

**Theme: Powerful Words – Powerful Passion – “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”**

**Text: John 19:6-16**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify *Him*, crucify *Him!*" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify *Him*, for I find no fault in Him." <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." <sup>8</sup> Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, <sup>9</sup> and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." <sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." <sup>13</sup> When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The Pavement*, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" <sup>15</sup> But they cried out, "Away with *Him*, away with *Him!* Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" <sup>16</sup> Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

Today's Lenten meditation on the "**Powerful Words**" of Jesus' "**Powerful Passion**" brings us to some of the most horrible and shameful words in all of Scripture: "**Crucify Him!**" Who could even think of shouting these words toward the innocent Son of God?

The opening chapter of John's Gospel tells us, "**He [Jesus] came to His own, and His own did not receive Him**" (John 1:11). Well, it's one thing to not "**receive**" Jesus, but to call for His crucifixion? It gives you a sick feeling in your stomach just thinking about this mob shouting "**Away with him! Crucify Him!**" (v. 15) at the very Messiah who had come to save them.

"**Crucify Him!**" These are *horrible* words. When you think of all the words of forgiveness, and life that Jesus spoke during His ministry; all the healings, and the miracles—even raising some people from the dead—how could anyone have shouted them against Jesus? When you think of His innocence, His sinlessness, and His love, how could anyone have had such hatred toward Jesus? When you think of the fact that He is the very Son of God, eternal—no beginning and no end—the Creator of life itself, how could anyone even attempt to bring death upon Jesus? How can you crucify the Creator? How can you end the life of the Eternal God? Yet that was the horrible action this mob of Jesus' enemies was calling for!

"**Crucify Him!**" These are *shameful* words. They were shameful for the chief priests, the Jewish religious leaders, and the rest of the mob to shout toward Jesus. They are shameful words for us as well. Each one of our sins—every evil thought, word, and deed against God's holy Law—is a shout of "**Crucify Him!**" against our loving Savior. Haven't there also been times in our lives when our sinful flesh wanted Jesus "out of the way"? Times when we've known that what we were doing or thinking was against Jesus' Word, but we just really want to do it anyway? We don't want our conscience to be bothered by our thoughts, words, and actions. We wish that Jesus would just "go away" for a while and let us do what we want to do. Don't these thoughts and actions also cry out, "**Away with Him! Crucify Him!**"? We ought to be ashamed!

**“Crucify Him!”** These are *powerful* words. They are powerful because they are God the Father’s verdict on Jesus! That is the only verdict that counts. The Jewish religious leaders and the blood-thirsty mob were not the ones who were in control of Jesus’ fate. Pilate was definitely not the one “calling the shots” at this trial either. Jesus made this very clear in our text, **Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?” Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above” (v. 10-11).** No man could crucify the Creator! No one could end the life of the Eternal God, unless God had willed it. No one could have laid one hand on God’s Anointed Son without Him allowing it to happen. Not only that, Jesus Himself willingly allowed it to happen. Pilate had no authority or power over Jesus, the King of Kings. The angry mob and the Jewish High Priests had no authority over the Almighty Son of God. Jesus was there of His own free will. He accepted the sentence of death by crucifixion because He wanted to!

**“Crucify Him!”** These are *beautiful* words. Yes, beautiful words! They are words that God should have spoken against us, but instead were taken out on Jesus. As horrible as the thought of the mob shouting these words is; as shameful as our sins are which also nailed Him to the cross, the words **“Crucify Him!”** were the powerful words that our souls needed God the Father to speak against Jesus to rescue us from the death and hell that Jesus endured in our place. Jesus’ death is counted as our death. As Paul says in Galatians, **“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).** Again Paul says in Romans, **“Knowing 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. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him...Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:6-8,11).**

The payment for all our sins has been made; our souls are set free! Free and washed clean from the guilt of sin that stains our souls. Free from the power and control sin has over our hearts. Free to live a life of loving thankfulness to Jesus who lovingly, and willingly took upon Himself the verdict of those *horrible, shameful, powerful, and yes, beautiful* words, **“Crucify Him!”**

*“...Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,  
Dearest Jesus unto Thee!” Amen.  
(Hymn 420 LSB; Hymn 151 TLH)*

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