

.ATTRIBUTES OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

(1/10)

In this study I want to discuss the attributes of Christ's sufferings. Time will not permit me to discuss each one in depth, so I will just touch on a few. Some of what you may hear, you have already heard, however, I hope to bring out something's you have never thought about or considered. Acts 9:16, is Christ speaking of Paul, who is our example, "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." The sufferings I want to look at are the last day of Christ's life here on earth. We are to be identified with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection which would also include His sufferings.

RENTED HIS CLOTHES (Matt. 26:65)

To rent something in the Bible means to tear asunder. This word is only used 5 times in the Bible. 3 times translated "rent." Two other times translated "brake."

LUKE 5:6, "...inclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake.." In this case, the fish were in so much abundance that it tore the net. This was a very powerful and aggressive tear of the net. In all cases of the word "rent" used in the Bible, it is the end result from a massive force to cause the tear or break. When something is "rented" it is directly affected by a very strong influence that causes it to be rented. Christ's accusers "rented" His clothes in a manner that was very forceful and determined. He was left naked for the world to see. This is the same nakedness that ashamed Adam and Eve in the garden. They knew or realized for the first time their nakedness once their sin was manifested. The fact that Christ died naked on the cross showed that He had no possessions on the earth. He came into the world naked and left naked. Just as everyone else.

Think about this for a minute... clothes are meant to be taken off, not rented. Clothing back in Christ's day, was probably made up of very thick material, a lot better quality then the thin stuff we buy today. Materials were sewn together and made much better and stronger. It's humiliating enough to TAKE your clothes off in front of a doctor, nurse, etc... But to have them ripped off your body in front of complete strangers is much worse. It would have taken a much stronger force back then to rip clothing off with the type of thick material used. Try ripping off your own shirt and see how hard that actually is to do!!

Man's only motive was to humiliate and hurt the Son of God by renting off His clothing.

We, in the aspect of salvation in our present lives, are to rent our old clothing or old nature. These old rags that we cling to, have no use to us. Every time we cling to our old rags, we are renting the clothing off Christ with His accusers! Just as we are told to "put on Christ" we are to put on a new wardrobe as well.

IT MUST BE NOTED THAT WORDS ARE USED TO EXCITE SOMEONE INTO DEFENDING THEMSELVES OR EVEN FIGHTING BACK. THIS WILL THEN LEAD TO FURTHER MORE SEVERE FORMS OF ADVERSITY. IT WOULD BE ONE THING IF CHRIST DEFENDED HIMSELF AND THEREFORE ENTICED THESE MEN TO FURTHER MORE SEVERE PUNISHMENT, BUT CHRIST SAID NOTHING!! THINK ABOUT THE WORST CRIMINAL IN PRISON, IF HE WANTED TO ENTICE SOMEONE, HE WOULD FIRST SAY SOMETHING DEGRADING ABOUT THE PERSON. THIS WOULD LEAD TO A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE TWO AS WORDS WERE BEING EXCHANGED, THEN PHYSICAL ACTION WOULD TAKE PLACE. HOWEVER, IF THE OTHER PRISONER SAID NOTHING BACK TO HIM AND IGNORED HIM EVERY TIME HE SAID SOMETHING, IT WOULD DEFUSE HIS AGGRESSION. NOT SO WITH CHRIST AND HIS ACCUSERS. HE KEPT SILENT AND THEIR ANGER TOWARD HIM ONLY INTENSIFIED.

SPIT IN HIS FACE (26:67)

Spitting in a person's face indicates gross contempt. When performed by an unclean person, it produced defilement. The ultimate show of disrespect. Think of how gross it is to spit on the ground. I know me personally, if I have something in my throat and need to spit it out, I always spit on the grass because spitting on the concrete or road shows a remnant that is gross to look upon. Christ to my knowledge never

even made an attempt to wipe off the spit. Spitting in ones face is a sign of hatred. However, even most people who hate others would never think or want to spit in their face. Christ's accusers were the vilest of sinners bringing to light the depths of sinning.

