

# The Honor of God: The Shamed Christ

*The Honor of God*  
By Grant Castleberry

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## **Capital Community Church**

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Well, good morning. What a great week in the life of our nation. I think June 24, 2022 will be a day that goes down in history that God had mercy on our country. You know, people say all the time, especially around 4th of July, we're going to hear this a lot this week, "God Bless America." Quite frankly, there's no reason why God should bless America. We have not done anything to warrant God's blessing. In fact, we deserve God's judgment. And mercy is when God takes pity on you in your sinful estate, and that's what God has done in our country. You know, we can chalk it up to Supreme Court justices. We can chalk it up to President Trump. We can chalk it up to a number of people who have been working, and God bless them, we are so thankful for the people that have been working for years and years the past 50 years on this, but at the end of the day, this the overturn of Roe v Wade was a mercy from the living God upon us.

I to invite you to open your Bibles to 1 Samuel 2, and what I'm going to do over the next few weeks is I'm going to finish up a study that we started on Sunday night and we didn't finish. So if you've been coming on Sunday night, you are a step ahead because you've been tracking on the series that we've been doing, which is a study on the honor of God. So what we do normally on Sunday mornings is we teach verse by verse through books of the Bible, and then generally speaking on Sunday nights, we do doctrinal studies or applicational studies and discipleship, and so we're going to be finishing a doctrinal study. So really we're going to be looking at a number of different scriptures. It's going to be more teaching than it is preaching but we're going to be really looking at this theme over the next few weeks of what it means to live for the honor of God. What does God's honor even means? And in 1 Samuel 2:30, there is a rule that God shows us regarding his honor and I want to read these verses to you. This is from a man of God that is sent to confront Eli. This is what he says. He says,

30 Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

That word "honor" is the Hebrew word "kabod," and it literally means heaviness or weightiness or severe. In a moral sense, we translate it "honor." The New Testament words timao and megaleno largely mean the same things. They stress the moral element of giving due respect, admiration, and worship to God. So if you look at what the rule of honor is, it's very simple what the rule is. Look at this, second part of verse 30, "those who honor me," God says, "those who treat me as heavy, as weighty in their lives," God says, "I will honor them." Very simple. The flip side is also true, "those who dishonor me, those who fail to honor me will be lightly esteemed." That's the rule, and the reason for this rule is because God is our Creator. Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. God created mankind. God is a holy God. God is an awesome God and he is worthy of our honor. He's the only one worthy of our honor.

One person in history who really understood this is a man who lived about a thousand years ago named St. Anselm of Canterbury. And St. Anselm was really a remarkable person. He was a monk, so he was in that time when the church taught that you had to be celibate. He was a monk in Normandy over in France, and then later he became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093, when he was 60 years old. He died about 16 years later, in 1109, so those are his dates. We're literally talking about a thousand years ago. And one of the things he's famous for is he came up with the ontological argument for the existence of God. Raise your hand if you know the ontological argument for the existence of God. Does anybody know the ontological argument? Okay, five of you. Okay, so this is just, here's what he said. He said, "God is the being that which none greater can be perceived." Right, that's who God is. You can't imagine anyone greater than God. Then he said in the argument, he said, "You are greater if you actually exist than if you just exist in the mind. Therefore, the being of which none greater exist exist." Did you get that? And you're like, okay, does that, is that actually real? Does that argument work? I mean, couldn't you just imagine a unicorn and then say, okay, well, I can see the unicorn in my mind, I have it right here, therefore, the unicorn actually exists. Well, the reason why it's different is that a unicorn is not the being for which none greater exist, and if it exists, then in reality then it's greater.

So I think there's some logic to this. Okay, so you get the picture, this guy is a brilliant thinker, right? Well, what Anselm is most known for is he wrote a book and the book had a Latin title, "Cur Deus Homo," which means "why the God man." In other words, why did Jesus come? That's the theme of the book. Why the God man, why did God become a man? That's the question that he's seeking to answer in the book, and the reason why Anselm said that the Son of God became a man is because, he said, each person who lives owes a debt to God. We all owe a debt to God because God is the one who created us.

