



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
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CREDO 8

CROSS: God Dies

In our last time together we studied the INCARNATION — the amazing and radical truth that God became man in Jesus Christ. This evening we are going to study the REASON for the Incarnation — We are going to humbly study THE CROSS of Jesus Christ — the most important event in the history of the world. We are going to see how the death of Jesus made possible for us the beginning of our new life.

Tonight we will be asking and answering FOUR QUESTIONS

1. What is Crucifixion?
2. How did Jesus die?
3. What was accomplished by way of His death on the cross?
4. How do we reconcile the brutal murder of the innocent Son of God with the Love of God?

As we study THE CROSS — It is the great desire of my heart that those of us that do not know Jesus would understand with great clarity the purpose of his death— and in a **life changing way see** the love of Jesus for us and our need for Jesus.

For those that do know Jesus — and maybe we have lost sense of the magnitude and majesty of the crucifixion of Jesus — that tonight God would completely captivate our hearts — and that by way of THE CROSS reignite within us a deep passion to know — love — serve — trust and obey the Lord Jesus!

QUOTE: Evan Roberts — The great Welsh Revival of 1904-05 had it's beginnings in an otherwise obscure prayer meeting on October 31, 1904. A visiting evangelist by the name of Seth Joshua prayed publicly, 'O God, bend us.' A 26 year old Welshman named Evan Roberts went forward and prayed with great agony, 'O God, bend me.' He was overwhelmed by [Romans 5:8](#). He wrote of that moment — "*I felt ablaze with a desire to*

go through the length and breadth of Wales to tell of the Savior; and had that been possible, I was willing to pay God for doing so."

What followed touched the entire world.

Romans 5:8 *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Evan Roberts was BENT and SENT by THE CROSS

May the Holy Spirit reveal the CROSS of Jesus Christ to each of us tonight in a way that would forever change us.

QUESTION #1 — What Is Crucifixion?

Crucifixion was invented by the Persians, 500 years before the birth of Jesus Christ.

Ashurbanipal used crucifixion in its primitive form as a means of expanding the Persian Empire. PRIMITIVE = Impalement on the end of a sharp stake. He conquered entire cities by taking the leading figure of the city and impaling him on the end of the stake — Entire city would surrender.

It was later perfected by the Romans in the days of Jesus. And, it continued until it was ended by the Roman Emperor Constantine circa 300 AD.

Crucifixion was the most barbarous, shameful, painful way to die. The ancient Jewish historian, Josephus called it "the most retched of deaths". The Roman philosopher Cicero said that – decent Roman citizens shouldn't speak of the cross because it was unfit for them to even ponder that kind of murderous death. Orthodox Jews understood from the Old Testament Scriptures that the cross was indicative of one who was cursed of God (**Deuteronomy 21: 22-23**). This was such a horrific mode of execution that it was against Roman law for any of its citizens to be executed by way of the cross. Only foreigners and those guilty of high treason and the most heinous of crimes were to face capital punishment by way of crucifixion.

Death by crucifixion was so horrific and painful that a word was invented to describe the pain of crucifixion — EXCRUCIATING. Excruciating literally means – from (ex) the cross (cruciate). Those who were crucified died by painfully slow, excruciating death by asphyxiation.

Crucifixion was common practice within the Roman Empire. 10s of 1000s of people were crucified. Including 6,000 people in one day when Spartacus fell in battle, his followers were lined up along the shoulder of the highway for 120 miles. 6,000 people were crucified in a day. The modern day equivalent would be getting in your car and driving along the freeway (say from here to San Francisco) and for 120 miles seeing

6,000 people baking in the heat of the noon day sun. Being picked out by birds, being mourned by family and friends. Bleeding, suffering, dying, weeping.

QUESTION #2 — How Did Jesus Die?

Jesus suffered **multiple** forms of physical trauma prior to His crucifixion.

HEMATIDROSIS — Luke the physician is the only Gospel author to record that while in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus began to sweat as it were great drops of blood. This is a medical condition known as Hematidrosis. A condition that can occur as a result of extreme emotional duress in which the capillaries near the surface of the skin, bursting and the blood oozing through the pores of the skin.

BLINDFOLDED AND BEATEN — Following the Agony in the Garden Jesus was brought bound before the high priest where he was blindfolded and beaten.

ROMAN SCOURAGE — A form of interrogation. Jesus' hands would have been chained above his head to expose his back and legs to an executioner's whip called the **FLAGRUM** — a series of long leather straps. At the end of some of the straps were heavy balls of metal intended to tenderize the body of a victim. Some of the straps had hooks made of either metal or bone that would have sunk deeply into the shoulders, back, buttocks, and legs of the victim. IF the victim began to confess his crimes the intensity and force of the blows would be lightened. IF no confession was forthcoming the blows intensified. Jesus had **NO CRIME** to confess. The scourging He endured was the most violent of scourgings.

The first blows caused bleeding from the capillaries and veins. But as the blows continued in frequency and intensity the back was torn to shreds and there would be arterial bleeding. Once the hooks were sunk deeply into the tenderized flesh, the executioner would rip the skin, muscle, tendons, and even bones off the victim as he shook violently, and bled heavily. History records that upon occasion, this was so violent and the hooks would go so deep that a rib would literally come flying off the body of a living man. He went into shock. His body was covered in blood. The Lictor would then untie the hands of the victim and he would collapse in a pool, of his own blood and flesh. 700 years before the scourging of Jesus the prophet Isaiah predicted the results of Jesus' scourging: *“many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind.”* (Isa. 52:14)

CROWN OF THORNS — Jesus was taken to the Praetorium where the Roman soldiers made a crown of lengthy thorns and pressed it into his head as onlookers mocked him as the “King of the Jews.” ([Matt. 27:29](#)) With that, blood began to flow down Jesus' face, causing his hair and beard to be a bloodied and matted mess, and his eyes to burn as he strained to see through his own sweat and blood. It was most likely in the Praetorium that they plucked out His beard.

[Isaiah 50:6](#) I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.

CARRYING THE CROSS BEAM — Jesus was then forced to carry his own cross bar out of the Antonia fortress — out the Damascus gate, some 650 yards to the “Place of the Skull.” This cross bar — the PATIBULUM — was a rough cut piece of wood that weighed upwards of 100 pounds. It was often used for the execution for other men prior, so it was covered with sweat and tears and blood. It was laid across the shredded and traumatized shoulders and back of Jesus. But He is experiencing utter physical exhaustion. He has been awake for over 24 hours — has suffered Hematidrosis in the Garden of Gethsemene — has walked miles across the city of Jerusalem — Experienced the severe beating at the house of the high priest — the Scourging and Crown of Thorns. Exhausted — Jesus collapsed under the weight of the cross, unable to carry it alone. A man named Simon of Cyrene was appointed to carry Jesus’ cross.

CRUCIFIED — Upon arriving at his place of crucifixion, they tore the clothes off the back of Jesus and threw Him in the dirt.

Jesus the carpenter, who had driven many nails into wood with his own hands, then had five- to-seven-inch rough metal spikes driven into the most sensitive nerve centers on the human body in his hands and feet. Jesus was nailed to his wooden cross.

The Soldiers took his hand, laid it on the Patibulum — felt for the space between the radius and ulna and drove a wrought iron nail through His wrist — fastening Jesus to the cross beam. Then they would have coldly done the same to the other wrist. Then they would have lifted Jesus up from the ground — The weight of His entire body held by the nails in his hands. They would then drop the cross beam into a notch in the vertical piece of wood — known as the stipes. They would then turn His feet sideways and with one nail fasten both of them to the Stipes.

It is AT THAT VERY MOMENT that Luke records

Luke 23:34 THEN said Jesus — Father forgive them!

Jesus looked not just at those soldiers. They were our proxies. The force that drove the nails through His hands and feet was not merely the biceps and triceps of a Roman soldier. It was YOUR sin and MY sin — ***Isaiah 53 He was wounded for OUR transgression!***

At this point Jesus was in unbearable agony.

EXCRUCIATING pain shooting up his arms as the nails pressed upon the radial nerves.

EXCRUCIATING headaches.

PARTIAL SUFFICATION — Contrary to what one would naturally think — Death by crucifixion was not by way of exsanguination — extreme loss of blood. Crucifixion killed its victims by way of asphyxiation. The posture of the body and the

incomprehensible toll that pain took on the strength of the victim — made it difficult for the victim to breath. In order to take the next breath that would keep him alive — the victim would have to inflict upon himself EXRUCIATING PAIN by pressing down on his feet in order to stand erect and gulp in a breath. This would and could go one for days.

