

## **“To Think He Died for Me”**

(A Short Meditation on Christ’s Death)

By Pastor Kelly Sensenig

“Oh, can it be, upon a tree  
The Saviour died for me?  
My soul is thrilled,  
My heart is filled,  
To think He died for me!”

To think He died for me! To reflect on the wonderful truth of Christ’s death, as it’s presented in the Bible, brings great wonder, amazement, and tears to our eyes. It should stir our hearts anew as Christians, revitalize our efforts of evangelism, and bring sinners to faith in Christ who sense their lost estate and need for salvation from hell. To think He died for me!

Romans 5:6

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

Christ died for you! Dear friend, you were in God’s mind when Jesus died on the cross! A man in the hospital once asked, “How can the death of Jesus Christ, which took place 2,000 years ago, help me today?” This booklet provides the answer to this question. It’s a short meditation on the death of Christ that brings out the clear and unmistakable purpose for Christ’s death, so all can see that Jesus Christ died for them, in order to rescue them from the eternal judgment of hell.

### **The Death of Jesus Surveyed**

“When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride.”

1 Peter 3:18 says:

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) by the Spirit.”

The Bible teaches that Christ was judged (penalized) in our place (“the just for the unjust”). On the cross Jesus experienced the punishment of God for the sins of the entire human race (“suffered for sins”). Jesus was also put to death in the sinner’s place (“being put to death in the flesh”). Jesus Christ took the “wages of sin” (Rom. 6:23) or the payment that sin required, upon Himself, which was the penalty of “death” (Rom. 6:23). Jesus experienced physical death upon the cross (John 19:30; 1 Pet. 3:18) as a result of God’s wrath being poured out on Him (“smitten of God” – Isa. 53:4).

Jesus also endured the spiritual nature of death as well. Death in its spiritual sense refers to separation from God and the terrible punishment and judgment that God brings upon the sinner because of his sins. On the cross Jesus bore the sinner’s punishment and death. He endured intense suffering, thirst, and separation from the Father’s presence. It was punishment that resulted from God’s divine wrath and “righteous judgment” (Rom. 2:5) being meted out on Christ, as He experienced our curse or judgment for sin. To think He died for me!

### **The Price that Jesus Paid**

Galatians 3:13 says that Christ was “made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Christ was cursed in our place. This means that Jesus took the curse, or judgment and death that we deserved for breaking God’s Law, upon Himself. The curse of judgment was transferred from sinners to Christ and He died in our place. This was the price that Jesus had to pay on the cross. Our sin had a price tag attached to it. The payment or price that was attached to every sinner was to experience God’s just punishment in hell. But the Bible teaches that Jesus “bare our sins” (1 Pet. 2:24) or the punishment (the necessary wage, payment, or price) that sin required when He died upon the cross. The Bible repeatedly says that “Christ died for our sins” (1 Cor. 15:3) and “Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8), and “Christ also hath once suffered for sins” (1 Pet. 3:18) paying the required fine for sin that God demanded, which was

death and God's judgment (Rom. 5:12; 6:23; 8:2; James 1:15; Revelation 20:11-15).

“My hope is in the Lord,  
Who gave Himself for me,  
And paid the price for all my sin at Calvary.”

Christ's perfect payment for sin (1 Pet. 1:19; Heb. 9:14 – “without spot”) was the only payment for sin that could appease God's righteous anger against sin (“the wrath of God” - John 3:36; Eph. 5:6) and vindicate His holiness (Hab. 1:13; Lev. 6:25; Exodus 26:33; Heb. 9:3, 8). A perfect sacrifice had to be made and Christ was that spotless sacrifice which the Father would accept as sufficient payment for sin.

“Guilty, vile and helpless we,  
Spotless Lamb of God was He;  
Full atonement! Can it be?  
Hallelujah, What a Savior!”

It's important to realize that God cannot overlook sin without judging it. Why? It's because God could no longer maintain His character of holiness and righteousness without judging sin. He would cease being a holy God (Ex. 15:11; Lev. 11:44-45). No honest or fair judge would ever dismiss someone who is guilty. The same is true about God. Because God is holy He cannot dismiss sin and the sinner without proclaiming His judgment upon them. A payment and penalty for sin is absolutely necessary.

“Jesus paid it all,  
All to Him I owe.”

When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the necessary purchasing price (“bought with a price” - 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23) that God required, to set us free from sin's penalty and power. To think He died for me!

### **The Satisfaction that Jesus Made**

The payment (a penalty or judgment for sin) that Jesus Christ experienced on the cross becomes the satisfying sacrifice

("propitiation") that God can accept for sin and the sinner (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). Christ's payment for sin is the only sacrifice that can bring the believing sinner into God's presence ("that he might bring us to God" - 1 Pet. 3:18; John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5). Through Christ's death the sinner that was once alienated from God ("were sometime alienated" - Col. 1:21) and God's enemy ("when we were enemies" - Rom. 5:10) can now be reconciled to God. This is because the Father is satisfied with Christ's payment for sin on behalf of the sinner sinner ("He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" - Isa. 53:11).

