



## The Significance of the Sufferings of the Christ

**B**y now, no doubt, you have heard of the movie, "The Passion of the Christ" directed by Mel Gibson. The subject of the movie is, more or less, the last twelve hours of the life of Jesus. I saw the movie this past week and it accurately, vividly, and gruesomely portrays what the physical experiences of Christ were like when He was delivered up by the Jews to the Romans for crucifixion. I have heard in the media, and even from some professing Christians, some negative reactions to the consideration of the sufferings of Jesus. In this regard, one is prompted to ask the question, why should we, as Christians, consider the sufferings of the Christ?

First, we should consider the sufferings of the Christ because Jesus was God in the flesh. Without the doctrine of the deity of Christ, the sufferings of Christ would be loveless. When we consider that Jesus was God Himself and took on the form of man to redeem sinful man from the clutches of Satan, we recognize the true love of God. Through sin, man became God's enemy, but through Christ, man can be God's friend once again. Jesus said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:14-16). Paul wrote, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). It was on account of God's love for His creation that Jesus died on the cross. The sufferings of the Christ cause us to consider God's love for us.

Second, we should consider the sufferings of the Christ because Jesus was

the Son of God. Without the doctrine of the sonship of Jesus, the sufferings of the Christ would be unnecessary. When we consider that Jesus was the Son of God, we think that He came from the Father Himself. And when we think that the Father sent Jesus into this world, we must understand that the sufferings of Christ were necessary to accomplish what God, the Father, wanted to accomplish for the salvation of man. We read in John 8:28, 29, "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." Jesus loved His Father and so He obeyed and suffered. The sufferings cause us to consider Jesus, the obedient Son of God.

Third, we should consider the sufferings of the Christ because Jesus lived a sinless life and did not deserve what He went through. Without the doctrine of the purity of Christ, the sufferings of Christ would be worthless. When we consider the sinlessness of Christ, we recognize that the sufferings of Christ had true value. Counterfactually, if Jesus had sinned, then He may have merited what He received. However, since He was indeed sinless, we know that those sufferings are worth far more than the most precious of substances on this earth. They were made valuable by His sinless life. Peter writes, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19). The sinless life of Jesus makes His blood precious. The sufferings of the Christ cause us to consider His innocence and worth.

# The Significance of the Sufferings of the Christ (cont.)

Fourth, we should consider the sufferings of the Christ because it was our sins for which Jesus suffered. Without the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, the sufferings of Christ would be purposeless. When we consider that Jesus died for our sins, we recognize that His death was on our behalf. We are the ones who merited, on account of our sins, that suffering and death. But Jesus took our place and atoned for our sins so that we could be reconciled to God. In 2 Corinthians 5:21 we read, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." We read further in Romans 5:10, 11 "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The sufferings of the Christ cause us to consider our worthlessness, guilt, and need for redemption.

Fifth, we should consider the sufferings of the Christ because that will lead us to His resurrection. Without the resurrection of the Christ, the sufferings of the Christ would be powerless. When we consider that Jesus, after having suffered and died, was resurrected from the tomb, we recognize that this is where God's power truly lies. This is God's power of salvation for man

today, the message of the cross, the gospel (Romans 1:16). Paul writes in Philippians 3:10, 11 "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." We also read in 1 Corinthians 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." The sufferings of the Christ cause us to consider the power of His gospel.

Finally, we should consider the sufferings of the Christ because that will motivate us to live more faithfully to God and Christ. Without the doctrine of the perseverance of the Christ through His sufferings, then we would have no foothold upon which to place our faith. When we consider the fact that Jesus endured the cross, it motivates us to endure the pressures under which we come in this life as well. It motivates us to live a better life. It motivates us to study God's word more. It motivates us to worship God, as God wants us to worship Him. It motivates us to help the poor. Jesus endured this life and the death that is associated with this life. Through Him, we can endure too! The writer of the book of Hebrews exhorts us to look "...unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the

shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." The sufferings of Christ cause us to consider our own faithfulness to Him.

As Christians, we don't consider the sufferings of Christ merely to gape at a tragic and gruesome spectacle. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:16, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." For the Christian, the sufferings of Christ mean so much more than merely the physical travesties that He endured. We consider the sufferings of Christ today in light of the doctrines that were taught by the Christ. Jesus himself said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). His flesh is the bread of life. That bread is His teaching. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). Ultimately, it is the belief of Christ's doctrine in association with His sufferings that will bring one to salvation and move those who are saved toward greater service in the kingdom of Christ today.

Kevin Cauley

## Sermons and Study Topics

Week of 2/29/04

Morning .....	Arguments for Instrumental Music Examined
Scripture .....	Acts 17:11
Evening .....	The Rich Young Ruler
Scripture .....	Mark 10:17-22
Sunday Morning Bible Study .....	The Book of Hebrews
Wednesday Evening Bible Study .....	How to Study the Bible

## Weekly Record

Week of 2/22/04

Sunday Class .....	58
Sunday A.M. ....	75
Sunday P.M. ....	60
Wednesday .....	51
Contribution.....	\$2080.61
Budget .....	\$1760.00

## The Urgency of Preaching

Once a preacher was invited to address the inmates of a large prison. The warden showed him around, and they came to the chapel. It was a large auditorium seating fifteen hundred. The preacher noticed that two seats on the front row were draped in black. The warden said, "The two men who will occupy those seats tomorrow are under sentence of death. On Monday they go to the electric chair!" The minister asked, "Will this be the last service they will ever attend?" "Yes, sir," came the reply. "Your sermon will be the last one they will ever hear." The preacher went home, took out the sermon he had prepared, reviewed it, and tore it up. "This sermon is of no use," he said. "It does not meet the need." Then falling on his knees he prayed, "Oh, God, give me a message for those two men who will be sitting in those draped chairs." What would you have done? What sermon would you have preached?

