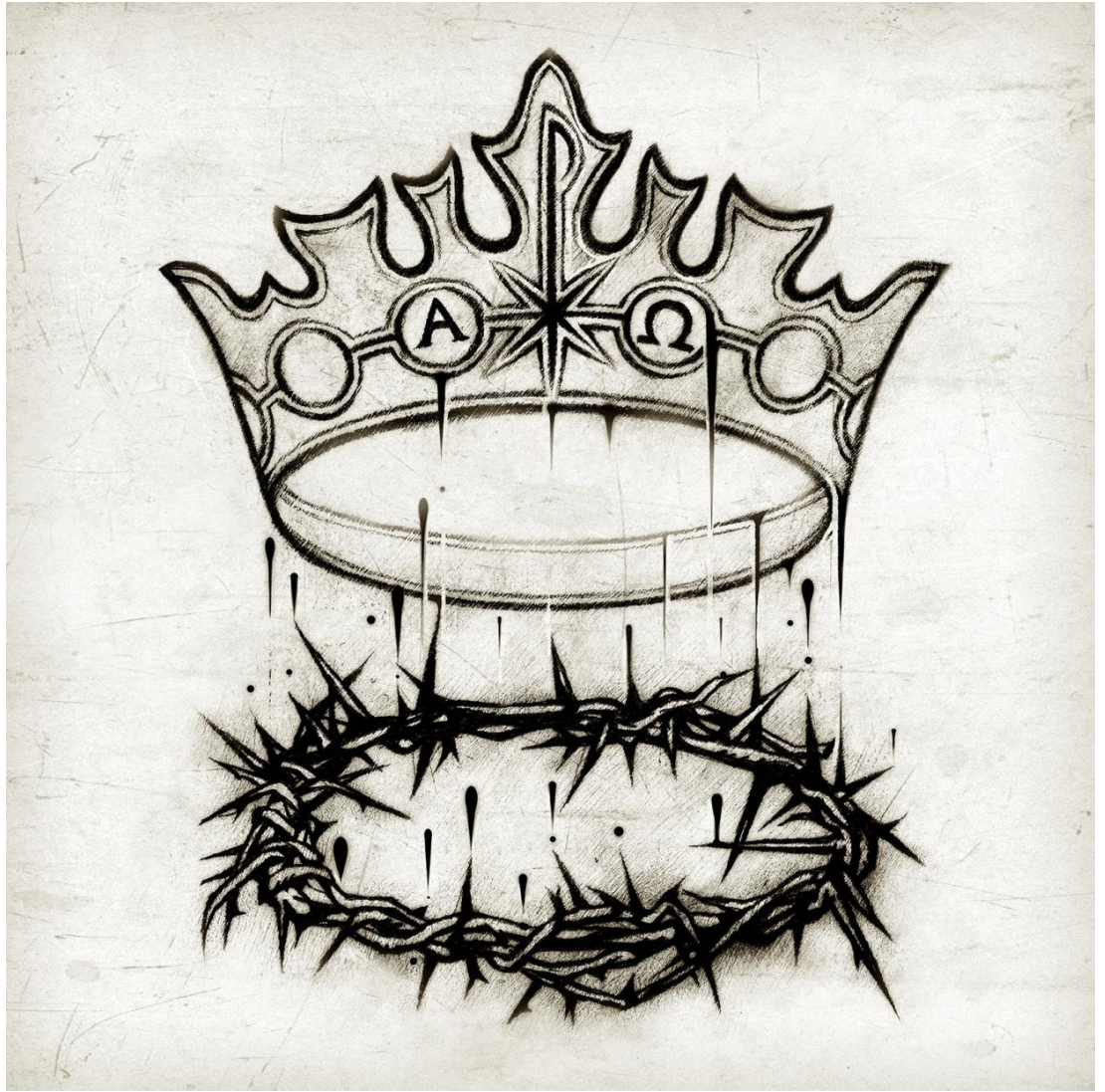


The Passion of Christ in
the Gospel of Matthew



Chris Koelle, Crown of Thorns, Crown of Glory

the Gospel of Matthew



CHRIST COMMUNITY
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The Gospel of Matthew

And I, when I came to you brothers and sisters, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. **For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.**