So let me give you some quotes from Anselm. He said, "Sin is nothing other than to fail to give God what is owed to him." Then he says, "This is the sole honor, the complete honor, which we owe to God in which God demands of us. Someone who does not render to God this honor due to him is taking away from God what is his and dishonoring God. And this is what it is to sin, as long as he does not repay, he remains in a state of guilt." So in Anselm's terms, we owe honor to God. That's why we're here and we're to give God the honor, and when we fail to do that, we sin. And what I want you to think about just, you know, I know that this is somewhat heavy, but I want you to think about is this, think about how Anselm is putting sin in terms of its relationship to God. It's vertical. We think of sin, I think, often because this is how it occurs to us as very horizontal. Somebody sins against you, you sin against somebody else. There's a rift in the family. Somebody gossips about you at the office. It's all very horizontal. But what Anselm is saying is that every single sin is an affront against a holy God, and every single sin is a failure to give God the honor that he is due. And that is something that we all owe God, and therefore each and every person is living in the red in terms of your balance sheet before God. We all are in God's debt and so what Anselm said is that this is the essence of sin, it's the dishonoring of God, and really this is what Paul said as well, remember Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fallen short of," what? "The glory of God." Just to put it just in its starkest terms, let me give you this quote. He says, "There is nothing more intolerable," look how magnificent this language is, "There is nothing more intolerable in the universal order than that a creature should take away honor from the Creator and not repay what he takes away." That is a God-centered perspective on reality, nothing more intolerable than taking away honor from our Creator.

So biblically speaking, this is true. We owe a great debt to God, and not only does sin create a debt that we owe to God, the scriptures say that sin brings the opposite of honor, which is shame. Solomon says in Proverbs 14:34 that, "Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people." Reproach means shame. What is shame? We don't really understand this as Western Christians so much, maybe we do a little bit now that we're kind of getting into this whole cancel culture where people are cancelled on social media. But let me give you a definition of shame. This is from the Wycliff Bible Encyclopedia. The biblical concept of shame is primarily that of an inner consciousness of guilt, failure, of unworthiness, and the frequent humiliation and reproach connected with it. So shame is the direct result of the guilt of our sin. It's that red hot embarrassment that you feel when you get caught. It's the ignominy of having your mug shot on the front page. It's the humiliation of being caught in the act. It's being treated as lightly by your friends, family, coworkers, as a result of something that you did. And what the Bible says is that God gives shame to those who are in sin.

So let me just show you an example. Turn to the right to Psalm 44. Just I'm going to read these verses very quickly. This is what David said has occurred as a result of their sin. Psalm 44:13. Notice how he's just describing being shamed. He says, "You make us the taunt of our neighbors, The derision and scorn of those around us." Have you ever been taunted by your neighbor? Maybe it's been a while. I was taunted by my neighbor when I was growing up because he was a Baylor Bear and I was an Aggie, so every time Baylor

won, he would, "Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah." Anyway, but you don't like to be taunted. Verse 14, "You make us a byword among the nations, A laughingstock among the peoples. All day long my disgrace is before me And shame has covered my face."

That's what it means to be shamed and what Anselm argues in his book is this, is that the reason why the Son of God took on our humanity is to come to this world and to pay the debt to God that we owed him that we couldn't do ourselves. He lived for God. He honored God, and I did a whole message on this on Sunday night, you can go listen to it about how the Lord Jesus Christ honored God. Every step of his life, he honored him. But not only did he honor God for us, he also suffered the shame that we deserved. This is what he did for us.

