



THE CROSS

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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The Cross

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 3:18

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1779

The cross of Jesus Christ is the cure for sin. 1 Peter 3:18 points out three truths about how God forgives and deals with sin through the cross.

The very first truth is the vicarious suffering of the cross.

The word vicarious means “in the place of another”. 1 Peter 3:18 says, “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust...” Jesus, who is the just, sinless Son of God, died for the unjust, us. He became our substitute. He faced emotional and bodily suffering unlike anything we could possibly imagine.

In the Old Testament, God instituted the ritual of the Passover Lamb. There was judgment upon the land because of sin, but God told His people to kill a perfect, spotless lamb. They were to take the blood of that lamb and put it upon the doorpost of their houses. 1 Peter 1:18-19 says, “For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot...” Jesus' crucifixion bears the symbolism of that Passover Lamb. God was using the Passover lamb as a prophecy and a picture of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Notice also the vital satisfaction of the cross.

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sin...” Once; once for all. The debt has been paid in full. To say that there needs to be another sacrifice for sin is blasphemy. It is finished.

We see also the victorious salvation of the cross.

“He hath suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” Sin separates us from a Holy God. The cross reconciles us a Holy God. Adrian Rogers says, “On that cross, Jesus took Holy God with one hand, sinful man with the other hand and by the blood of His cross, He hath reconciled God and man.”

God has a way of bringing us back.

“Oh the love that thought it; oh the grace that brought it.” – Adrian Rogers

Life Application

Do you believe in the cross of Jesus Christ? The vicarious suffering, the vital satisfaction, the victorious salvation? Thank God for the sacrifice He made through Jesus Christ to bring us back to Him.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Sin was the reason for the cross.
 - i) In the media, we hear of arson, pillage, war, pornography, and disaster, but we never hear the word sin.
- b) Life is short; death is sure.
- c) Sin is the curse; Christ is the cure.
 - i) How does He cure?
 - (1) He cures through the cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- d) 1 Peter 3:18
 - i) There is enough Gospel dynamite in this one verse to blow the sin, the hatred, the sorrow, and the sickness out of anybody's life.
 - (1) But that dynamite must be ignited by the spark of faith.
- e) Sin is a clenched fist in the face of God.
 - i) Only God can forgive sin.
- f) God is a holy God; and sin is an affront, a reproach, and a rebellion against Him.
 - i) Sin must be dealt with.
- g) Today's message points out three wonderful truths about how God forgives sin and how God deals with sin.

2) THE VICARIOUS SUFFERING OF THE CROSS (1 PETER 3:18)

- a) The word "vicarious" means "in the place of another" or "substitutionary".
- b) 1 Peter 3:18
 - i) The "just" in this passage is Jesus.
 - (1) Jesus never sinned.
 - (2) He is the virgin-born, sinless, and spotless Son of God.
 - ii) We are the unjust.
 - (1) Jesus became our substitute.
- c) All through the Bible, God has taught the lesson of substitution.
- d) The first day of Passover is also Palm Sunday.
 - i) This is not by happenstance.
 - ii) What is Passover?
 - (1) Exodus 12:1-14
 - (2) In the Old Testament, God gave a prophecy and a picture of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (a) He instituted the ritual of the Passover lamb.
 - (3) There was judgment upon the land because of sin.
 - (4) God told His people to take a spotless lamb without blemish.
 - (a) They were to kill the lamb; the blood was to be shed.
 - (5) They were to take the blood of the lamb and put it upon the doorpost of their house, not on the inside but on the outside.



