

Bryan Station Baptist Church

INDEPENDENT

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Teaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State

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THE CROWD AT CALVARY

BY: C. D. COLE

"And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS" (Matt. 27:35-37).

In our thoughts let us go back to a little hill called Calvary. Calvary is the name of the place outside Jerusalem where the Lord Jesus was crucified. It is the focal point of all history. For 4,000 years longing hearts looked hopefully, through type and shadow, for the real Lamb of God to be slain. For 2,000 years heavy hearts with a sense of sin have looked back to Calvary and found peace. Calvary stands alone as

the one and only place where a righteous God will sheath his sword and spare a sinner. He can in justice spare the sinner because at Calvary he did not spare his only Son. Calvary, the only place where sin has ever been adequately dealt with. It is Calvary or Hell for every sinner.

We sing the song, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Yes, were you there, or rather are you there even now, for Calvary stands in the midst of the swarming multitudes today. It seems that God so arranged it that every sort of person is represented in the different classes that watched him die. There is a sense in which you are at Calvary now, and your condition is declared, your salvation is decided, your destiny is determined, by the attitude you take toward



Location: 3.3 miles out Bryan Station Road. Right on Briar Hill Road.

- Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
- Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
- Evening Service 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Air-Conditioned Nursery Provided

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Lexington, Ky. 40505

the cross of Christ, and the Christ of the cross.

Let us study the groups that gathered at Calvary and see if we cannot find your crowd there. There was a person or group of persons there that day with whom you belong and whose fate you will share.

1. The soldiers. Look at them and their conduct. They clad him in a mock robe of royalty, they spat in his face, pressed a crown of thorns upon his brow, they nailed him to the tree. But back and beyond all that was your sins and mine. In the deep mystery of providence it was you and I who spat in his face, etc. We had a part in it for he was wounded for our transgressions. This crowd we belonged to by nature. But grace has wrought in us and we no longer crucify him afresh. You today who refuse to trust him as your only hope are crucifying him afresh. Do not put all the blame on the soldiers of that day. They were but administering the wounds that our sins had caused.

They sat down and watched him there. And you today sit and watch him as you read this message of God. And some of you do not seem to care. What proof of human depravity that men can read the Gospel in sermon and yet politely go away as though it made no difference to them.

They also gambled for his seamless robe. Bad enough to watch him unmoved, but they gambled for his robe. The world plays its game today at the foot of the cross. If you are not a soldier of the cross you are a soldier at the cross, gambling away your opportunity to be saved.

2. Then there were those who passed by wagging their heads. They did not crucify him, only passed by, reviling him. It is fashionable today to pass by Calvary. From the blasphemer to the indifferent soul, men pass by the cross today. The Bible records three things of these passers-by:

(a) They misquoted his claims. "Thou that destroyest this temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself." He said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." But he was speaking of his body.

(b) They minimized his death. "Save thyself; come down from the cross." They saw no necessity in his death. Modern critics see no need of Calvary, no atonement in his blood, and decry it as butcher-house religion.

(c) They mocked his deity. "If thou be the Son of God." Modernists today doubt his deity and talk about the perils of worshipping Jesus. They see in him a great teacher, and idealist, the crystal Christ, but not the Calvary Christ.

3. The chief priests, scribes and elders. These were religious groups. You would expect them to be quiet and dignified, but they behaved very badly.

4. The general crowd, termed simply the people. "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and

returned." They looked but did nothing. Most people belong to this group. They look but neglect salvation. It is one thing to look at Calvary and another to look unto Christ on Calvary. "Smote their breasts and returned." They were impressed by what they saw; that awful scene of death and darkness made them smite their breasts, humbled by the awful solemnity.

5. The centurion.

(a) He feared greatly. "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

(b) He said that certainly this was a righteous man; he called Christ the Son of God; he glorified God. "Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47).

6. The dying thief. Here is one case of deathbed repentance. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:39-43).

(a) He took the place of a sinner.

(b) He called Jesus "Lord".

(c) Trusted him for salvation saying "remember me".

Can you see more clearly today where you stand? Be sure of one thing... you are there. You are part of the crowd at Calvary.

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PROMISES

How many promises are in the Bible? According to a count recently completed by Everek R. Storms, editor of The Gospel Banner, there are 8,810. Of these, 85% or 7,487 are promises given by God to man.

You may be surprised that more than one-third of the Bible's promises are in three books, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel--more than 1,000 each. Only one book of the Bible, Titus, has no promises at all, though seventeen others contain fewer than ten promises each.

Many verses have more than one promise; Isaiah 40:31 has four. One chapter, Deuteronomy 28, Editor Storms points out, has 133. But he adds, for Christians Psalm 37 is the most wonderful promise chapter with 43 promises such as "Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Commenting on his research, Storms says, "These promises are ours for the asking, 7,487 of them made by

God himself. They are waiting for us to test and prove them. We go to church and sing, 'Standing on the Promises,' but most of us are sitting on them."

Which is a thought. The promises are ours. Are we standing...or sitting?

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ARE WE HEADED FOR THE SAME FATE? In the year 1788, Edward Gibbon completed his monumental work, THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, in which he listed these five reasons for that fall:

1. The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society.
2. Higher and higher taxes and the spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace.
3. The mad craze for pleasure, sports becoming every year more exciting and more brutal.
4. The building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within, the decadence of the people.
5. The decay of religion--faith fading into mere form--losing touch with life and becoming impotent to guide the people.

Are there lessons here for us today???

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