
HANDOUT:
CRUSHED

Isaiah 53:5 and 2 Corinthians 5:21

Out of the corner of my eye, as the soldiers led me away, I saw Pilate washing his hands. The last think I heard as I was taken off to be beaten was, “Crucify _____.”

The cries of the crowd were charged, but the roman solders were just cold, calculated and cruel. They led me to a whipping post where I was stripped naked. Over and over they pounded instruments of torture against my flesh—cutting, tearing and ripping literal strips of skin off my back. Inner muscles and sinews were torn. That’s what happened when they scourged me (_____), by whips embedded with glass, nails and bone.

Careful not to kill me, for I still had a cross to bear, they put aside their whips—but only to make an absolute mockery of me. The soldiers, out of sport and boredom, covered my raw, burning flesh with a scarlet robe and placed a crown made of prickly thorns into my scalp. I was in physical agony, but they had the time to kneel before my shaking body and spit upon me like I was some village idiot. “Hail, King of the Jews,” they sneered as my insides bled to the ground around me. If only they knew.

The physical break was short-lived. It was time for me to carry my cross. I knew the burden was mine _____’s. I struggled with the weight of it for some time, but ultimately I fell to my knees. Another man had to help me finish the journey up to Golgotha.

When we got to the top of the hill, they offered me wine mixed with myrrh to dull my pain and my senses. There was still so much suffering ahead; they needed to make sure I was able to tolerate all of it. I refused. I needed to bear this pain. I, _____, needed to feel every excruciating moment.

What they did next was the most horrible torture mankind had yet devised. Crucifixion was designed to kill by way of slow suffocation. As the arms and legs of most victims were bound, the upper body would lose its strength, eventually collapsing the weight of the body onto the lungs. But instead of letting my body collapse onto itself, they drove spikes through the bones of my _____’s wrists—adding extra support and extra time to my suffering. They nailed my feet into the cross so that I could stand longer.

As I hung there from my own limbs, I _____, suffered the effects of any human body exposed to such trauma. The insufferable thirst of being hung in the sun fueled the fever brought on by the swelling of my wounds. Tetanus began to set in from the rusty nails, and the wounds from which I was hanging tore further as my body shook harder and harder.

Yet, I never lost sight of my purpose on that cross. Even as the soldiers gambled my garments away while I hung there convulsing, even as they hung a mocking sign above me reading, “This is _____, the King of the Jews,” I still kept my character. On either side of me were true criminals—thieves being crucified for their crimes. One of them was defiant, mocking me, daring me to come down off of my cross. How much I wanted to. The other criminal understood who I was. He asked if I would remember him when I came into my kingdom. Of course I would. He reminded me in my weakest hour, what I was there for.

Then more hours passed as I, _____, hung in agony, the sins of the world gnawing on every nerve in my flesh. It was now that I realized that even God the Father couldn’t look upon me. I cried, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The people still there thought I was confused and filled a sponge with sour wine, pushing it up to my lips.

As soon as the wine touched my lips, I knew the cup had passed. “It is finished.”