One more verse here. Actually, there's going to be a lot more verses, but keep turning to the right to the book of Hebrews, to Hebrews 12. I just want to show you this, how the apostles thought of the crucifixion. There's numbers, a number of metaphors that the apostles used to describe the work of Christ for us. This is one of the ways that the writer of Hebrews describes Christ's work on the cross in Hebrews 12:2, so the second verse of Hebrews 12 picking up just in the previous sentence in verse 1. He says, "let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him," so he's looking forward with joy, he says he, "endured the cross," and then look at this next phrase, "despising the shame." You could translate that word "despising," looking down upon, or pushing through it. Jesus is seeing the shame of the cross and he looks down upon it for the joy that is set before him. He pushes through it, he goes through the shame. And then he says, "and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus endured the shame of the cross for us. That's why Anselm said the God man came. That's why the God man. And what I want to do with the rest of our time this morning is I want to show you that, I want to show you the shame that the Lord Jesus Christ endured for you at the cross.

We begin in the garden of Gethsemane. Remember Jesus had been in the upper room with his disciples, he had instituted the Lord's Supper, they had sung a hymn and then he and his disciples walked across the Kidron Valley to the garden of Gethsemane. It was a known place where Jesus often prayed, probably a place where he and his disciples would sleep, spend the night, point being, Judas knew he could find Jesus there. And remember, Jesus was in the garden and he goes off away from his disciples, he takes Peter, James and John and he's praying and three times, three times he comes back and finds his friends asleep. But while he's praying, probably the third time, an angel sent by the Lord to strengthen him, he stands up and he comes back and at this point what Matthew calls a great crowd came into the garden of Gethsemane with. Judas Iscariot. John tells us that it was a band of soldiers with some officers and chief priests and the Pharisees, point being this is a lot of people coming into the garden of Gethsemane. But the real act of shame that takes place in the garden is the betrayal by Judas. To be betrayed is to literally be shamed. It's someone in your inner circle, a friend or family member, who treats you so lightly that they double-cross you. This is the shame of the matter and this is why Judas is called throughout the gospels and known as the betrayer.

Judas commits the shameful act of betrayal against our Lord by giving him, what? A kiss, a kiss of betrayal.

And after the kiss, John says in John 18:12, he says, "So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus and bound him." So they bound his hands together, they seized him like he was a dangerous criminal. Everybody probably would have thought this was odd. Jesus thought it was odd, he says in Matthew 26:55, he said to the crowd, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Interestingly, Judas was so overcome with guilt, you remember what he did. He took the 30 pieces of silver that he had been paid to betray Jesus, he went back to the temple, tried to give it back to the Pharisees and the high priest, they wouldn't take the money, it was blood money, so he threw it into the temple and he went to a field, and he hung himself. So that was the end of Judas.

But Jesus has marched from Bethsemane back across the Kidron Valley, so right where he came, into the city of Jerusalem and John tells us something that the other gospels don't tell us. They first took Jesus to the old high priest's house, whose name was Annas. Annas was like the godfather of the Jews. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. He was really the one pulling the strings on everything, and we really don't know what happened in Annas' house but Annas talked to Jesus and then sent Jesus to Caiaphas' house, Caiaphas' Palace. And what Mark tells us is that everybody was waiting for Jesus at Caiaphas' house. So the whole Sanhedrin, this is probably four or five in the morning, the whole Sanhedrin had been gathered at Caiaphas' house, Mark says in Mark 14:53, "they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes were assembled waiting there for Jesus."

So this leads us to what happens at Caiaphas' Palace, the shame that Jesus endures at Caiaphas' Palace. I want you to turn over to the gospel of John, to John 18, beginning in verse 15, John 18:15. What happens is Peter and another disciple, most scholars believe, is John the apostle, are following Jesus and they follow Jesus to Annas' house and then to Caiaphas' Palace. John somehow knew the high priest. John just seems to know everybody, seems to be faster than everybody. And John knew the high priest so John is able to get into Caiaphas' house. He was able to gain access, but Peter was not. So here, verse 15, says, "Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple." That's most likely John. "Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl." So basically John goes and speaks to the girl guarding the door, "Who kept watch at the door and brought Peter in." And look at what happens in verse 17. "The servant girl at the door said to Peter, 'You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?'" Then he says, "I am not." Peter probably didn't even think much of this at the time. I mean, here's a little servant girl, what does it hurt to tell a little white lie to save some social capital, right? Say a lie here, that way I'll preserve myself to be around when I'm really needed, Peter justifies himself. But he denies being the Lord's disciple. And then it was cold that

