

# When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

by Shane Idleman

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*The cross is the central symbol of Christianity, representing God's love and redemption for humanity, and offering hope to a dying world.*

**Duration:** 43:16

**Scripture:** Luke 9:23, Galatians 6:14, Philippians 2:8, Colossians 1:20, Hebrews 12:2, 1 Peter 2:24

**Topics:** "The Cross", "Eternal Salvation"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the significance of the Good Friday message titled 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,' emphasizing the profound impact of the cross in providing redemption, securing eternal destiny, and bringing peace amidst chaos. It explores the sacrificial nature of the cross, the separation it brings from the world, and the eternal life it offers through Christ's sacrifice. The sermon highlights the necessity of embracing the message of the cross for salvation and the condemnation that follows rejection.

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## Transcript

What we decided to do is, since we don't have a Good Friday service yet, right, I want to talk about a Good Friday, or I want to give a Good Friday message. It's entitled, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross. Some of the young people might think, well that's a great message.

Some of the older folks will know exactly where I got that title. It's an old hymn. When I Survey the Wondrous Cross by Isaac Watts, lived back with John Wesley and Charles Wesley and those famous hymns.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, what Good Friday usually is, it's a more somber service than Easter. It's where you look at the cross. And you know, some people might not agree with this, but I love the empty tomb.

Thank God for it. But that didn't save us. The empty tomb proved that who he was, who he said he was, that's who he was.

I will rise again. But the cross, the cross is what provided redemption. The cross is what secured my eternal destiny.

The cross is where his blood was shed for my sins. The cross is where it brings peace in the midst of a chaotic world. It's the cross.

Now I don't think we need to elevate one or the other. I mean, the cross, three days later, the empty tomb. Did he die on Wednesday? Did he die on Thursday? Did he die on Friday? You know, there's debates on that too.

The Sabbath and getting ready for the Sabbath. And I might talk about that a little bit next week. I'm not sure.

But I want to survey the wondrous cross. Isaac Watts wrote, I don't want to quote, but I think it was in the 1700s, mid-1700s. When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and poor contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my God. And it's interesting about the cross is the bad news became good news. And that's what I love about God.

He can take bad news and with just a turning of Romans, make that into good news. And you have to picture when back then the disciples, the person who they thought would save them from Rome, who thought would deliver them from hell, who thought would provide for them and rule over them, just died an embarrassing death. And sometimes I think it's good when you read the Bible, get a good commentary on the Bible.

Get a good study Bible or there's wonderful commentaries I can recommend. Usually older commentaries from men who came before us hundreds of years ago. Sometimes a couple hundred years ago if you read the Puritans or Matthew Henry is a good commentary.

It was said that George Whitfield would just carry Matthew Henry's commentary in the Bible. And if you know anything about George Whitfield, God bless his ministry. He was involved in something called the Great Awakening here in our nation.

And you can learn at the historical context of what they're writing in and some of the background. But they thought this was their king. They put him on the colt.

They put him in front of everybody in Jerusalem. Here he comes to save us. But then a few days later he's on a cross.

And that's an embarrassing death to hang between two thieves, beaten, hung on a cross. So they thought all of what we'd hoped for, everything is lost. But God, but God, and I want to encourage you in that as well.

Things might look bleak. This is terrible news. This is bad news.

But when God gets in it, somehow, I don't know how he does it, but he takes bad news and turns it into good news. If we commit our ways to him and if we commit our lives to him, he'll turn this. This was horrific.

Talk about suicidal thoughts. I think these disciples were having those. Some of them thinking, this is not happening.

What happened? But just give it a few days. And then he rose again. That's why we celebrate the empty tomb.

Jerry Vine wrote this, and I think it's important. If you really want to understand what Christianity is all about, you have to go to the cross. If someone said to me, what is Christianity? I'd have to explain the cross to them.

That's very important. Anytime you get caught up in debates about different religions or what's Christianity? The cross. God died for me.

No other religion says that. Most religions say, I've got to do all these things and be a good person. Then when I stand before God, he's going to see all these good things I did.

That's what separates Christianity from all other religions, the cross. That God died for me. He says, I'd have to explain the cross to them.

1 Corinthians 1.18 says, The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are saved, it's a wonderful gift. It's the power of God. This is why Christianity is foolish to so many people.

