



"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

"There They Crucified Him."

Tom Wacaster

Luke uses only four words to describe the extent to which wicked men will go when once they have developed a hatred for the God Who loves them. Arrested and quickly rushed through a mock trial in the courts of Annas and Caiaphas, our Lord was taken to the judgment seat of Pontus Pilate where He received no better treatment. False witnesses were brought forth to testify of the so-called crimes of this Jewish peasant. Evidence of wrongdoing was not just scarce — it was non-existent. Pressured by the mob that stood before him, Pilate eventually gave in to their demands and released Jesus to be crucified. A prisoner exchange gave freedom to an insurrectionist and murderer and sent the innocent Son of God to His death. Consider those four words that changed the course of history.

"*There* they crucified Him." Matthew calls that place Golgotha. It is also called Calvary. It was called the place of the "skull," perhaps because of the shape of the hill where criminals of the worse sort were executed. This hill was outside the gates of Jerusalem, situated on a thoroughfare leading into the country. Most of all, it was a place of death. Blood stains from previous crucifixions no doubt marred what otherwise might have been a beautiful field of grass and flowers. There may very well have been a stench from that blood-soaked ground. If ever a place had a connotation of woe and agony, surely it is this place called Golgotha.

"There *they* crucified Him." Sermons have been preached about who it is that crucified our Lord. The Jews? Most certainly they took the lead. The Sanhedrin represented the nation.

It was the political branch of a nation that had many centuries before wanted to be like other nations about them. Their long history of rebellion against God culminates in their rejection of the Messiah amidst their calls for His death. Pontus Pilate gave the sentence and the Roman soldiers drove the nails. What about us? You? Me? Did we crucify Jesus? Not directly, but certainly indirectly because of our sins.

"There they *crucified* Him." Death by crucifixion was invented by the Greeks and perfected by the Romans. Never has anyone devised a death so horrible, so painful, so associated with shame as that of death on the cross. A Roman citizen was exempt from crucifixion, except under the most heinous of crimes. No doubt a newspaper reporter could and would have written volumes on the ignominy of death by crucifixion. Yet inspired historians use less than two dozen words total. The only distinct words among them were "when," "there," and "where" (Matt. 27:35, Mark 15:24, Luke 23:33, John 19:18).

"There they crucified *Him*." What is it about the cross of Christ that draws men to Jesus? Surely it is not the fact that it was some instrument of death, for other means of execution remain to this day as symbols of only infamy and disgrace. Untold numbers of criminals suffered death upon the cross long before Jesus was crucified. So, I ask again, what is it about the cross that draws men to Jesus? It was Who was crucified upon that cross that has given the cross its notoriety.

For 2,000 years the cross of Christ has cast its beacon of hope across the tumultuous seas of human misery and sin, and the message of the gospel is so closely associated with that cross that to speak of the one is to bring to mind the other. It has been nine centuries since Abbot Rupert wrote the following tribute to the cross of Christ:

We venerate the cross as a safeguard of faith, as the strengthening of hope and the throne of love. It is the sign of mercy, the proof of forgiveness, the vehicle of grace and the banner of peace. We venerate the cross, because it has broken down our pride, shattered our envy, redeemed our sin and atoned for our punishment. The cross of Christ is the door to heaven, the key to paradise, the downfall of the devil, the uplifting of mankind, the consolation of our imprisonment, the prize for our freedom. The cross was the hope of the patriarchs, the promise of the prophets, the triumph of kings and the ministry of priests. Tyrants are convicted by the cross and the mighty ones defeated, it lifts up the miserable and honors the poor. The cross is the end of darkness, the spreading of light, the flight of death, the ship of life and the kingdom of salvation.

"*There they crucified Him*." Four words that will live in infamy!

The Cure For Denominational Division

Darwin Hunter

All who profess Christianity must wonder at times why there is so much confusion and division in religious matters. Why are there so many churches, with so many beliefs, and so many diverse practices? Any thinking person realizes it is detrimental to the progress of the gospel in the world. A Muslim or a Buddhist would conclude the entire system is flawed, and it cannot offer hope for mankind since those who profess it are hopelessly divided and confused about what Christianity is. This is why Jesus prayed the prayer of John 17:20-21. He expressed His desire for unity among His disciples lest division become a “turn-off” to the world. Indeed, it has become an obstacle to the conversion of many.

