average, 10 references/chapter during the crucifixion

### b. Four people in the passage proclaim Christ's kingship

- i. The damnable disbelief of the Jews
  - 19:7 - "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God."
  - 19:12 - Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.
  - 19:15 - The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."
  - 19:21 - 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.'"
- ii. The baffled misunderstanding of Pilate
  - 18:33 - "Are you the King of the Jews?"
  - 18:37 - Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?"
  - 18:39 - So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?
  - 19:14 - He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"
  - 19:15 - They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?"
  - 19:19 - It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."
  - 19:22 - Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."
- iii. The blasphemous mockery of the Romans
  - 19:3 - They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
- iv. The clear claims of Christ
  - 18:36 - "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."
  - 18:37 - Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king."

### c. What is John trying to illustrate with his emphasis on kingship?

- i. The passage cries out for someone to stand up and say, "Yes, He is the King of the Jews, we shouldn't be crucifying Him."
- ii. But it doesn't happen - everyone sees the truth to some degree, but they all reject it
- iii. The reference to kingship shows the irony and the injustice of the cross
  - 1) The one who should be worshiped is rejected
  - 2) The one who should be revered is mocked
  - 3) The one who should be obeyed is crucified

### d. So, I call this point "The (In)justice of the Cross."

## 2. The Crucifixion Was: The Purpose and Plan of God

### a. The theme of prophecy fulfilled also appears fairly suddenly here in John

- i. John references prophecy only 5 times in the book of John
- ii. 4 of these references are during the crucifixion (1/2 chapter)
- iii. 1/4 reference/chapter average, 8 references/chapter during the crucifixion

### b. Four prophecies

- i. My goal here is not to spend time looking at the prophecies that Christ fulfilled at the crucifixion, which is an excellent study. We will look at some of these prophecies in a later point, but right now, I just want us to see the theme of prophecy that John suddenly introduces.
  - 1) I think that those of us from Gloria Deo will look at a couple of the prophecies in more depth next week
- ii. 19:23-24 - 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, 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."
- iii. 19:28-29 - After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." 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.
- iv. 19:36 - For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken."
- v. 19:37 - And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

### c. Why does John emphasize prophecy here at the crucifixion?

- i. I think the reason John has four prophecies in 15 verses is to demonstrate the plan of God in the crucifixion
- ii. The wealth of prophecy being fulfilled means that God had planned throughout all ages for the crucifixion to take place
- iii. Christ also makes this point before the crucifixion - that God is in control of the situation
  - 19:10-11 - So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."
- iv. This is something that the Apostles realize and preach on after the resurrection
  - Peter in Acts 2:22-23 - "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know--- this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
  - Peter in Acts 3:13-15, 18 - The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses...But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.
  - The believers in Acts 4:27-28 - for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

### d. So, I call this point: "The Plan of the Cross."

### 3. The Crucifixion Was: The Love of Christ Displayed

#### a. There are two unique statements of Christ from the cross that John records

- i. In this point, we are looking at the first statement
- ii. 19:26-27 - When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

#### b. Why does John record this unique statement of Christ?

- i. Two possibilities
  - 1) To show the fulfillment of the law - Christ, even from the cross, fulfilled the command to honor your father and mother
  - 2) To show love - Christ, even from the cross, practically showed His love by caring for His mother
- ii. I think both of these are excellent observations, but I think the second is more compelling
  - 1) John has not focused on the fulfillment of the law in his gospel to this point
    - a) Also, I'm not sure that the law would require someone being judicially executed to provide for their parents
  - 2) John has focused on love throughout the book of John
    - a) John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son...
    - b) John 10:17 - For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.
    - c) John 12:25 - Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.
    - d) John 13:1 - Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
    - e) John 13:35 - By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
    - f) John 14:15 - If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
    - g) John 15:13 - Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.
- iii. I think John wants us to see, here in microcosm, the love that drove Christ to the cross
  - 1) Christ declared what sort of love He was displaying in John 15:13 - no greater love
  - 2) Here we see that love displayed - Christ was loving on the cross
    - a) He went to the cross in love for the Father
      - i) John 14:31 - but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.
    - b) He went to the cross in love for His people (John 15:13, etc.)
  - 3) We see that love particularly displayed in His care for His mother
    - a) His thoughts on the cross were not turned inward
    - b) His thoughts on the cross were turned outward, toward His people
    - c) This is demonstrated in His actions toward His mother
- iv. It is a picture of the truth of Romans 5:8 - but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