Hollywood will mock it. The pastor looks like an idiot up there. And the Christian dad looks like a buffoon.

And the young teenage daughters are running the show. It just mocks it. And the foolishness of the cross.

That's so foolish. Right. Because you're perishing.

So if somebody thinks the cross is foolish, it's because they're perishing. But those of us who have been saved and now we have the Holy Spirit confirming God's truth, we run to the cross. We run to God and we thank him for everything he's done for us.

Jerry Vines continues, I cannot explain to you what salvation is without taking you to the cross where Jesus died. Where God died. At the cross we see humanity at its worst.

With wicked hands they took him and crucified him. At the cross we see God at his best. All of the facets and shades of the meaning of love.

God came together at the cross. God put it all together at the cross. And really, I know it's hard on a message like this.

You could expound on the cross for the whole sermon. You could talk about Leviticus and the shedding of blood and why the cross was required. And like so many people, they're confused about this area.

And to be completely honest with you, nobody has a complete grasp on what took place. To think that God came down from eternity and saved me. Died on the cross.

Took my place. Absorbed God's wrath. It'll just blow your mind.

People will say, Shane, I can't understand that. And this is a good point to remind you. I'm not going to go to hell over a mystery.

We cannot go to hell over a mystery. I can't understand all the facets. No, you never will.

This side of heaven. And even in heaven, I don't know if we'll understand all facets of God and what he did. And the love.

I mean, he creates this universe. He has a little planet. If you look at the universe at a big scale, it's not even a speck of dust.

It doesn't even exist. You have to zoom in to show the earth. I created all that.

And you've got all these little creatures down there. I don't believe in God. I don't care.

He's not this. And they're mocking God. I can't imagine.

He's just looking at them. Whatever. Whatever.

Ready or not, here I come. Remember that game you used to play? I played it with my kids. Ready or not, here I come.

But with God, you're not going to tell him. No, go back and hide again, Dad. Go back.

We're not ready. Okay, I'll go back. One, two, three.

Here I come. No, go back. We're not ready.

When God comes, when Jesus comes again, it doesn't matter. Ready or not, here I come. There's no second chances.

We'll go back. We're not ready. So we have to prepare a people.

Yes, it's a mystery. Yes, we don't completely understand. But truth is truth.

And it's true. And it's confirmable. Everything I'm talking about, you can confirm it.

You can look to God and say, Lord, show me. So let's look at the cross. Survey.

Those in construction, you know what survey means, right? Well, I'm going to take a survey of the land. Or I'm going to go survey a house. Basically, it takes a very thorough look at this to evaluate its value.

You survey. You look at it. You don't just glance over it or gloss over it.

You take a look. So let's take a survey of the cross. Number one, the cross heals and restores.

The cross heals and restores. First Peter 224. I'm reading from the NIV in these next seven points.

Don't get upset at me. It's just because you didn't know there's some people out there that don't touch NIV. It's from hell.

Well, if you believe that, then I taught on what translation is reliable. Just search it in our website, and I spent an hour covering all this. So we'll save us an hour right now and just say, let me read from it.

First Peter 224. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Now, it's interesting. This word healed means alleviate. To alleviate a person's distress or anguish.

So God, through his stripes, healed us. He removed that distress and this anguish. I'm going to talk about something controversial right here.

It's okay. I think we can do that. A lot of times, there's a group out there.

I won't say names, but you should never be sick. And if you are, you just don't have enough faith. And I've heard it.

I've seen it preached. I've seen it on TV, and it kind of makes me sick. Like, poor Paul.

I mean, godly people get sick. And here's the verse they use. By his stripes you are healed.

You're healed. So whatever's going on is in you. There's problems not with God.

By his stripes you are healed. You need to walk in that victory. Get up.

Walk in that victory. Something's wrong with your faith. You're healed by his stripes.

Well, really, if you look at the context and everything, this is spiritual healing. By his stripes you have been healed spiritually. I've been set free.

And here's the interesting thing. Physical healing. Not everyone is healed.

But spiritual healing. Everyone who comes to the cross is healed. Nobody's cast away.

Nobody says you're not good enough. You're not prepared. Maybe later.

Physical healing. We don't know. Sometimes we're just not healed.

