



The Gospel According to Luke
Wk. 114 "Death and Burial"
By Pastor Jody May

Luke 23:44-56 ESV

The Death of Jesus

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" ⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Jesus Is Buried

⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. ⁵⁴ It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵ The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Review:

There are three areas of **CONCERN** that Jesus had (Jerusalem, Ignorant people, the 1 Lost Sheep) on this Path of Sorrows where He fought against men's cruelty and personal fatigue.

The Path to Salvation is paved with what Concerns Christ, and because He is concerned for us, we can Rest...

Opening Illustration:



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The principle of law that states *one is innocent until proven guilty* has thought to have been around since the 1300s and noted to be used in the turbulent times of European revolution during the 1600s when torture was in full practice. This belief though rose to prominence here in the United States in the legal Case ***Coffin vs. US 1894***. The Coffins were two brothers accused of mis allocating funds through the keeping of their company ledgers. It was at this time,

*the court did instruct the jury that "Before you can find any one of the defendants guilty you must be satisfied of his guilt as charged in some of the counts of the indictment beyond a reasonable doubt." The lower court then instructed the jury at great length on the doctrine of reasonable doubt and its relationship to evidence. The Supreme Court saw its task as determining whether the lower court had violated the defendants' rights by not instructing the jury on presumption of innocence and whether reasonable doubt was essentially the same as presumption of innocence.*¹

All that to say it became the standard practice of law as American citizens, you're are to be treated as innocent until and if guilt is found.

Actually, if you go back about 3,500 years you can find the beginning of this principle:

Deuteronomy 19:15 ESV

A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.

What does the Mosaic law conclude but that *one's innocence is maintained until reasonable doubt is formed*. Again, another example of a Biblical mandate that our culture enjoys unbeknownst to them.

This biblical mandate was still important in Jesus' day for it was to be kept even in the mock trial of Jesus:

Matthew 26:59-62 ESV

¹ <http://legalhistorysources.com/Canon%20Law/PresumptionInnocence.htm>



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⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰ but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. **At last two came forward** ⁶¹ and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.' " ⁶² And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"

The only two witnesses they could get, even out of the false ones that came forward, was two people that agreed Jesus said *I am able to destroy the temple and build it again in three days*. Meaning, there is no crime, for the only person able to complete this feat would be God. In Luke 22:70, they asked Jesus if He was the Son of God (loaded term there also to mean He was the rightful king of Israel), and He said, "you say that I am." It was what they were accusing Him for, they said He was, and no one could prove He was not, in fact the signs of miracles said He was. According to Deuteronomy they had no right to touch Him.

Luke is careful to catch all of this. In his day in time when he wrote this, Jerusalem had already been destroyed (70 AD) which put the Jews in dispersion and even more at odds with Christians. The persecution of Christians was beginning to be turned up by the Romans. It was important for Luke to let the church understand that their Lord, their King, was an **innocent man, contrary to the Jews, contrary** to what the **Romans** may have been saying. Because all our theology, **ALL** our doctrine, **ALL** our beliefs, are built on the **FAITH**, that is **HOPE** in that which we cannot see, that the reason Jesus can pay it all is because **HE WAS INNOCENT**. We call that righteousness (same word in the Greek), AND because Jesus was innocent, HE was rewarded with **RESURRECTION**. AND His earning of that RESURRECTION shows us all that is what we will get IF we truly believe He did it for us. If you don't believe He was innocent, **THEN** you have **NO CHRISTIAN FAITH**.

To show His innocence Luke offers the testimony of different groups of people and it is through their reactions to the death of Jesus, we see even more evidence that He was truly innocent.

5 Responses / Actions to Witnessing Sentencing/Death/Sacrifice:



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1. Praising God / A Centurion's Surprise (vs. 44-47).

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he **praised** God, saying, "Certainly this man was **innocent!**"

This is a darkness that comes over the land at 3 noon. This is not a Solar Eclipse for Passover always happens on a full moon, the Jews checked the calendar to know this darkness was not to be a natural occurring thing like an eclipse. This is a supernatural event, this darkness that goes through the land. *The geographical extent of the darkness is not known, although the writing of the church fathers hint that it extended beyond Palestine.* Scripture talks about the land going dark on the day of judgment (cf. Isa. 5:30; 60:2; Joel 2:30-31; Amos 5:18, 20; Zeph. 1:14-18; Luke 22:53; Acts 2:20; 2 Pet. 2:17; Rev. 6:12-17).

Joel 2:1-2 ESV

The Day of the LORD

2 Blow a trumpet in Zion;

 sound an alarm on my holy mountain!

Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,

 for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near,

² a day of **darkness** and **gloom**,

 a day of clouds and **thick darkness!**

Like **blackness** there is spread upon the mountains

 a great and powerful people;

their like has never been before,

 nor will be again after them

 through the years of all generations.

Amos 5:20 ESV

Is not the day of the LORD **darkness**, and not **light**,



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and gloom with no brightness in it?

Gloom and Darkness is used in the narrative of scripture to portray the serious work of God, **JUDGMENT**, when it requires a death. Do you remember the angel of God at night going through the Land of Egypt to claim the firstborn ([Ex. 12:29-32](#)), do you remember over night when God moves against the Assyrians in King Hezekiah's day killing 185,000 ([2 Kings 19:35](#)), do you remember perhaps remember God passing between the animal carcasses to display to Abraham the ramifications of breaking the covenant ([Gen. 15:17-21](#))? So, as it is the day that Jesus dies, God Himself acts as the mediator, and it is His blood spilled for Abraham's seed to fulfill the curses of the Covenant.

⁴⁵ ... And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

The tearing of the curtain in the temple, was the place that divided the holy of holies where an unclean man could not go, where JB's father (Zechariah) had gone into to offer incense and instead met the angel of God. Luke shows the intensity of God's wrath by rending asunder the curtain between Him and His people, almost, as the tearing up of a contract.² The covenant could no longer be overlooked, it was broken, they had killed His last representative. It was the evoking of this relationship that God had with this people solely for thousands of years. BUT it was also pointing to the new covenant that was coming for all flesh.

⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he **praised** God, saying, "Certainly this man was **innocent!**"

The strength with which Jesus cried out ("with a loud voice") showed His physical strength—He did not die of exhaustion—but, more important, the significance of His declaration. Jesus sovereignly controlled His circumstances to the end of His life. Jesus removes His Spirit from His body, proclaiming He has done all that was to do, He's asking for God's sentence.

² <http://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/html/nt/luke/luke.htm#head270>



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Jesus voluntarily laid His life down; no one took it from Him ([John 10:15-18](#); cf. John 15:13). His words were similar to those that many Jews used in prayer before they went to sleep at night (cf. [Ps. 31:5](#)).

In light of these events our first juror/witness if you will, makes a public comment, "**Certainly Innocent**", and by the act of his proclamation the text says He praises God, or in the KJV he glorifies God by what he declares. The Roman Centurion saw the signs, saw the darkness, perhaps heard of the curtain torn through rumor, saw the mourning of the people, witnessed the mock trials, saw the strength of Jesus, and saw the departure of life based on His words, not the Roman cruelty he had performed.

This morning I ask you family and friends, have you ever looked at the life of Jesus and really believed He did not deserve what He got, **not because HE wasn't that bad, but because HE never sinned at all!? You have to believe that to call yourself a Christian...** Perhaps today the problem is you think that you aren't that bad, and you don't need His innocence, my friend without the applied innocence of Jesus on all our lives we are headed to a definitive, a Certain sentence of eternal death in Hell. Good intentions don't get you into the Kingdom, only Jesus' works of righteousness do.

2. Despising Shame / The Condemning Act of the Jews (v. 48).

⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home **beating their breasts**.

Beating one's breast is not a sign of lowliness, it was something only a woman would do in public mourning and even then it was the showing of all lack of restraint. Luke had shown this sign of remorse before, as displayed by what some thought to be the worse of sinners.

Luke 18:13 ESV

¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'



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The observation of Jesus' innocence crucified for you asks you as well, do you mourn how you have treated the Son of God? Do you see the consequences of your sin displayed in the broken body and death of the Christ? The crowd left that day realizing that they were not just responsible for a man's broken body but a broken heart, they had kicked Him out of His vineyard, they had murdered the last prophet ever to be sent. A man that felt the sting of death, felt God's favor replaced with wrath reserved for them:

Matthew 27: 46 ESV

⁴⁶And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

This morning perhaps you are mad at yourself, you spend a lot of time kicking yourself because of how you have misused the life that God has given you. My friend, don't waste another day telling yourself you could have done better, even if you had, you're still a sinner and you deserved the forsaking of God, but Jesus withstood that for you. **He took your condemnation so you could have His Justification.** Yes, perhaps spend some time this week mourning but stop mourning for yourself, Jesus has already paid for your past, but mourn rightly for Him, and then praise Him because He did it with a heart full of love for you.

3. Distant Watching / The Eye-Witness Accounts (v. 49).

⁴⁹And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Briefly I just wanted to point out here in the middle of the recording of Jesus' death Luke provides for the reader a reminder that he has spoken with the people there. From Lk 23:47 – Luke 24:39 he mentions six times that someone **saw** what he was writing about (23:47, 49; 24:23, 24, 34, & 39) and every event of seeing is to the revelation of Jesus.