Think of it this way. Christ's death upon the cross was the wage or payment that we deserved since we are all sinners (Rom. 3:23 - "all have sinned"). Christ's judgment for our sin and separation from God (experiencing sin's penalty in our place) was the necessary wage, fine, payment, or price that Jesus had to endure in order to satisfy God's wrath against sin and set us free (redeem our souls) from sin's penalty which was hell (Gal. 3:13), sin's bondage (Titus 2:14), and Satan's strongholds (Col. 2:15). To think He died for me!

"Man of sorrows, what a name  
For the Son of God who came  
Ruined sinners to reclaim!  
Hallelujah! what a Savior!"

### **The Substitution that Jesus Displayed**

On the cross Jesus Christ died for you, as you, in your place, paying the necessary payment for sin, so you could be redeemed from sin's penalty and go free! Jesus became our substitute (replacement) on the cross. Jesus displayed the God loved us and gave His only Son (John 3:16) to pay the necessary fine for sin, which was a penalty of judgment that involved experiencing God's separation, justice, wrath, anger, and full punishment against sin. The Father "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). This means Jesus became our sin offering in order to bear the full penalty or judgment for our sins, so we in return don't have to bear the penalty and perish in hell ("should not perish" - John 3:16).

“Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned he stood,  
Ruined sinners to reclaim!  
Hallelujah, what a Savior!”

Jesus was condemned in our place, as our substitute, so we don't have to experience condemnation or the dreadful sentence of punishment and judgment in hell (“not condemned” – John 3:18 and “no condemnation” – Rom. 8:1 and “shall not come into condemnation” – John 5:24). Jesus was condemned in our place so we don't have to be tried and punished before God as sinners who have broken His holy requirements and laws (1 John 3:4). This is how God demonstrated His love toward the world of lost mankind (Rom. 5:8; John 3:16). He gave His only son to bare the dreadful payment and penalty for our sin so we could escape hell and judgment forever (“they shall never perish” – John 10:28).

“Amazing love!  
How can it be  
That Thou, my God,  
Shouldst die for me!”

Jesus paid the terrible penalty for sin when He experienced God's divine wrath, anger, and judgment against sin, when He was separated from the Father's presence, and when He finally died upon the cross. Jesus “poured out his soul unto death” and “bare the sin of many” and “made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12) who deserved to die the sinner's death. This was the necessary price that God required in order to save sinners from damnation and hell. To think He died for me!

“Alas! and did my Saviour bleed,  
And did my Sovereign die;  
Did He devote that sacred head  
For such a worm as I?”

### **The Hell that Jesus Portrayed**

Christ's punishment and death on the cross was a fearful and dreadful price that had to be paid (Luke 22:42). His death on the

cross portrayed the judgment of hell that every sinner must face. Jesus went through our hell on the cross so we don't have to be judged in hell for all eternity. This is portrayed in Christ's death upon the cross as He suffered torment, thirst, and separation from the Father's presence. When you put these three things together you have hell.

First, Jesus was willing to suffer shame, terrible physical pain, and intense agony in connection with His death for sinners (Matt. 27:28-35; Ps. 22:15-18 – “they pierced my hands and my feet”). The payment for sin, which was the mandatory penalty of judgment that God required, consisted of shame, severe suffering, and the severing of Christ's own life.

Think of the crown of thorns, the nails in Christ's hands and feet, and the disfigurement of His face (“his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men” – Isa. 52:14). All this points to Christ's terrible suffering. Untold physical suffering and agony was part of the dreadful curse that Jesus took upon Himself (Gal. 3:10).

Hell is suffering. Luke 16:23 says, “And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments” (Luke 16:23). Matthew 8:12 says “there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (see also Matt. 13:42, 50; Rom. 2:5-6; Rev 20:15). Jesus experienced our hell when dying for us upon the cross. Jesus was “brought as a lamb to the slaughter” (Isa. 53:7). He went through great humiliation and suffering as the “lamb of God” (John 1:29) in order to die the sinner's death and pay sin's penalty for the sinner. He was “wounded for our transgressions” (Isa. 53:5).

“Wounded for me, wounded for me,  
There on the cross He was wounded for me.”

Second, Christ also suffered thirst on the cross (John 19:28). Thirst is part of the experience of hell as well.

Luke 16:24

“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”

There is no water in hell. In every way Jesus experienced the pangs of hell and suffering on our behalf as He hung upon the cross dying in our place.

“Dying for me, dying for me,  
There on the cross He was dying for me.”