There's a memorial service I missed today down at Costa Mesa, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa. The wife of the guy who founded Firefighters for Christ just found out I think five, six weeks ago that went to the doctor, something's growing, tumor, and six weeks. And talk about some prayer warriors.

Talk about some people who you want to pray for you when you're sick. What happened? She's healed. Now, perfect healing.

And I'm not trying to minimize anything, because I believe God is the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. I pray for healing. I believe in healing.

I've seen it. Not to the magnitude we see in the New Testament, but I've seen God move. So I'm not going to discount that.

But this verse, by his stripes, he's saying you are healed. It's not you might. You keep praying, we'll see.

You are healed. You are healed from what? From your distress and your anguish. By being set apart from God, you're healed by his stripes.

Because here's what really did it for me. By his stripes, you are healed. What's more important? Being healed physically or being healed spiritually? So if he's saying by his stripes you are healed, we can't just take that and say no, it's physically.

It's physically. Now, what happens is you are healed spiritually. Because of the cross, because of Jesus, bore your sins on the cross by his stripes.

The stripes, what's the stripes? That he was whipped. Do you want to watch the Passion of the Christ again to remind us of what took place? It was horrific. He was whipped.

He was beaten. The stripes, the blood shed. And then on the cross, he died and was pierced.

And that blood shed, that blood, without the shedding of blood, there's no remission of sin. So that blood had to be shed. So by his stripes, you are healed, and I am healed physically and spiritually.

But here's what happens physically. Spiritually, you're healed. Physically, it's a benefit.

But sometimes, it's not according to God's will. And I'm not ashamed to say that. I don't think that God is running around like a butler.

Bring me ice water. Bring me this. We need healing here.

God, healing now, here. And God says, okay, okay, okay. And he's healing everybody.

There's something according to his sovereignty, according to his will. I know a lot of people. Johnny Erickson Tata, you know her in the wheelchair.

She's got a national ministry. She's said before that, and I don't want to misquote, but along the lines of she thanks God for where she's at, because without that, she wouldn't be able to reach the countless people that she's reached. And God, through that infirmity, can reach and can break people.

And there's a guy named Nick. I can't pronounce his last name. No arms or legs.

You too. I mean, this is amazing. This guy, I mean, and they'll just put him on the podium, or they'll put him on stage about this high, married now.

I'm like, God, how unthankful can we become? No arms, no legs, and he's preaching the gospel, and he's encouraging. I just want to cry every time. And I've got problems.

But, see, he doesn't have problems. God has used that in a powerful way. You should see the young adults crying.

Young adults who would walk out of my sermon, they sit and they listen because different giftings. God's called each of us. And so sometimes he doesn't heal.

And I've prayed for people in these hospital homes or the hospital, and four days later, five days later, they're gone. I remember the emergency room. I ran in there, and I was praying for this guy, and he was in a coma.

I felt good, and I felt the peace, and I just left. And then four days later, he never came back. They lost him.

What do you mean? Lord, what? And there's confusion, but it doesn't need to be confusing because God has saved us spiritually. And then physically, sometimes we just don't know where he's going to take us. It doesn't mean you don't pray.

It doesn't mean you don't contend. It doesn't mean you don't hope for the best. But when something happens that doesn't line up with what we thought, we shouldn't allow that to make us doubt God and

become angry, and it's hard, especially if you've lost a child.

There's anger, and there's anxiety. Those are normal human emotions. I don't want to discount any of that.

But the cross brings spiritual healing, spiritual healing and restoration. Number two, the cross makes his will clear. This is an interesting concept.

The cross makes God's will clear. If you want to know God's will, read Luke 9.23. Then he said to them all, whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. I die daily.

Walking according to God's will will bring peace and direction. I'll submit this to you for your consideration that I believe the majority of the problems we have in life are because of this issue. We don't die daily.

I fight for Shane daily. Dying daily is when you get up, or throughout the day you're like, Lord, not my will, but your will be done. Well, Shane, what do I do? I take this job.

Is it going to hurt your family? Is it going to hurt your relationship to the Lord? Die daily. Do you have to get the right answer? Do you have to get the right thing? Do you have to do this? You die daily. Or if pride comes in, you've always got to be at the top of your game.

You've always got to achieve. You die daily. I've shared with some of you before, I'm coaching a little league team, and we just lost our sixth game today in a row.