The Ladies saw the centurion, the ladies saw the reaction of the crowd, the ladies saw the angels first who said He was alive, the ladies saw Him who mistook Him for a gardener first at the tomb, the ladies told the guys, and the ladies saw Jesus



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with the disciples. And it is the eye-witness accounts of these ladies, the declaration of seeing Him die and come back to life, that tells us again that Jesus was innocent. It is important for us to know that.

Let me just ask you a simple question today family. Will you let another Passion week, will you let another Easter, slide by and not let it affect you, or **will you take it in and in 2021 will you commit to sharing that experience with someone else this year?** Will you begin praying today that God will embolden you, that He will increase your faith, in the Spirit's presence, so that you will share the story of Jesus in your life with someone outside this room? **If you have been affected by the displayed innocence of Jesus and what it has done for you then there is no way you can keep that silent.**

4. Publically Sacrificing / The Display of Loyalty by the Redeemed (vs. 50-54)

⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. ⁵⁴ It was the day of **Preparation**, and the Sabbath was beginning.

According to Matthew 27:57 Joseph had already **become a disciple of Jesus**. He was not the only Jewish leader to come forward and publically sacrifice their reputation.

John 19:39 ESV

Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight.

Both men came so that the fulfillment of God's prophecy would take place. Did the impossible happen, did rich men become saved?

Isaiah 53:9 ESV



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And they made his grave with the wicked
and **with a rich man** in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Both men were leaders of the Jews, at least one of them was on the Sanhedrin and had spoken out against their desires and actions. It is said of Joseph that he was righteous, that is code in Luke for having a saving faith in God.

These two men have always had a special place in my heart. **If God is able to save these men, then He is most definitely able to save me.** They represent men brought up in a time where they were raised in their church, they were taught the scriptures, they were under the beliefs their works saved them, they believed their money was a blessing of who they were and what they had accomplished for God. **It is all the things I was brought up to believe.** They represent many of the people we have in the church today, people that have become comfortable with their lives and rage against anything that challenges that comfort. Yet God still saves the Rich man too.

Joseph goes to Pilate, take that in, the man that was with the uncooperative Jews, he dares go to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body. Then don't miss it, **all the things in his actions tell of his sacrifice.** Joseph goes against the Sanhedrin and shows honor to one they despised. Joseph lays Him in what was probably His own bought tomb, a sign of riches being poured over Jesus. Joseph touches a dead body before Sabbath making Himself unclean on Passover and separates Himself from His family and friends.

Joseph, that day, sacrificed His standing, His job, His position, His religion, and that day put all His faith in God, hoping that Jesus' innocence perhaps would be the thing that could save him. Joseph still went looking for the Kingdom that day and displayed he was already living in it! And because Luke mentions Him, being righteous, we know he was rewarded with the Kingdom he sought.

Family, in light of 2020, in light of this upcoming season on the eve of Easter 2021 is there something you're still holding onto that keeps you from putting all your



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hope in Jesus, for **if you believe He is innocent then it will show in your sacrifice for Him.** What are the things in your life that portray your comfortableness? Is it a position in your job, the friends you have, the things you spend your time and money on? To follow Jesus usually requires a sacrifice that you feel, if you are one of the rich Christians in America, what is it costing you to follow Him today?

5. Heavy Resting / Contemplation vs. Idleness (vs. 55-56)

⁵⁵The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

My last challenge for you this week, is when you have your free time, is to stop and review what you have seen. These ladies had to stop their preparation, they had to stop worrying over the body of Jesus, there was nothing they could control with their behavior, there was no good to be done but to REST. What thing can you take off your calendar this week and spend some time in contemplation on what Jesus has done for you this year, what have you seen Him do, in what ways has he opened up your mind to God, what jams has He gotten you out of, and instead of rushing out, REST in it, and don't do a thing, but think about Him. For a whole day, these ladies, the disciples, all they could do was ponder what they had lost, you don't have to do that, **but ponder perhaps what would have become of you this year if you didn't have Him in your life.**

Let me encourage you today, think about the innocence of Christ, do you believe it? Think about how if it was not for His innocence, you would be condemned as guilty and still under the wrath of God. Think about what sacrifice you have made out of a heart filled with longing for the Kingdom of God. Then spend time thanking Him and prepare your hearts for next week when we celebrate the proof of His righteousness.



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PRAYER

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father, that held His Son accountable for the elect to ensure that we His people would be redeemed.

Go in the name of the Son, that provided for us our Justification by His Righteousness and in return bore our condemnation.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that bore witness then, has caused us to believe now, and compels us to share the truth with others so they may believe and be saved.