

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

### "THE CROSS, PART 1"

For individual study or discussion

Since our last study, the pervading tone of the crowd has shifted from mourning to mocking, as Jesus hangs on **the cross**. When the innocent Son of God is crucified between two criminals, Luke's stirring narrative bears witness to the OT prophetic fulfillment of Jesus' messianic role. Even as Luke 23:32-38 highlights Jesus' royal identity, his threefold mission as prophet, priest, and king cannot be missed. Philip Ryken writes, "*God has given notice that Jesus Christ is the saving King: the Prophet who predicted the fall of Jerusalem and the Priest who interceded for his enemies is also the King of God's people.*"<sup>1</sup>

#### The Prophetic Fulfillment of Jesus (vv. 32-33, 34b)

The somber prophecy of Isaiah 53:12b, foretelling the Messiah's association with transgressors, finds its stark fulfillment in Luke's account. The scene is set: Jesus, the innocent one, hangs between two condemned men, a portrayal of his being numbered with the transgressors. The scene is further punctuated by the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' garments, a detail echoing Psalm 22:16-18.

- Read Isaiah 53. How does the cross show us that there is no redemption without wounds, no wholeness without brokenness, and no resurrection without death?
- How does Jesus' statement in Luke 18:31-34 underscore the prophetic aspect of his ministry, and how is it ultimately fulfilled in the events of Luke 23?

#### The Astounding Grace of Jesus (v. 34a)

Words of astounding grace pierce the darkness of the cross when Jesus utters, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*" (v. 34a). His plea isn't generalized sentiment but a specific petition for those directly involved in his suffering.<sup>2</sup> J.C. Ryle points out that the cross brings his intercessory role into sharp focus, "*As soon as the blood of the Great Sacrifice began to flow, the Great High Priest began to intercede.*"<sup>3</sup>

- Read Luke 6:27-29. How does Jesus put into practice what he taught his followers about forgiveness?
- How does the concept of Jesus as the Great High Priest in Hebrews 7:25-28 illuminate the meaning and depth of his prayer for forgiveness (v. 34a)?

#### The Royal Identity of Jesus (vv. 35-38)

The mocking taunts of the rulers and soldiers ironically affirm Jesus' royal identity. The soldiers, offering him sour wine, challenge him to prove his kingship by escaping his fate. The inscription "*This is the King of the Jews*" stood as a striking declaration of his royal status. A sign they unwittingly intend as a mockery proclaims the very truth they sought to deny.

- Read Ephesians 2:4-9 and Romans 6:4-11. What is ironic about the words of the rulers, "*He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!*"
- Read Psalm 69:21. It is unlikely that their offer of sour wine is an act of kindness. John 19:28-29 gives the added detail that the sour wine is offered up to Jesus on a hyssop branch. Read Exodus 12:22-23 and Psalm 51:7. What is the significance of the hyssop branch?
- "*If something seems too good to be true, it probably is. But could anything that seems so horrible be in any way good? At the center of our Christian faith is a radical paradox—the most horrible thing that ever happened was the most wonderful thing that ever happened. [So when] you make sense of your life, what looks like a disaster may, in fact, be grace. What looks like the end may be the beginning. What looks hopeless may be God's instrument to give you real and lasting hope.*"<sup>4</sup> How can you trust God on your worst days?

DATE: March 30, 2025

SPEAKER: Brian/Frank

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 23:32-38

### RENEW: 31 Days of Prayer

#### DAY 29: For the revival of God's people

**PRAYER:** Living God, humbly and desperately, we pray for the power of your Spirit to move among us afresh. We are far too often dull to your presence and drifting from your Word. Forgive us for being taken in by all the deceitful allure of this world and for allowing lesser things to become more important in our lives than you. We bring you all the places where we are hurting, broken, enslaved, burdened, and hopeless. You know where we truly are in our heart and our mind. Set us free through the power of the Gospel. We pray for your healing power to mend every broken place, to liberate every chain of bondage, and to renew our hearts in you again. Wake us up, Lord! Help us, by faith, to put off the old nature of sin and to put on the new nature of Christ daily. Teach us to look carefully at how we walk, not as unwise but as wise, and enable us to make the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Revive and renew us as your people, O Lord. We pray that, by your Spirit living and breathing among and through us, you will shine your light brilliantly upon us and clearly through us so that many are drawn to know you as Savior and Lord. Your same power that broke prison chains, raised the dead, healed the sick, and parted the seas — may that same power work among us today. For your glory and in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Hope Unlimited, supported partner ministry

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Ugandan Seminary Faculty, supported national partners

<sup>1</sup> Ryken, Philip. *Luke: Volume 2*. 2009, Phillipsburg, NJ. P&R Publishing. 586

<sup>2</sup> Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*. 1998, Wheaton, IL. Crossway Books. 378

<sup>3</sup> Ryle, J.C. *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: Luke, Volume 2*. 1860, NY NY. Robert Carter & Brothers. 467

<sup>4</sup> Tripp, Paul. *Seems Too Bad to Be Good*. March 31, 2021. <https://www.paultripp.com/wednesdays-word/posts/seems-too-bad-to-be-good>