

**Armagh Baptist Church:**  
**Good Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2019**  
**Matthew 27:11-56**  
**“Jesus Experiences Death for us”**

### Introduction

In the run up to Easter this year, we've been looking at what Matthew has to say about the Death of Christ. Away back as early as ch.16...

1. Jesus **Predicted** his death for us (cf. Mark 8). Then in Matt 26 we saw that:
2. Jesus wants us to **Remember** his death for us at the Lord's Table. And:
3. Jesus **Anticipated** his death for us in Gethsemane. Tonight we will see:
4. Jesus **Experiencing** Death for us on the Cross. (Matthew 27).

### **But why the Cross?**

Why did Jesus have to die on the Cross - for us to get right with God?

As we saw last Sunday morning, Jesus wrestled with the whole idea of going to the cross: *'Let this cup pass from me...'* So if there was some other way our sins could have been dealt with, God would have found it. But there was no other way! There is no other way that we can be forgiven, except through the Cross of Christ.

As Christians we need to understand the Cross - if we are ever going to be able to communicate the Gospel effectively.

Jesus suffered physically, mentally and spiritually for you and for me on that cross. But Matthew doesn't put a lot of emphasis on the physical sufferings of Christ on the Cross. It's more the mental and spiritual torture that he focuses on.

From Matthew's account we see something of what the Cross involved for Jesus. I want you to see tonight that His Death involved 4 things:

### **1. SEPARATION (vs.45-47)**

Jesus cried out... *“My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me!”* (v.46)

It's a statement that was misunderstood then (v.47) (Was he calling Elijah?) And it is still misunderstood today!

God the Father and God the Son were separated! Cut off from each other. There was a rift in the Godhead, because of our sin. But why was that?

Well, we need to go back to Psalm 22 to see the significance of Jesus' words:  
(v.3) ***“Yet You are holy...”*** - God the Father just can't look at sin!  
(v.6) ***“But I am a worm, and not a man!”*** - Jesus bears our sin & our curse!

- Jesus experienced separation from His Father because of us (See Isaiah 59:2)

(Because *'Our iniquities have made a separation between us and our God'*)  
• He experienced all the horrors of eternal hell compressed into 3 hours!  
• And He experienced death itself – as the just punishment for our sins.  
(Romans 6:23 “the wages of sin is death”). Jesus had to pay that for us.

In the darkness we weren't able to see all that this really involved (v.45)  
We couldn't have grasped it, so God drew a veil of darkness over it all!  
So that's the first word from the cross – Separation: Between God and Jesus.

### **2. COMPLETION (v.48-50) (cf. John 19:30)**

In v.50 we're told that Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, before  
*“He yielded up his spirit”* - as ‘the shepherd ***laid down his life*** for the sheep.’  
In John 19:30 we're told what that final, loud cry from the cross was.  
It was one word on Jesus lips, *“Tetalestae!”* (Gk) *“It is Finished!”* (*‘Paid in Full!’*)

It was a note of victory, from someone who was in complete control of himself. It was a loud shout of triumph, it was not a note of defeat or fatigue. If it was, it would just have squeezed past his lips and no more, but it didn't, he shouted it: *‘Jesus cried out again with a loud voice’ ... ‘It is finished!’* – It was *‘Paid in Full!’*

### **But what was finished?**

It was all the work that was necessary for our salvation. That's what was finished. The work Jesus had come into this world to do for us was now complete. Jesus said in John 4:34:

*“My food is to do the will of Him who sent me **and to finish his work.**”*

So when Jesus said: *“It is finished,”* the work for our salvation was complete.

Now there's nothing more that needs to be done.

Nothing to add to it.

Nothing more God has to do.

Nothing more that we can contribute.

It can't be improved upon.

And yet people still feel they need to **do** something for their salvation!

As if they still need to give God a helping hand.

That's an insult to Christ and His finished work for us on the cross.

Either you get to Heaven by *your own good works*, or by *His Finished Work*.

It can't be both! So which is it that you are holding on to? - 'Yours' or 'His'?

Only Christ's work on the cross will actually get you there!

Because *‘all our righteous acts are like filthy rags’* in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6).

But Christ's work for us on the cross was *“once and for all,”* never to be repeated.  
(See Hebrews 9:25-28, 10:11-14) Therefore:-

No more sacrifices are needed.  
No more altars are needed.  
No more sanctuaries or Temples are needed.  
No more priests are needed.

O.T. Type worship is finished. The OT Sacrificial system is over!

We worship God now in accordance with the New Testament, and it doesn't involve any sacrifices, instead it must be worship *'in spirit and in truth'* (Jn 4:24).

**Spiritual** worship offered to God in accordance with the **Truth** of God's Word, offered **on the basis of Christ's finished work for us** on the cross.

Christian churches shouldn't try to continue a sacrificial system in any shape or form. Our worship must rejoice in the fact that Christ has died for us, but also in the fact that He has risen again for us, and that He is coming again for us too!