The body underwent such a brutal, devastating, series of sufferings that often times, at the foot of the cross would be a pool of feces and urine — because the man would become incontinent — mixed with sweat, tears and blood.

I'm not giving these details for shock value. I tell you this because too often there's not a full appreciation for what he endured. Particularly in light of the fact that he's God, become a man.

I give these details to show the OBSCENITY of making the cross an EMPTY ICON. It is OBSCENE that the cross has been reduced to a fashion statement. It is OBSCENE that on her "Confessions" tour, Madonna laid on a cross. It's OBSCENE for men and women who live in absolute opposition to Jesus to wear the icon of His sacrifice for their sins which they refuse to repent of.

We NEED to understand and appreciate what Jesus endured for YOU and for ME!

SO there is Jesus — Nailed to a cross — Nearly naked, striped and dishonored. He sees those who have falsely accused him. He sees His disciples who have abandoned and betrayed him. He hears false accusations — he hears mockery. *What kind of God are you? You cannot even save yourself.* Jesus does not retaliate. He tells John, his dearest friend, to look after his mother. All of his words from the cross are of love and grace and mercy.

THE CAUSE OF DEATH for Jesus was NOT suffocation!

***John 19:34** ³⁴But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.*

Physicians know that such an issue from the pericardium tells us that Jesus died of a **Ruptured heart!**

THAT'S HOW Jesus died

Which leads to the next question –

QUESTION # 3 — Why Did Jesus die?

How in the world could Christians call the crucifixion of Jesus good news? How could we possibly celebrate it every year on Good Friday? Furthermore, why would we celebrate it every month at communion here at Metro where we tell you repeatedly that the bread represents the broken body and the cup represents the shed blood of Jesus?

Isaiah 53:5 “But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:12 “. . . he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.”

Romans 4:25 “[He] was delivered up for our trespasses . . .”

Romans 5:8 “But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

1 Corinthians 15:3 “Christ died for our sins . . .”

Galatians 3:13 “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us . . .”

1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God . . .”

1 John 2:2 “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Here’s why the crucifixion of Jesus is good news. It is **FOR** us.

In theological terms, it means that Jesus’ death was substitutionary (or, as some used to call it, vicarious). His death was in **our** place solely **for our** benefit and without benefit for himself. Jesus took the **penalty for our** sins in **our place** so **we** do not have to suffer the just penalty ourselves. **The wrath of God** that should have fallen **on us** — and **the death** that **our sins merit** — fell on Jesus.

As incomprehensible as the physical suffering of THE CROSS seems to us — THAT was NOT the greatest suffering Jesus endured. The physical suffering of THE CROSS is not why Jesus sweat great drops of blood in the Garden of Gethsemane.

We read in *Hebrews 2:9* — *because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

In *Mark 15:34* — “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” At that moment Jesus tasted *the WAGES OF SIN FOR us*

This is why Jesus willingly became man, why He willingly went to the cross (*John 10:18*; *Phil. 2:8*; *Heb. 12:2*).

Theologically, we call this penal substitutionary atonement. Big words, I know. But, very important.

There is no right understanding of Jesus. There is no true gospel. There is no forgiveness of sin and salvation apart from penal substitutionary atonement.

Let's break down the phrase word by word.

Penal — There is a penalty for sin. In Genesis, God told our first parents, *if you sin, you will die*. That's the penalty. Paul says that – the wage for sin is death. So, the penalty for sin is death. Spiritual death, separation from God. Physical death, sensation of life. When Jesus went to the cross, he did so to pay our penalty. He suffered and died in our place for our sins to pay our penalty.

Substitution — That Jesus went as our substitute, Jesus went in our place. Jesus endured what we should endure, Jesus suffered what I should suffer. He's my substitute. I love Jesus so much because he took my place. Some will say – *no, no, no, the cross is not about substitution, it's about the fact that Jesus is a great example and he shows us how to suffer well and how to love our enemies, all of which is true*. **But, the big idea of the cross is substitution.** The rest are simply implications.

