

1. Sacrifice.
 - a. Biblically, it calls our minds back to the Old Testament, where Israel sacrificed animals, grain, and drinks to the LORD.
 - b. Today, it holds a different meaning.
 - i. My granddaughter is in a program for gifted children.
 - ii. This program is a lot of work and requires time and effort.
 - iii. In her mind, she is missing time with friends.
 - iv. I told her that she was sacrificing something now for something better later on (not mine, but I can't remember where I heard it).
 - c. We rarely refer to sacrifice in the context of our death.
2. Simon of Cyrene
 - a. Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell us that Simon carried Jesus' cross. Only Mark gives us any idea who Simon was.
 - i. Mark 15:21: "And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross."
 - ii. Romans 16:13: "Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well."
 - b. None of them tell us why the Romans pressed Simon into service.
 - i. Only John tells us that Jesus started out carrying His cross.
 - ii. John 19:17: "and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha."
 - iii. "Coming in from the country," Cyrene is in Northeastern Libya on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.
 - iv. It is likely he was there for the Feast of Pentecost. Luke tells us in Acts that there were "devout men from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5).
 - v. Acts 2:10: "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome,"
 - vi. Maybe it was only to show us how physically and emotionally exhausted Jesus was from the beatings and trials (loss of blood and dehydration).
 - vii. This would lend validity to Jesus' death without the soldiers breaking his legs.
 - c. Many commentaries take this one step further to say that Simon was converted because of his service, carrying Jesus' cross to Golgotha.
 - i. I try to put myself in Simon's shoes.
 - ii. Simon witnessed all that happened that day: the darkness, the earthquake, the dead resurrected, etc.
 - d. Even in the face of this death, marching to it, Jesus takes time to give a warning.
3. Do Not Weep.
 - a. Luke 23:28–31: "But turning to them Jesus said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'"
 - b. Weep for yourselves.

- i. “Weep for yourselves” is an odd thing to say coming from someone who is walking to His death.
 - ii. There is no remorse, “cold feet,” or second thoughts.
 - iii. Jesus walked these 500 yards to Golgotha, resolute in his path and firm in His decision to give us life.
 - iv. Philippians 2:4–8: “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”
 - v. This steadfastness allowed him to warn those devout women following Him.
- c. Blessed are the barren.
- i. Being barren was viewed as a curse.
 - ii. Sarai and Hagar (Genesis 16:1-6)
 - iii. Sarai gave Abraham her servant, Hagar, to have a child (“it may be that I shall obtain children by her,” Genesis 16:2b).
 - iv. Luke 1:24–25: “After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”
- d. Mountains and the hills.
- i. Jesus quotes Hosea.
 - ii. Hosea 10:8: “The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed. Thorn and thistle shall grow up on their altars, and they shall say to the mountains, “Cover us,” and to the hills, “Fall on us.”
 - iii. A prophecy that the Northern Kingdom of Israel would fall (it fell in 722 BC, never to be reestablished).
- e. Green and dry wood.
- i. This entire statement by Jesus is a judgment on Jerusalem, on the people who rejected Him.
 - ii. “If Jesus must suffer as he does, sinless as he is and bearing only the sins of others, what will they have to suffer who sin until the judgment?” Lenski
4. Save Yourself!
- a. Luke 23:32–38: “Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments. And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”
 - b. Crucifixion.
 - i. An ancient method of deliberately painful execution.
 - ii. The condemned person is nailed or tied to a large wooden cross and left to hang until dead

- iii. The Romans used crucifixion to terrorize those who witnessed it so they would not perform the wicked crime that determined the criminals' guilt.
 - iv. It was used when the rulers wanted a death that was very slow, painful, gruesome, humiliating, excruciating (literally "out of crucifying")
 - v. Remember, Jesus orchestrated his death from the very beginning
 - vi. He knew what was coming, yet went to the cross anyway
 - c. The rulers - He saved others; let him save himself
 - d. The soldiers - If you are King of the Jews, save yourself
 - e. The thief - Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us
5. The truth
- a. Luke 23:40–43: "But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."
 - b. Here lies the truth of Jesus' sacrifice
 - i. He became sin so we could overcome sin
 - ii. 2 Corinthians 5:21: For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - c. His sinless sacrifice satisfied God's wrath for those who obey the Gospel of Jesus
 - i. 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10: "This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering—since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed."