

“Exchanging Reproach for Glory”

A Cross for a Crown: The Great Exchange #1

INTRODUCTION

In our Easter sermon series we are going to examine what Jesus gave up for to secure our salvation and what He received in exchange. It is impossible to imagine what it was like for Christ to set aside His glory in exchange for our humanity, but we will catch a glimpse of the disparity as we contrast what the Bible has to say about the reproach of the cross and the glory of the crown in that great exchange.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

If you had to sell everything, what would be the last thing you would want to part with?

Study Questions (45 MIN)

The reproach of the cross

Q1. Read Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 59:2; Matthew 27:46; Ephesians 5:2; John 10:30

Jesus stepped out of eternal glory into this world, fully aware of what he would be facing. What does Galatians 3:13 tell us Christ did to redeem us? What does 2 Corinthians 5:21 tell us He did so that we could become righteous? Because of His holy nature, what is God’s response to sin? (Isaiah 59:2) At the time Jesus became the sin-bearer for all of humanity, He “knew no sin.” How did Jesus experience the weight of sin from the cross (Matthew 27:46)? Up until then, what had been the relationship between the Father and the Son (John 10:30)? The reason Jesus laid down His life was because of His great love for us. (Ephesians 5:2) In your group, take a moment to pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God for loving you so greatly that He endured the sufferings of the cross.

The glory of the crown

Q2. Read Philippians 2:6-11; Hebrews 2:9; John 17:5; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 21:10-11, 23-25; Matthew 4:12-16; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Now that we have considered how incredibly far Jesus descended to redeem us, let’s consider the heights from which He came. How does the Bible describe Jesus both before and after taking on the likeness of man (Philippians 2:6-11, Hebrews 2:9)? John 17:5, Hebrews 1:3 and Revelation 21:10-11, 23-25 all describe to the glory Jesus had in the presence of God the father before He became a man, as well as after and in the age to come. As you read these passages, what is some of the imagery associated with God’s glory? We saw that glory dawn on the earth when Jesus walked among us (Matthew 4:12-16). And now, as believers, we are being transformed, and shine a reflection of God’s glory on those around us. What is one way you have seen the light of

God’s glory shining in this dark world? What is one place you would like to shine the light of God’s glory?

Our cross and crown

Q3. Read Colossians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Timothy 2:11-12a; Romans 8:17-18

“In every Christian’s heart there is a cross and a throne, and the Christian is on the throne till he puts himself on the cross” A.W. Tozer

Jesus made it very clear in Mat 16:24-25 that we must deny ourselves, and take up our cross (i.e. put to death our “flesh”), in order to follow him and find new life. This transformation is both a crisis (our conversion experience) and a process (our spiritual growth). What are some of the works of the flesh that are no longer “alive” in you life? The result of putting ourselves on the cross is that we gain an incredible reward. What is the “crown” we receive in exchange for “dying to self”? (2Timothy 2:11-12a; Romans 8:17-18) Are there areas in your life that are still “being put to death” that you would like your group to pray over with you?

Wrap-Up

Jesus knew the price of our redemption was so high that only He could pay it. He willingly left His place in glory with the Father to travel the road to the cross. There he suffered the reproach of the cross, bore the sin of humanity and experienced the separation from God that results from sin. But when He was raised to life, he returned to be crowned with glory once again. Jesus calls us to follow Him by taking up our cross, putting to death our carnal nature, and dying to self. When we do, we receive a crown as our inheritance, to reign with him and share in his glory.

Memory Verse

11 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him...

2 Timothy 2:11-12a NIV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more notes) _____

Challenge: Ask God to show you places you can deny yourself more for the sake of Jesus.

Q1

Galatians 3:13 ESV - 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse¹ of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—

¹ Not merely *accursed...* but a *curse ...*, bearing the universal curse of the whole human race. Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, . (19 Feb, 2000).

2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV - 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Isaiah 59:2 ESV - 2 but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Matthew 27:46 ESV - 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

John 10:30 ESV - 30 I and the Father are one."

Ephesians 5:2 ESV - 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Q2

Read Philippians 2:6-11 in your Bible

Hebrews 2:9 ESV - 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

John 17:5 ESV - 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

Hebrews 1:3 ESV - 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Revelation 21:10-11, 23-25 ESV - 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ... 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day--and there will be no night there.

Read Matthew 4:12-16 in your Bible

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 ESV - 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Q4

Colossians 3:5 ESV - 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

1 Corinthians 3:3 ESV - 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

2 Timothy 2:11-12a ESV - 11 The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him...

Romans 8:17-18 ESV - 17 and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Prayer Notes cont.