Atonement — Penal substitutionary atonement. Atonement is a word that you will start hearing early on in the Old Testament. You will see God's people in the Old Testament celebrating Yom Kippur, annually, the day of atonement. The point of atonement is that sin has separated us from God and that sin must be taken away so that we can be forgiven and reconciled to God. The day of atonement was the day that God's people would come together to individually and collectively confess their sins and deal with them according to the Old Testament sacrificial system which was all foreshadowing the coming of Jesus Who lays down his life as the sacrifice in our place, for our sins; all of it was preparing people for the coming of Jesus. **Atonement means at-one-ment.** Through sin we are separated from God, and by Jesus taking away our sin, we are forgiven and reconciled with God and we can be one with God again through Jesus Christ.

You need to know that at Metro penal substitutionary atonement is absolutely central to all that we believe. I would go so far as to say – it is at the crux, literally the cross of what we believe. We do not believe that Jesus was just a decent moral teacher or enlightened example. We believe Jesus is God, who lived the life we have not lived, who died the death we should've died and who gives the gift we cannot earn. We believe that Jesus is our penal substitutionary atonement. Jesus died in our place for our sins — that's why we love Jesus so much. No one has done for us, or could ever do for us, what Jesus, God become a man, has accomplished at the cross.

QUESTION # 4 — What Did the Death of Jesus on the Cross Accomplish?

1.) Jesus is our justification.

On THE CROSS Jesus became our JUSTIFICATION.

What does JUSTIFICATION mean? It's a word that you can and should study. Justification is a word in the Bible. Atonement is a word in the Bible. And, because we love the Bible — because we trust the Bible — because Jesus said that every word of the Bible would come to pass— because Paul says that all scripture is God breathed — we pay close attention, not to just the ideas of scripture but the very words which articulate them because we believe every word of scripture is from God.

This word **JUSTIFICATION** appears repeatedly in your Bible, particularly in the New Testament. One particular example: ***Galatians 2:16** "a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified."*

What's Paul talking about?

The word Justification articulates the fact that you and I, one day, will stand before God and give an account of our life. It implies that God is a just judge. And, because God is just — he cannot declare us *just* in His sight. We are all by nature and choice guilty sinners. We sin by omission, not doing what we ought. We sin by commission, doing what we ought not do. We have sins of thought, word and deed — and as such — we have no right to stand before God and be declared righteous.

THINK ABOUT THIS — Let's say for example that there was a judge — and before him was someone who was accused of a heinous crime. The judge asked the question — *how do you plead?* The accused declared – *Guilty*. How would you respond if the judge then said – *I find you not guilty, you are free?* You would call it a gross violation of the judge's responsibility to maintain and administer justice!

You and I are guilty as sinners and God is just. God is not evil, he is good. God cannot look at us and say – *Not Guilty* — *I declare you to be justified*.

The question then is – how can we be justified in the sight of God? Paul says that the proclivity of sinful human nature is to justify one's self through what he calls works of the law. It is natural for fallen man to try to make himself good enough for God. That's the basic definition of *works of the law*.

Works of the law come in two forms. There's a religious form and a moral relativism form.

The religious form is that you try to be a devoutly good and religious person so that God will love you. The false assumption underlying all religion is that the only way to be justified in the sight of God is to earn it — by doing your best and obeying the rules. So, religious people make lists of things they will and will not do. They seek very hard to do what they should do, not do what they shouldn't do. Anticipating that one day, the day of judgment where they stand before God and then sharing with him their

resume and saying — *God, here's my life. I did a good job, please justify me. Declare me to be righteous and allow me into your presence forever.*

The moral relativism form assumes that what you are presently doing — the way that you are presently living — is good enough. This was my basic position before I met Jesus at the age of 22. I thought — *I'm sure I'm in the good people list. I'm a pretty good guy, I'm sure that all will be fine when I stand before God.*

PROBLEM — The scriptures which say that we are to be perfect as God is perfect. And, God doesn't grade on a curve. God sees people as perfect or imperfect. On God's grading scale I am most assuredly imperfect.

The problem with religion is this — it leads to pride or despair. Religion never leads to hope, confidence, joy and peace. Because the assumption is – you need to do something that God will love you.

Likewise — moral relativism which carries the assumption that you are good enough is nothing more than pure pride. It assumes an absolute sense of overriding self-righteousness — in that you look at all the people around yourself and assume that you are better than most. That is the epitome of arrogance.

Now, in the Bible, God does speak of these things using some very stark terminology — He uses these terms in order to dissuade us and discourage us from being religious or vaguely spiritual.