Die daily. Because I'm competitive. I want to win.

I don't want the parents going, oh, who's this coach? I mean, my dad built, my grandpa built the field in the 50s and 60s, and baseball runs through our veins. I know what I'm doing. But you think, oh, what are people thinking? And it's humiliating.

It's humbling. It's just die daily. Die daily.

This isn't about you. Die daily. Because if I don't die daily, I'm going to pop off to the umpire.

Or the coach, right? Come on, Blue. What was that? He's clearly safe. This is ridiculous.

Who's that guy? Pastor? Oh, no. But it's dying daily. What about marriage? Oh, my goodness.

Get the last word in. Have to be right. Have to do this.

Have to argue. Just die daily. Relation with your kids.

Die daily. You see how important dying daily is? And that's why he said this here, I believe. He said to the disciples, deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow me.

And the point I'm trying to make here is that the cross is a resembling, it resembles death. Death to self. Death to our dreams and our ambitions.

And the funny thing is once we, death to our dreams and ambitions, and Lord, I give you my life, he gives you a whole new set of goals and agendas and fills your heart with the things that please him, and you're

on fire for God. These things that were meaningless, you thought were important, are now meaningless, and you're dying daily. It doesn't mean you don't earn a living and live at home and take care of your kids, but there's an agenda that has to die.

Because our will will not coincide with God's will. Here's what happens. So once you say, Lord, I die daily, I die.

Here's a perfect example. I just talked about in the announcements with the church that we're considering uniting with. Would that ever have even entered my mind? Never.

It wasn't even on the radar. And when it was brought up to me, I'm like, no, no. No.

We're good. Lord, we're looking here. Lancaster, this is our focus.

And then somebody said, would you at least pray about it? No, no. Not going to pray about it. This is our focus.

This is what God's called me to do, and would you at least pray about it? Yeah, I guess I'll at least pray about it. Me and my wife finally talked after a few weeks of bad moods. Because you know when you're fighting God, it's not a good spot.

Finally, when you surrender, it's a great spot. And I said, well, what about if God is doing this? Can we rule that out? What about if God is doing this? And actually, I love the area. I love the country and the mountains, and so the area I love, it wasn't on my radar.

Here's what we're doing, and this is okay over here. So once I gave that, I said, okay, Lord, if You're doing it, then I just want to get on board. Your will, not my will, be done.

And a tremendous peace came. And confirmation and confirmation. And now it just feels like home.

We've grown to love the people, love the place, love everybody here too. It just feels like one united coming together. But it was not easy.

What do you think? It's not a bad thing. It's just like, here's our focus. You've called me to this, and now you're switching gears.

Get ready, because God will switch gears. You won't stay in first gear very long. You're in the second, third, and fourth, because He's directing.

And here's why it rarely works out, because here's how we look at things. And this is going to be embarrassing if you don't, but I'll just be transparent, because I know it's everybody. I'm looking at things.

Here's where I'm going. Comfort, easier, not as far, can get home earlier, newer. So we start to think that all these things are in our comfort zone.

And we make decisions based on my comfort zone. And when God gets involved, your comfort zone is not even a consideration. Does God want to give us peace and rest? Of course.

But I'll choose things according to, many times, what's comfortable, what's familiar. Not necessarily bad, it's just what's familiar, what feels safe. Don't push me beyond my safety zone, God.

I'm safe right here. And He says, oh no, no, we're getting way out of that area. Most problems are the result of selfishness, of not carrying our cross.

So then the third point, the cross offers hope to a dying world. The cross offers hope to a dying world. Hebrews 12.

Fix our eyes on Jesus. And I cannot get that sentence out of my mind this week since I read it. It reminded me, fix your thoughts, fix your eyes on Jesus, because my mind doesn't want, the flesh doesn't want to.

It wants to fix on everything else that's going wrong. The news, and who's going to be next president, and who's this, and fix, and fix. You have to fix your eyes.

In other words, take your eyes and throw it back at Jesus. No, back at Jesus. You're fixing your eyes back on Him.

That's the only way to get through life, folks. Because the run-of-the-mill, daily activities will take your eyes away and you've got to fix your eyes back. There's an effort involved.

Fix your eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and the perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross. I couldn't get over that.

A lot of these scriptures really hit me hard this week. For the joy set before Him. Watch the passion of the Christ.