#### c. So, I call this point: "The Heart of the Cross"

## 4. The Crucifixion Was: The Guiltless for the Guilty

### a. This is a clear theme in John's account

- i. 18:39-40 - But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.
- ii. Statements by characters
  - 1) The challenge of Christ
    - a) 18:23 - "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?"
  - 2) The findings of Pilate
    - a) 18:38 - I find no guilt in him.
    - b) 18:39-40 (Above)
    - c) 19:4 - "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him."
    - d) 19:6 - "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him."
- iii. Commentary by John
  - 1) The recognition of the Passover lamb
    - a) 18:28 - They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.
    - b) 18:39 - But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover.
    - c) 19:31 - Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.
    - d) Remember the Passover lamb...blood on the doorpost...see the blood, pass over you
      - i) The Passover lamb (a lamb without blemish) was the picture of the guiltless for the guilty
  - 2) The prophecy of the Passover lamb
    - a) The prophecy of the garment untorn and "I thirst" both come from Psalm 22 (I thirst probably also comes from Psalm 69) - and reference the one who has been crushed, but trusts in God
    - b) The prophecy of the unbroken bones comes from Exodus 12, Numbers 9 and Psalm 34 - and reference specifically the Passover lamb whose bones were not broken
    - c) The prophecy of the one who was pierced comes from Zechariah 12, and Zechariah 13 tells us that this one was to cleanse from sin and from uncleanness
    - d) All of the prophecies fulfilled in John point to the crushed Passover lamb who atones for sin
  - 3) The theme of John
    - a) John 1:29 - Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!

### b. Why does John emphasize the guiltless for the guilty

- i. Because this is the point of the crucifixion, the great exchange
- ii. Again, we see it in microcosm in the picture of Barabbas, Christ, the guiltless one, took the place of Barabbas, the guilty one, and Barabbas went free
- iii. It is the message of II Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- iv. This, at the core, is the message of the cross

### c. So, I call this point: "The Purpose of the Cross"

## 5. Four Applications for Four Points

### ○ The reason I put applications at the end

- i. We've looked at John as we would look at a piece of literature, and we looked at the climax today
- ii. We saw four different points, that are group in 2 twos
  - 1) We saw two points that were previously unrecognized in John
    - a) The (In)justice of the Cross
    - b) The Plan of the Cross
    - c) These provide the tension at the climax
  - 2) We saw two points that were prevalent all the way through John
    - a) The Heart of the Cross
    - b) The Purpose of the Cross
    - c) These provide the continuity of the climax
- iii. Each of the four points will get their own application
  - 1) But, the tension points must be looked at in reference to the continuity points
  - 2) And, the continuity points must be looked at in reference to the tension points
  - 3) So, I put the applications at the end, so as we go back through each point, we can consider how the other points affect it

### a. We must see the Justice of God in the Injustice of the Cross

- i. In our first point, we considered the fact that the crucifixion was the king being crucified, and saw the injustice of the cross
  - 1) The passage begs for someone to cry out, "Yes, He is the King of the Jews, we shouldn't be crucifying Him!"
  - 2) So, humans showed unfathomable injustice in crucifying Christ; He did not deserve death, He deserved adoration
- ii. But, we must see the injustice of the cross in light of the purpose of the cross
  - 1) In our final point, we considered the 'great exchange' the guiltless for the guilty
  - 2) So, is the cross finally unjust? On a human level, yes, but on a cosmic level, no.
    - a) God's justice is finally displayed at the cross
    - b) Christ is reaping the well earned benefits of sin
    - c) So, in the (In)justice of the Cross, we must see the justice of God
    - d) Isn't this the point of Romans 3:25-26 - This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- iii. So, in application of seeing the King crucified, we must consider the justness of the crucifixion, and I think this leads to two related applications (each application will actually be two closely related applications)

#### 1. We must fear the justice of God

- The fact that the King was crucified for the wages of sin shows us how terrible sin truly is and how powerful the wrath of God is against sin
- God hates sin so much, the only offering He would accept for the guilty was the death of His infinite and perfect Son
- The first reflex this should cause in us is fear, if God hates sin enough to destroy His own Son, what must we expect
- We hang under the wrath of God - the wrath that justly killed His perfect Son
- At the cross, we see the true implications of Psalm 111:10 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom

#### 2. We can have confidence in the justice of God

- The right response to the cross is fear, we see the wrath of God displayed, but it doesn't end there
- Again, we consider our fourth point, the guiltless for the guilty - God's wrath has been satisfied, God's justice has been satisfied
- So, if we can stand and say, "Yes, Jesus is the King and He did not deserve to be crucified on His own merit, but on mine!" then the justice of God gives us confidence at the cross - confidence

- that the debt has been fully paid, and we no longer need to fear
- I said, there were two unique statements of Christ from the cross in John, we covered one before, now I'll look at the second
  - ◆ Christ says, "It is finished!"
  - ◆ Strong's defines the word 'finished' as "to end, that is to complete, execute, conclude, discharge (a debt)
  - ◆ Christ proclaims, even from the cross, that now the debt is paid, God's justice is satisfied, His wrath is quenched, and there is reason for confidence in the sacrifice of Christ
- This is what John says in I John 4:17-18
  - ◆ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.
- Romans 8:33-34
  - ◆ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died---more than that, who was raised---who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

#### **b. We must see the plan of God in the cross**

- i. This point we won't really modify by the other points
  - 1) It's a very straightforward point
  - 2) It also is, I think, the most surprising point to John
  - 3) It is used to modify the other points, this actually was the plan of God
- ii. But we still see two closely related applications here