If these men were dealt with on a one on one bases or even in just a few at a time with Christ, they would have never treated Him this way! In every instance in the Bible, when Christ was belittled, it was by many and not one or two people. Peer pressure has been around forever and I believe many that day were fallen into peer pressure who would have never joined in if they were by themselves. On the opposite end of the argument, let's look at Peter. When he walked with Christ and other like-minded believers, he was firm, unmovable. However, when confronted all alone with several unbelievers, he denied even knowing Christ. In both instances, sin is the motivating factor. The idea of conforming to the image of this world. The necessity to "fit in" with others. James 4:4, tells us that "whosoever will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God."

It's degrading enough to have someone spit at you. Although I have never experienced that, but to spit in the FACE of someone is the ultimate humiliation. What must be ones mindset to spit in someone's face? This just shows us of how capable we are of sinning and how defiled we can be. The world not only rejected and denied Christ, but demerited favor by sinning so badly towards Him. The world still wants nothing to do with Christ. We are still mocking Him, spitting at Him, laughing at Him, ignoring Him, belittling Him, the list can go on and on...

Spitting is done after words seem of no effect! Spitting is worse than a verbal assault. The saliva in spit is used to digest food; Christ's accusers couldn't digest Christ spiritual food and therefore used their saliva in a negative fashion. People say bad things to others in hopes of a reaction from the other person. Christ didn't react to their sayings; they were not worth Christ's reactions. So therefore, they hated Him even worse and spat in His face. I think it was symbolic that mans spit stay on the Saviour's face while He died on the cross. It was a visible remnant of sin in which Christ was dying for. Matt. 15:18, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man." The remnant of man's sinful DNA left a stain on the face of perfect mankind.

It interesting to point out that every instance that Christ spat, (Mark 7:33, spit into the ear of the deaf man and in 8:23, spit on the eyes of the blind man / John 9:6, made clay by spitting and anointed the blind man's eyes) it's a completely different Greek word than when His accusers spit on Him. In every instance, Christ's spit was used to heal, man's spit was used to humiliate. Both Greek words mean to spit, however the motives behind the two were completely different, so much so, a completely different Greek word is used.

We, as believers should have the attitude of "spitting in the face of sin." We should look upon sin, just as man looked upon Christ, as vile, disgusting, disgraceful, evil.....We should loath it so much that we would want to spit at it and spit it out of our lives completely.

BUFFETED

Buffeting mean to hit rapidly over and over, rude maltreatment. Punishment in the form of a beating using the hands. Paul speaks of this same kind of treatment in his own life in 2 Cor. 12:7, speaking of the "messenger of Satan to buffet" him. Christ's accusers didn't just hit the Saviour, that would indicate a single blow. By buffeting Him meant they repeatedly hit Him. They also went as far as to blindfold Him and buffet Him. Then mocked Him by asking Him to prophesy as to which person was hitting Him. The only time these men reached out to make contact with Christ was to inflict pain by hitting Him. They certainly didn't deserve any physical contact with Him.

It also should be pointed out that "buffeting" is similar to the word "punching" but different in the sense that punching can be slow, fast, aggressive, non aggressive. Buffeting is an all out attack with the fists. Have you ever wondered whether or not other criminals that were crucified, were buffeted, spat upon, mocked, hit, scourged, etc... or whether they were led to the hill quietly and crucified quietly with no other infliction put upon them? I'm not certain, but there may have even been laws against these types of actions towards criminals on their way to be crucified. Our mind at times can be our worst enemy; many times thoughts produce actions that are ungodly. We must buffet these thoughts before they produce

action. I remember Brother Rhodes once saying that ungodly thoughts will continue to enter your minds, just don't invite them in for milk and cookies! Buffet them, get them completely out of your thoughts!

SMOTE

To smote is to hit with the hand or slap. It is a single action as opposed to "buffeting." This would indicate that there were some that aggressively attacked Christ by buffeting Him and others who just smoted Him. It must be pointed out that in Mark 14:47 where Christ's servant smoted or cut off the ear of the man attempting to arrest Christ, the Greek word for smote here is PAIO and means to hit as if by a single blow and LESS VIOLENTLY THAN TUPTO (5180). This word (TUPTO) is used for smote when they planted the crown of thorns on Christ and smote (TUPTO) Him. THINK ABOUT THIS.....If the cutting off of one's ear is less violent than the smoting that Christ endured, that would mean these blows that He was taking were of incredible force and intensity. Which is worse, being hit repeatedly with less force or being hit less frequently with all ones force? Christ experienced both. I'm certain Christ didn't even lift His hands to soften the blows. He defended the gospel, His Father's word, and His beliefs, but Himself physically he defended not all on our behalf.

