

Why Did Jesus Die? | Matthew 27:45–54

The Passion of the Christ

Pastor Woody Woodward continued our Passion of the Christ series with a powerful message from Matthew 27:45–54 that centers on the question, "Why did Jesus die?" Through dramatic signs and divine proclamations surrounding Jesus' final moments on the cross, we are led to the heart of the gospel: Jesus died so that we might live.

Summary

This passage in Matthew's Gospel presents a series of supernatural and symbolic events that answer the question, "Why did Jesus die?" Darkness covers the land, the veil of the temple is torn from top to bottom, the earth shakes, tombs are opened, and a Roman centurion declares, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Pastor Woody emphasized that these events are not coincidental or merely historical—they are theological signs pointing to God's judgment on sin and His love for humanity. The darkness symbolizes divine judgment, the torn veil represents access to God, the earthquake reveals God's wrath, and the resurrection of saints previews future victory over death. In all these signs, we see that Jesus died in our place, bearing the full weight of sin so we could be reconciled to God.

The centurion's declaration challenges all of us to respond in faith. If even a Roman executioner could recognize Jesus as the Son of God, so can we—regardless of our past. Jesus' death offers life to all who believe.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus died as our substitute, bearing our sin and punishment.
- The darkness reveals God's judgment and the weight of sin Jesus bore.
- The torn veil declares that access to God is now open to all.
- The earthquake and opened tombs affirm God's power and His plan for resurrection.
- The centurion's confession models the faith response we are invited to make.
- Salvation is not earned by works or religious acts; it is received by faith in Jesus.

Discussing and Applying the Sermon

- Which of the signs surrounding Jesus' death (darkness, veil, earthquake, tombs) impacted you most? Why?
 - How does understanding the symbolism of the torn veil affect how you approach God in prayer or worship?
 - Why is the centurion's response significant in light of who he was? How does his declaration challenge your own response to Jesus?
 - In what ways does this passage reinforce or reshape your understanding of salvation?
 - Have you personally believed in Jesus as the Son of God who died for you? If not, what is holding you back?
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About *The Passion of the Christ*

This series explores the final hours of Jesus' life leading up to the resurrection. Each message focuses on a different moment in the Passion narrative, revealing the depth of Christ's love, the gravity of our sin, and the invitation to follow him as Savior and King.