##### **1. We must glorify God for the cross**

- The disciples did not expect the cross, this is why the plan of God is the tension point in the narrative
- But, the disciples, having meditated on what Christ said and understanding the Old Testament, came to understand that this was the eternal purpose of God
- The correct response is Paul's benediction in Romans 11
  - ◆ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
- Every time the sovereignty of God is taught, this is the purpose, to glorify God
  - ◆ God was sovereign over even the crucifixion, it is here that He gets the most glory

##### **2. We must humble ourselves at the cross**

- This is always the flip side of glorifying God, if God get's the glory, we do not
- The disciples didn't expect or plan the cross, we never planned the cross
- The work of salvation was never ours, it was the work of God, so that God would get the glory

#### **c. We must react to the heart of the cross**

- i. We are going to pair the Heart of the Cross with the King being crucified
  - 1) The first half of the application flows directly from seeing the heart of the cross
  - 2) The second half, from seeing the heart of the cross is from the King being crucified

##### **1. We must love Christ**

- 1) When we see Christ loving on the cross, the only proper response is to love Christ back
  - a) I John 4:19 - We love because he first loved us.
- 2) This is both an incredibly simple and an incredibly deep application, I do not have time this morning to go into all that this means, but if we see that Christ loved us, we must love Him

##### **2. We must hate sin**

- 1) Here is where we pair the Heart of the Cross with the King being crucified
  - a) If the crucified one is truly the king, and we love Him because He first loved us, we must

- obey his commands
- b) Isn't this what is said in the upper room over and over again - John 14:15 - If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
- 2) I call this application, we must hate sin, because this shows the lordship of Christ in love, if we love Christ, we must hate sin
  - a) We see here at the cross the hatred of God for sin
  - b) We see here at the cross the love of Christ for His people
  - c) We must understand that the cross calls us to hate sin in love for Christ

**d. We must see the Lamb of God slain for the sins of the world**

- i. We are going to color the purpose of the cross with the plan of the cross
  - 1) We saw that the cross is the great exchange, the guiltless for the guilty
  - 2) We saw that the cross was the plan of God from all eternity
  - 3) This means, that the cross is the only place where sin will ever be dealt with
- ii. So, what does that mean for us? What did it mean to Peter and John in Acts 2
  - 1) This is after Peter and John have preached the atoning death of Christ and the sovereignty of God over it
  - 2) Acts 2:37-38 - Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**1. We must repent**

- 1) This is the continual testimony of Scripture, the response to the cross is repentance for sin
  - a) It is such a continual testimony that I would not have time to even start to go to all the references
- 2) If we want to have a share in the Passover lamb, in the great exchange, we must
  - a) Acknowledge that we are a sinner, that we have rebelled against God, and that the appropriate punishment for that sin is exhibited in Christ
  - b) Turn away from sin, no longer living for the temporal joys that it brings, but renouncing it
- 3) Repenting is an initial act, but it is also a continuing act
  - a) We continually must acknowledge our sinfulness and continually be rejecting it

**2. We must believe**

- 1) I changed the word here from baptism to believe, but I think, in reality, they mean the same thing
  - a) The command in Scripture is always repent and \_\_\_\_\_
    - i) Sometimes it is be baptized
    - ii) Sometimes it is believe/have faith
  - b) So, they are more-or-less equivalent statements
    - i) But we don't have time to go into that now
- 2) To believe is the flip side of repentance
  - a) In repentance, we turn away from sin
  - b) In believing we embrace Christ
  - c) My favorite analogy for faith is Matthew 13:44-46
    - i) The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
    - ii) Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.
  - d) If we renounce sin, we must embrace Christ
    - i) If we no longer find pleasure in sin, we must find pleasure in Christ
    - ii) If we no longer find hope in sin, we must find hope in Christ
    - iii) If we no longer find purpose in sin, we must find purpose in Christ

## Conclusion

- **So, to conclude this message, I want to just return to what I said at the beginning**
  - I haven't preached anything I believe most of you don't already know
  - I have tried to simply preach the gospel from John's account of the crucifixion
  
- **I preach the gospel this morning because I know there are unbelievers here this morning that need to hear this message**
  - Unbeliever, it is you that must see the cross and fear God because you do not have confidence at the cross, all you see is the demonstration of God's justice and the anticipation of His wrath
  - Unbeliever, it is you that must see the cross and humble yourself and glorify God for His unsearchable ways
  - Unbeliever, it is you that must give up your love for the world and instead love Christ and hate sin
  - Unbeliever, it is you that must repent from your sins and turn in faith to Christ
  - Only in these things can you have confidence at the cross
  
- **I preach the gospel this morning because I know there are believers here this morning and you need to hear this message**
  - The gospel is not only what starts us on our journey, it is the constant, sustaining, effective cause of our journey
  - Believer, it is you that must see the cross and fear God, but know you have confidence at the cross
  - Believer, it is you that must continue to humble yourself and glorify God for His unsearchable ways
  - Believer, it is you that must continue to give up your love for the world and instead love Christ and hate sin
  - Believer, it is you that must continue to repent from your sins and turn in faith to Christ
  - Brothers and Sisters, we are not done with the gospel, continue to find your life and your hope here