BOUNDED (27:2)

To bind means to knit tie, be in bonds. This is the same Greek word Paul uses in Colossians, where Paul states "to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in BONDS." (4:3) The bonds that Christ was put in by man, lead up to Him being crucified, although Christ at any given time could have released Himself from them, they still were a necessity to being crucified. It wasn't enough for man to smote, buffet, spit and mock our Saviour, man wanted Him to be bound in the hopes that He couldn't or wouldn't defend himself from the blows. The act of bounding is a prerequisite to total command over something or someone. This act must be first accomplished before anything else in the sense of control can happen. This is the same order of events that must take place in our lives for salvation to be manifested to us. God must first bind us with His mercy, grace and love before we can ever taste the sweetness of His salvation. Once we are bound, we are in total abeyance to God whether we realize it or not. In a lot of cases it would seem as if we have a free will to do anything we want, but when we realize that everything we do is in the will of God and that He is sovereign over ALL things, there is nothing we can do apart from Christ willing it in our lives. Sin must be bounded in our lives every day. It's our natural man who is responsible for un tying those binds which the inner man secures.

SCOURGED (27:26)

A Roman implement for severe bodily punishment. Horace calls it horrible flagellum. It consisted of a handle, to which several cords or leather thongs were affixed, which were weighted with jagged pieces of bone or metal, to make the blow more painful and effective. It is comparable, in its horrid effects, only with the Russian knout. The victim was tied to a post (Acts 22:25) and the blows were applied to the back and loins, sometimes even, in the wanton cruelty of the executioner, to the face and the bowels. In the tense position of the body, the effect can easily be imagined. So hideous was the punishment that the victim usually fainted and rarely died under it. It was a form of torture, yet pleasure for those who watched. Scourging was a sentence or judgment given to someone who WAS NOT condemned to die! Had they of died during scourging, which I'm sure may have happened; it was just part of the sentence. IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT CHRIST WAS SCOURGED BEFORE HE WAS EVER SENTENCED TO DIE! The people acted on their own and not by the laws when taking matters into their own hands by scourging Him. Back in that day, one would either be condemned to die or condemned to be tortured, not both! However, because Christ's scourging enacted by men and not sentenced by a ruler, Christ was scourged AND crucified!

It's very likely that Christ's enemies made sure that He didn't die while being scourged. In fact their motive behind offering Him vinegar could have been to awaken His senses and make Him more aware of His sufferings. This world continues to scourge Christ by changing the Word of God. One purpose for scourging is for correction, men today still feel the Bible needs correction and therefore many translations of the Word of God are produced. They continue to rip apart the truths that save men's souls. Our sins must be scourged! We must rip apart the motives that lead to our sinning. Just as scourging rips apart the

pieces of flesh from the body, it must rip away individual sins from our lives. The more we put off this old man by scourging our sins, the less sin we have in our lives by putting on the new.

STRIPPED (27:28)

What could be more humiliating than to be stripped naked in front of strangers or worse yet enemies?! Christ had nothing to hide in the way of sin and had no need of clothing and therefore wasn't ashamed. However, man in his evil ways, wanted Christ to be humiliated and left Him with nothing on His body but the scars and whelps that man inflicted on the perfect sinless body of Christ. We, as believers, should see ourselves being stripped of our sins. We should see our sins for what they are, pitiful, shameful, unrighteous, selfish..... If we strip our perfumed body and got to the real inner beauty (or lack of), we will see ourselves as filthy rags that need to be cleaned. Christ's accusers stripped Him of human dignity but couldn't strip Him of deity. Clothing is worn because of sin, how embarrassed would you be if you had no clothes on? Yet, this would be our state right now had Adam and Eve never sinned. Christ had no sin in His life and therefore was not ashamed to be naked and stripped.