- (a) This was to be done openly, publicly, and unashamedly.
- (b) The blood was to be upon the lintel and upon the side posts.
 - (i) This was the sign of the cross.
 - 1. This was a picture and a prophecy of the blood of Jesus Christ.
- (6) When God saw the blood, He would pass over them.
 - (a) That is how we got the word "Passover."
 - (b) If the blood was put beneath your feet and you passed over the blood, then God would not pass over you.
 - (c) When you put yourself under the blood, the death angel (the judgment of Almighty God) would pass over you.
- (7) The Passover lamb is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (a) 1 Peter 1:18-19
 - (b) Jesus is the Passover Lamb.
 - (i) He is the Lamb without blemish and without spot.
- iii) Jesus Christ would die upon Mount Moriah.
 - (1) This is the same place where Abraham offered up his only begotten son, Isaac.
 - (a) Genesis 22:1-14
 - (2) This is the same place where the temple was built.
- iv) Jesus was born in Bethlehem, not many miles away from Mount Moriah.
 - (1) By the time of Christ, the priests and the Levites had instructed a special rank of shepherds to grow very special lambs, Passover lambs.
 - (a) These were the finest and the best lambs.
 - (b) They were grown in Bethlehem.
- v) On Passover week, the lambs would come from the fields of Boaz at Bethlehem and go up to the Temple Mount through the sheep gate.
 - (1) There, they would be examined by the high priest and by the Levites.
 - (2) On the same day, the Lord Jesus (God's lamb) came down from the Mt. of Olives, riding upon a donkey, as He went up to Mount Moriah.
 - (a) The lambs and God's lamb entered into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.
- vi) The priests examined the Passover lambs.
 - (1) They looked inside the mouth.
 - (2) They went through the fleece.
 - (3) They would examine the hooves, the eyes, and even the eyelids.
 - (a) If there was any flaw, then that lamb would not be worthy.
 - (i) He had to be a special lamb; a lamb without spot or blemish.
- vii) There was another lamb born in Bethlehem; Mary had a little lamb.
 - (1) His fleece was white as snow.
 - (a) He never knew sin.
 - (b) He was the virgin-born Son of God.
 - (c) God's sinless lamb.
 - (2) He was the lamb Abraham spoke about on Mount Moriah.
 - (a) Genesis 22:8
 - (i) Not a lamb for Himself.
 - 1. He, Himself would be the lamb.
- viii) Much of the Gospels are given over to the last week of Jesus' life because it was the climax of it all.



- (1) It was there in that last week that Jesus was examined.
 - (a) He was examined by the Pharisees.
 - (b) He was examined by the Sadducees.
 - (c) He was examined by the Herodians.
 - (d) He was examined by the civil leaders.
 - (i) They found no fault in Him.
 1. John 7:46
 - (ii) Jesus could look all of them in the eye and say, "Which of you convicts me of sin?"
 1. John 8:46
- ix) Then came the day when the Passover lambs were slain.
 - (1) At 3:00 PM, the priest would sacrifice the spotless lambs.
 - (2) At the same time on Golgotha, God's Lamb poured out His blood for the sin of mankind.
 - (a) Jesus said from the cross, "It is finished."
 - (i) John 19:30
 - (ii) It was paid in full.
 - (iii) The job of the priests, Levites, and shepherds was finished.
 1. Jesus, God's lamb, died upon that cross.
 - a. The purpose of the cross was substitution.
- e) When the Lord Jesus Christ died, He fulfilled another Old Testament symbolism.
 - i) The high priest would take a goat called "the scapegoat".
 - (1) He would lay his hand upon the head of the goat and confess the sins of the people.
 - (2) The goat would be led outside the city wall and killed.
 - (a) His blood would be shed.
 - (b) This is the reason the Bible tells us that Jesus died outside of the city.
 - (3) Jesus is our scapegoat.
 - (a) Our sins were laid upon Him.
 - (b) He carried those sins to the cross, and in agony He died.
 - ii) Pilate didn't want to crucify the Lord Jesus, but Pilate was a fence-straddling politician; whatever buttered his bread determined his conduct.
 - (1) The people were clamoring for the blood of Jesus.
 - (2) There was another prisoner named Barabbas.
 - (a) He was a thief, murderer, and an insurrectionist.
 - (3) According to tradition, a prisoner would be released to the people.
 - (4) Pilate let the people choose whom they would pardon: Barabbas or Jesus.
 - (a) They chose Barabbas.
 - (b) They said to let Jesus be crucified.
 - (i) This was the same fickle crowd that on Palm Sunday was saying, "Hail Him."
 1. John 12:13
 - (5) Jesus died in Barabbas' place.
 - (a) There were three crosses.
 - (i) The middle cross was made for Barabbas.
 - (b) Jesus was crucified on that cross instead of Barabbas.
 - (i) We don't know if Barabbas was ever saved, but God arranged a perfect picture of substitution.
 1. "The just for the unjust."