What is the cure for such rancor and division? The solution is embedded in the text of John 17. In 17:17, Jesus gave the answer: “Thy word is truth.” True unity would be based on more than “agreeing to disagree” since that just embraces the division. It would not be based on “unity in diversity” which proposes unity on a few “big issues” (the deity of Christ, His death, burial, and resurrection) and ignoring what is deemed to be “lesser issues” (salvation matters, worship practices, etc.) since that makes some things taught by God to be trivial and insignificant. Who wants to take that position? That idea puts man in the position of deciding what part of the inspired teaching is important, and what is “fluff and filler” in the Bible to be disregarded. Any doctrine which puts man in the position of judging God’s Word must be false!

“Sanctify them
through thy truth:
thy word is truth.”
John 17:17

Realizing God’s Word is ultimate truth, and the way marked out in His Word can never be wrong, is the only way to unity. As long as men appeal to human writings as authoritative, there will be division. As long as a man judges a doctrine or practice on the basis of “what my creed says,” there will be division. As long as men clamor for “what we have always traditionally believed and practiced” as authoritative, there will be denominational splintering. As long as humans keep exalting “I think” over what **God says**, there will be confusion in Christianity. The cure for denominationalism is for all to accept and submit to the Lord’s powerful principle: “Thy word is truth” and nothing else is! It is a recognition there can be only one standard in Christianity — the divinely, revealed gospel (Romans 1:16), the New Covenant our Lord mediated (Hebrews 9:15). That alone must be our law, or the division which the Lord hates, and which we also detest, will continue to ravage the religious world!

Observations and Concerns

November 1, 2023

Welcome Visitors! If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Praise in Psalm: “O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard” (Psalm 66:8).

Declaration of Appreciation: To those who are in attendance each time the “doors are open.” We appreciate the encouragement such provides for one another.

There will be a **Youth Devo** on Friday, November 3rd at 6:00 PM at the church building in Ramona. Please bring a sweet or side to go with Italian food.

Our sympathy is extended to the **Smith family** upon the passing of Vance Smith. Vance played an instrumental role in the planting of this congregation, and served as the full time minister here for 35 years.

We extend our condolences to the **Denney family** upon the passing of Bonnie Denney. Bonnie is Denise Hall’s aunt.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Caroline Swearingen** is healing from a concussion, but doing much better.
- ▶ **Sherry Carmona** fell and suffered trauma to her face. She had surgery on her nose yesterday, and is doing ok.
- ▶ **Pat Taylor** has been down in the back. She also had a procedure to have stints put in her legs this week.
- ▶ **Sammy Gray** will be having medical tests conducted in the upcoming weeks.
- ▶ We are thankful that **Stephanie Huckleby**, **Yvonne Hall**, and **Darla Smith** were all able to be with us this past Lord’s Day.
- ▶ **Sam Orr**, father of Kathy Orr, recently fell and had to have stitches. He is also suffering with Covid.
- ▶ **Sandra Rowell**, step mother of Landon Rowell, has lymphoma. She has started treatments and is doing ok.

Schedule of Services	Assignments			
		Wednesday, Nov. 1	Sunday, Nov. 5 AM	Sunday, Nov. 5 PM
	Announcements	Chris Nelson	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
	Song Leader	Chris Nelson	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
	Prayer	Doyle Jackson	Bill Dilks	Doyle Jackson
	Lord's Supper (speaker)		Ross Swearingen	Chuck Northrop
	Lord's Supper		Chuck Northrop	
	Lesson	Chuck Northrop	Chuck Northrop	Chuck Northrop
	Prayer	Ross Swearingen	Ross Swearingen	Bill Dilks
	Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
Sundays				
Bible Classes. . . 9:30 AM				
Worship 10:30 AM				
Worship 5:00 PM				
Wednesdays				
Bible Classes. . . 7:00 PM				
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