

Uplifted Savior

Portraits of Jesus—John 19

March 28, 2021

Notice Jesus' commitment to the Father's purpose over His own comfort. This is seen in (1) His interactions, (2) fulfilling prophecies, and (3) honoring God no matter His suffering.

DAY 1: "Crucify! Crucify!"

1. "Bloodthirsty" describes not just the desire to spill blood and kill, but also animus, hatred, and often revenge. We see this kind of fiendish rage in our time. This is clearly seen here.

John 19:14 It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. ¹⁵ But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

2. Though the Jewish leaders shouted their supposed loyalty to Caesar, they hated Caesar and deeply resented Roman rule. These religious men hated Jesus even more. Why? Ultimately, it came down to their own vested interests. If Jesus was the Messiah, their role at the top of religious life was over, their status gone and perhaps their careers ended. If they had remembered their Old Testament history they would have remembered that God was their King (See Judges 8:23 and 1 Sam. 8:7).

John 19:16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. ¹⁷ Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).

3. "Golgotha" is the Hebrew word for "skull." "Calvary" comes from the Latin word *calvaria* which also means "skull."

John 19:18 Here they crucified him, and with him two others--one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

4. Being crucified with two thieves also fulfilled another prophecy

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

John 19:23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. ²⁴ "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did.

5. The clothing of the condemned was part of their pay. Notice another Messianic prophecy fulfilled in verse 24. (See Psalm 22:18).

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: The crucifixion of Christ

John 19:19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰ Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. ²¹ The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

1. Why did Pilate have this notice nailed to the cross? He knew something was terribly wrong about this whole episode. It was something that the Jewish authorities “forced him” to do. He didn’t want responsibility for this terrible decision. Yet, he was caught in the jaws of two competing forces. First, he was the political leader of the Jews. He must keep the peace. Second, he was under the authority of the Caesar. Whatever decisions Pilate made had to ensure Roman authority.
2. The sign nailed to the cross served two purposes. First it attempted to appease the Jewish authorities and people. Second, it made a statement to the Roman authorities that a rebellious king had been executed. Tragically for Pilate, the sign did not take away the responsibility and guilt for his decision to have Jesus crucified.
3. The sign was meant to communicate to everyone the utter defeat of this Jewish king. Ironically, it would mean the exact opposite. This was the moment that the kingdom of God would defeat the kingdom of Satan! This would be the mortal blow to Satan’s kingdom.
4. The irony of the sign is that it is true. Jesus is a king. He ushered in a new kingdom. But He is not just king of the Jews, but of all who believe on Him, both Jew and Gentile.

John 19:25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," ²⁷ and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

5. This could have been Salome, John’s mother. That would have made James, John, and Jesus cousins. Mary, the wife of Clopas was the mother of James the younger. Mary Magdalene is the first person Jesus appears to after the resurrection.
6. These scenes provide incredible contrasts to the crucifixion of Christ. All the disciples except John were nowhere to be found, the soldiers were numb to their duty, the people and religious leaders came sneering and scorning Jesus. Only these four women and John understood the tragedy of the scene and came to be with Jesus in His suffering.
7. The glory of God in John 17 is demonstrated here. Jesus turns His mind and affections toward others in spite of His suffering. He is reflecting the glory of Trinitarian love at any cost to Himself.

8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 3: The death of Jesus

Of all the ways someone could be put to death, crucifixion was the cruelest and most shameful. Physically, it was a slow, lingering death that could last for more than a day, with intense pain in strained muscles and joints. It was most shameful in that it became a public spectacle with scorning, mockery and humiliation. The image of someone dying on a cross was unforgettable.

John 19:28 Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

1. What was it that "was now completed?" (See also John 17:4)

2. Jesus went to the cross to accomplish the work of atonement for sin. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Matthew records that Jesus experienced three hours of darkness, the wrath of God for sin, separation from God His Father, and bitter isolation. When people talk about "hell on earth" they should consider this scene!

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

3. *Tetelestai* (Gk.) can be translated "accomplished" or "fulfilled." (John 4:34; 17:4). It was also used by businessmen as in "paid in full."

4. Again and again, Jesus insisted that no one would take His life from Him. He would voluntarily give it up. This is confirmed in verse 30.

John 19:31 Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. ³² The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

John 19:34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. ³⁵ The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.

5. The imagery cannot be missed. His blood provides for our atonement, and the water provides for our purification. The awful stain of sin is dealt with.

John 19:36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," ³⁷ and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

5. The gospel of John has given us numerous images of the death of Jesus. (1) The Lamb of God who would be slain (John 1:29), the destruction of the temple (John 2:19); the serpent lifted up (John 3:14); the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11-18); and the seed dying in the ground that would produce fruit (John 12:24)

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: The seven last words of the cross

1. Consider what people call the “seven last words of Christ.”

2. He thought about others even in His crucifixion! He thought about:

(1). Those who crucified Him.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

(2). The repentant thief.

*Luke 23:42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."
⁴³ Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*

(3). His mother, John and others.

John 19:25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," ²⁷ and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

(4). His relationship with God the Father.

Matthew 27:46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"--which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

(5). His body.

John 19:28 Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

(6). His mission.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

(7). His life. “Into your hand I commit My spirit.”

Luke 23:46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

3. Even in His suffering He was in relationship with God and people, and on mission.

4. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 5: His burial

John 19:38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

1. Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy, respected member of the Council. He was a disciple of Jesus, and a good and righteous man. He had not agreed with what was decided about Jesus. He looked forward to the kingdom of God.

John 19:39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

2. Nicodemus was introduced back in John 3. He was also a part of the Jewish council, but also disagreed with how they dealt with Jesus.

John 19:40 Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

3. It took immense courage for these two men to perform this ministry to Jesus, publicly. They risked their reputation and position.

John 19:41 At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴² Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

4. The tomb belonged to Joseph.

5. Even in His burial, Jesus accomplished another Messianic prophecy. He “made His grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death.

Isaiah 53:9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?