- a. 1 Peter 3:18
 - b. "Jesus for all mankind."
- f) "Christ also hath suffered for sin."
 - i) 1 Peter 3:18
 - ii) Tongue cannot tell, throat cannot sing, and hand cannot paint the tragedy that was called Calvary and the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iii) There was the emotional suffering of Christ.
 - (1) Matthew 26:38
 - (2) Luke 22:44
 - (a) He was in such agony that the minute capillaries ruptured and broke down.
 - iv) There was the bodily suffering of the Lord Jesus.
 - (1) They scourged the Lord Jesus.
 - (a) In a scourging, the victim's hands would be tied, and he would be hoisted up until he was on the balls of his feet to increase the pain.
 - (b) The scourging instrument was a whip with a sturdy handle and leather thongs.
 - (i) On the ends of the thongs were bits of bone, metal, and glass.
 - (c) There would be two scourgers.
 - (i) One would start at the nape of the neck and work downward.
 - (ii) The other would start at the ankles and work upward.
 - (d) No one walked away from a scourging; they crawled away.
 - (i) That is why the Bible says that they brought Him to the judgment hall.
 - 1. He was too weak to walk.
 - 2. You can understand why Jesus later stumbled and fell beneath the cross.
 - (2) They battered Him with their fists.
 - (3) They beat Him with clubs.
 - (4) Then, they took Him out for the actual crucifixion.
 - (a) Crucifixion was meant to be cruel.
 - (i) It was meant to inspire stark terror.
 - (b) The word "excruciating" comes from a Latin word that literally means "out of the cross".
 - (i) Our word "excruciating" comes from "crucifixion."
 - (c) They would nail the victim's hands to the cross.
 - (i) They would drive the nails through the nerves.
 - (d) They would nail the victim's feet to the cross.
 - (e) The weight of the body would come down upon the chest, and the person who was crucified would gasp for breath.
 - (i) In order to breathe, he had to lift himself up.
 - 1. In order to lift himself, he had to push down on the nails in his feet.
 - a. He would be between gasping for breath and searing pain.
 - (f) There was nausea, shock, and searing pain as every nerve in the body became a pathway for the pain.
 - v) Not only did Jesus Christ drink the cup (the pollution of sin), but He also wore the crown (the penalty of sin).
 - (1) Jesus never sinned; He was the just for the unjust.
 - (2) Jesus paid the price.
 - (a) The price was separation from Almighty God.



- (b) Not only would God the Father be separated from Him, but for that moment Jesus would become the object of the Father's loathing.
 - (i) God the Father looked upon Him as God the Father would look upon a sinner.
 - (ii) God the Father dealt with Jesus as He would deal with a sinner.
- (c) 1 Peter 3:18

3) THE VITAL SATISFACTION OF THE CROSS (1 PETER 3:18)

- a) 1 Peter 3:18
 - i) The word "once" here does not mean "once upon a time"; it means "once for all".
- b) When Jesus said "It is finished", He meant that the debt had been paid.
 - i) John 19:30
 - ii) In Rome when a man had been found guilty of a crime, he would be put in prison, and a certificate of debt would be written.
 - (1) This told of his debt to the state and to society and what his crime had incurred.
 - (a) It would be placed on his prison door.
 - (2) After he had paid the penalty and satisfied the demands of the law, they would write across the certificate of debt, "Paid in full," and give it to him.
 - (a) The word they would write was tetelestai; "it was finished."
 - (i) The man would not have to go back to prison again.
 - (ii) He would never come into double jeopardy.
 - 1. He could not be charged with the same crime twice.
 - iii) "He hath once suffered for sin."
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:18
 - (2) What blasphemy to say that again there needs to be another sacrifice for sin.
 - (3) Hebrews 10:12-14
 - (a) This is why we can believe in eternal security.
 - (b) After you are saved, you cannot lose your salvation.
 - (i) But suppose you could get lost after you got saved.
 - 1. For you to be saved again, Jesus would have to die again.
 - (c) When Jesus died, it was good for one salvation only.
 - (i) It is done; it is paid in full.
 - 1. There is nothing you can do, and there is nothing you need to do.
- c) Isaiah 53:11
 - i) God is satisfied with what Jesus did on the cross.
 - (1) The sin debt is paid.

4) THE VICTORIOUS SALVATION OF THE CROSS (1 PETER 3:18)

- a) "That He might bring us to God."
 - i) Sin separates us from a holy God.
 - ii) On the cross, Jesus took holy God with one hand and sinful man with the other hand.
 - (1) He has reconciled God and man.
 - (2) He has made peace by the blood of His cross.
 - (a) Romans 5:10