morning and so in that courtyard, there was a charcoal fire, and Peter went and stood by that fire to warm himself, and if you look down now at verse 25, skip down in verse 25 John says, "Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, 'You also are not one of his disciples, are you?' He denied it and said, 'I am not.'" So now he denies it to the group in the courtyard. And then another man sees him, this is a relative of Malchus, the guy that Peter had cut off his ear in the garden of Gethsemane. Peter's name is getting around. People are talking about him and this guy says, "One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, 'Did I not see you in the garden with him?' Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed." Luke tells us right at this moment in Luke 22:61. He says, "And the Lord turned and looked at Peter."

So one of the things that happens when you are shamed and when you're experiencing shame is people stop returning your phone calls, right? The friends that you thought you had abandon you. They don't want to be associated with you. That's what Jesus is experiencing in this moment. The shame is so heavy upon him that the very disciple who said in Matthew 16 that, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," the one who said in John 6 that, "We have believed and have come to know that you are the holy one of God," that disciple denies even being associated with the Lord Jesus Christ and it was just right as the Lord had predicted. But what's going on with Jesus during these moments? John doesn't tell us this, but Luke does. Luke says that while he was in the courtyard before the Sanhedrin met, that they played a game of human pinata with Jesus. They blindfolded him and they started turning him and punching him, spitting on him, mocking him. Luke says Luke 22:63, "Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?' And they said many other things against him." Luke says these words, "blaspheming him." Blaspheming the Lord Jesus Christ. They felt devilishly vindicated when the Lord wouldn't prophecy according to their fiendish demands.

Jesus endured the public shaming in the courtyard. and then after this he's taken to stand trial before the Sanhedrin and one of the interesting things in in Jewish law to convict someone, how many witnesses did you need? Two. Two witnesses. They asked Jesus to testify against himself because they know they don't really have good witnesses. So they start questioning him and you see in verse 19, look at John 18:19, "The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching." He's trying to extract a confession from Jesus. And "Jesus answered him, 'I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret.'" In other words, "Look if you want to know what I teach, just go ask the populace; people been hearing me teach in the temple and in the synagogues the entire time. I don't have any Gnostic teaching, a secret teaching that I've kept from the world. Everyone has heard what I've said." So he says verse 21, "Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said."

And just before verse 22, you need to know something: not once did Jesus ever sin. Not once did Jesus ever sin. When he gives a retort to someone, it is a retort of perfection.

You know, if I backtalk someone, there's probably some sin there. Not with Jesus. But look what this guy does that's next to the high priest, "When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, 'Is that how you answer the high priest?'" Well, yes, it is. When you're the Son of God, yes, it is. "Jesus answered him, 'If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong,' in other words, "You bring your witnesses. You've heard me speak publicly, but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?" So why do you strike me if what I have said is right?

So what happens next? Well, the other gospels tell us that they brought forth false witnesses to try to convict Jesus, and the way that they would do this is they would have one witness come in before the Sanhedrin at a time. So you'd have one at a time and others would have to wait outside, out in the courtyard somewhere else, and then after one was done, they would bring in the next one, and the reason for that is so that way the witnesses couldn't just hear what somebody else's testimony was and then copy it. So they bring in these witnesses and they all contradict each other. None of them can verify the charges that they are bringing against Jesus. And the charge that they're really going for is a charge of blasphemy. They want to hear someone say that Jesus is God and that he taught that he was God, that he taught that he was the Son of God. So they turn to question Jesus again after these false witnesses and Luke says this, I'm not going to have turn there but Luke says in Luke 22:67 that the high priest said, "'If you are the Christ, tell us.' But he said to them, 'If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer.'" But then he says this, because, look, remember, Jesus is on a mission to the cross. Jesus is purposely going to the cross. So Jesus basically gives himself up here. He says, "But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." And they knew that the Son of Man was the apocalyptic figure from Daniel 7, the Messiah, and at that the high priest, tore his robe and he said, "What further evidence do we need? This man has blasphemed, he's called himself God."