MOCKED (27:29)

To mock is to deride. Which means to laugh at or ridicule. Sin didn't stop at just laughing at Him, but ridiculed Him by placing a robe on Him. The Greek word for mocking here is EMPAIZO and means to deride. Every time this word is used in the Bible it is referring to the mocking done to Christ with the exception of one instance. In Matt. 2:16, when "Herod saw that he was mocked of the wise men, he was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem..." Mocking was such a powerful demonstration of disrespect, that Herod ordered all the children under 2 years of age to be killed. However, that didn't stop King Herod from mocking Christ himself in Luke 23:11, by putting on the scarlet robe on Christ. Herod and his men were envious of Christ because they couldn't live up to His standards. Mocking is also a reflection of insecurity of one's self. These accusers had to build themselves up by breaking Christ down. Have you ever, as a believer, mocked Christ? Anytime we act on our unbelief, we are in a sense mocking Christ. Because we are in an age of Grace, we tend to think that God may not be watching our actions, but He sees everything in our lives. Sin continued the mocking of Christ by:

Putting a scarlet robe on Him:

This was a military cloak or a mantle. It was worn over the shoulders. The crimson color resembled the king's colors. Sin mocked Christ as a worldly king, when His Kingship can never be matched with anything of this world. The blood on Christ's back due to scourging must have blended in with the color of the robe put on Him. This robe could also symbolize the abundance of pride in a believer's life. We should not ever get puffed up with pride thinking that we deserve a robe of royalty because we are God's elect. We must stay humble and rid ourselves of pride each and every day as we "put on Christ." There were 2 types of robes worn back then, one which stood for a mark of dignity and the other which was nothing more than just apparel. What would your thoughts be today if you saw a homeless man begging for money while wearing a nice suit and tie? It would probably be the same reaction most people had towards Christ back then while He was wearing the robe. Sin saw Christ as nothing but a homeless begger.

Sin further mocked Christ by planted a crown of thorns on His head:

The word for Crown here, is the Greek word stephanos (stef'-an-os); from an apparently primary stepho (to twine or wreath); a chaplet (as a badge of royalty, a prize in the public games or a symbol of honor generally; but more conspicuous and elaborate than the simple fillet, NT:1238), literally or figuratively:

It would have been one thing to place a king's crown on His head and mock Him, but to add thorns in which to cause and inflict pain is another altogether. This was a reminder to Christ about their refusal to have a King like Him rein over them. It was a great honor to wear a crown, however, the thorns made a mockery out of His leadership. What is the purpose of a thorn? Thorns are used for protection in plants. To ward off unwanted attacks from either animals or insects. Thorns are also used to protect the beauty of

the plant. These men (or better yet, sin) saw Christ as an unwanted attack on their manner of life that had no beauty at all. We as believers should wear the crown of thorns on our head for protection against this world. As we "put on Christ" we are to put on His sufferings as well. The beauty of the mind of Christ in our lives should be protected at all times from the wiles of the devil and the trappings of this world.

Sin then put a reed in His right hand:

A reed is a gigantic hollow-stemmed grass which grew along river banks and in moist areas of Egypt and Palestine. Many different Hebrew words refer to the marsh plants of the Bible. They form a large order of plants, such as flax, flags, bulrush, cane, calamus, and papyrus.

Reeds and rushes grew anywhere from one to six meters (3-20 feet) high and had long, narrow leaves. A cluster of white flowers formed at the top of each stem.

The reeds were used in various ways, including walking sticks, fishing poles, musical instruments, and pens. People also used them for weaving baskets, mats, and for other domestic purposes. Moses' basket was woven from reeds. Papyrus, a particular reed, was used to make paper.

Reeds were a symbol of weakness. Christ Jesus refers to them as shaking in the wind (Matt 11:7). A reed was placed in Christ's hand as He was mocked by the Roman soldiers. Christ's enemies replaced the staff of rulership with a much weaker reed in further attempts to humiliate Him. This same reed was used to smote Christ on the head and while still having on the crown of thorns, I'm certain it added to further suffering pain. It's the same reed that was brought to His lips with vinegar. A staff in the right hand symbolized a leader's authority (Isa. 14:5), as well as God's protection of the believer (Ps. 23:4). This reed symbolized the weakness in Christ's ruling of the earth. Man didn't want Christ to rule over them, therefore put a very weak staff in His right hand. Christ didn't have to hold onto this reed, when they put it into His hand, but He did. He went along with their plan, because it was God's plan. Have you ever put a reed into the hand of Christ? Have you ever classified sin in your own mind as some being ok to do and others not? Has television, your children, job, stress and any other care of the world taken a higher precedence in life than Christ? If so, you too are placing a reed into the hand of Christ. You are in essence saying that Christ's ruling authority over my life is weak and the world's is strong. We must let go of the reed by letting go of this world and its trappings.