- iii) In the Greek language, the word “bring” means to take an individual and present him to a king or a dignitary.
 - (1) That is what Jesus has done.
 - (a) Jesus has taken us by the hand to present us to God the Father.
 - (b) He brings us to God.
 - (i) He says, “Father, these are Mine. I purchased them with My blood on that cross.”
- b) King David, in the Old Testament, had a son named Absalom.
 - i) Absalom rebelled against David.
 - ii) There was a woman in the kingdom who told David that he needed to reconcile with his son, but David did not do it.
 - (1) She said that David was not acting like God.
 - (2) 2 Samuel 14:14
 - (a) This is a great Gospel text in the Old Testament.
 - (b) God has a way of bringing us back.
- c) God devised a means that His banished be not separated from Him.
 - i) Jesus died for you on that cross.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) God will save you.
 - i) He “suffered the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.”
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:18
- b) God is satisfied by what Jesus did on that cross, and now you must receive it.
- c) What should you do today?
 - i) Put your faith where God has put your sins: on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you take God's Word and be finding please, First Peter chapter 3 and verse 18! What a marvelous depiction we have of the cross of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But here is the question: what was the reason for the cross? What was the necessity of the cross? I can give it to you in one word and that one word is sin. Now you pick up the newspapers this morning and you read of arson, you read of rape, pillage, war, pornography, disaster and when you read all of that you never read the word sin. Life is short. Death is sure. Sin the curse, Christ the cure. And how does He cure? Through the cross of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Listen to this Scripture, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins." Why the cross? "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Say, isn't that a great verse? Is that not a great verse? There is enough Gospel dynamite in that one verse to blow the sin, the hatred, the sorrow, the sickness, out of anybody's life. But that dynamite must be ignited by the spark of faith. I want us to learn today exactly how God forgives sin. How God deals with sin.

Suppose someone were to come up and with their big fist, punch you in the nose. And suppose in an act of compassion, you were to say to that person who punched you in the nose, "I forgive you." And suppose they said to you, "Oh, there's no need for you to forgive me, I've already forgiven myself." And then, suppose the person standing by said, "Oh, well neither one of you need to worry about it. I have forgiven both of you", and you were the one who got punched in the nose. Friend, listen to me, only the punchee can forgive the puncher. Now understand that. Sin, is a clenched fist in the face of God and only God can forgive sin. And away with all of the psychological, psycho-babble that says we need to forgive ourselves and we need to affirm one another and we need to forgive one another. There is a holy God. God is a holy God and sin is an affront, a reproach, a rebellion against a holy God and that sin must be dealt with. We've said that over and over again.

Out text today points out three wonderful, wonderful truths about how God forgives sin and how God deals with sin. The very first thing I want you to see as we look at our text, and that again, First Peter chapter 3 verse 18, is **the vicarious suffering of the cross**. Do you have that down? The vicarious suffering of the cross. The word vicarious means in the place of another. The word vicarious means, substitutionary. Look at it, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." That is, Jesus, who is just, who never sinned, the virgin born, sinless, spotless, stainless Son of God. The just died for the unjust. The unjust, that's me, you, we're the ones, He became our substitute. All through the Bible, God has been teaching the lesson of substitution.

Today is the first day of Passover. It is also Palm Sunday. Do you think that it is by happenstance? Oh, oh, my friend, no. What is Passover? Well back in the Old Testament, God wanted to give a prophecy and a picture of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. So He instituted the ritual of the Passover Lamb. There was judgment upon the land because of sin, but God told His people to take a lamb, a spotless lamb without spot, without blemish, they were to kill that lamb. The blood was to be shed and then they were to take the blood of that lamb, you will remember, and put the blood of that lamb upon the doorpost of their house. Not on the inside, on the outside. Openly, publicly, unashamedly, the blood of the lamb. And have you thought about it? It was to be upon the lintel and upon the side posts. Now just think of a person with a sop with blood and he goes to put that blood here and here and here. What has he done? He made the



sign of the cross? Even there, so old, so long ago, God is picturing and God is prophesying that it is the blood.

And God said to those Israelites so long ago, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." And that's how we get the word Passover. God will pass over you when the blood is applied, but if you put the blood beneath your feet and you pass over the blood, God will not pass over you. But when you put yourself under the blood, then God, the death angel, the judgment of Almighty God will pass over you. And this Passover Lamb, it's all a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You're in First Peter, go back to First Peter chapter 1 and look with me if you will in verse 18. First Peter chapter 1 and verse 18 and 19, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers," but now watch it, "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Jesus is the Passover Lamb. He is the Lamb without blemish and without spot. Over here is the Mount of Olives where Jesus prayed in Gethsemane. Over here is Mount Moriah, where Jesus Christ will die. Mount Moriah, the same place where Abraham was willing to offer up his only begotten son, Isaac. The same place where the temple was built. Mount of Olives, Mount Moriah. Down here is Bethlehem where Jesus was born, not many miles away.

By the time of Christ, the priests and the Levites had instructed a special rank of shepherds to grow very special lambs, Passover lambs. These were the finest, the best. They were grown in Bethlehem. On Passover week, those lambs would be coming from the fields of Boaz from Bethlehem, up to the Temple Mount and they would be going in through the sheep gate. Up there to be examined by the high priests and by the Levites, by the high priests and the other priests and the Levites. Coming down from the Mount of Olives, the same day riding upon a donkey is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Lamb, going up to Mount Moriah. On the same day, the lambs and God's Lamb entering into the city. Palm Sunday, Passover, the same day. This day so long ago. When those lambs came, those priests began to look at those lambs and examine those lambs. They would look inside the mouth. They would go through the fleece, the little hooves, the eyes, even the eyelids were examined. If there were any flaw, that lamb was not worthy. He had to be a special lamb, a lamb without spot or blemish!

