



# **STORIES OF LIFE!**

**The Gospel of Luke**

## **A Story of Forgiveness!**

**Luke 23:26-56**

**Message #70 of 73 – S865**

**Sermon given on October 13, 2019**



**Sunday Morning Service**

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# A Story of Forgiveness!

**Luke 23:26-56**

## Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 23**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- Today, we look at the centerpiece of Christianity
- So important is this single event that without it all of humanity would be hopelessly lost in their sins
- So important is this event that anyone who believes experiences a changed eternity
- God is writing the story of Jesus in your life
- And as people watch your life, they see the reality of your changed eternity as the power of this event is manifest in your relationships
- You see, God created humans to live in community, first with Him, and then with each other
- But we typically don't do either one the way we should
- This morning we are going to look at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
- Let's pray and then get into our text
- **Pray**

## Teaching

- **A Story of Forgiveness!**
- Last time Jesus was brought to Pilate who three times tried to release Jesus because He was innocent
- But ultimately Pilate gave in to the pressure of the religious leaders of Israel and condemned Jesus to die on the cross
- **Luke 23:26**
- While it doesn't say it explicitly, the only reason the Roman soldiers would do this is if Jesus couldn't do it Himself – too weak
- It is hard to imagine what Simon was thinking here
- To carry a cross was a very humiliating thing – it was a sign of guilt
- **Luke 23:27-31**
- These were not the women who followed Jesus from Galilee

- These were devout women of Jerusalem – this was an act of sympathy for the condemned
- Jesus, as He struggles to get to His appointment on the cross, tells them that their sympathy is misplaced
- They should be weeping for themselves – a terrible future awaits them
- In less than forty years these same women will see the destruction of the city of Jerusalem after a three-year siege – terrible famine
- The weak and vulnerable always suffer the most during those things
- Cannibalism was not uncommon during a siege
- Jesus was not on the road alone
- **Luke 23:32-33**
- ‘Calvary’ and ‘Golgotha’ = skull
- Believed that the ‘place of the Skull’ was a hill just outside the city and may have resembled a skull – exact location is uncertain
- Crucifixion was a horrible way to execute someone
- It was meant to be horrible – to be a deterrent to other people who might think about breaking the laws of Rome
- It was a slow and excruciatingly slow way to die – could take several days – and bodies could be left on the cross long after death as a warning
- Then Jesus does something that is incredible – incredible grace
- **Luke 23:34**
- Jesus asks the Father in heaven to forgive them of this sin
- Jesus was not asking for forgiveness for all their sin, just this one
- Jesus was asking the Father to postpone the judgment such a wicked act deserved
- This is a tremendous act of God’s grace
- The mocking of God the Son, Savior of the world continued
- **Luke 23:35-39**
- This very thing was predicted to happen to the Messiah **Psalm 22:6-9**  
**But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!”**
- God the Son, God in the flesh on the cross

- They all thought that if Jesus was who He said He was, He could have prevented this or saved Himself by taking Himself off the cross
  - They totally misunderstood what was going on
  - Jesus came as the fulfilment of the meaning of the millions of Passover lambs they had sacrificed for the previous 1,500 years
  - To mock Him is like mocking one of the millions of lambs they sacrificed to atone for their sins, because while it was used to save others, it couldn't save itself.
  - If Jesus had saved Himself, then all of us would have been lost
  - It was His sacrificial death that saves us
  - In the midst of all this mocking, someone is sensing something much greater is going on than most people can see
  - **Luke 23:40-42**
  - What faith! This man is calling out to Jesus as they both hang dying on crosses and believes that Jesus will have a future kingdom. Based on that belief he asks for mercy in the future kingdom.
  - As Jesus is mocked by the religious leaders, the soldiers, and by the other thief Jesus remained silent – but He responds to this cry for mercy
  - **Luke 23:43**
  - Jesus told him he doesn't have to wait for the Second Coming
  - 'today you will be with Me in Paradise' – Paradise = heaven
  - This reminds us of the hope all Christians should have
  - The moment after we take our last breath on this earth, we are translated into the presence of Jesus forever **2 Corinthians 5:6-8**
- So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.**
- Humanly speaking, it is hard to imagine the suffering that Jesus had endured up to this point
  - But it was nothing compared to what was coming next
  - **Luke 23:44-45**
  - This was a miraculous darkness
  - It symbolized in the physical world what was happening in the spiritual realm

- It was during this time that God poured out the cup of His wrath for the sins of the whole world upon His beloved Son who accepted it as the perfect will of His loving Father
  - The sinless One had all the sins of the whole world poured out upon Him **2 Corinthians 5:21**
- For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**
- For three hours Jesus experienced unimaginable suffering on our behalf
  - Including having His beloved Father turn His back upon Him
  - Another miracle took place at the end of the three hours – veil in the temple torn in two from top to bottom
  - Symbolized God opening the way into His presence
  - Jesus also said, ‘It is finished!’ – the work of salvation for any who would believe was done
  - Once the work was done, there was no more reason for Jesus to suffer on the cross
  - **Luke 23:46**
  - This was a quote from Psalm 31 and was routinely prayed by Jews before they went to sleep
  - This was not a cry of defeat but a shout of victory! Typically, the crucified would eventually become so weakened and exhausted that they would faint and slip miserably into death. Jesus was in control of every moment.
  - Others were affected by what they saw
  - **Luke 23:47**
  - We can’t say with certainty that this man was saved, but we can say that he did have a spiritual experience that made him a candidate for salvation
  - **Luke 23:48**
  - ‘beat their breasts’ is an expression of guilt and mourning
  - Something about the way Jesus died convicted them of their sins
  - It also doesn’t mean they were saved – repentance and faith needed
  - Jesus’ friends were there too
  - **Luke 23:49-56**

- Joseph and the others expressed their love and respect in the only ways they knew how
- Even though Jesus told them what was coming next, they couldn't help but feel hopeless as they saw His lifeless body being taken down from the cross
- The image of the cross is sickening and terrible
- The idea that God the Son chose to do that is hard to understand
- The apostle Paul would later tell us what the cross means to us

### **Ephesians 1:7**

**In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...**

- Because we have all sinned, we have broken community with Holy God
- But through Christ's sacrifice on the cross everything that separates us from God is washed away
- The story of Jesus that God is writing in your life is one that includes complete forgiveness of your sins and restored community with God
- One of the ways the Bible teaches we tell this story in our lives is that we don't practice the sins that God has forgiven us of
- Doesn't mean we don't blow it occasionally, we will – don't practice
- Another way we tell the story of Jesus, the story of forgiveness, is to extend the forgiveness we have received to others
- We are going to participate in Communion – we should take a moment and reflect
- Does the story of Jesus in our life show others the forgiveness we needed, received, and accepted?
- And does the story of Jesus extend to the community around us, whether believers or not? Do they see a story of forgiveness?
- Jesus died on the cross so that we could be forgiven, so that we could be in community with Almighty God and also in community with others – what does your story tell of the forgiveness of God?
- **Pray!**