

Calvary – Christ’s Victory Over Death

John 16:20 (NKJV)

²⁰Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.

John 16:20 (ISV)

²⁰Truly, truly I tell you, you will cry and mourn, but the world will rejoice. You will be deeply distressed, but your pain will turn into joy.

- “Truly, truly I tell you, you will cry and mourn, but the world will rejoice” - *Jesus spoke these words prior to His suffering and crucifixion to prepare His disciples for what they would soon observe and experience.*
- “You will be deeply distressed” - *The extreme distress, anguish, and utter hopelessness that the disciples would experience as they saw the suffering of Christ at Calvary were magnified, because they were unable to foresee the ultimate outcome—the resurrection.*
- “but your pain will turn into joy” – *The transformation of their pain and sorrow into joy would come at the revelation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*
- *Once the disciples learned that Jesus Christ’s suffering at Calvary did not signify that things had gone terribly wrong, but that Jesus had paid the price for their redemption, then their anguish gave way to thanksgiving and joy.*

John 16:21 (NKJV)

²¹A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

- “A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come” - *Jesus uses the analogy of a woman in labor to help His disciples understand how their sorrow and His suffering would be turned into joy.*
- *Without labor pains and sorrow there would be no birth or new life.*
- “but as soon as she has given birth to the child” – *The “but” of childbirth is what changes all the pain and sorrow into joy, because the “but” signifies the purpose—a child is born.*

- “she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world” – *Once a mother holds her newborn child, the wonder and joy of this new life outweighs the momentary pain she had to experience.*
- *What Jesus suffered for us at Calvary is beyond human comprehension, not only because of the physical pain He endured, but also because of the torment He experienced by taking upon Himself the sins of all mankind and the accompanying judgment.*
- *Jesus makes the comparison that just as the joy of a child being born outweighs the pain of childbirth, His joy to be the Saviour of all mankind outweighs the intense and unimaginable agony of Calvary. (Hebrews 12:2)*
- *A mother brings new life into the world through the pain of childbirth.*
- *Jesus brought life and redemption into the world through His suffering and death at the cross.*
- *If we fail to see Jesus’ suffering at Calvary in the light of the resurrection it will produce a melancholy disposition.*
- *If we fail to see the resurrection in terms of what Jesus had to suffer for us to be redeemed, it will cause us to take for granted the real cost of our salvation.*
- *Not remembering Jesus’ resurrection causes a morbid kind of faith.*
- *Not remembering Jesus’ suffering causes an irreverent kind of faith.*
- *How should we respond when we speak about Jesus Christ’s suffering and death?*

Romans 5:8 (NKJV)

⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- “God demonstrates His own love toward us” – *Any time we speak about Christ’s suffering and death for us we should exude thanksgiving and joy, because what He did for us is the perfect expression of God’s love for us.*

- *Non-believers who see our preoccupation with remembering Jesus' suffering think that Christianity is a morbid religion, when in fact it is the most joyful!*
- *Non-believers only see the death of Jesus, but we also see His resurrection!*

Romans 6:5 (NKJV)

⁵For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

- *“certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” - Our faith in Jesus is not a dead end, because Jesus Christ is resurrected from the dead and we also will be.*
- *Jesus Christ's suffering and death will never be forgotten, but the remembrance of His suffering will not be a source of sorrow, but of overwhelming joy and thanksgiving.*

John 20:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

²⁰When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

- *“When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord” – The disciples' response to seeing Jesus' wounds was gladness and rejoicing, not sorrow or mourning.*
- *While it may seem strange to a non-believer to rejoice when we think of Jesus' suffering, it seems perfectly normal and appropriate to believers.*

Romans 1:3–4 (NKJV)

³concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

⁴and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

- *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” – When Christ stood before His disciples and showed them the wounds He endured for them, joy filled their hearts for*

many reasons. One reason was that now they knew for certain that He is the Son of God because He overcame death!

- *There is an additional fact we can learn from Christ's appearance in John 20—His resurrected body still carries the wounds of Calvary.*
- *In our resurrected bodies we will have no scars from this life. Our bodies will be perfectly whole and healed.*
- *For all eternity, Jesus will carry with Him those scars in His body, so that for all eternity we will remember and rejoice in His great sacrifice and His overcoming resurrection from the dead.*

Revelation 5:3–7 (NKJV)

³And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

⁵But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

⁶And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

⁷Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

“And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.” – *No one was able to open the scroll and John's response to this was, “I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll”.*

- *Why did Apostle John weep when he heard that no one was worthy to open the scroll?*
- *The scroll represented God's cleansing judgment that would destroy all the works of Satan and man's rebellion, but unless the scroll was opened, rebellion, evil, and death would continue for all eternity.*