If I knew that was before me, no, no, no, I'm moving to Brazil. Under an alias. But the joy set before Him, He endured the cross.

And I don't know, people speculate, but the joy set before Him, seeing people set free. Those of you who are believers, you have been set free from the powers of darkness. That's something to celebrate.

That's joyful. Jesus has set millions of people free. But we live sometimes as if He hasn't.

And there's a joy set before Him. He endured the cross. Scorning its shame.

And set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Basically, the right hand of God is a position of power and authority. He came down from heaven.

Took on the form of a man. And He took on this form. He became obedient to the point of death.

Endured the cross for the joy that was set before Him to save humanity. When He's done, He sits on the right hand of the Father and says, It is finished. In a position of authority.

There's only one hope. And what I want to say on this point is, and I saw it at the Lily field, you see people my age, and they're in tremendous shape. Just like this guy, he's bragging on this, and his hope is in his health.

Another guy talked to you, his hope is in, sold his house somewhere, and it was paid off from a divorce, something like that. \$600,000 in the bank. Okay, well that's great.

But their hope is in these things. See, the hope is in, he's healthy right now, what happens next week? The hope is in \$600,000 sitting in your bank? Hmm, that would be pretty nice. But that's his hope right there.

So you start talking about church, yeah, yeah, yeah. But see, also there's hope and success and fame. We put our hope in all these things, but there's only one true hope.

All these hopes fall by the wayside. All of them. Ask somebody dying on their deathbed who doesn't have any hope, does that \$600,000 matter? Did having a six-pack of abs in perfect shape matter when 20 years ago? None of that matters.

There's only one hope. That's why he says the cross offers hope to a dying world. And he says endurance.

He suffered patiently as he carried the cross. I've said this before, I'll probably say it again, but if I was Jesus, and you actually hold everything, you know that Jesus holds everything together. That Roman soldier doesn't breathe unless Jesus says, breathe.

The first person to spit on me, okay, angel, you slap me, and just wipe out Rome. That would be our, but he endured. And I don't know, maybe it's me, but I just can't imagine the creation.

He created the soldier who was about to hit him, and he sit there and he endured the cross. It's not just walking up and getting shot and it's done. This is a process, not of minutes, of hours and hours and hours of being beaten.

Your beard was ripped out, the crown of thorns placed on your head, the blood came down, and he was whipped with the cat of nine tails that would actually rip the flesh off, endured the cross for me, and then he had to carry the thing he was going to hang on. They put it in, they laid it on the ground and began to nail his wrists and his legs into the cross, and he's enduring the cross for me. And you, shouldn't that change the way we live? I think so.

It would sure get rid of all little bickering and complaining. It would get rid of all the pre-trib, post-trib, mid-trib, and arguing and debating. Look at the cross.

That's the hope. The joy that was set before him, there was only one hope. And the cross offers hope to a dying world.

Anytime I try to talk to people, I do try to point them to the cross. Because, think about that, when people say, well, I'm a good person, what was the point of the cross? Well, it's fairytale. No, it's not.

Go read secular historians that say a man named Jesus who had followers died on a cross. Oh. Wow.

Okay. What do you do with that? It's a historical figure. It's an historical figure.

I mean, we'll put more trust into Shakespeare. Don't people? Oh, Shakespeare's real, but not Jesus. Shakespeare.

And they think, Romeo and Juliet, that's real, but not Jesus. Out, out, brief candle, life is but a walking shadow. A poor player that stretches hour upon the stage and is heard no more.

It is the east and Juliet is the west. Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon who is pale and full of grief. That's truth.

And this is fake? The cross. Number four. The cross set us free.

Oh, my God. Romans 6.6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with. That we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Listen to this. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruined and ruled by sin might be done away with. That we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Here's the difference between you, if you know the Lord, and the world. You are no longer a slave to sin. Well, Shane, if I'm no longer a slave, why is it still here? Because whatever you choose to obey becomes your master.

Paul says that in the same discourse in Romans. He says, whatever you choose to obey becomes your master. And it's an interesting concept.

I'm no longer bound to sin. But it's still alive in me. If you choose to obey it.

And it's an interesting point. The old man. The Bible talks about the old man.

It's not talking about the dad. Oh, my old man. The old man was the old sinful nature that will lead you to hell.