But the same time those lambs were coming, God's Lamb was coming. You see, there was another Lamb born in Bethlehem. Mary had a little lamb. His fleece was white as snow. He never knew sin! He was the virgin born Son of God! God's sinless Lamb! The lamb that Abraham talked about on Mount Moriah when he said in Genesis 22:8, "God will provide Himself a Lamb." Not a lamb for himself, He himself will be the Lamb. "God will provided Himself a Lamb." See now how it comes to place. See how it's all coming together.

Have you ever wondered why so much of the Gospels are given over to the last week of Jesus' life? Have you ever thought about that? I mean, so much that Jesus did. But it is the last week. Why? Because this is the climax of it all and it is there in that last week that Jesus is being examined. He is being examined by the Pharisees. He is being examined by the Sadducees. He is being examined by the Herodians. He is being examined by the civil leaders and they all have to say, "I find no fault in Him. Never a man spake like this man." Oh, Jesus was there. Jesus could look at all of them, God's perfect Lamb, and Jesus Christ could look them in the eye and say as He did in John 8:46, "Which of you convinces Me of sin?" That is, convicts Me of sin? He was the sinless, spotless Lamb and He was being examined.

Then came that day, that day when the Passover lamb was to be slain. At 3:00 in the afternoon, the priest would tilt the head of that little spotless lamb and take their sharp and lethal knives and slit the throat of that little lamb. The same time that was happening, on cruel Golgotha, God's Lamb was pouring



out His precious, precious, ruby red, royal blood for the sin of mankind. And in John 19 verse 30, Jesus said from that cross, "It is done. It is finished. It is paid in full." And priests, I want to tell you, you can go home now. Levites, put away your knives. Shepherds, your job is finished because it's done! Amen? It is done. Hallelujah! It is finished. Jesus, God's Lamb, died upon that cross. The purpose of the cross is substitution. Passover has shown us very clearly and very plainly.

Again, when the Lord Jesus Christ died, He fulfilled another Old Testament symbolism. The high priest would take a goat called the scapegoat. He would lay his hands upon the head of that goat and confess the sins of the people upon the head of that goat. Then that goat would be led outside the city and there outside the city wall that goat would be killed, his blood would be shed. And that's the reason the Bible tells us that Jesus died outside the city walls. Because Jesus was our scapegoat. Our sins were laid upon Him and He carried those sins to the cross and in agony and blood He died.

Another illustration, Pilate was there in his judgment hall. Pilate did not want to crucify the Lord Jesus. Pilate was a fence-straddling politician and whatever buttered his bread, determined his conduct. And so he's trying to get out of this situation. And the people are clamoring for the blood of Jesus. Pilate thinks he has an ingenious scheme. Well, he says, "We've got another man here. That man's name is Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a thief. Barabbas was a murderer. Barabbas was an insurrectionist and they thought, "Surely, if there was ever a man that needs to be put to death, it's Barabbas." So here's what Pilate says. In Matthew 27 verses 15 through 26, Pilate says, "According to tradition, we always release a prisoner to the people. We let them choose whom they will pardon and so we have here Barabbas. And we have here Jesus. Which of these two do you wish that I will release to you?" And do you know what they said? "Barabbas!" But he said, "What then shall I do with Jesus, who's called the Christ?" They said, "Let Him be crucified." That's the same crowd, the same fickle crowd, when He was coming in on Palm Sunday, who were saying, "Hail Him, hail Him," and now they're saying, "Nail Him, nail Him." Oh, the wickedness of human hearts. And they are saying, "Let Jesus be crucified." And they carried Jesus, God's Passover Lamb, Jesus, God's scapegoat. They carried Him out here. The just for the unjust and He is hung up on a cruel Roman cross to die.

But I want you to picture another scene. I want you to see a Roman soldier, he has a torch. He walks down a narrow corridor in a Roman prison. He comes to a door that has iron bars on it. He holds the torch up, back in the shadows on a mat of straw is a man. That man is trembling like a bird caught in a cage, caught in a trap. That man's face is the mirror of evil and yet fear is written all over him. The guard with his key opens the door and says, "Barabbas, get up and come with me." See Barabbas as he begins to plead and say, "No, no, wait, wait, don't, don't take me! Please, have mercy!" The Roman soldier says, "Barabbas, quit sniffing. I've never seen a man with the fortune and the luck that you have. Barabbas, you rascal. You're not going to die, there's somebody else who's going to die in your place. Come here Barabbas. Look over on that hill. Do you see the middle cross? Barabbas, that's the cross we had made for you, but there's someone else on that cross. He has taken your place." I don't mean to say or infer that Barabbas was saved or he ever got saved, but I am saying that God has arranged a perfect picture of substitution. "The just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." And so the very first thing that I want you to see in how God forgives sin is what I want to call the vicarious suffering of the cross.