And so now they feel like they have what they need in order to kill him but there's just one problem, there's just one problem, do you know what the problem is? The Jews were under the Romans and the Jews were not allowed to execute capital punishment. They weren't. They had to get the authority and permission from the Romans and the Romans had to execute capital punishment. So they now have to bring Jesus to Pilate, to Rome in order for capital punishment to be executed. And by the way, they plan that. How do we know? Because who came to arrest Jesus in the garden? The Roman soldiers. They had already cued Pilate up and already said, "We're going to be bringing to you this guy." Remember they had the whole Sanhedrin waiting for him, 5:00 AM. They've cued Pilate up, "We're going to bring Jesus to you, and then you're going to pass the sentence on him." So now they take him to Pilate and we'll see next just the absolute shame that Jesus endures at Pilate's hand.

One of the things that's also interesting is you see when they get to Pilate that Pilate doesn't want to give a conviction anymore. You notice this, Pilate does everything he can not to pass down a guilty verdict on Christ. I think one of the reasons for that is that during the night something had happened. Pilate's wife had had a dream, and in that dream, she sends a message to her husband and she says this, we don't know exactly what

the dream was about, but she had a dream about Jesus and she says to Pilate, this is Matthew 27:19, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream."

So Pilate, he's now reluctant. What's fascinating, this is really interesting, what was the charge that the Sanhedrin had against the Lord Jesus Christ? Blasphemy. What's the charge that they bring to Pontius Pilate? It's not blasphemy. They do a switch. The charge that they bring to Pontius Pilate is that he's an insurrectionist. He's a traitor. He's guilty of public treason against Rome. Luke 23:2 says this, "they began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.'" So they knew that the Messiah was a king. They knew that all those claims. They knew that Jesus had claimed to be bringing the kingdom of heaven. But what they're asserting is they know that what Rome cares about, they don't care about a charge of blaspheming a Jewish God. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of gods in Rome. What Rome cares about is what every single king or dictator cares about and that is a threat to their rule. That's right. In England, I was over in the UK last week and I went and visited the Tower of London and walked around Westminster. The worst punishments were reserved for those who made threats against the throne. You just killed somebody, robbed somebody, you got the death penalty by hanging. You made a threat against the king, you were drawn, hung and quartered which meant that they cut your body into quarters and sent it off into different places, and they put your head on the London Bridge because you were a threat and they were going to make an example of you.

And so this is the charge that they're bringing to Pilate. They're saying this guy is a traitor and he's a threat to Caesar. And this is how they're going to put their thumb on Pilate. This is a very serious charge. And in the end, when Pilate's going to try to excuse Jesus, they threaten him by saying, "If you excuse this guy, you're no friend of Caesar and you're basically guilty of treason. You're guilty of insurrection for allowing this guy to go free." So what Pilate does is he takes Jesus aside and you see in John, we don't have time to read through it, but Pilate questions Jesus about his kingdom and Jesus, says in verse 36 that his kingdom is not of this world. And Pilate latches onto that, he says, verse 37, "So you are a king." And Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I've come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." And then this famous question of Pilate. Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" And after he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him, I find no guilt in this man." We know from the other gospels that he sent him to Herod and then eventually Herod sent him back, and there he is standing in front of the people and they hold this charge of insurrection over Jesus and they press Pilate and they press him and they press him and eventually Pilate just puts his hands in a wash basin and says, "Fine. I wash my hands of this man's life." And he gives him up to be crucified.