- “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” - *But there was One who was found worthy, because He had prevailed and overcome—it was the Lion of Judah!*
- “And I looked, and behold ... stood a Lamb as though it had been slain” – *As John turned to behold the Lion of Judah he saw a Lamb—and not just any Lamb—but a Lamb as though it had been slain.*
- “as though it had been slain” - *Jesus’ sacrifice is remembered for all eternity and His scars are not removed, but actually become the sign of His total victory over all His enemies—even death!*
- *However, there is one more important fact about this Lamb. The Greek word for Lamb used here is actually the diminutive for the word Sheep, so it literally means “little lamb.”*
- *The book of Revelation uses this Greek word for “Little Lamb” 28 times to describe Jesus Christ and it is only in Revelation that this word is used in the New Testament.*
- *The word “Little Lamb” used to describe Jesus is very appropriate, since the Passover Lamb was to be a yearling, a lamb of only one year old, still young, tender, and gentle.*
- *Jesus was gentle and meek to the broken and battered, A bruised reed He did not break, nor a smoking flax did He extinguish. (Matthew 12:19-21)*

2 Corinthians 13:4 (NKJV)

⁴For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.

- “For though He was crucified in weakness” – *Jesus was led as a lamb to be slaughtered. He did not speak in His own defense, but allowed Himself to be condemned so we could be justified. (Isaiah 53:7)*
- “yet He lives by the power of God” – *In His resurrection, Christ’s power was fully manifested.*

- “For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you” – *Just as Jesus came in the appearance of weakness, so we appear weak to this world, but we live by the same power of God that raised Him from the dead. (Romans 8:11)*

Revelation 5:12–13 (NKJV)

¹²saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

- “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!” – *The central focus of worship in Heaven is the Little Lamb who was slain to redeem mankind.*

1 Corinthians 11:26 (NKJV)

²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

- *Communion is the ordinance that Jesus gave to His church for us to celebrate in continual memory of His sacrifice for us.*
- *Looking back at the origins of death in the light of God’s plan of redemption we see how Romans 8:28 comes into play, “All things work together for good for those who love God to those who are called according to His purpose.”*

Genesis 2:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

- “for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” – *the consequence and penalty of man eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was death, and through Adam’s single act of rebellion death came into the world.*

Genesis 3:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

²²Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—

²³therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

- “Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them” – *In spite of Adam and Eve’s rebellion we witness God’s care and tenderness toward them as He clothed them in tunics of skin to hide their shame and nakedness.*
- *Even from the beginning of man’s rebellion, God’s motivation and actions speak clearly of His love for them and His desire to protect and redeem them.*
- “And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” – *In an apparent contrast to God’s care for Adam and Eve found in the previous verse, He barred their way to the Tree of Life to prevent them from living forever.*
- *Even though death was the consequence and punishment for choosing to rebel, death was also the path for their redemption.*
- *When Adam chose to rebel and obey Satan, something much more hideous happened to mankind than what resulted in death.*
- *The rebellious nature of Satan was implanted into mankind, which produces all the evil fruit which the Bible calls the works of the flesh.*
- *If man had eaten of the Tree of Life and lived forever, the sin nature of Satan would have continued to grow within them until all the vileness of Satan would have been fully manifested in their souls for all eternity.*
- *This would have resulted in unimaginable torment with no possibility for redemption.*

Romans 5:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

- “we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” – *Through Jesus’ death we were reconciled to God. Without death Jesus couldn’t have died for us and we would have been irreversible and eternally separated from God—it would have been literally a living eternal Hell.*

Romans 7:1 (NKJV)

¹Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

- “the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives” – *The Law is only in force as long as someone is alive and for those who have put their faith in Christ, they are no longer subject to the condemnation of the Law and are reckoned dead to the Law through the death of Jesus.*

Romans 7:4 (NKJV)

⁴Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

- “you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ” – *Through Christ’s death, He paid the price for our sins and rebellion and we are no longer condemned by the Law, because He took our condemnation upon Himself.*

Galatians 2:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.

- “that I might live to God” – *Through Jesus’ death I am now free to live my life for God.*

Romans 6:3–8 (NKJV)

³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

- *Being baptized into His death is not referring to water baptism, but to our new birth in Jesus Christ where our old nature has been put to death.*

⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- *As we identify daily with Christ's death for us, we are able to walk in the new life of Christ that resides in our reborn spirits.*

⁵For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

⁶knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

⁷For he who has died has been freed from sin.

- *Through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection we are freed from sin, so that we should no longer be slaves to sin.*

⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

- *We no longer have to fear death, because we believe even as we died with Christ, we will also live with Him for eternity.*

Romans 6:11 (NKJV)

¹¹Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- *We need to daily reckon ourselves dead to sin so that we are no longer controlled by sin, but through Jesus' death and resurrection we can serve God with the new life we have in Christ.*

1 Corinthians 15:54–57 (NKJV)

⁵⁴So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- *So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality - The third aspect of Jesus' redemption through His death and resurrection relates to our bodies.*

- *Our resurrected physical bodies will be incorruptible and immortal and not subject to aging, sickness, or pain.*
- **“Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”** – *We can rejoice continually in Jesus’ victory over death and Hell through His suffering at Calvary and His glorious resurrection.*

Revelation 21:4 (NKJV)

⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

- **“for the former things have passed away”** – *In Heaven all the former things related to the tears, sickness, and suffering of this present time will pass away. We will experience the immeasurable blessings of God for unending ages.*