

The Characters At The Cross
The Death Of Jesus

March 22, 2026

Luke 23:44-49

The Cross Is Not *JUST* Where Jesus Died For You.

The Cross Is Where You Die To Self So Christ Can Live *THROUGH* You.

I. Does the _____ of Jesus still matter today?

- A. Spirituality is on the rise
- B. Everybody wants to go to Heaven
- C. People are asking about today
 - 1. If Jesus died for our sins, why do I still feel their weight?
 - 2. What did Jesus' death actually do?

II. The death of Jesus _____ what seemed stable (vs 44-45a)

- A. Supernatural disruption
 - 1. The sun failed in the middle of the day
 - 2. Sixth hour to the ninth hour (Noon to 3 PM)
 - 3. A great earthquake
- B. Historical fact
 - 1. Historians recorded the darkness & earthquakes
 - a. Thallus
 - b. Phlegon of Tralles
 - c. Origen of Alexandria
 - d. Tertullian
 - e. Jerome
 - f. Mara Bar-Serapion

- g. Pseudo-Dionysius
- 2. Widespread observation
 - a. Judea
 - b. Asia minor
 - c. Egypt
 - d. North Africa
 - e. Syria

C. A theological revelation

- 1. Creation responds to the death of its Creator
- 2. Judgment imagery
- 3. Prophetic fulfillment

III. The death of Jesus opened what we could never _____ (v45b)

- A. A divine action
 - 1. The curtain was torn
 - 2. From top to bottom
 - 3. God is the one removing the barrier
- B. A new reality
 - 1. The separation between God & man is removed
 - 2. No restriction on who can come to God
 - 3. Access is not earned; it is granted
 - 4. Life doesn't begin "one day." Life begins **today!**

IV. The death of Jesus _____ what we could never finish (v46 + John 19:30)

- A. The debt is insurmountable
 - 1. Sin is universal
 - 2. Sin is inherited
 - 3. Sin is embraced
 - 4. Sin is deadly
- B. The Son secures victory by submitting to the Father
 - 1. Not defeat - but surrender

- 2. Not taken - given
- C. The work is finished
 - 1. The debt is paid
 - 2. Death is defeated
 - 3. The grave has no victory
 - 4. The mission is complete
- D. The gift of God is not earned by offered
 - 1. Freely (by Grace)
 - 2. Once for all
 - 3. Unlimited
 - 4. Unmitigated
 - 5. Imperishable
 - 6. Eternal

V. The death of Jesus _____ a response (vs 47-49)

- A. Criticism - rejecting the Cross
 - 1. Criticism is not primarily intellectual - it is protective
 - 2. People reject the Cross because:
 - a. It confronts their authority
 - b. It threatens their control
 - c. It has clear implications
- B. Curiosity - observing the Cross
 - 1. Curiosity feels safe because it requires no commitment
 - a. Close enough to engage
 - b. Far enough to avoid change
 - 2. Curiosity creates the illusion of progress
 - 3. Consuming spiritual content does not guarantee transformation
- C. Conviction - feeling the Cross
 - 1. Conviction disturbs the heart but does not automatically change the will
 - a. Emotional response to the message

- b. Emotional moment without lasting change
- 2. Conviction alone can create confusion, guilt, & shame
- D. Confession - surrendering to the Cross
 - 1. Confession is where belief becomes commitment
 - a. Personal surrender - "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live."
 - b. Public declaration - deeply personal, not private
 - c. Public allegiance shift
 - d. Owning a truth you once resisted

VI. The death of Jesus calls to _____

- A. There are 4 types of people at the Cross
 - 1. **Those who criticize it** - they reject
 - 2. **Those who are curious about it** - they stay in observation
 - 3. **Those who feel the conviction of it** - they feel the weight, but never the freedom
 - 4. **Those who confess and carry it** - they surrender to the LORD
- B. What you do with the death of Jesus determines what his death will do for you

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So Christ Can Live Through You**