But look at our text, First Peter 3:18, look at it. It says, "Christ also hath suffered for sin. He hath suffered for sin." We have the Passion Play here, and the Passion Play depicts the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. But no Passion Play can really depict the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. I've told you before that tongue cannot tell, throat cannot sing, hand cannot paint, the tragedy that was called Calvary and the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was **the emotional suffering of Christ**. We talked about that when we talked about the cup. When the Lord Jesus said in Matthew chapter 26 and verse 38, "My soul is exceeding



sorrowful, even unto death." Oh, the emotional agony. Luke chapter 22 and verse 44, "And being in agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood."

Some years ago, somebody handed me an article from the American Medical Association journal. The journal of the American Medical Association. And in that journal the physicians were talking about the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. And they talked about this bloody sweat. It's called hematidrosis. And this is what the article said, "A very rare phenomenon. It may occur during highly emotional states or in persons with bleeding disorders. As a result of hemorrhage into the sweat glands, the person's skin becomes fragile and tender." This is what happened to the Lord Jesus. He is in such agony that the minute capillaries are rupturing and breaking down. There was the emotional suffering. It is in agony.

But not only was there the emotional suffering, there was **the bodily suffering of the Lord Jesus**. They scourged the Lord Jesus. The Romans knew how to scourge. They would tie the hands of the victim and hoist him till he's on the balls of his feet. This is to increase the pain. The back would become smooth as silk. The scourging instrument was a whip with a sturdy handle and then leather thongs. And on the ends of those leather thongs, there would be little bits of bone, and metal and glass, ingeniously tied. There would be two scourgers, two lictors. And as the body is stretched out, one would start at the nape of the neck and work downward. The other would start at the ankles and work upward. And as a team they would flay that person standing on the balls of his feet stretched out there. As the whip would reach around the body, each time it's pulled back, it pulls away a piece of flesh. These were experienced men. They knew how to do that. They knew how to pull away the flesh so as to expose the nerves and the muscles without yet disemboweling the individual.

And after a man is cut down from being scourged and he falls to the ground, men did not walk away from a scourging. They crawled away. That's the reason the Bible says in John 18:28, "They brought Him to the judgment hall." They brought Him, why? He's too weak to walk. You can understand why later Jesus stumbled and fell beneath the cross. The physical abuse of the Lord Jesus Christ. They battered Him with their fists. They beat Him with clubs. And then they took Him out for the actual crucifixion.

Do you know why the Romans used crucifixion? Do you know why they used the cross? You talk about cruel and unusual punishment. Crucifixion was meant to be cruel. Crucifixion was meant to be unusual. Crucifixion was meant to inspire stark terror! Anybody who saw a crucifixion said, "Whatever caused that, I will not do that! Romans whatever you tell me to do, I'll do it. But don't crucify me!" That's what crucifixion was all about. Have you ever heard the word excruciating? That comes from a Latin word, excruciatos. It literally means, out of the cross, out of the cross. Our word excruciating comes from crucifixion. It was out of the cross kind of pain, excruciating pain.

They would nail the victim's hands to that cross. They would separate the metacarpals, put the nail right there. Not really in the palm of the hand, but there in the wrist so the body would not fall from that cross. They would try if they could to hit the median nerve to send pain up the body and into the torso. They would drive those nails through those nerves. He would be crucified with his hands at a 90 degree angle, but when the body falls, it goes down to a 65 degree angle as the hands are out like this. And the feet are nailed to the cross. The weight of the body comes down on the chest and the person who's crucified is gasping for breath. And so in order to breathe, he has to lift himself, but in order to lift himself, he has to push down on those nails that are there on his feet and so he is between gasping for breath and searing with pain. He is there. And there is nausea and there is shock and there is a searing pain as every nerve in that body becomes a pathway for the feat of pain. And the individual stays there agonizingly long and dies an excruciating death.