Now when you receive a sentence of crucifixion, almost always what comes before the crucifixion is a flogging. They go hand-in-hand. If you're crucified, you're going to be flogged before the crucifixion and I want to show you what happens next by turning to



Mark 15. Mark 15, beginning in verse. 16. So he gives Jesus up to be crucified and he sends Jesus down, you see this actually up in verse 15, to be scourged where he's chained and beaten with a whip. And after this, I want you to notice how Jesus is shamed by the Roman battalion there in the garrison. "And the soldiers led him away," so he's been scourged, "inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion," about 600 Roman soldiers. "And they clothed him in a purple cloak," a purple cloak was reserved for royalty, for a king, purple was the color that royals wore, "and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him." And what happens next is really remarkable. When I was in the Marine Corps, what you do when a dignitary, a president or a senator comes to a graduation, you do a parade and in the parade, the entire battalion or the entire regiment will march in front of a reviewing stand, and as you march in front of the reviewing stand, you turn eyes right and you salute the reviewing officer. The reviewing officer is the dignitary that has come to visit, the president, vice president, senator, whoever it is. You salute him. What they do with the Lord Jesus is they place him in the spot of the reviewing officer and they come and they mock salute him. It's the epitome of shaming him. Think of this: the Lord of the universe and an entire Roman battalion mocking him, shaming him. Verse 18, "they began to salute him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'" And after they would salute them, they would strike his head with a reed and spit on him and then kneel down in homage to him. "And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him." And this leads us to the shame of the cross.

So what they would do, so they flog you, and then every person that would be crucified would have to carry their cross. This was a known thing. This was the custom. It wasn't just Jesus who had to carry his cross. You remember when Jesus earlier in Luke 9:23, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself daily and," what? "Take up his cross and follow me." When you were crucified, you'd have to pick up that beam, 150 pounds, some say 300 pounds, who knows how heavy, and you would have to carry your own cross to the place where you would be crucified.

So Jesus comes out of Pilate's headquarters on what they call the Via Dolorosa, the way of suffering. He walks and he can only make it a few steps. He can't carry his cross because of the beating and the flogging that he's endured and so they coaxed a man named Simon of Cyrene to carry his cross. And they carry the cross outside the city. So they go outside the city gate to a place called Golgotha which you have to understand about crucifixion is that crucifixion is one of the most terrible ways that a person can die. It was an execution method designed by the Persians, practiced by the Greeks but perfected by the Romans. It was designed as a means to shame your enemies. That's the point. That's why you don't just chop off somebody's head or stab him with a sword. They want you to be shamed. That's the point of the cross.

And what they would do is they would strip you of all your clothes. You were crucified completely naked. The pictures that you saw in grade school aren't accurate. Can't be accurate. They took every piece of clothing off of you and then they nailed you to the cross. And they would put nails either right in your palms but normally right between the two bones in your arm, the radius and the ulna, they'd put it right in between in your

wrist, and then sometimes they'd put another nail through both of your heels. And then the only way for you to get oxygen is to pull yourself up exerting pressure on those nails and the nerves in your arms and in your feet, so that you can literally breathe. And then you let yourself down and you begin to suffocate again. And you do that again and again and again until you die of suffocation.

Martin Hengel was a German scholar who did a study, a little book called "The Crucifixion." This is what he said. He said, "By the public display of a naked victim at a prominent place at a crossroads, in a theater, on high ground, at the place of his crime, crucifixion also represented his uttermost humiliation." He then goes on to say that it was, "a matter of subjecting the victim to the utmost indignity." It was the greatest shame that you could possibly imagine. It really brings meaning, doesn't it, to what Paul says in Galatians 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.'" Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.

