

# What Jesus Actually Suffered On The Cross

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of mourning in the Christian life, focusing on mourning over the right things, particularly the profound significance of Jesus as the slain lamb. It delves into the depth of Jesus' sacrifice, the need for genuine mourning over our sins, and the challenge to live a life centered on looking unto Jesus. The sermon also touches on the essence of meekness as seen in Jesus riding on a donkey, highlighting the call to humility and being vessels for Christ's use.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:4, Revelation 5:9, Hebrews 12:2, Isaiah 6:5, Matthew 21:5, John 12:14, Exodus 28:36, Luke 19:40

**Topics:** "Mourning for Sin", "Humility in Christ"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So we were hearing about mourning from the beginning. It's a very important part of the Christian life because in the song on the mount Jesus said blessed are those who mourn for they shall be strengthened. So that's the real meaning of the word comforted.

So strength Jesus said comes from mourning but mourning over the right thing. I mean a lot of people mourn because they lost money or didn't get a promotion or something centered around themselves or a little higher level mourning over a loved one that died or something like that. But the highest level of mourning, there are different levels depending on what is valuable for us.

It is like we heard seeing the lamb slain that's what in heaven it's a perpetual sight. It's not something you just see and you forget about it. It was that word in Revelation 5 is they sang a new song and the word new means ever fresh.

So I've mentioned this a number of times one of the things that I prayed for myself when I understood that in heaven they sing about the slain lamb as if ever fresh means as if I'm hearing for the first time Jesus died for a wretch like me. I fear that for many Christians born-again Christians that's a stale message. Oh yeah I've heard that long ago and I know I have that attitude and the way I know it is because I remember

in the olden days many many years whenever I sang a song about Christ dying on the cross or the love of Jesus for me.

How he could die for a sinner like me. I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus in Nazarene and he had no tears for his own griefs but sweat drops of blood for mine. I could sing it so casually with a smile in my face he died for me.

I said Lord save me from that let me never sing about the cross as if. Oh that's an old message I heard it long ago I know it. That's not the spirit of heaven means heaven that song is new ever fresh that's the thing that came home to me some years ago from Revelation 5 and that's what makes them look at that slain lamb.

The wonderful thing about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit has come to bring you know we sing in that song heaven came down and glory fill my soul. When did it come down? Jesus said once to people standing around him some of you standing here will not die before you see the kingdom of heaven come. That's not the coming of Christ in the future no some people standing there in the first century in 30 AD they did not die until they saw the kingdom of heaven come and that was on the day of Pentecost.

That was the kingdom of heaven came to earth. What does that mean? The Holy Spirit came and established the kingdom of heaven in individual hearts and in a group of 120 people for the first time in human history. In Israel in the Old Testament it was not the kingdom of God it was the kingdom of this earth.

They didn't have the Holy Spirit but God blessed them with property and possessions and health and unfortunately more than 90 percent of born-again believers that's all they're seeking for today. Health and wealth and a comfortable life and finally eternity in heaven. All this and heaven too that's the attitude of many Christians.

Fine a lot of old covenant people also went to heaven and such Christians will go to heaven also but they'll be terribly disappointed when they get there when they realize like we heard that all their life they sat in the outhouse when they could have owned the mansion on earth. The abundant life the choice is ours because God never pushes us. I mean if God pushed people nobody would go to hell.

He would push everybody into the kingdom of heaven. Why does he allow millions and millions of people to die every day and go to hell when Jesus died for them? It teaches me one thing I'll tell you what it is. God respects the free will of man so much that he will not even force them to go into heaven even though he knows that's the very best thing for them and if God doesn't do that he's not going to force any believer to push them into the abundant life.

He won't push you. I tell you in Jesus name he will not push you into abundant life. If he does not push people into heaven he's not going to push anybody into this abundant life.

He's not going to push people out of the outhouse into the mansion. It's if you're happy with the outhouse live there forever and that's the thing that challenges me. I say Lord I can miss out on something on this earth because you'll never push me.

Jesus said I if I lift it up will draw all men unto myself. He never pushes. He draws and how does he draw? We read that looking unto Jesus we run the race Hebrews 12.

