

“The Crosses of Calvary”

Matt. 27:33-38

Introduction

- I. Whether one calls it Calvary or Golgotha, the fact remains that this is the sight where our Lord was crucified.
- II. The word that is translated Calvary means skull (hence the idea of the crucifixion sight being known as the place of a skull (Matt. 27:33 and John 19:17).
 - A. There are different ideas as to why this place was known as such.
 1. One idea, according to the ISBE, is that this place is where supposedly Adam's skull was found!
 2. Another idea is that it was known as such due to skulls being visible on the ground.
 3. Possibly going along with this theory is the idea that it was an execution site (certainly that is the case with Jesus and the two malefactors).
 4. There is also the suggestion that the name came about due to the area's appearance possibly resembling a skull.
 - B. No one on Earth today knows for certain as to why the place was designated as such.
- III. On the place known as Calvary, there were three men crucified and left to die in the first century (Luke 23:13-46).
 - A. Rightfully so, there is much more emphasis placed on the crucifixion of one (Jesus) than the others.
 - B. Yet all three died that day, and each death was different than the other.
 1. One of those men, Jesus, died for sin that day.
 2. Another man (one of the malefactors) died to sin that day.
 3. The other man (the other malefactor) died in sin that day.

Discussion

- I. Jesus died for sins (John 19:30).
 - A. Jesus, being sinless, became the offering for the sins of mankind (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 John 3:5; Rom. 5:10).
 - B. In dying for sins, sinners can be saved (1 Tim. 1:15; 1 Pet. 2:24-25; Eph. 1:5-9; Col. 1:12-14).
- II. One of the malefactors died to sin (Luke 23:39-43).
 - A. One man recognized that he was receiving physical punishment due to his wickedness (Luke 23:41).
 - B. He also knew that Jesus did not deserve to be punished (Luke 23:41).
 - C. This man then made a decision that forever changed his future.
 1. Acknowledging his condition, this man then “turned” to Jesus (Luke 23:42).
 2. By implication of his statement, this man demonstrated his faith in Jesus as the Christ (Luke 23:42).
 3. In a manner of speaking, the penitent man figuratively turned himself over to Jesus, and in so doing, he died to sin (2 Tim. 2:11; Col. 3:3).
 - D. Even though this man's physical life was almost finished, Jesus could assure the man that his spiritual life was secured (Luke 23:43; Matt. 9:6).

E. If we die to sin, then in like manner, we can be assured of our spiritual life (Rom. 6:1-8)

III. One of the malefactors died in sin (Luke 23:39).

A. This man did not have faith that Jesus was the Christ.

1. He was not confident, for he used the word "If" (Luke 23:39).

2. Mankind must believe that Jesus is indeed the Christ, or else we will die in our sins (John 8:24; Heb. 11:6).

3. Our faith in Him must lead us to obedience to His Word (Heb. 5:9; Matt. 7:21-23).

B. This man seemed impenitent, and unless a man repents, he will die in sin (Acts 17:30; 2 Pet. 3:9; Luke 13:5).

Conclusion

I. While one was greater importance than the other two, it is still good to look at all three of the crosses of Calvary.

A. By doing such we learn that our Savior died for our sins.

B. We will also be able to see an example of how one died to sin.

C. We may think upon the consequences of dying in sin.

II. Where do we fall in the last two categories?

A. Have we died to sin (Eph. 2:1-2; Col. 2:13-15)?

B. Are we dead in sin (1 Tim. 5:6)?