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 ESV

The gift of the Easter Season is that it calls us to pause to specifically focus on the life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ. As Paul declares in **1 Corinthians 2:1-5**, it is this reality in Christ that should shape the whole of our lives year round.¹ This Easter Season we will engage the passion of Christ in the Gospel of Matthew. We will focus specifically on **Matthew 26:17-28:20** with a postscript in **Acts 1:1-11**. As Frederic Dale Bruner writes of the last three chapters in Matthew, “Scripture’s main teachers through the centuries have found in these three chapters the best news of all – Jesus’ suffering triumph over sin and death for us and the whole world, and his gift of thrilling meaning to life in the joy of Christian mission to the whole world.”² May we be blessed by and moved to share the story of the King who was willing to endure the crown of thorns so as to reign with a crown of glory for the redemption of His people!

¹ Paul’s use of “Jesus Christ and him crucified” is shorthand for the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and return of Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 15 as evidence of this).

² Frederic Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: Volume 2: The Churchbook, Matthew 13-28*, Revised & Expanded Edition (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 586.

Matthew's Gospel was written for a Jewish audience for the purpose of convincing them of the inclusion of the Gentiles as part of the redemptive work of Christ in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. He also emphasizes the Davidic Kingship as part of Christ's redemptive work. Charles L. Quarles observes, "Matthew closely associates Jesus with Old Testament David in order to highlight Jesus' identity as God's Anointed One, the King appointed by heaven. Jesus, as the messianic King, will reign over people of every nation, tribe, and language forever and ever."³ Christ's crucifixion proves to be the central historical event in the declaration of the kingship of Christ. According to Herman Ridderbos, "The kingship of Christ *must* be affirmed, even in his cross; it is as the King of the Jews that he must be crucified and die. In the mocking words of men, God maintains the truth. And it is not *in spite of* the cross that he is King. Far rather it is *because of* the cross. For it is through the cross that he has made his people his own and that he rules over them; it is through the cross that he has made satisfaction for his own."⁴ Thus, our study of and meditation on the crucifixion of Jesus is critical to our understanding of our redemption so as to display the glory of God in a fallen world.

Interestingly, Matthew does not go into great or gruesome detail about the torture and crucifixion itself. These details are not critical to our understanding and application of this historical event. Mark Ross suggests, "The details of the physical torments of scourging and crucifixion do not begin to tell us what we most need to know."⁵ What we most need to know is what the crucifixion accomplishes. Paul helps us in this regard in **Galatians 3:10-14**: "For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.' Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for 'The righteous shall live by faith.' But the law is not of faith, rather 'The one who does them shall live by them.' **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us** – for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree' – so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of

³ Charles L. Quarles, *A Theology of Matthew: Jesus Revealed as Deliverer, King, and Incarnate Creator* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2013), 95.

⁴ H.N. Ridderbos, *Matthew's Witness to Jesus Christ: The King and the Kingdom* (New York: Association Press, 1958), 89-90.

⁵ Mark E. Ross, *Let's Study Matthew* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 287. This is an excellent devotional commentary for those looking for an insightful overview of the Gospel of Matthew.

Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit by faith.” Fleming Rutledge rightly challenges us all when she writes, “It sometimes seems as though the church has willfully decided to ignore the radical content of such passages (concerning the crucifixion of Christ), concentrating instead on a more generic, less offensive interpretation of Jesus’ death – for example, ‘Jesus died to show how much he loved us.’ That is true, certainly, but it has a bland sound and falls far short of accounting for the particular horror of crucifixion. The question this raises is this: On the cross, was Jesus simply ‘showing’ us something, or was something actually *happening*?”⁶ YES, something DID HAPPEN, and we need to know it and walk in light of its glorious truth. We most need to know that redemption was accomplished in the life, crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ! We also need to know that we are to look forward with definitive hope to the return of Christ when it will be fully applied to the children of God and all of Creation!