Third, Jesus was also willing to be separated from the Father’s presence during those three hours of darkness (Matt. 27:46; Ps. 22:1). Darkness and separation from God’s presence is part of the experience of hell (Matt. 8:12 – “outer darkness” and 2 Pet. 2:17 – “the mist of darkness is reserved forever”). This was the worst suffering and mental anguish that Christ endured while hanging on the cross. He was severed from the Father’s fellowship, when He bore the sins of the world, during the time when blackness and darkness covered the land.

Separation from God is hell (Rev. 20:14-15; 2 Thess. 1:9) and this is what Jesus experienced when hanging on the cross. Jesus was willing to suffer the sinner’s hell and die the sinner’s death (Rom. 5:7-8) while hanging upon the cross. He experienced the full impact of God’s wrath and vengeance against sin. Jesus experienced our hell (separation from God) and was judged in our place. Christ paid the penalty in full which was actually a penalty that we deserved.

“Was it for crimes that I have done  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity, grace unknown,  
And love beyond degree!”

It was a dreadful ordeal when Jesus was punished for all the sins of the world, when He was made “an offering for sin” (Isa. 53:10), or when God the Father “made him to be sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21 – a sin offering on our behalf). But what a glorious moment it was in salvation history when Jesus said, “It is finished” (John 19:30) and died upon the cross.

The moment of Christ’s death was the promise of our salvation from hell and the dreadful curse (Gal. 3:13). When Jesus spoke these words (“It is finished”) upon the cross, He was declaring that His redemptive and saving work was complete. He had paid the

necessary price (a penalty or judgment for sin) that we deserved (Rom. 3:23) and which God required (Rom. 6:23) to liberate us or set us free from sin's penalty and power. Christ has paid the fine that God required to save us from the eternal judgment of hell and our horrible bondage to sin.

“Oh, can it be, upon a tree  
The Saviour died for me?  
My soul is thrilled,  
My heart is filled,  
To think He died for me!”

To think He died for me! Yes, Jesus Christ has died for you. He died for you on the cross and rose again the third day (1 Cor. 15:3-4) declaring to everyone that the Father has accepted His payment for sin (Rom. 4:25) and that He can give eternal life (Rom. 6:23) to every believing sinner. The question is this. Will you believe in Jesus Christ today?

### **The Decision that Must Be Made**

Acts 16:31

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Galatians 3:26

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”

### *A Decision to Express Faith in Christ*

Faith involves a personal decision to trust in Christ to be your Savior. The words “believe” and “faith” mean that a person will make the choice to depend upon Jesus Christ to save him. The Bible teaches that every person must reach out in faith and rely upon Christ's saving work to bring salvation into his own life (“**If thou believest with all thine heart**” – **Acts 8:37**). You must open your heart to Christ, respond to Christ's offer of salvation, and make the decision to place your faith in Christ.



If you want to be free from judgment then you must express child-like faith in Christ's death and resurrection to deliver you from hell. Jesus died and rose again to save you. However, you can't receive the benefits of His salvation work without personally believing or expressing faith in Christ and what He did for you. When you express simple trust or reliance upon Christ, it's then that His saving work is applied to your life.

Jesus Christ is looking for your faith. *Belief or faith in Jesus Christ is not passive. It's active.* It involves a response and choice on your part. Belief in Jesus Christ involves a definite personal decision, the movement of a person's will, to commit their faith to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ alone for salvation (**"if thou shalt believe in thine heart" – Rom. 10:9**).

You must make a personal response and choice to rely on Christ, commit your faith to Christ, or transfer all your trust in Christ alone for your salvation. There was a time when you were born and married. There was a time when you turned ten, twenty, or forty years of age. There was a time when you started driving a car. There must also be a time when you reach out in faith to Jesus Christ and rely upon Him to be your Savior from hell. Faith involves a personal response and definite decision or choice to trust in Christ to be your Savior.

Faith actively reaches out to Christ and can be illustrated and explained as **calling** upon Christ for salvation ("whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" - Rom. 10:17), **coming** to Christ for salvation ("him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" - John 6:37), **looking** to Christ for salvation ("Look unto me, and be ye saved" – Isaiah 45:22; John 3:15-16 with Numb. 21:8), **receiving** Christ for salvation ("But as many as received him" – John 1:12) , and **drinking** (John 4:14; 7:37-38), **eating** (John 6:54), or **taking** (Rev. 22:17) the gift of salvation and eternal life that Christ offers.

These are simple *illustrations* of what it means when a person places faith in Christ for salvation. They *represent* what it means when a person believes in Christ for salvation. A person must desire and choose to have Christ's salvation or saving provision applied to his own life.

