

Network for Revival Prepare Issue 58 – July 2026

Pray for Revival – for the Lord's sake

One of the subjects God has recently spoken to me about powerfully in my prayer life is the suffering of Jesus on the cross. It is easy just to think of the cross as a profoundly significant historical spiritual event, which is the foundation of our salvation. But we can omit meditating on the excruciating suffering Jesus experienced on the cross. It is the worst possible human suffering.

However, there is continuing suffering associated with the cross. I am well aware that God is not subject to suffering. But he does allow himself to experience it. Hence, we can grieve God – he allows himself to experience the grief. Paul writes "do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph 4:30). Isaiah says Israel "rebelled and grieved [God's] Holy Spirit (Isa 63:10). Ezekiel quotes God as saying about disobedient Israel "how I have been grieved by their adulterous hearts, which have turned away from me" (Ezk 6:9). The psalmist said of disobedient Israel "How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the wasteland! (Psa 78:40).

The continuing suffering associated with the cross is the Lord's grief that millions of people are either ignoring or rejecting the message of the passion of Jesus. This is one of the most powerful motives for prayer for Revival.

Crucifixion is a torturous, degrading slow death, the most horrible way to die, "the most wretched of deaths" (according to Josephus, a 1st century historian), "the most severe punishment" (according to Paulus, a 3rd century Roman lawyer).

Here is my meditation on the cross, written recently. As you read it, remember that the cross is being ignored or rejected by millions of humans. I recommend you read it slowly in a prayerful attitude.

> Lord Jesus, In Gethsemane you were horrified at the prospect of bearing the sin of humanity and the wrath of God against all human sin. It was so terrible. Divine holiness is so infinite, so pure, so totally separated from human sin and you were going to bear that sin. You "began to be deeply distressed and troubled (Mk 14:33-34). In Holy Week you offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears (Heb 5:7).
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> You said "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death" - an expression of horrific dread (Matt 26:38) beyond our understanding. Being in anguish, you prayed more earnestly three times: 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. (Such was the sorrow and pain.) Yet not as I will, but as you will.' Your sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground (Lk 22:44). The intensity of your grief, in itself, could have killed you as you contemplated bearing the enormous "disgrace" of human guilt (Heb 13:13; 1 Pet 2:24), the unutterable weight of our sins and transgressions, being 'made a curse for us.' But your blood had to be shed. I worship you, Lord.
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> You in whom is all the fulness of the deity; you who fill the universe; you who sustain the universe with your powerful word went up to Jerusalem to be "mocked, flogged and crucified" in your human nature.
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> After Gethsemane you endured betrayal by one disciple, denial by another, being forsaken by the other ten (Mt 26:55), rejection by many other people. You endured being spat upon, repeated mockery, insults, violence (including being hit on the head with a wooden staff), smacking in the face. You experienced potentially fatal beating with a bone-tipped whip (which damaged the body so much that it could reveal bones or internal organs), the crown of thorns being pressed on your head which caused serious bleeding over your face into your eyes, then dragging your cross through the streets (Jn 19:17). You suffered crucifixion in "disgrace" outside the city walls. You suffered extreme pain within your body, including in your very torn flesh, your hands, feet, wrists, shoulders and knees. You would have suffered fever and heart stress, nausea and dizziness, the anticipation of asphyxiation (when you could no longer support yourself on your crucified legs, which itself caused excruciating pain), severe cramps, extreme chest pain. I worship you, Lord.

You were bearing a terrible burden which is beyond our imagination, especially to one who lived in the most intimate and unbroken communion with your Father, from all eternity. Then on Calvary you cried "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (an expression of horrific spiritual anguish). You suffered alienation from the Father, and the agony of the cross reached the heart of the Trinity in the body of Jesus. In your human nature You experienced Hell which is a God-forsaken state. It is a place dominated by impenetrable darkness. It is "burning" with utter loneliness, complete desolation, total wretchedness and a sense of guilt – in Jesus' case the enormous guilt of humanity.

You experienced agony and torment far more than the individual unbeliever does in Hell. You took our pain and were crushed for our iniquities. You, divine Son of God, experienced horrific death in your human nature. I worship you, Lord. You, the infinite, majestic, eternal, utterly pure Son of God were suffering excruciating agony in your human nature. Isaiah describes your appearance as "so disfigured beyond that of any human being and [your] form marred beyond human likeness" (52:14). He adds "many … were appalled at the sight of you" ie you were disfigured by the appalling treatment from the soldiers and looked subhuman. Such humiliation! Such love! Deliberate sin shows contempt for all this.

This is the terrible suffering through which God provides salvation. But it is being ignored or rejected by millions of human beings. Imagine the grief it caused him, as a God who is love. So, how God must grieve at the millions ignoring and rejecting the Cross.

I urge you, most strongly to renew your commitment to prayer for Revival – for Jesus' sake, and to counteract God's grief.

God bless you.

Tony

RELEVANT QUOTATION

Ken Terhoven wrote in *Breath of Heaven* "We pray for the revival of the glory of God because we cannot bear to see God continually dishonoured by the worldliness, indifference and coldness of the church, the sin and wickedness around us and the proud and arrogant unbelief of the day."

In Network for Revival God has called us to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." This includes:

- Encouraging people to seek holiness and true biblical discipleship.
- Encouraging people to major on prayer for Revival.
- Encouraging churches to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit (see Church Development for information and resources).
- Encouraging people to "Watch!" for the return of Jesus (Mk 13:32-37 – see Eschatology).