

The Message of the Cross

Harvest Pastors | John 18:28-19:42

For a brief recap, the sermon's title was: **The Message of the Cross**
Main Points were: 1. A Trial for a King (18:28-19:16)
2. A Cross for a Lamb (19:17-42)

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group and family discussion, or for personal reflection. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. *Soli Deo Gloria*.

Icebreaker

What is the weirdest food item you've eaten? Vote on the winner!.

Understanding the Text in Context

Read John 18:28–19:42 together. Or listen to the text together (one option: the Symphony of Scripture)

Summarize the "trials" and the injustices Jesus faced in this text.

Read Exodus 12:21-27. What are some key similarities between this text and our passage?

In multiple places in our passage, the author, John, mentions that events were "to fulfill the Scripture." Select a few to discuss:

- Jesus' garments (John 19:24 and Psalm 22:18)
- Jesus' thirst (John 19:28 and Psalm 69:21 and Psalm 22:15)
- Jesus' body (John 19:36 and Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12, Psalm 34:20)
- Jesus' side (John 19:37 and Zechariah 12:10)

Connecting to Jesus and His Gospel

Discuss how Barabbas is a foreshadowing of the Gospel (see 2 Cor 5:21 and 1 Peter 3:18).

What is ironic about the crown of thorns, the purple robe, the soldiers' words in John 19:1-3, and the sign in John 19:19-22?

What did Jesus “finish” (John 19:28-30)? See also Isaiah 53:2-10. Explain the significance of the cross for “propitiation” and to satisfy God's righteous judgment. These are radical, gracious actions that make our forgiveness and acceptance possible. How should that stir our heart and fuel our actions?

Living Out the Truth

Often, sermons will focus on shorter portions of this text. How has hearing and reading a larger part of the story all at once encouraged you? What ways can your gratefulness for Christ be demonstrated this week?

Pilate had the Truth standing in front of him. Yet, the pressure of the moment caused him to turn away. What pressures do you face or what lies do you hear from the world that tempt you to turn away from Truth? How can Truth replace lies?

Because Jesus knew all authority is from God, He was bold before Pilate. How does this truth help us as we seek (1) to live faithfully (even in uncertain times) and (2) to share the Gospel actively?

If someone were to ask you, “What is the Gospel?” how would you respond? How would this text help? How could these categories help: God/Creator — Man/Fall — Christ/Redeemer — Response/Faith? If time allows, role-play how a conversation might go.

Think about who in your life you can share the Gospel with. Pray together that the Lord may open the door for a Gospel conversation you can have with them, even this week.

Parenting Moment and Family Focus

Jesus took our place and said “It is finished” (John 19:30). Because we’re fully forgiven, we can forgive and care for each other at home. Is there someone in our family we need to forgive or ask forgiveness from?

Who can your family share Jesus with? Pray together for them.

Further Study

Read some articles:

- What “Not of This World” Doesn’t Mean …
- What is truth? And Pilate’s Cynicism
- Who Killed Jesus?
- What does “propitiation” mean? And for more background: What Does Propitiation Mean? The Biblical Definition Explained

Listen to this portion of the Gospel of John at the Symphony of Scripture.

In your John Study Journals, look ahead to next week’s sermon and text for John 20:1-31: “Jesus Speaks Her Name,” “Jesus Speaks Peace,” and “Jesus Speaks Belief.”