Every time a preacher preaches and teaches God's Word, there are people present who are sitting in draped chairs! Many are they that are lost in sin and cannot find their way to the Lord and salvation. The whole world is a searching, desperate world of indecision and the church needs to feel this urgency both at home and abroad. We must teach at home, and we must take part in preaching God's Word throughout the world. Jesus teaches us in Matthew 28:19-20, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

The following are suggestions as to what we can do to proclaim the saving gospel of Christ:

1) Invite someone to worship with you.

- 2) Give a friend a Gospel tract or tape.
- 3) Encourage the church to be involved in mission work.
- 4) Invite someone to study with you.
- 5) Enroll your neighbors in a Bible correspondence course.
- 6) Open your home for a group Bible study.
- 7) Pray for the lost -- by name.
- 8) Strive to put on the "real spirit" of Christ.
- 9) Subscribe to a gospel paper, read it, then pass it on to a friend.

Christ said in John 4:35, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest". Let us as followers of Christ, "Lift up our eyes, look on the fields, and see the urgency of preaching the saving message of Christ!" (2 Tim. 4:2).

Mike Riley

## Kevin's Korner

**Q** As I mentioned in the lead article, I did go to see the movie "The Passion of the Christ" this past week. Several in the community have been discussing it. While the movie itself contained a lot of Catholic tradition, I do think that it would be worth seeing to understand the truly gruesome nature of Roman crucifixion.

In this regard, you notice the lead article, but also, I made up some tracts to give to your friends who may or may not have seen the movie. The tracts are identical to the bulletin article except that there is a short article about the plan of salvation in the tract as well. Those tracts are in the back on the foyer table. I made 100 of them, so feel free to take as many as you would like to take and hand them out to your friends, family, and neighbors.

There is also in the back another tract written by Allen Webster titled, "The Scourging of Jesus." You may want to review this tract as well if you are considering going to see the movie.

In other news, Miss Arkansas is coming to Berryville. She will be here on March 16th, 3:30 PM at the Berryville community center. Some of the folks at the community center asked me to get involved in promoting that, so I have been helping to do this. Miss Arkansas will be speaking on the subject of volunteerism. Her speech should be interesting. This would be a good event for us to help with in the community. If you would like to volunteer some time at the community center to support this event, please let me know.

Please note that the elders decided to move the elders and deacons meeting to the first Sunday of the month due to scheduling conflicts. The

youth devotionals will be moved to the third Sundays of the month.

Believe it or not, come March (which starts tomorrow) there will only be three more months to our friends and family day. Now is the time to start inviting our friends and family to come on this day, Sunday, June 13th, 2004. Let's make this day one to remember!

### Elders:

Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan,  
Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn  
Quigley

### Deacons:

Ken Smith, Brent Stevens,  
Rusty Windle.

### Preacher:

Kevin Cauley... 870-423-6707

# News, Notes, and 'Nouncements

- "God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4;24). Thank you God for giving us your truth whereby we may worship You.
- Let us remain constant in prayer for the following individuals: Joann Bragg's brother, Michael Collins, Brian Guess, Halen Pem, Chris Pinkley, Glenn Quigley.
- Please remember our shut ins in your prayers: Curtis and Opal Hull, Edith Mischler, Mary Patterson, Art Roberts.
- In the last elders and deacons meeting, it was decided that the meetings would be moved to the first Sunday night of the month and that the youth devotional would be moved to the third Sunday night of the month. That begins this month. So next Sunday evening will be the elders and deacons meeting.
- If you have not already got a Question and Answer book, they are available on the back table for \$2.00 only if you have the \$2.00 to give for it. Please take as many as you would like to have to hand out to family and friends.
- This afternoon at 2:00 PM we have our quarterly singing at the nursing home. The singing will be in the dining area starting this month. Please meet there to sing with these wonderful people in the nursing home.
- On the bulletin board in the back, you will find a flyer for a new book from Apologetics Press titled, "Dinosaurs Unleashed." If you would like to obtain a copy of this book, please let me know and I will place the order.
- The latest issue of the Voice of Truth International is on the table in the foyer. Please pick one up if you would like to have one.
- The pantry item for this week is toilet paper.

## Welcome!

To the Berryville church of Christ.

### Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:..... 9:30 AM  
 Sunday Morning Worship: ..... 10:30 AM  
 Sunday Evening Worship: ..... 6:00 PM  
 Ladies Bible Class: ..... 10:30 AM  
 Wed. Evening Bible Class: ..... 7:00 PM

### Serving Each Other

	February 29th, 2004	March 7th, 2004
<b>Sunday Morning</b>		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Larry Elliott
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Brent Stevens	George Eddings
Scripture Reading:	Sandy Nieves	Dan Hand
Lord's Table	Dan Hand	Clay Bozarth
	Leon Duncan	Glenn Quigley
(assist)	Ray Duncan	Brent Moore
	John Gass	Ray Duncan
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Ken Smith
<b>Sunday Evening</b>		
Songs:	Hugh Atchley	Clay Bozarth
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Rusty Windle
Scripture Reading:	Dale Pinkley	Matt Bassing
Lord's Table	Brent Stevens	Brent Stevens
	Larry Elliott	Larry Elliott
Closing Prayer	Matt Bassing	Bob Moore
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Songs:	Kevin Cauley	Hugh Atchley
Opening Prayer:	Rusty Windle	Bill Fort
Invitation:	Bob Moore	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer:	Glenn Williams	Ray Duncan

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