Our entire life is a race from the starting line. I think of it as being elected to selected by my country to represent my country in the marathon race in the Olympics. Boy imagine that.

That's a great honor and I come to the starting line that's being born again. I have been selected. I'm born again.

I'm one of the very few people from my country selected to represent the country in the marathon. Very small percentage and that's how I see you and I a very small percentage of people selected to be born again to come to the starting line. But if I get satisfied with the fact that I got selected to by my country one among the few one in many millions to represent the country and come last in the race it's disgraceful.

I was sent there by the country to do my best to try and come first and Paul says to the Corinthians we run. We must discipline ourselves to run and this running is by looking unto Jesus. Hebrews 12 is very clear the moment you stop seeing Jesus let me tell you you have stopped running.

If your vision is focused on advancement in the world or popularity in the church or anything like that you're not going to run. I'm not saying we should not seek advancement in the world but it must be the corner of my eye. I have to see you know when we drive we've got to look left and right.

True there's a car coming from this side or that side it's sure but our focus is in front. So I'm not saying that we we got to take care of our family. We got to make sure we got enough finances to run our home and we need to make provision for the future and educate our children and college and all that is all true.

Save up for the future and all right but it must not take away from our single-minded vision of looking unto Jesus running this race. That must be central. I'm saying everything else must be secondary.

Like many things in our life something is central even in your place of work there are some things that are central. There are other things that are secondary and you know in your work and you really want to make progress in your office or job wherever you work that you focus on the central things in the same way that it's not that you ignore the other thing you may go to the gym for example that workout and all that is fine but the central thing in your office is something else. It's the same thing the central thing in your Christian life is to look unto Jesus and make progress and that can come only as we look at Jesus and as we look at the Jesus as the slain lamb it brings a morning.

It has to. It was not true in the Old Testament. It was very little in the Old Testament.

In fact one of the examples in the Old Testament we can say is where Isaiah saw the Lord on the throne in Isaiah chapter 6. That's really a passage if you're not familiar with read Isaiah chapter 5 and chapter 6 together. In chapter 5 he's preaching preaching preaching and sinners you're like this you're like this you're all who are you who are to you and then the Lord gives him a vision in Isaiah 6 and he sees the Lord on the throne and the angels worshiping him and he says who unto me he mourns who unto me he's mourning. That's nothing compared to the mourning of seeing the slain lamb.

He mourned because he saw how unholy he was and he was just condemning all the other sinners around him and he felt bad about that. That's good to mourn for that. It's a sort of initial level.

The highest level is where I see Jesus. Today I can see the slain lamb. Isaiah could not see the slain lamb.

That Jesus died for me. You see the depth of the meaning of it. I remember for years and years and years I prayed right from the time of my conversion.

I said Lord I want to see Calvary more clearly more clearly more clearly and it's only after about 16 17 years that the Lord opened my eyes. It was a revelation from heaven where God showed me what it was that talked with Jesus said I don't want to drink it. Can you imagine Jesus telling the father I don't want to.

I don't want to drink this. He forced me to drink it. I'll drink it but really honestly I don't want to do it.

He who all his life said I delight to do my father's will came to a point in Gethsemane where he said if possible take this cup away from me. If possible let me not do this. I know you want me to do it but can I avoid it.

It's a very difficult answer and I couldn't understand it till the Lord opened my eyes to see there was only one thing that Jesus dreaded. Only one thing and that was break of fellowship with his father even for a single moment. As I meditated on that I would have said this many many times if you haven't heard me before listen to it now.

I can imagine I played this out in my mind and I can imagine the angels coming down to him in Gethsemane. It says there were angels comforting him saying to him but Lord it's only going to be about three hours and then you'll be back in fellowship with the father again. So don't worry and I said it's as if the Lord would say no.

I don't care if I'm going to come back after three hours. I don't want to break that fellowship with my father for one second and I asked myself I say I love Jesus and I want to be like him and I want to follow him and I want to look at him but is it really true in my life that I don't want to break fellowship with my father even for one second. Do I have a that's the slain lamb that's why he was slain and I felt a conversation going on between father and the son saying to the father told Jesus at that time okay you've never sinned all these 33 years come straight up to heaven.

Your fellowship will not be broken but Zach will go to hell. That's it and Jesus stops. Zach will go to hell.