And the new man is the new person in Christ. And the old man and the new man cannot be friends. We still like to bring them together for reunions, don't we? So, this is another interesting concept.

Early Methodists used to teach perfectionism. That you could actually be perfect. And I'm going to be careful what I say here, but scripturally you have the power to walk in the newness of life and to be separated from the world.

And you have the ability but because of the sin nature that comes in it continually is a battle and many people succumb to the battle and they lose the fight. Not the war. They lose the fight.

And this is the number one culprit of most of our problems. The old man and the new man, you try to bring them back together again. They try to be friends again.

If I'm dead to sin, why is it still alive in me? It's because we feed that area. Here's what happens. The old man begins to put thoughts in.

You have to tell that. You have to say, that's a lie. That's a lie.

Because he'll say, come on, just a few more drinks. Remember that? Let's go relax. Lie.

Or, oh that's right. Thanks for inviting me again. You go back or smoke this or take this or click here or go there or say that.

The old man begins to plant thoughts to get the new man to fall back in. That's how it works. J.C. Ryle.

I've read this quote before. And he said that holiness will cost a man his sins. He must be willing to give up every habit and practice which is wrong in God's sight.

There must be no separate truths with any special sin which he loves. Our sins are often as dear to us as our children. Remember this? We love them, we hug them, we cleave to them, and we delight in them.

To part with them is as hard as cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye, but it must be done. The parting must come. The old man and the new man must be separated.

Next point. Number five. It separates me from the world.

The cross separates me from the world. Galatians 6.14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. This is interesting.

The cross is a line of demarcation. Because of the cross, now I'm separated from the world. And that's a good thing.

That's a very good thing. I like what a different translation said. Because of the cross, my interest in this world has been crucified and the world's interest in me is dead.

So the cross comes and it cuts me away from the world to save me. So because of the cross, Paul said don't boast in anything except in the cross. Don't boast in anything of accomplishments but what God has done.

The world boasts against God. Look at what I've done. See what I've accomplished.

Those outside of God's salvation are connected to the world. They resemble it. Here's a sad fact.

Many Christians want just a little piece of God. You've heard me talk about this before. I'll give you this much, like a pie.

Not the whole pie. You can have a little piece, God. And they actually look like the world.

They love the world. There's not a separation. But because of the cross, if you truly embrace the cross, there should be a separation.

If a Christian is not separated with the world but loves the world, the things of the world, then you have to wonder, have they truly embraced the message of the cross? Because it separates. Number six, one of my favorite points, it brings peace. It brings peace to an anxious heart.

If you're anxious tonight, that can change. Colossians 1 20, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross. See, there's temporary peace.

What I just talked about earlier, somebody came across some money, or they're in health, or there's temporary peace, but there's no peace long term without the cross. Because the cross brings that peace to me. The cross satisfies God.

So how can I live in fear and trembling before God because the cross satisfied it? The cross of Christ has saved me, my redemption, because of that cross. D.L. Moody said this, there's no peace, there is no peace until we see the finished work of Jesus Christ, until we can look back and see the cross of Christ between our sins. When you can look back and see the cross of Christ between you and your sins, that brings peace.

And this is why the world doesn't know peace, because there's no true peace outside of having a right relationship with God. All of us know there's an internal alarm clock. We have to worship something.

We either worship the world, or we worship God, or we worship the devil. There's something. So without that, without that, what I think Billy Graham called, or other people, a hole there, that God-sized hole, without that filled, there's no peace.

There's no peace. And then the final point, of course you all know, but it bears repeating, it brings eternal life. There is a such thing as heaven and hell.

There is a such thing as right and wrong, life and death, eternity. Eternity is real. And the cross, that's why I love the cross, it brings eternal life.

The empty tomb revealed who Jesus was, but it's the cross who brings eternal life. Philippians, 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. Did you catch that? And being found in appearance as a man, just as I said earlier, he humbled himself, and became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross.

Now let's talk about that for a minute. The most shameful death imaginable. That's the most, the most shameful death imaginable, God used it to reconcile the world to Him.

Those who believe. Now let me bring this point home. I want you, if I could, just have a minute of your attention without getting up and using the restroom or looking at your phone.