So all of this happens, by the way, before 9:00 AM. It's a lot to take place before 9:00 AM. Jesus is crucified in the third hour, which is roughly 9:00 AM, give or take. And what happens is they cast lots, that the Roman soldiers cast lots for his clothes. They realize that his garment was seamless and they couldn't split it and that's why they cast lots for it. By the way, that was predicted in Psalm 22 over a thousand years before; David said that the Messiah would have his clothes gambled over. They crucify him in the middle of the two other thieves. Who is supposed to be on that cross, the middle cross? You remember? Barabbas. Barabbas was the actual insurrectionist. They put him on the cross where the real criminal was supposed to go and Pilate had a sign placed above his head written in three languages, "King of the Jews," in Aramaic, Greek and Latin. And what happens is essentially everyone who walked on the road next to the cross mocked Jesus until he died.

So look at verse 29 of Mark 15. "And those who passed by derided him." You know, you've got to think this is on the road going into the city. You have people coming out of the city, people going into the city. Those who pass by derided him, "wagging their heads and saying, 'Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!' So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.'" And look at this, "Those who were crucified with him also reviled him."

So public shame from literally everyone. Of course, we know that one of those thieves would repent and turn to Christ. But the worst shame is what we see in the next verses and this is the shame from God himself and this, I think is what broke his heart. "And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" Why have you forsaken me? Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:21, he made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf. Not that he became a sinner, but that he bore our punishment on the cross.

So there was a vertical transaction taking place right here in this moment. The foulness of our shame draped his soul. It was the stench of our sin on his sinless body and the penalty that we deserved, he paid. The penalty that we deserved, he paid. The shame that we deserved, he bore. And what I want you to see from this just very quickly, just some thoughts for you to think about because I think we fail to understand the deep shame of our sin, for my sin of your sin because listen, if Jesus had to save just you and nobody else, just you, he still would have endured the same thing. That's how shameful our sin is before God. And he did it because he loves you and you weren't worthy to do it yourself. But when you look at the cross, you see how truly wretched our sin really is. The Lord of glory on the tree, suffering my shame for me. It helps you understand why the prophet said even our righteous deeds are like filthy rags, that he had to endure that for you.

Another thing to think about is the great weightiness of God, the honor of God, this reality that God must be honored and that there is a massive price to pay in order to do it. We don't fear God like we should. God is in the heavens, he is a holy God and he deserves to be honored. So when you look at the cross, you see the majesty of God. You see Jesus demonstrating the honor of God, that that is what it took to have God's justice appeased. Nothing less than the shameful death of his own Son was necessary. The reason why our country minimizes sin is because we have a very small vision of God, and at the cross you see God in all of his greatness and his holiness.

The third thing I want you to think about is that the story doesn't end here. I want you to think about the eternal honor of Christ, because the Lord Jesus did this, the God man, he deserves all of the honor and all of the glory from here unto eternity forever and ever. All of it. All of it. Listen to what Paul says. This is Philippians 1:20. He says, "it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death." He deserves all of the honor. He says in chapter 2, he says because of what he endured on the cross, he says, "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." And he was honored in the resurrection, and he was honored in his ascension, and he will be honored forever and ever and every single knee, the knee of Pilate, of the Pharisees, of Caiaphas, of Annas, of the criminals, of the passersby, they will all one day bow before the Lord Jesus Christ and give him the honor that he deserves. That is a fact.

In lastly, if you are in Christ and you have trusted in him in faith, then what Christ endured on the cross, that shame, is credited to you and there is no more shame for you, that when God sees you, he sees you as pure and clean and cleansed from all your shame. Just one more verse. Paul says Colossians 1, "And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him." Above reproach means without shame. God presents you without shame through the blood of Christ, the blood of his Son.

That's the meaning of the cross. That's why he came. That's why the God man.

*Heavenly Father, we look at the cross and we just can't believe the love that you have displayed for us, just the intense shame that you endured for us. It's really staggering of what our salvation actually cost. The cost is so great because our sin is so great, because your holiness is so pure. And so, Lord, our only response is 1) to come to you, to cling to you, to cling to the cross of Christ and know there we can find forgiveness and all of our sin and shame wiped away. And then to thank you, and as Paul said, to live for your honor. We pray, Lord, that we would do this with your help. In Christ's name. Amen.*

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