

Two Sides of the Same Cross

Torment and Triumph

Luke 23:33 (NKJV) – *And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they **CRUCIFIED HIM**, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.*

- Jesus was severely beaten for hours before He was ever crucified (Isaiah described that the “form of his visage/face was marred beyond that of any other man”). Then, the crucifixion itself was intentionally brutal by the Romans.
- Jesus died a painful, horrible death for you and me. Our English word “excruciating” comes from two Latin words: ex – “out of” and cruciare – “the cross”.
- But, Jesus’s tormenting pain paved the way for our never-ending victory.
- **I Corinthians 15:54 – 57 (NLT)** *Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: “Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? ” 56 For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. 57 But thank God! He gives us VICTORY over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rejection and Redemption

Mark 15:34 (NKJV) – *And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"*

- Jesus exclaimed, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?”
- Did He really mean that? Did the Father really abandon Him?
- **Isaiah 53:6 (MSG)** – *We're all like sheep who've wandered off and gotten lost. We've all done our own thing, gone our own way. And God has piled all our sins, everything we've done wrong, on him, on him.*
- The Father turned His back on Jesus for 3 days, so He would NEVER have to turn His back on us.
- **I Peter 3:18 (MSG)** – *That's what Christ did definitively: suffered because of others' sins, the Righteous One for the unrighteous ones. He went through it all - was put to death and then made alive – TO BRING US TO GOD.*
- **QUOTE:** *Jesus breathed His last breath feeling REJECTED. Today, God wants you to take your first breath feeling REDEEMED.*

Defeat and Defining Moment

- The cross represents the place where all of hell thought that they had defeated God once and for all.
- But, when Sunday morning rolled around, and Jesus was ALIVE AGAIN, that defeat turned into their DEFINING MOMENT.
- The empty cross and the empty grave is your Defining Moment today, as well.