The first comes from [Isaiah 64:6](#) — There God speaks of the works of the law and thinking that you are a good person and trying your hardest so that God will love you. God says that your righteousness — your human attempts at being a good person apart of relationship with him through Jesus — *are as filthy menstrual rags* — bloody tampons.

THINK ABOUT THIS — If God is the Father... this is the equivalent of showing up to His birthday party and when he unwraps the box — bloody tampons.

THIS IS SO CRITICAL — Coming before God at the end of time and saying to him — well, I think I've got a few things that you'll really appreciate — and I just know that when you see what I've brought to You that you will justify me — and we will be even. He opens the box — and there they are — your righteousness — filthy menstrual rags — bloody tampons. That's not gonna do!

THERE IS MORE STARK IMAGERY — [Philippians 3:8](#)

Paul is talking about his religious life before meeting Jesus and Paul declares that all of his religious efforts to be righteous were as *dung*. It's very stark word in the Greek. Some of our translations get a bit skittish. I don't have a dog — well I do — but not really. He doesn't leave much when he poops. But occasionally a REAL dog gets in my yard and leaves a huge, steaming pile! The next time you see one of those huge steaming piles I want it to remind you of the spirituality of Oprah, and the Dalai Lama,

and Jehovah Witnesses, and Mormons, and Islam, and vague spirituality and Goddess worship, and WICCA. Paul says – in the sight of God — *it's a huge steaming pile.*

HERE'S THE POINT — When you stand before God — and we all will stand before Him — and if you come with a handful of bloody tampons and a warm, steaming pile — you will not be declared justified in his sight. You see — Religion is disgusting before God. Vague Spirituality is disgusting before God. Trying to earn or merit God's favor is disgusting. Assuming that you are good enough for a holy, righteous, perfect good God, is disgusting. **That's why** the Bible uses disgusting imagery.

The ONLY alternative to RELIGION and Moral Relativism is Jesus. That righteousness that God demands — we do not possess. BUT — the righteousness that God demands, and we don't possess — He will provide for us in Jesus. In [2 Corinthians 5:21](#), Paul says it this way

²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Martin Luther rightly called this the great exchange. My sin was imputed or reckoned to Jesus. *God made him who knew no sin to become sin.* All of my sin, past, present and future, is put on Jesus. God did this to Jesus THE CROSS so that *we might become the righteousness of God.* By faith in what Jesus did on THE CROSS the perfect righteousness of the sinless Lord Jesus is then imputed or reckoned to my account. My sin goes to Jesus — His righteousness comes to me. It's the great exchange.

This is pure GRACE. We don't merit it, we don't earn it, we don't deserve it. It's a gift. It doesn't lead to the kind of pride or despair that religion does. It does not lead to the kind of self-righteousness that morality, spirituality does. **It leads to humility.** I did nothing, Jesus did everything. **It leads to joy.** Everything He did is sufficient.

The only way that God can maintain His Divine justice and declare us to be justified is if we have faith in — and grace from — Jesus Christ alone.

At Metro we believe that to be justified you must have trust in the promise of the Gospel that your sin was dealt with at the cross of Jesus and that because of that the righteousness of Jesus can be given to you so that you can stand before God and be justified, declared righteousness in his sight.

2.) Jesus is our propitiation.

Another big word.

[1 John 4:10](#) says it this way – *in this is love.* HUGE CONCEPT HERE! We can not begin with a false concept of love and then try to define God and His love by that definition. Instead, we start with God — who is love — and then we interpret the rest of life in light of the character of God. *In this is love. Not that we have loved God.* Not that we are seeking God, pursuing God, crying out to God, yearning for God, *but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

This word *propitiation* appears four times in the New Testament. Many translations will not give you the full understanding of the word. They will use the word — *sacrifice* or *atonement*. A handful will use an even less accurate translation and use the word *expiation*.

When the Bible uses the word *propitiation*, it's a very important word. Let walk through it. David says in *Psalm 51:4*. *God, against you only have I sinned*. You and I sin — and our sin is against one another to be sure. **But, ultimately, our sin is against God.**

The question then is – How does God feel about our sin? The Bible says, repeatedly, that God is angry because of sin. That though he loves us, God hates sin. All of that is summed up in the term — *the wrath of God*. MANY churches and pastors will NOT speak or do not ever address the reality of *the wrath of God*. We must! Because the Bible does.