Okay father I'll go to the cross. I'll never forget in my life that day when the Lord opened my eyes to that truth. It changed my whole attitude to to the Lord to serving him and even to imagining that I had made any sacrifice in my life.

What stupidity to think some little thing we give up we call a sacrifice. I realized what we call sacrifice is like a drop in the ocean not even a drop. When you think of when you meditate on that I mean if you haven't you can hear me say this and you understood it in your head and you can go and tell the same repeat this in some message this is what Jesus went through and gets in me but it hasn't gripped your heart.

I tell you if it grips your heart you'll mourn. That's what it did to me. It wasn't just a nice thought that came to me that I could share with people.

I wasn't interested in sharing anything at that time with anyone. In fact I didn't share about it for many years afterwards but it gripped my heart that it was to save me from eternal hell that Jesus was willing to choose that which was the most difficult thing of all. So what does it mean? The slain lamb means what is the slain part of it? Is it just the whipping, the crown of thorns, the pain of the nails? That's not the slain

part.

That's all the physical thing. The mocking, the scorning Jesus would have done through a hundred thousand of those things for me. The slain part of the lamb was he was forsaken by the father.

That is the real meaning of slain means killed, death. For Jesus death was not physical death. There was only one definition of death in Jesus life and that was my fellowship with the father is broken.

I want to have that definition of death in my life. That is the only definition of death I want to have in my life. My fellowship with the father is broken and I'll tell you when it is broken.

When you don't forgive somebody who hurt you. When you don't ask forgiveness from somebody you hurt. Whether you know it or not that moment your fellowship with the father is broken.

But we got so used to living out of fellowship with the father that we don't even notice it. It's like people who got leprosy. I've heard of people who had leprosy.

You know the leprosy you lose sensation in your parts of your body. Believe it or not, I've heard of people who had leprosy. They wake up in the morning and find one of their toes was eaten by a rat at night and he slept right through it because he doesn't feel it.

Pain is one of the greatest gifts that God has given man. It's pain that indicates that you're sick. You go to a doctor before you get before you die of that sickness.

Pain in your stomach or head or somewhere. Pain is the indicator of something God has put it in there to warn us. And if you don't feel a pain in your conscience when you got a wrong attitude towards someone or when you do something for your own glory, you don't feel a pain.

Lord that was evil. Me touching the glory of God. Me preaching a sermon and trying to get some glory for myself.

Oh God forgive me. Do I see how terrible that is? This is the slain lamb. This is what he died for.

He died because he knew I do all these things and he had to take the what in Leviticus is called the, not Leviticus, in Exodus it is called the iniquity of the holy things. The high priest had to have this thing on his head called holy unto the Lord to take the iniquity of the holy things. The iniquity of my holy activities.

What is the iniquity in my holy activities? My preaching a sermon and getting some honor for myself. Other people want money for themselves but you maybe you only want honor. As bad as the man who's preaching for money.

Exactly equally bad to preach for honor as to preach for money. Let's not look down on someone who preaches for money. If I preach to get honor from people, I want something out of it.

We've got to mourn for a lot of things but Jesus was not like that. Only thing that Jesus wanted was to glorify the father and the slain lamb. What was the thing that broke his fellowship? It was his fellowship was broken.

That's the only thing that brought mourning. He never mourned for anything else. He had no cures for his own roots but sweat drops of blood for mine that I would be eternally lost.

He had sweat drops of blood for that. What is the greatest grief he was going through that he lose fellowship with the father even for a moment. So let's not take that lightly.

Let's never sing of Calvary lightly. We cannot artificially produce tears in our eyes when we sing about the cross. You know what real mourning is.

Supposing you hear that a loved one of yours someone who's very close to you in your family dies. You don't have to artificially produce tears. It comes and I want to genuinely have sorrow and in my heart even if there's tears no tears in my eyes whenever I think about the cross that Jesus died for me.

I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus and wonder how he could love me a sinner. He had no tears for his own dreams and never never sing about the cross lightly my brothers. It's a fresh song in heaven.

When you get to heaven you will every time you sing about it it will be oh as if I've never heard it before. You mean Jesus died for a sinner like me? Yes. I want it to be that's what was my prayer for myself anyway that it would always be fresh in my mind that I mourn because I see the slain lamb.

