

24 Hours That Changed the World by Adam Hamilton
Session 6- The Crucifixion

Session Goals:

- Explore the Gospel's account of Jesus' death on the cross;
- Compare several ways to think about how Jesus' death saves us;
- Hear in Jesus' dying words echoes of his purpose and mission as God's Messiah.

Opening Prayer -

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the word of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame. **(Psalm 22:1-5)**

Biblical Foundation

*It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way, the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him. When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" **(Mark 15:25-39)***

Watch the Video (9:06 minutes)

Questions for Discussion -

- In his sermon excerpt, Adam says that the cross is a reminder that (1) we need saving, (2) God experiences suffering because of our brokenness, (3) God has chosen to be merciful and forgiving toward us, and (4) God loves us. How do you respond to those reminders?

- What does the cross mean to you?

Bible Study and Discussion:

Traditionally, Christians have revered the four Gospel accounts of the words Jesus spoke while on the cross. Ask for volunteers to read aloud each of these "seven last words of Christ." After each of the seven sentences, use the following questions to guide the group's discussion:

-How do Jesus' words give meaning to the Gospels' claim of who Jesus is?

1. "Here is your mother" (John 19:27).

2. "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

3. "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

4. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:24; Mark 15:34; also see Psalm 22:1). Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the word of my groaning?

5. "I am thirsty" (John 19:28).

6. "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit: (Luke 23:46).

7. "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Ask for a volunteer to read aloud Romans 5, focusing especially on verses 6-11. Use the question that follows to guide discussion.

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. ⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. ¹² Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—¹³ To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. ¹⁵ But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶ Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through

the one man, Jesus Christ! ¹⁸ Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, ²¹ so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- According to Romans 5, how does Jesus' death on the cross bring about our salvation?

Wrapping Up In Perspective

To conclude the session, ask group members to consider and discuss one or more of the following perspectives. For the painting of **Velazquez's *Christ On The Cross***, google it or print out a color copy and display it or pass it around for the group to see.

AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

According to Adam Hamilton, it is now believed that most crosses were not much more than nine feet tall. In that case, Jesus would have only been three feet or so above the ground. Imagine that you are standing or sitting just three feet from the spikes that hold Jesus' bloody feet in place on the cross. What image most captivates your attention? What do you hear? How do you respond?

INSIDE THE HEART OF THE ROMAN CENTURION

Imagine that you are standing alone, facing the body of Jesus, now dead upon the cross. You have heard his loud cry and seen him take his last breath. Perhaps you have been nearby since Jesus was nailed to the crossbeam. What is it about Jesus that might have prompted you to say, "Truly this man was God's Son!" (Mark 15:39)?

IN FRONT OF VELAZQUEZ'S *CHRIST ON THE CROSS*

One of Velazquez's achievements was to make his paintings seem to come alive with just the right luminosity. The irony in this particular painting is that the dying body of Christ appears real (or alive) enough to step down from the cross. What other features of Velazquez's Christ strike you? What aspects of the Gospel's account of Christ's death on the cross do you think the painter wanted to portray to his viewers?

Sharing Joys & Concerns

Closing Prayer

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. (Galatians 1:3-5)