In speaking of *the wrath of God* some of you will say – *God's not a God of wrath. God's a God of love. God doesn't get angry, God's the God of love.*

REALITY — If you compile all of the times and ways that the Bible speaks of the love of God — and compile all of the ways that the Bible speaks of the wrath of God — the number of times that it speaks of his wrath is greater than the number of times it speaks of his love. **He is both, loving and filled with wrath.**

According to conventional wisdom — No pastor in his right mind is supposed to talk about the *wrath if God* anymore. In fact — in a growing church it is tantamount to suicide. It takes a lot of overhead and money to run a church that is growing. The pressure is to pull back from declaring truths that are unpopular or uncomfortable to potential givers. Don't talk about sin, don't talk about hell, don't talk about wrath, don't talk about blood, don't talk about the cross — make a little list of things that people don't like and conveniently ignore them.

As we address the **DOCTRINE OF PROPITIATION** — **you need to know** that God is very angry with sinners and their sin — and that His wrath burns against them.

I don't say that to be mean — I say it to be truthful. I will continue to say it because when it comes down to it — whether we grow or don't grow — make budget or don't make budget — at the end of the day — I'm not concerned about your opinion! I have to give an account before God for all of us.

***1 Thes. 2:2-4** we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. ³For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, ⁴but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.*

I want you to know the truth — and the truth is — You and I are far worse than we think — and God is far better than we think. The distance between you and God is far greater than you hope it to be.

God's wrath against sinners is the outworking... not of impetuous, emotional tirade — But, his just, righteous, holy indignation.

God has to be angry at sin, because he's good. **God has to do something with sinners because he's just.** That's the doctrine of propitiation.

Now, some of you are here and you would say — this sounds like nonsense. I'm sinning all the time and God hasn't poured out his wrath on me.

God's wrath is exercised in two ways. There is the **active** and the **passive** wrath of God. Let me make sure that I terrify all of you because I love all of you. The **active** wrath of God is where God strikes you — rebukes you — kills you. He sends you to hell. You reap what you sow. It's bad. When we think of the active wrath of God, we think of a lightening bolt out of heaven, right? As soon as you are going to download porn, touch your girlfriend, yell at your kids, steal money from your employer; the expectation is that a lightening bolt comes out of heaven, you get fried and everyone comes out of their cubicle and says — *that was the wrath of God, right there.* That's the active wrath of God.

There is also the **passive** wrath of God. [Romans 1](#) says that the passive wrath of God is when God simply gives you over to your unbridled desires. God lets you go do whatever it is that you want to do. If God hasn't shown up and stopped you, you are experiencing the passive wrath of God. The **passive** wrath of God. And please know this — you won't get away with anything. You say — well, God didn't throw a rock at me. No, he didn't, but he put it on the pile.

The Bible says that those that are unrepentant of their sin are storing up for themselves judgment on the day of wrath.

[Romans 2:4-8](#) Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? ⁵But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

That means every time you sin, God may not in active wrath throw a rock, but that rock goes on a pile and at the end, that mountain falls on you. There is complete and total justice, for all people, in the end.

THE DOCTRINE OF PROPITIATION declares that Jesus substituted himself and died in our place for our sins. It's the ultimate love, mercy and grace. Jesus dies in my place for my sins — and the wrath of God that I deserve is poured out on the son of

God — and by the death of Jesus on THE CROSS the wrath of God is propitiated, diverted, taken away from me.

AGAIN — The suffering of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemene is tied to this

***Matthew 26:38-44** Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.”³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”⁴⁰ And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?⁴¹ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”⁴² Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”⁴³ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.⁴⁴ So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.*

WHAT is this cup Jesus is talking about?

***Rev. 14:9-11**⁹ And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”*

THAT is this cup that Jesus was talking about?

It **was NOT possible** for us to be saved from the wrath to come **UNLESS** He endured it! **IF it were possible** — Jesus would not have died on THE CROSS.

THIS IS HUGE! People ask — Why does this matter? Here’s why it matters.

In Jesus — God is not angry with me. He loves me.

In Jesus — I know God is not punishing me when I sin. **You need to know this.** Some of you still falsely believe that when you sin, or if you suffer, that God is punishing you — he’s making you pay Him back. There are many teenage girls taking razors and cutting themselves so that they suffer and bleed **because** something deep in them says – I’ve done wrong and there needs to be suffering and blood so that God will be appeased.