The illustrations teach one lesson. Faith involves a definite decision. Faith involves a choice. Faith is active. *A person must be willing to appropriate Christ's saving work to his life.* A person must be willing to take a step of faith, reach out to Christ, make a decision to be saved, so that Christ's saving work can be applied to his life. Of course, a person cannot literally drink water (John 4:14), drink Christ's blood, or eat His flesh (John 6:54) in order to be saved from hell. Salvation does not involve a person literally and outwardly doing these things or anything to be saved since salvation is "not of works" (Eph. 2:8-9). Christ was simply illustrating what true faith is by these statements. *A person will choose to appropriate Christ's salvation to his life by directing his faith only to Christ.*

Faith involves an active decision to personally rely on Christ in order to receive the salvation He has provided. It involves a person's will and choice to have Christ's work of salvation applied to his life. No person can say that they were born with faith in Christ or always possessed faith in Christ. No person drifts into faith. Each person must come to faith in Christ at a certain point of time and know that their faith rests in Christ alone for salvation ("I know whom I have believed" – 2 Tim. 2:12).

Acts 16:31

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Believe and be saved! It's that simple! Belief or faith in Christ comes first and then our salvation follows. Faith in Christ is the channel by which we receive the rich blessings of Christ's saving work. There must be faith in Christ before there can be *application* or *appropriation* of Christ's saving work to your life.

There is a Bible illustration that teaches this truth. When the blood of the slain animal was applied to the doorposts, God promised to pass over the people and not judge them ("when I see the blood, I will pass over you" – Ex. 12:13). In a similar way, when we believe on Christ for salvation, Christ's saving work is applied to our lives, credited to our account, and God's judgment passes over us! So first there is belief in what Christ has done for us and then comes the application of Christ's saving work to our lives so we can be free from condemnation or judgment.

## *A Decision to Escape Future Judgment by Christ*

Christ took the penalty for your own sins upon Himself and died upon the cross. He then rose again the third day (1 Cor. 15:3-4). The saving work of Christ is finished (John 19:30 – “It is finished”). Jesus did everything that needs to be done in order to save you from hell. However, this does not mean that everyone in the world is automatically saved and spared from judgment.

Those who do not believe in Christ for their personal salvation are “condemned already” (John 3:18) to hell and they have “the wrath of God” (John 3:36) or judgment and punishment of God hanging over their heads. If you have not made a decision to personally believe on Christ to be your Savior then you are sentenced to receive God’s judgment and punishment. You will die the sinner’s death and go to hell. “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the Lake of Fire” (Rev. 20:15).

This is the reason why everyone must decide or choose to place their faith only in Christ for salvation. Jesus asked in Matthew 23:33, “How can ye escape the damnation of hell?” The answer is simple. You must make the decision to believe in Christ’s death and resurrection to save you.

Sooner or later you must come to the place of decision. Will you personally believe or rely on the death and resurrection of Christ to save you? Jesus died paying the penalty for your sins and rose again to save you from hell. Will you allow Him to save you from hell by expressing simple faith in Him? Jesus died to rescue you from hell. Now you must reach out to Him in faith and give Him the permission to become your personal Savior.

Dear friend, the payment or purchasing price has been made for every lost sinner (1 John 4:14; John 3:16; 2 Pet. 2:1). Jesus Christ “tasted death for every man” (Heb. 2:9). This includes you! To think He died for me! Yes, you were in the mind of God when Jesus died on the cross! Jesus paid the price of judgment that you deserved so that you don’t have to experience hell’s terrible fate and judgment. All you must do is reach out in faith and receive the free provision and promise that is available to you through Christ’s death.

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Eternal life is a free gift that is received through expressing faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. Jesus died and rose again to spare you from death and grant you the free gift of eternal life. He died so you don't have to die and go to hell. He lives so you can live forever with Him in Heaven. If you want to be saved from hell and live forever with Jesus Christ in Heaven, if you want to receive the gift of eternal life, then you must transfer all of your faith in Jesus Christ. You must place your "faith in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:4). He will save you today.

**The price has been paid and the provision for salvation has been made. Now your decision must be made.**

The person who believes on Christ knows he has made, not just a momentary decision, but a decision that will affect his eternal destiny and life. Do you want to be saved? Are you ready to drink, come, eat, look, call, receive, and take the offer of eternal life through Jesus Christ? Are you ready to express faith in Christ alone for your salvation?

Isaiah 45:22

“Look unto me, and be ye saved,  
all the ends of the earth.”

On the final page is a prayer that may help you express your own personal faith in Christ. God will hear your prayer today and save you from hell.

“Dear Lord Jesus, I admit that I’m a sinner and deserve the punishment of hell for my sins. I understand that Jesus died in my place, taking my own sins and judgment upon Himself, which I deserved. I understand that Jesus rose from the dead. Right now I choose to commit my faith only to Jesus Christ for salvation, believing that His death and resurrection will save me from hell, and give to me the gift of eternal life. Thank you for personally dying for me, rising from the dead, and saving me today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”