We will continue to seek nourishment from our historic faith and the Old and New Testaments for our weekly devotion and worship. The calls to worship will come from **the book of Exodus** to remind us of God’s foundational desire to free His people from the slavery of sin and death to dwell with and worship Him in freedom and truth. We will confess together each week **Questions 27-28** from **the Westminster Shorter Catechism** to remind us of the humiliation and exaltation of Christ in His life, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. The assurances of pardon will come from **the letter to the Galatians** in which Paul makes clear the saving distinction between law/works and faith which is offered to all. Our benedictory blessings each week will come from **1 Corinthians 15:50-57/58** to remind us of the power of the resurrection in our lives. The goal of these various elements is to show us that Christ’s life, death, resurrection, ascension, and return serve to transform us into His image despite the crucifixion event having happened over 2,000 years ago.

This devotional is designed to encourage daily meditation and prayer in personal devotions and/or family worship. You are encouraged to use it the week prior to the associated sermon so that you and your family are prepared for worship. In addition to the Scriptures and associated questions, there are opportunities to pray for the various aspects of the Church. On Wednesdays, we will pray

⁶ Fleming Rutledge, *The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 17.

for the various missionaries, church plants, and missional ministries that we support at CCC through Faith Promise. We also have the opportunity to pray on Saturday for another church within the Northwest Georgia Presbytery, or prepare for the appropriate sacrament. On Sunday, the Lord's Day Sabbath, we can use the suggested prayer focus to prepare ourselves for worship in the presence of the Lord. Our desire is to continue to facilitate and grow in our dependence on the Lord through prayer.

May the Lord use our time in the Gospel of Matthew to remind us of the cost of our salvation in Jesus' crown of thorns and the gift of eternal life in His crown of glory! May we wrestle deeply with both Christ's humiliation and exaltation so as to grow further in His image! May we be faithful to share the passion of Christ from the Gospel of Matthew!

Soli Deo Gloria

Sermon Schedule

Date	Call to Worship	Assurance of Pardon	Benediction	Sacrament
Sunday, 2/4: Matthew 26:11-46	Exodus 12:1-14	Galatians 1:2-5	1 Corinthians 15:50-57	<i>Bread and Cup</i>
Sunday, 2/11: Matthew 26:47-75	Exodus 15:1-18	Galatians 2:15-16	1 Corinthians 15:50-57	
Sunday, 2/18: Matthew 27:1-27	Exodus 15:22-26	Galatians 2:11-21	1 Corinthians 15:50-57	
Sunday, 2/25: Matthew 27:22-66	Exodus 16:1-12	Galatians 2:10-14	1 Corinthians 15:50-57	<i>Bread and Cup</i>
Sunday, 4/1: Matthew 28:1-20	Exodus 24:1-9	Galatians 4:4-7	1 Corinthians 15:50-58	
Sunday, 4/8: Acts 1:1-11	Exodus 17:1-6	Galatians 6:8-10	1 Corinthians 15:50-58	

27. Q. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

28. Q. Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation consisteth in His rising from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 27-28

Jesus Meets the Last Passover

Monday 2/26: Exodus 12:1-14: What has the Lord has passed over in your life through Christ's sacrifice that you are thankful for?

Tuesday 2/27: Galatians 1:3-5: Given all that is going on in our world right now, give praise to the Lord Jesus for delivering us from this evil age.

Wednesday 2/28: Pray for the Larsens with NEXT through MTW as they seek to equip others to reach youths world-wide.

Thursday 3/1: Matthew 26:26-46: How comforting is it that Jesus promises to drink of the fruit of the vine with you in His Father's Kingdom? ⁷

Friday 3/2: 1 Cor. 15:50-51: Give thanks to God for the blessing that all that is weak and failing will be eternally transformed in the Kingdom of God.

Saturday 3/3: Prepare for the Lord's Table with the preparatory letter and prayer. Give thanks for all of your sins being passed over in Christ.

Sunday 3/4: The Lord's Day Sabbath *with the Lord's Table:*

Pray for the bread and cup to nourish you in becoming more forgiving as a reflection of you having been forgiven in Christ.

⁷ The phrase "with you" is unique to Matthew's telling of the Last Passover / first Lord's Supper making it more personal than Mark's account.

Jesus Betrayed and Denied

Monday 3/5: Exodus 15:1-18: Praise God for His promise to deliver us from our enemies of sin and death so as to dwell with Him for eternity.

Tuesday 3/6: Galatians 2:15-16: What is the true posture of faith as opposed to thinking our works can save us?

Wednesday 3/7: Pray for the Women's Extension and the group from CCC that ministers there once a month seeking the fruit of redemption.