Very very very important and I pray that'll encourage us and help us as we make progress in our Christian life. I want to say one last thing about this matter of sharing the word you know. You know in a very intellectual crowd like NCCF is it's easy to get a lot of honor when you share clever things.

When you go down to the villages in India where I've spent a lot many years preaching more than 40 years they're not interested in all these clever clever statements. They you got to share something with them to help them in their life in a very simple way the way Jesus spoke. Jesus spoke in a very simple way and I thought of it like this for myself.

In my younger days I made the same mistake myself. I wanted to impress. I wanted to preach and I remember recently listening to a message of mine which I preached in 1972.

I was a young 32 year old person that those days sincere but immature and I hadn't really experienced the genuine fullness of the spirit at that time but I had some degree of anointing. Good message people appreciated it but when I listened to it it's so obvious to me this guy is trying to impress people. It's so obvious to me this guy and that is me.

So I've learned to be merciful to people because I was like that myself but the picture that's come to me is when Jesus said you shall be witnesses unto me. It's by my life and by my words not bear witness then it'll be only words be be a witness means life and words. In other words the life is packaged in the words.

Remember that the life must be packaged in the words and that's being a witness. So it's like this you know if the words are not fanciful and wonderful it doesn't matter. I mean if I'm presenting a person a diamond very expensive diamond or hundreds of thousands of dollars and I wrap it up in old newspaper and I give it to the person he doesn't he said what's this newspaper but he opens it up and said wow hundreds of thousands of dollars.

He's not bothered that it was in the newspaper. That's the difference between life and the wrapping. You know the presentation of the message is the newspaper but inside all that money that's your life.

On the other hand if I get up you know how people give gifts with a lot of ribbons and fancy paper and colored and I get a gift like that and I open it and I mean underneath that is another fancy wrapping and all

that and finally I open it all up and inside is a stale piece of bread. That's the gift. I say wow with all this fancy wrapping what do I get finally? A stale piece of bread.

I said that's the difference between a wonderful message with no life backing it and the powerful life presented by a brother who does not have the ability because he's not so clever to present it in such a beautiful way. Dear brothers and sisters pursue life you know and it doesn't matter if you can't express it as wonderfully as that clever brother can. It doesn't matter at all.

Do the best you can and God's anointing will be there. He'll back it up and he will minister to people. Yeah I just remember you know I thought of meekness today.

I was trying to understand the word meekness. It comes four times in the Gospel of Matthew. Blessed are the meek or they shall inherit the earth and NASB says gentle.

Gentle or meek. I never it's one of the most difficult words to understand. Humility, pride, poor in spirit, righteous, hungering, thirsting, righteous and all that but meek.

Until I saw it here where you know the definition the same Gospel of Matthew. The first time it comes is in Matthew 5 and the last time it comes in Matthew 21 where it says Jesus riding on a donkey and it says behold your king is coming gentle meek and mounted on a donkey and I realized that's meekness. You know the great men of the world ride on horses.

Great kings ride on horses. I've never in my life seen a king riding on a donkey. That's only my savior who rode on a donkey and so I saw that's meekness.

I don't need to understand a dictionary definition of meekness. Meekness mounted on a donkey. That's where I got my definition of that very difficult word which I sought for years to understand what does it mean and that's what the Lord wants.

He just wants me to be a donkey. I know I'll get a lot of honor like the donkey got a lot of honor. Imagine never in his life had that donkey walked on fancy clothes on the ground.

Nobody threw all that down and if that donkey was stupid to think that they were all appreciating him he's got to be really crazy and people appreciate us but it's because they see Christ in us. I have a picture in front of me in my table. I've had it for some years.

I want you to see it is Jesus riding on a donkey and you know when they went to pick up that donkey Jesus said if anybody asks you why are you taking this say the Lord has need of him. So this is the picture that I have. Jesus riding into Jerusalem and the word is the Lord has need of you and I never want to forget that and I want to keep that in front of me always.

First of all to know who I am to remind me that the Lord has need of me and then when that when Jerusalem starts praising me and throwing their courts down in front of me I recognize whom they are honoring. May God bless you all.

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