Teenage girls should put down their razors — and religious people should put down their efforts to pay God back — and **humbly and joyfully embrace the doctrine of propitiation.** Jesus has propitiated the wrath of God. Because Jesus has become the propitiation for my sin I can **KNOW** that when I suffer, I do not have to assume that God is punishing me. **Because that would be unjust. He already punished Jesus in**

my place. Hebrews and Proverbs do say – *God is a father and he disciplines his kids, but he doesn't punish them. He's not angry at them, he loves them. He's not making them pay him back. He's using their sin as an opportunity for correction to grow them in holiness.*

The propitiation of Jesus is beautifully summed up in the final words of Jesus from **THE CROSS** — ***IT IS FINISHED***. We don't need to pay God back — we don't need to suffer. We don't need to make it up to Him. **We need to trust in his son.** On THE CROSS the wrath of God is propitiated, diverted, taken away from us and placed on Jesus.

This was foreshadowed every year on Yom Kippur — *the day of atonement* —

On that day a sacrificial goat was brought forward. The High Priest would then confess the sins of the people over the animal — and slaughter it. Its blood would be shed and it would die as a substitute for the sins of the people. This was all foreshadowing and anticipating the coming of Jesus and the **PROPITIATION of THE CROSS**.

THIS IS HUGE — On Yom Kippur there was an additional goat — **The Scapegoat**. The Scapegoat was not slaughtered — but rather sent away from the people — showing how God alone **removes** our sin. The Scapegoat was significant because it foreshadowed the expiation of Jesus.

3.) Jesus is our expiation.

Again, this is a word that is important. Expiation.

When we **sin** and are **sinned against** — the Bible says (particularly in many Old Testament ceremonies, cleansings, and metaphors) that we are defiled, dirty, filthy, polluted and unclean.

But on the cross Jesus took away our sin so that we could be cleansed from the presence and power of defiling sin.

1 John 1:7 *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son — there's the cross — cleanses us from all sin.*

In that passage sin is depicted in its defiling effects.

Isaiah says this — in Isaiah 6 — *I'm a man of unclean lips, I come from a people of unclean lips.* That's a clear articulation of the defiling effects of sin. This defilement happens whether you have sinned or been sinned against.

THIS IS HUGE — Without an understanding of **expiation** — we have a partial understanding of the Gospel. We fully grasp and embrace the part of the Gospel that declares — *Jesus died for all your sins. If you confess your sins to him, you will be forgiven.* We totally believe that. But — what about those who have been sinned against? What

about the person who was abused as a child, or raped as an adult, or beaten, or betrayed, or abandoned, stolen from, lied to, cheated on? Their lives have been polluted — made filthy — defiled. What are they to do?

Even though they are not the person who has sinned — they are the victim of sin. And, whether you sin or are sinned against, you are still defiled.

There are countless women who always end up with the loser boyfriend / husband. So many of them when asked – why do you settle for that guy? — respond — *well, that's what I deserve*. Why do you feel that you deserve that? *Well, I'm damaged goods. This is what I've done, or this is what has been done to me. This is as good as I deserve*. Our identity is polluted / defiled — by either what we have done or what has been done against us — rather than what Jesus has done for us.

On the cross Jesus not only endured the wrath of God in our place (PROPITIATION) — slaughtered like the first goat of Yom Kippur. Jesus EXPIATED our sin — He REMOVED the polluting and defiling power of our sin — like the second goat on Yom Kippur that had the sins of Israel confessed over it and was sent away.

As a pastor it is devastating to hear people who see themselves as defiled. So many women who have been raped say that after being raped the first thing they did was take a shower. It is an attempt at cleansing — more than just the body. Her soul, has been stained. It's been defiled. That filth has occurred in the depth of her being. The bathing is an attempt to clean more than just the body, it's an attempt to get down to the level of the soul. The truth is – only Jesus gets down to the level of the soul.

[*Zechariah 13:1*](#) so beautifully promised this provision — *“On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.*

In Jesus a cleansing fountain is opened up. It is imagery of cleansing. It's the same imagery we use in baptism as well. Cleansing. Expiation.

I find it beautiful as well that the church — which is referred to as *the bride of Jesus Christ* is spoken of in the Book of Revelation — [*Revelation 19:8 KJV*](#) *“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

That's symbolic of expiation.

IF some of you have been defiled by sexual sin you need to grasp the reality of PROPITIATION and EXPIATION

Last question

QUESTION #5 — Does the Cross Contradict God's love?