We don't come to this Table tonight **to get our sins forgiven**;  
We come to this Table because **our sins are forgiven** - through Christ!

So Christ's death involved – **Separation & Completion**. And thirdly...

### **3. SATISFACTION (vs.51-53)**

By this I mean that Christ's death on our behalf **satisfied God's righteous, just demand** - for our sins to be dealt with.

God was **satisfied** by the work that His Son did on that cross, to deal with our sins, and to take the punishment for our sins.

But in punishing his Son in our place, instead of us, it also meant that God could now reach out to us **in love** and offer us forgiveness for all our sins!

So now at last we can be at peace with God.

See Isaiah 53:11-12 – *"After the suffering of His soul,  
He will see the light of life and be **satisfied**."*

In other words, after Jesus would suffer and die for us on the cross, He would come back to life again, and as a result of what he had accomplished by his death and resurrection, God's justice would be **satisfied!**

But how do we know that God was satisfied with Christ's work on the cross?  
How do we know that it was enough to save us?

#### **(i) Because Jesus actually died (v.50)**

Ever since the Garden of Eden & the Fall, the wages of sin has been **death!**

The price to be paid to satisfy God's justice has always been a perfect death.

Well that price has been paid! Christ has died. His blood has been shed for us on the cross. So now there is remission for all our sins (Hebrews 9:22).

God's righteous requirements have been met: Innocent blood has been shed.  
A perfect spotless life has been laid down in death. A Sacrifice has been offered!

#### **(ii) The Veil was torn in two in the Temple (v.51)**

Notice it was *"from top to bottom."* So God must have done it, because this veil or curtain was about 30 feet high! No man could have done it. This curtain in the Temple being torn down symbolised the fact that the way is now open (for the first time) for us to come right into God's Presence, right into the Most Holy Place.

Because of the Cross, the way to God is now well and truly open!  
(See Hebrews 9:3-8, and Hebrews 10:19-23).

Because the barrier of sin has been dealt with once and for all!

#### **(iii) The Resurrection of holy people (vs.52-53)**

This "mini resurrection" shows that death has been defeated.  
The punishment for sin has been broken. The chains of death are broken.  
The power of death to hold us down forever is defeated. Many people in Jerusalem witnessed this. But obviously those people would die again...

#### **(iv) But Jesus Himself has risen, never to die again (v.53)**

On the third day He defeated death, Himself. He has risen!  
Jesus is alive, and He will never die again.  
He is alive in the power of an endless life!  
And because He lives we shall live also!  
Because He rose from the dead, we shall rise from the dead too!  
Unlike the holy people in v.52 when we are raised from the dead some day, we will never die again, we will live with Christ for all eternity!

#### **(v) The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:31-33)**

Is proof, not only that Christ has been raised, but that Christ is now back in Heaven, preparing a place for us to be with Him for all eternity.

So these 5 facts are proof that God is **satisfied** with Christ's work for us on the cross. They are proof that His work to bring us salvation is indeed finished, complete, perfect! It was truly **'Mission Accomplished!'**

But if Salvation is accomplished, does that mean that all men & women are now saved? Not at all! Just look around. They don't look like it, do they?  
A personal response is still needed.  
Because the benefits of the Cross are conditional...

Christ's death involved

- **Separation** from the Father.
- **Completion** of Christ's saving work.
- **Satisfaction** of God's just demands.

But there's one more thing in this passage. It's...

#### **4. REALISATION (v.54)**

Standing at the Foot of the Cross there was a Roman Centurion:

- He probably nailed Jesus to the Cross.
- He probably cast lots for his clothing.
- He probably joined in the mocking of his victim.

But at the moment of Jesus' death, he was struck by the manner of his death, and he realised that Jesus was different, He was special. His was a unique death.

And because of all he had witnessed, he exclaimed:

*"Surely this was the Son of God!"*

He was at last personally convinced about Jesus!

The Death of Christ is an historical fact – It's undeniable (from the Bible & History).  
But each individual must come to realise for themselves the significance for them of that historical event. That Jesus died there for their personal sins.

That... *"Jesus died for all mankind, (yes) **and Jesus died for me!**"*

- (i) He was **separated** from his Father, because of *your* sins.
- (ii) He **completed** everything that was necessary for *your* salvation.
- (iii) God's justice has been **satisfied** by all that Jesus suffered for *your* sins.  
Jesus took all that punishment so we wouldn't have to, so we could go free!
- (iv) But each of us must realise that for ourselves. We must accept it for ourselves.  
You must personally trust in Jesus Christ, (who He is & what He has done) - *for yourself. And if you do, you will be saved!*

***The Cross is the Turning Point of History.  
Absolutely everything changed that day.  
The question is: Has it changed you?***

Four words from **The Cross**: Separation. Completion. Satisfaction. Realisation.