There was the physical agony of the cross. There was the emotional agony, **the emotional suffering of the cross** as we preached last week. Not only did Jesus Christ drink the cup, that is the pollution of sin. But Jesus Christ wore the crown, that is the penalty of sin. And so the cup and the crown tell us of the cross and Jesus there having the pollution, bearing the penalty. Not that He ever sinned; He was the just for the unjust. But He paid that price. And what was that price? Separation from Almighty God. Not only would God the Father be separated from Him, but He for that moment would become the object of the Father's loathing and God the Father must look upon Him as God the Father would upon a sinner. And deal with Him as He would deal with a sinner. Now do you understand Peter's text? "Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust." That's the vicarious suffering of the cross. Do you have it? The vicarious suffering of the cross.

Now here's the second thing I want you to see. And friend, my heart was so moved as I studied for this sermon. I want you to see **the vital satisfaction of the cross**. Look at the text, and there's a word there I don't want you to miss. Look at it, First Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath," what's that next word? "Once, once, Christ also hath once suffered for sin." Friend, that does not mean once upon a time. That means once for all. That was a good place for an Amen. That means once for all. When Jesus said, "It is finished." He meant that the debt had been paid, absolutely.

Now remember that I told you before in Rome when a man would be put in prison, when a man would be adjudicated guilty for a crime, they would put that man in prison. They would write out a certificate of debt. This was his debt to the state. This was his debt to society. This is what his sin, his crime had incurred. It was called a certificate of debt and it would be placed on his prison door. And then after he had done his time, after he had paid the penalty, whatever it was, after he had satisfied the demands of the law, then they would write across that certificate of debt, "Paid in full", and give it to him. And do you know the word that they would write on there? Tetalesti. Do you know what that is? It is finished. It is finished. It is paid in full. That man won't have to go back to prison again. He'll never come into double jeopardy. If they ever arrest him for that crime again and say, "This is what you've done," he may say, "Yes, but I have paid. It is paid. It is done. You can't bring me in twice for the same crime." And this is what it says, "Jesus has once suffered for sin", and what blasphemy to say that again there needs to be another sacrifice for sin.

Listen to Hebrews chapter 10 verses 12 and 14 through 14, "This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." Now listen to this, "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Hallelujah. That's why I believe in eternal security.

Did you know for, if you were to ever get lost after you get saved, which you never could do, but let's suppose you could get lost after you got saved, for you to be saved again, Jesus would have to die again. You see, when Jesus died, it was good for one salvation only. "He by one sacrifice hath perfected forever." Jesus said, "It's finished, it's done, it's paid in full." There's nothing you can do, nothing you need do. There is the vicarious suffering of the cross. There is the vital satisfaction of the cross. The Bible says in Isaiah chapter 53 verse 11, "God the Father shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." God is satisfied with what Jesus did on the cross! The sin debt is paid! Hallelujah!

Now here's the third thing I want you to see. Not only the vicarious suffering of the cross. Not only the vital satisfaction of the cross, "He hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust." But I want you to see **the victorious salvation of the cross**, the victorious salvation. "He hath suffered for sin, the just for the unjust," why? "that He might bring us to God." Do you see it? Look at it, "That He might bring us to God." What does sin do? Sin separates us from a holy God. What does the cross do? On that cross, Jesus took



holy God with one hand, sinful man with the other hand and by the blood of His cross He hath reconciled God and man. He's made peace by the blood of His cross, with His cross that He might bring us to God. Listen to Romans 5 verse 10, "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life." That He might bring us to God. The word bring, prosago is the Greek word, it means to take an individual and present him to a king or a dignitary. That's what Jesus has done. Jesus has taken us by the hand to present us to God the Father. He's bringing us to God. He's saying, "Father these are mine. I purchased them with My blood on that cross." Does that excite you? Does that? Oh, it excites me.

King David in the Old Testament had a son. His name was Absalom. And Absalom rebelled against his father and there was a woman in the kingdom who said, "David, you need to do something to reconcile your son, to get him back, to bring your son back." But David did not do it. And the woman said, "David, you're not acting like God acts." And then I want you to jot this verse down in the margin of your Bible. It's a precious verse. Second Samuel 14:14. Here's what that woman said to David, "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth He devise means, that His banished be not expelled from Him." Isn't that a great Gospel text in the Old Testament? We're like water spilt on the ground and God doesn't respect persons and yet God has devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him. God has a way of bringing us back.

I want to tell you a story, a true story. The Readers' Digest recounted this story. There's was a man in Long Island, New York. That man was a commuter. He would ride the commuter train that would stop in Long Island, the subway. He would get on at 9:02 or 9:05 every morning and he would ride in. He was of a Hungarian background, business man in New York. Upon a day this man had a friend who was sick and so this business man whose name was Marcel Sternberger said, "I'm going to stay with my friend today and go in later." So Marcel Sternberger stayed with his sick friend and then rather than riding the 9:02 commuter, he got on the noonday commuter to ride to Long Island. He wasn't used to riding that train and the train was filled with people. And when Marcel Sternberger got on that train, a great host of people got off, a great host of people got on and Sternberger is looking for a seat. One man gets up and Sternberger says, "I'll get that seat", and he goes over and plunges into that seat and sits down.