Thursday 3/8: Matthew 26:47-15: Compare Peter's and Jesus' ways of engaging the circumstances. Which is most reflective of your way?

Friday 3/9: 1 Cor. 15:50-51: Meditate on how blessed it will be for our bodies to put on the imperishable and the immortal when Christ returns.

Saturday 3/10: Pray for David Hall and Midway PCA that the Lord would bless their ministry in Powder Springs.

Sunday 3/11: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to help us walk in newness of resurrected life between the now and the not yet.

Monday 2/12: Exodus 15:22-26: In what ways are you seeking to diligently listen to the voice of the Lord and give ear to His commands?

Tuesday 2/13: Galatians 2:11-21: What impact does the historical event of Christ being crucified have on how you are living your life?

Wednesday 2/14: Pray for the Stocks in Southeast Asia as they seek to build relationships with their neighbors.

Thursday 2/15: Matthew 27:1-31: Give thanks for Jesus enduring all that He endured to prove that He truly is our Redeeming King.

Friday 2/16: 1 Cor. 15:50-51: What are you most looking forward to about death being swallowed up in victory and losing its sting?

Saturday 2/17: Pray for Joel Smit and Smyrna PCA that the Lord would bless their ministry in Smyrna.

Sunday 2/18: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to humble and help you to be more grateful in light of Christ's suffering.

Jesus Crucified, Dead, and Buried

Monday 3/19: Exodus 16:1-12: Praise God for His ongoing provision for you and your family over the years.

Tuesday 3/20: Galatians 3:10-14: Meditate on the cost to Christ for redeeming you from the curse of the law. Give thanks for this.

Wednesday 3/21: Pray for Mike Kennemar with MNA Disaster Response that the Lord would use their ministry to bless those who have lost so much.

Thursday 3/22: Matthew 27:32-44: Have you ever been mocked or felt forsaken? How does it compare to the experience of Jesus on the cross?

Friday 3/23: 1 Cor. 15:50-51: How has Christ's victory over death and sin blessed you in this life?

Saturday 3/24: Prepare for the Lord's Table with the preparatory letter and prayer. Give thanks for Christ dying the death you deserved.

Sunday 3/25: The Lord's Day Sabbath *with the Lord's Table:*
Pray for the means of grace to nourish you with life more abundant as a result of Christ's sacrifice on your behalf.

Jesus the Crucified is Given!

Monday 3/26: Exodus 24:7-9: Give thanks specifically for each of the specific attributes confessed by God in verses 6-7.

Tuesday 3/27: Galatians 4:4-7: What has blessed you most about being adopted as a child by your Abba Father who sent Christ to redeem you?

Wednesday 3/28: Pray for Jody Stancil and Riverside Community Church that they would see many walk in newness of life in Christ's resurrection.

Thursday 3/29: Matthew 28:7-20: What are some ways in which you are participating in the making of disciples as commanded by Jesus?

Friday 3/30: 1 Cor. 15:50-58: Meditate on how Christ's victory over death allows you to be steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the Lord.

Saturday 3/31: Pray for Tom Myers and Chapel Hill PCA that the Lord would bless their ministry in Douglasville.

Sunday 4/1: The Lord's Day Sabbath *Easter*: Pray for those who will attend worship today who are not part of a regular church body that they would be drawn into fellowship to the Father by the Son.

Monday 4/2: Exodus 17:1-6: What was the main purpose for God to elect Israel as a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation”?

Tuesday 4/3: Galatians 6:8-10: What have you sown spiritually over the last month or so? What do you hope to reap from it in the months ahead?

Wednesday 4/4: Pray for Daniel and Meredith Chen with Campus Outreach at KSU that the Lord would provide leaders and disciple makers.

Thursday 4/5: Acts 1:1-11: Why didn't Jesus take the disciples with Him when He ascended? What does this say to us today?

Friday 4/6: 1 Cor. 15:50-58: What are some ways in which you are blessed by knowing that your labor in union with Christ is not in vain?

Saturday 4/7: Pray for Ross Ritter and Cherokee PCA that the Lord would bless their ministry in Canton.

Sunday 4/8: **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for our worship to help stir and equip people to go out to share the glory of the Gospel.