

## **The Death of God's Son**

### **1. The Fullness of Times**

- A. God had spent several thousand years preparing for the present moment: the promises to the patriarchs, the rise/fall/restoration of Israel, the giving of the Law of Moses.
- B. Finally, the time was right – Gal 4:4-7. But oh the price of sonship!
- C. Jesus has lived, taught, worked signs – now it was time for the most horrible and dreaded part of God's plan. He must sacrifice His own life for the sake of others.

### **2. Jesus Anticipates His Death**

- A. Jn 12:23-32 – *“The hour has come ... now my soul is troubled ...”*.
  - 1. Death is foreign to God. God has existed from eternity; He *gives* life; He sustains all things. But now Jesus must *yield* His human existence. How can we comprehend this?
  - 2. Jesus recognizes purpose (v 27, 32) and victory (v 31) but is still troubled.
- B. The struggle continues in Gethsemane – Mt 26:36-46.
  - 1. Peter, James and John had seen Jesus' glory on the mount, but now they see His agony.
  - 2. v 38 – “Exceedingly sorrowful” (or overwhelmed) is first in word order.
  - 3. We can understand Jesus physical needs – food, water, sleep, etc. – but what about *emotional*? He needs friends, but they are *“sleeping for sorrow”* (Lk 22:45).
- C. Jesus is also aware of trauma His death will bring: Mary will watch her son die; Jesus' friends scared and scattered; Jerusalem will yet again be annihilated (Lk 19:41-44).

### **3. The Suffering of the Final Hours**

- A. This was Satan's final chance; he couldn't stop the atoning death from occurring but he unleashed the powers of hell in order to defile the sacrifice. Jesus endures:
  - 1. The denial of His person – Mt 26:63-66. Have you ever been accused of being someone you know yourself not to be?
  - 2. Betrayal by Judas, abandonment by disciples, the cursing disavowal of Peter – Mt 26:69-75. Jesus was *alone* in His suffering (as He was alone in His initial temptation).

3. Miscarriage of justice. Even carnal men have a deep sense of right, justice.
  - a. False witnesses with contradictory testimony – Mk 14:55-59.
  - b. Pilate's cowardly capitulation to the Pharisees; acknowledges Jesus' innocence.
  - c. Herod's perverse curiosity to see a miracle – Lk 23:8. Jesus was a mere sideshow!
4. The humiliation: spitting, slapping, nakedness; the ridicule – Mt 26:39-44.
5. The physical suffering – We sometimes sell Jesus short on this. Did the thorns not hurt? Was He numb to the scourging? Did the nails rip His flesh and part His bones? Did six hours of body-weight against iron and raw wood ***not*** have an effect upon Him?
6. Maybe the ***ultimate*** suffering was that He was paying a price for something He *did not do*. All of the sins of mankind – past, present, and future – were heaped upon His pristine, sinless shoulders.
7. What man would have ever thought this scheme? We conceive of our heroes as strong, victorious; we create legends to make them bigger than life. Paul says that Jesus “*was crucified in weakness*” (2 Cor 13:4) The cross *was an offense to the Jews!*

B. Yet unto such an agonizing, inglorious end (as man saw it), Jesus:

1. Cared for the welfare of others: His mother (Jn 19:26-27); the penitent thief (Lk 23:40-43); and even His enemies (Lk 23:34).
2. Trusted in God – Lk 23:46.
3. Died for His **enemies** – Rom 5:6-8.

### ***Conclusion***

1. The character of God defined: “I will die for you.” Left to his own imagination man insists on appeasing God's wrath by offering something valuable – babies, virgins. But we have nothing to offer. The debt was paid by Jesus, and we owe Him our lives.
2. This was not for “mankind” but for ***me***, for ***you*** – Gal 2:20.
  - a. This is not merely some historical event that we can dispassionately dismiss. *A lot of men have died in history*, and their passing their death has no *direct* bearing upon us.
  - b. But this one does, and how you respond is the most important decision you will ever make.