Next to Marcel Sternberger is a man reading a newspaper and he spread it out and it is a Hungarian newspaper. Sternberger looks over, can read Hungarian. Sees the man is reading the classified ads and he says to the man, just conversationally, "Are you looking for a job?" And the man said, "No." He said, "I am, I am looking for my wife's name." He said, "Well tell me about it." Well, he said, "In the war we lived in Debrecen." Said, "The Nazi's were there and they began to oppress us. And the Nazis came and took me away from my home. I was happily married and the Nazis took me to the Ukraine to bury the German dead; I had to do that. I was afraid to leave my wife because I was afraid that the Nazis would come and put my wife in a concentration camp." But, he said, "I went and when I came back home after the war, I couldn't find my wife. I asked around and they said, 'Well, the Nazis came and they took a number of people off to Auschwitz, maybe your wife was taken there.' He said, "I began to read and study to find out what happened to the people who were taken to Auschwitz." Many of them you know ended up in the crematoriums where they were seared and burned in the holocaust. But he said, "I also read that when the allies came, they came into that prison camp and they freed some people." And he said, "I'm just thinking that perhaps my wife might not have been killed. She might have been freed."

"And then I got to thinking, maybe the allies took those people to America." And then he said, "I was thinking, if they took those people to America, where would be the point of entry? It would be New York."



And then he said, "I was thinking, if my wife would be in New York, she wouldn't know where I am. But I know my wife, she's a thinker. She would put an ad in the Hungarian newspaper and I'm just reading the newspaper, if by chance, I might find my wife."

Marcel Sternberger remembered that he had been, a few days before this, at a party. He had met a Hungarian woman. And she had given her name. She had said that she had lived in Debrecen. She had said that her husband was taken away to the Ukraine. Marcel Sternberger's mind began to run just like this. He said, "What is your wife's name?" The man said, "My wife's name is Maria Paskin." Sternberger, without saying a word, got out his wallet. Pulled out a slip of paper that he'd folded and looked at it. And there was the name Maria Paskin.

He said, "Sir, it's very important. Will you get off this train at the next stop with me? He didn't yet tell him why, but the man trusted him, they got off. Sternberger had Maria's telephone number. He went to a pay phone, put in a coin, dialed the number and said, "Hello, who's speaking." She said, "This is Maria." He said, "Maria, do you remember me? We met at a party about three days ago." "Yes, I remember you." "I'm Marcel Sternberger." "Yes, I remember you, Marcel." "Maria, did you have a husband, do you have a husband?" She said, "I don't know whether I have a husband or not, I did have one. But I've not seen him since the war." "Maria, what is your husband's name?" "My husband's name is Bela, Bela Paskin." He said, "Wait just a moment." "Sir, what is your first name?" He said, "Oh, my name is Bela, Bela Paskin." He said, "Sir, take this receiver, you are about to witness a miracle." He picked up the phone and said, "Hello? Maria, Maria, Maria, Maria!" Maria said she'd been praying that she could find her husband.

The Reader's Digest told that story and then they said, "Some will say if they're skeptical that was a chance." But the Digest asked this question: "Was it a chance that this man who normally rode the 9:02 rode the 12:00 train? Was it by chance that he sat in the one seat in that entire train that was unoccupied? Was it by chance that this man was reading a Hungarian newspaper? Was it by chance that three days earlier he had met this woman Maria and written her name down?" And then the Digest said, "No, it wasn't by chance. God rode the subway that morning. God devised means to bring these two together." But I want to tell you friend, there's a greater miracle than that. A greater miracle than that. God devised means that His banished be not separated from Him and Jesus on that cross died for you. Oh, the love that thought it. Oh, the grace that brought it. Wonderful, wonderful salvation.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed, eyes are closed. All of this if for you, for you, for you. He bowed his head and died. How many of you could say, "Pastor Rogers, if I died today I know I know I'd go to Heaven because I've been saved by the precious blood of Jesus." Now if you couldn't say that, if you would pray a prayer like this, "Oh God, I'm a sinner, I'm lost, I need to be saved. I want to be saved. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin and save me." He will save you because He suffered the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God. Oh friend, hallelujah. God is satisfied by what Jesus did on that cross, and now you must receive it. What should you do today? Put your faith where God has put your sins, on the Lord Jesus Christ. Father, I pray that many will come to Christ today. In His wonderful name, Amen.



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