Sin ended it's mocking of Christ by chanting "Hail King of the Jews!"

The word "hail" is a greeting which involves a wish for the good health and peace of the person addressed. It also means to rejoice or be glad. Although this is the direct opposite effect sin hoped to have on Christ, in the end Christ did rejoice and was glad. This chant was a show of unbelief, it's the same unbelief that can creep up into our lives as believers. We must always walk circumspectly and act in belief and not unbelief.

GIVEN VINEGAR (27:34)

Vinegar is a drink made from wine that had been soured or overfermented. In accordance with their vow, the NAZIRITES separated themselves from any product of the grapevine, including vinegar (Num 6:3). The psalmist complained that his enemies had given him gall for food and vinegar to drink (Ps 69:21). Vinegar was used by farm families as a relish in which to dip parched grain.

The vinegar given to Christ was not mixed with water like normal drinking vinegar, it was mixed with gall. Gall is a bitter poisonous herb only given to those to inflict internal pain. This was given to many to help deaden the pangs of the sufferer and therefore their senses would not be clear. I can't help but think that Christ's enemies had a different motive. It wasn't enough to torture Christ's external body, even while dying on the cross being hung naked for all to see, they wanted to torture His internal body as well by offering Him poison! What type of poison do we put into our bodies? Do we listen to gossip or things we shouldn't. When we hear or see something ungodly, it will always rear it's ugly head at certain times in our lives. Dusty once said that we must protect our minds and be careful what we see and hear because

once we see and hear something especially ungodly, we can never get it out of our minds. We will continue to have thoughts of things we did, heard or said 20,30, 40 years later and the worst part for me is those thoughts can come when I'm reading God's Word! Just as Christ turned from the vinegar and poison and wouldn't let it get into His body, we must do the same in our lives daily.

BELITTLED (27:27-42) :To cause a person to seem little or less.

Every trait listed has one thing in common, unbelief. Unbelief has always been man's biggest problem. Here, these men SAW Christ's miracles, they SAW His healings, they SAW His walk before everyone, they SAW Him and STILL didn't believe. Today, we are instructed to believe in Christ whom we have never seen! This is why there is so much more unbelief in the world today than back then. Here is some belittling words spoken to our Saviour....

“This is the King of the Jews”

“If thou be the Son of God, come down from this cross”

“He saved others; himself he cannot save”

The world looks at true unbelievers, those who rightly divide the word, as outcasts, as accusers, as conservatives who breed hate. We will be belittled by the world because of our values and love of Christ. We can take this word belittled and apply it to our life on this earth. We are to BE LITTLE, not be boastful, proud, cocky, arrogant but to see ourselves as small in the world's standards. Not to BE BIG in this world, BE LITTLE!

CRUCIFIED

Crucifixion was unanimously considered the most horrible form of death. Among the Romans, it was only used in the case of the vilest criminals. The one to be crucified was stripped naked of all his clothes, and then followed the most awful moment of all. He was laid down upon the implement of torture. His arms were stretched along the cross-beams, and at the centre of the open palms the point of a huge iron nail was placed, which, by the blow of a mallet, was driven home into the wood. Then through either foot separately, or possibly through both together, as they were placed one over the other, another huge nail tore its way through the quivering flesh. Whether the sufferer was also bound to the cross we do not know; but, to prevent the hands and feet from being torn away by the weight of the body, which could not "rest upon nothing but four great wounds," there was, about the centre of the cross, just below the feet, a wooden projection strong enough to support, at least in part, a human body, which soon became a weight of agony. Then the "accursed tree" with its living human burden was slowly heaved up and the end fixed firmly in a hole in the ground. The feet were but a little raised above the earth. The victim was in full reach of every hand that might choose to strike. A death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of the horrible and ghastly, — dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds, all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. The unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with anguish; the wounds, inflamed by exposure, gradually gangrened; the arteries, especially of the head and stomach, became swollen and oppressed with surcharged blood; and, while each variety of misery went on gradually increasing, there was added to them the intolerable pang of a burning and raging thirst. Such was the death to which Christ was doomed. The crucified was watched, according to custom, by only a party of four soldiers, (John 19:23), with their centurion, (Matt 27:66), whose express office was to prevent the stealing of the body. This was necessary from the lingering character of the death, which sometimes did not supervene even for three days, in which the crucified ended up dying of gradual numbing and starvation. In Christ's crucifixion, many sat down to watch, almost as if they were enjoying the show! Fracturing of the legs was especially adopted by the Jews to hasten death. (John 19:31). In most cases the body was suffered to rot on the cross by the action of sun and rain, or to be devoured by birds and beasts. Christ's crucifixion seemed have been shorter than normal, in fact, Christ was the first to die among the others next to Him. This could have been because of all the cruel and unusual punishment He endured prior to being crucified, that no others had to endure prior to their fate. Paul states in Galatians 2:20, "I am