There have been some incredibly erroneous — ignorant — heretical and blasphemous things said about this.

This is among the most stupid.

Steve Chalke and Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* use the term “cosmic child abuse” to describe the idea of penal substitutionary atonement.

QUOTE: “The fact is that the cross isn’t a form of cosmic child abuse—a vengeful Father, punishing his Son for an offense he has not even committed. Understandably, both people inside and outside of the Church have found this twisted version of events morally dubious and a huge barrier to faith. Deeper than that, however, is that such a concept stands in total contradiction to the statement: ‘God is love’. If the cross is a personal act of violence perpetrated by God towards humankind but borne by his Son, then it makes a mockery of Jesus’ own teaching to love your enemies and to refuse to repay evil with evil.” (See Steve Chalke and Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), pp. 182-183.)

Chalke mocks the God of Jonathan Edwards (*Lost Message of Jesus*, page 56) and argues that the Bible “never defines him [God] as anything other than love” (*Lost Message of Jesus*, page 63). This is simply false as revealed in both [1 John 1:5](#) (“God is light”) and [Isaiah 6](#) and [Revelation 4](#) (“God is holy”).

Brian McLaren used the term “cosmic child abuse” on the lips of one of his most attractive characters in his book *The Story We Find Ourselves In*. In this book, fictional characters have theological discussions. On page 102, a character name Kerry is talking about the atonement, saying: “*I know that’s supposed to mean something to me, and I suppose I can see it, but it raises so many questions. . . . For starters, if God wants to forgive us, why doesn’t he just do it? How does punishing an innocent person make things better? That just sounds like one more injustice in the cosmic equation. It sounds like divine child abuse.*”

Here are the arguments —

- 1.) A loving God could not possibly pour out his wrath on Jesus.

Yet this is precisely what Scripture says: [Isaiah 53:10](#) *Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief.*”

- 2.) A loving God would never sanction the bloody, brutal, unjust murder of Jesus.

But again they argue in the face of the plain teaching of Scripture. Jesus himself said in no uncertain terms that THE CROSS is where the love of God for us is most clearly seen.

[John 15:12-13](#) ¹²*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.*

So when people ask or even argue — *How will people see the love of God at the cross of Jesus?* The answer is — **THE CROSS IS** the love of God.

The world outside of Jesus defines love in terms of sentiment and emotion. Love is seen in general as a feeling. A feeling that you fall into and fall out of. **THAT** is NOT the meaning of LOVE. It is a tragic perversion of love to think that love is just words and feelings and not actions and devotions.

We can ONLY understand love in the light of God, who is love! **God does not** love in the realm of mere sentiment. **God does not** love in the realm of mere emotion. The Bible speaks of God's love as being **efficacious** — successful in producing a desired or intended result. **In other words** — God doesn't just *feel* loving — He **does** love. He acts. God doesn't just send a greeting card — He goes to a cross and dies. He does something!

Some of you may come in here wondering — does God love me?

Look at THE CROSS!

It is ONLY at THE CROSS that you discover how sinful you are — and how sinful sin is

It is ONLY at THE CROSS that you discover how loving He is!

I'll give you a few other Scriptures that define God's love for you by way of THE CROSS is the place where love is most clearly seen in all creation.

***John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."*

***Romans 5:8** "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

***1 John 4:9-10** "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

***Rev. 1:5b** **KJV** Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*

LISTEN TO ME HERE — THE CROSS of Jesus is the clearest demonstration of the love of God in the history of the world.

God's love for each of us is so GREAT — so PERFECT — so STRONG — that He

Came as a human being to identify with us.

Lived a life without sin.

Died the death in our place for our sins.

Rose to forgive us, transform us — and He lives to intercede for us — and He's preparing a place for us.

And because of what Jesus did for us on THE CROSS He is going to come again to claim us and we'll enter into His presence — that we might share in His Kingdom — Where sin is no more and Jesus is everything.

CLOSING — Have you come to the place where you understand that either your religion — your morality — your “spirituality” is insufficient to stand before the God of the Bible?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Jesus is our Victor

Colossians 2:13–15 “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.” □

Jesus is our Redemption —

Titus 2:13–14 “. . . our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” □

Jesus is our Reconciliation —

Ephesians 4:31–5:2 — “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Jesus is our Example —

1 Peter 2:21 — “Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”