But this is an amazing excerpt that, again, quoting Johnny Erickson Tata, that she wrote from her book, *When God Weeps*. And I want you to think about this for a minute. Just give me one minute or two.

She wrote this, the guard, and she's talking now, Jesus is, they believe that the cross was laid down first, obviously. And that Jesus was going to be laid on that cross to absorb the wrath of God, to take our sins. And the soldier is getting ready to begin to drive those nails in.

So the guard raises a mallet to sink in the spike, but the soldier's heart must continue pumping as he readies the prisoner's wrist. Someone must sustain the soldier's life minute by minute, for no man has the power on his own. Who supplies breath to his lungs? Who gives energy to his cells? Who holds the molecules together? Only by the Son all these things hold together.

The victim wills that the soldier live on. He grants the warrior his continued existence. That heartbeat of that soldier was held together by Christ.

But these pains are a mere warm-up to the growing dread. He begins to feel a foreign sensation somewhere during this day, and an earthly foul odor began to waft, not around his nose, but his heart. He feels dirty.

Human wickedness starts to crawl upon his spotless being. The living excrement from our souls. The apple of his father's eyes is now turning brown with rot.

And he thought his father, his father, he must face his father like this. From heaven, the father now rouses himself like a lion disturbed, shakes his mane and roars against the shriveling remnant of a man hanging on a cross. Never has the son unseen the father look at him like this.

But the roar shakes the unseen world in darkness. The visible sky. The son does not recognize the eyes of his father.

And God says, Son of man, who have you? Or why have you behaved so? You have cheated. You have lusted. You have stolen.

You have gossiped. Murdered. Envied.

Hated. Lied. You have cursed.

Robbed. Overspent. Overeaten.

Fornicated. Disobeyed. Embezzled and blasphemed.

Blasphemed. O the duties you have shirked. The children you have abandoned.

Who has ever so ignored the poor? So played the coward. So belittled my name. Have you ever held your razor tongue? What a self-righteous pitiful drunk.

You who molest. You peddle killer drugs and mock your parents. Who gave you the boldness to rig elections, torture animals and worship demons? Does the list never end? Relishing each morsel and bragging all about it.

I hate. I loathe this thing I see in you. Disgust for everything about you consumes me.

And God the Father is seeing every sin in Christ at this point. Of course the Son is innocent. He is blameless.

The Father knows this. But the divine pair have an agreement. And the unthinkable must now take place.

Jesus will be treated as if He's personally responsible for every sin ever committed. The Father watches as His heart's treasure, the mere image of Himself sinks, drowning into raw liquid sin. Jehovah's stored rage against humankind for every century explodes in a single direction.

This is why Jesus said, Father, Father why have you forsaken me? God, why have you left me? Because at this point in history all of humanity's sin falls upon the cross. God, God why have you forsaken me? But heaven stops its ears. The Son stares up at the one who cannot, who will not reach down.

The Trinity had it planned. The Son endured it. The Spirit enabled Him.

The Father rejected the Son whom He loved. Jesus, the God-man from Nazareth perished. The Father accepted the sacrifice for sin and was satisfied.

The rescue was accomplished. I mean, that's a very vivid, real picture of what happened. Well Shane, that's not in the Bible.

Well, the truth is He absorbed every sin ever committed and that God had to. How could God look at Christ in the same way without drawing that distance? Because a holy, righteous God cannot dwell with sinful men. And there had to be a separation.

And Christ endured that time. Father, Father why have you forsaken me? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Have you thought about the answer to that? You're the answer. I'm the answer.

That's why He forsook Him. And never forget this as you leave this evening. What saves you, what I just read, what saves you also condemns you.

It only saves you if you embrace the cross. You have to embrace the cross. You have to repent.

And say, Lord, I need the cross. I need that sacrifice. I repent of my sin.

I acknowledge that you are Savior and Lord. And that which was going to condemn me now saves me. But those who reject this message are condemned already.

Those who reject the message of the cross are condemned. And it's interesting, the same thing brings life and death. And it reminds me of the Old Testament commandment when God said, choose life or choose death.

Choose life that you may live. It's not complex. It's very simple and to the point.

God just says, would you repent and believe and confess that Christ is Lord? And if you haven't done that tonight, I just encourage you to do that while we're closing in prayer. You know, how much are you going to keep coming to church? Week after week, month after month? The message doesn't change.

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