

Fifth Wednesday in Lent – 2025
Wednesday, April 2 at 11 am & 7 pm

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross



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along!
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again at
home!
Then
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Text: LSB 425 and NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends: Imagine ♦ committing a capital crime and ♦ being sentenced to death. You are then told that you must choose your form of execution. These are your choices: ☹️ lethal injection, ☹️ gas chamber, ☹️ electric chair, ☹️ hanging, ☹️ firing squad, or ☹️ crucifixion. I think we can all agree that **crucifixion** would be – *BY FAR* – the worst!

Think of the horror for a man condemned to be crucified:

- Stripped naked and scourged (*very severely beaten*)!¹
- Forced to carry the crossbar to the crucifixion site!
- Nailed to his cross through his *wrists* and *feet*!
- Forced to hang – *sometimes 3-4 days* – until dead!

¹ Journal of the American Medical Association (March 21, 1986 – Volume 255, No. 11): Scourging Practices: “The usual instrument was a short whip with several single or braided leather thongs of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bone were tied at intervals. Occasionally, thin shaped strips of wood or metal were used. For scourging (whipping), the man was stripped of his clothing, and his hands were tied to an upright post. The back, buttocks, and legs were flogged (beaten) either by two soldiers or by one who alternated positions. The severity of the scourging depended on the disposition of the soldiers and was intended to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse or death.”

Death by crucifixion is so horrible, yet *Christians focus so much on Jesus' cross* – WHY? Because Jesus *willingly* endured His cross as the final stage of His soul saving work:

† *Jesus took away the sin of the world!*

† *Jesus objectively reconciled the whole world to God! Now subjectively, personally, God is calling and enabling all people to ▶repent and ▶believe – to receive the eternal benefits of Jesus' saving work!*

Today's hymn: **When I Survey the Wondrous Cross**

God used that *horrible instrument of torture* to defeat †sin, †death, and †the devil!

1. **The Greatness of Jesus' Saving Work:** **When I survey the wondrous cross, On which the Prince of Glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.**
 - a. One Good Reason to Boast: **Galatians 6:14** "...may it never be that I would boast, **except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**, through which the world has been crucified [made dead] to me [according to my new nature], and I to the world." // *Christians are IN but not OF...!*
 - b. Putting a Proper Value on Things: **Philippians 3:8** "...I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ..." // John 17:3
2. **Jesus' Death Is Most Important:** **Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my God; All the vain [meaningless] things that charm [interest] me most, I sacrifice them [give them up] to His blood.**

- a. The Don'ts and Dos of Boasting: **Jeremiah 9:23-24**
 “Thus says the LORD, ‘Let **not** a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let **not** the mighty man boast of his might, let **not** a rich man boast of his riches; **but** let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,’ declares the LORD.”
- b. God Gets All the Credit for Our Salvation: **Ephesians 2:8-9** “For by grace you have been saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” // Being saved – GIFT of God! Faith itself – GIFT of God!

3. **Jesus’ Obedience and Love Were Visible: See, from His head [thorns], His hands [nails], His feet [nails], and love flow mingled down! Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

- a. Jesus Quietly Endured the Pain and the Mocking: **Matthew 27:29** “...after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’” // For us!
- b. Jesus Forgave the Soldiers: **Luke 23:34** “...Jesus was saying, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’” // Not knowing who Jesus is.
- c. Jesus Had Already Laid Down His Life: **John 19:34** “...one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.” // Jesus finished His work; then He laid down His life. The spear merely confirmed that He was dead.

- d. Peter Explained Jesus Suffering and Death: Acts 2:23
“...this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.”
// Jesus perfectly followed God’s plan to save us!

4. **Amazing Love should receive an Amazing Response:**

Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a tribute [gift] far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all!

- a. For Whom are You Living – Self or Jesus? **Galatians 2:20** “I [in my old nature] have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” // Compare 2 Corinthians 5:15.
- b. What or Who Do You Love? **1 John 2:15, 17** “Do not love the world nor the things in the world... [WHY NOT?] The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts [temporal desires]; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.” // What is the will of God? **John 6:40** [Jesus answered:] “...that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.” // As the Father raised Jesus, *so Jesus will raise everyone on the last day* – some to life, others to judgment (Jn 5:28-29)!

Let Us Pray: Dearest Jesus, *You gave EVERYTHING for us!*
Dear Holy Spirit, ♦fill us with gratitude and ♦enable us to hold nothing back – *soul, life, all* – in honoring OUR JESUS!

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