crucified with Christ..." Our old nature is crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6), however, we cannot crucify ourselves. Brother Dusty once told a young man who claimed he was crucifying himself daily, "Once you have hammered the nails into your feet and possibly one of your hands, how can you nail your last hand into the cross? We can't!" "Being crucified with Christ" is a position that we have and it's because of this position that we must "put on Christ." How is your crucified life? Are you being crucified with Christ daily?

BARE FALSE WITNESS AGAINST (Mark 14:56)

To bare false witness is to offer falsehood in evidence or to be untrue. Christ accusers twisted the words of Christ as did the serpent in the garden. Christ in John 2:19, stated, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." However, the people misquoted Christ by saying in Mark 14:56, "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple THAT IS MADE WITH HANDS, and within three days, I will build another made without hands." How many times do we bare false witness without realizing it? Worse yet, do we ever bear false witness purposely? Do we bend the truth a little; do we cling to the idea of a white lie? Do we get wrapped up in gossip about other people? Have you ever had falsehood spoken of you? Whatever the case may be, we are to put it off and let it have no part in our lives.

BLASPHEMY (Luke 22:65)

Blasphemy means to speak impiously, defame, revile, speak evil of. I have heard the question before as to whether or not Christ's accusers were saved or were able to come to saving grace after His death when they realized what they had done. Absolutely not! Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was unforgivable in that dispensation (Luke 12:10) and those who partook of it would not see eternal life. Ask the question, why do people speak blasphemy against others? It's normally in retaliation to something some else may have said about the person. A dislike or disagreement. Christ, on the other hand, never spoke badly about anyone and yet, sin despised Him so much, it had to speak falsehood against the only perfect being. The only blasphemy we should have in our lives is against sin itself.

ACCUSED (23:2, 10)

To accuse is an accusation against someone, whether true or false. To charge with some offense. In every instance of Christ being accused of things He was not or did not, He answered not! Christ didn't waiste one breath or word to defend Himself. He knew it would do no good. They not only accused Him, but VEHEMENTLY (Luke 23:10) accused, which means fiercely and intensely. Think back in your walk with Christ, has there ever been anything you have been intensely accused of that was wrong or misunderstood by those accusing you? Most of the time, it's by other professing Christians! I'm certain that if we take a stand for the truth, we will be negatively accused by others.

Moving quickly because of time, they...

PARTED RAINMENT and CAST LOTS (23:34)

DERIDED (23:35) Sneered

PIERCED SIDE WITH SPEAR (John 19:34)

Christ's was pierced from His head to His feet. This last attribute of Christ's suffering was done after He had died. They pierced His side with a spear and out came water and blood. A Roman soldier thrust a spear into Jesus' side to ensure his death. "Immediately blood and water flowed out." (John 19, 34) Blood, a sign of his life, flows upon those standing beneath His cross. Water, which signifies the Spirit living within him, is poured out upon the world they represent. Death, far from ending His life, becomes the moment He shares His life. "This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ." (I John 5,6)

Earlier in John's Gospel, Jesus used these same symbols to describe his mission. He invited the thirsty to come to him and drink, and "from within him rivers of living water shall flow." (John 7, 37-38) Now on Calvary, his promise is fulfilled, as the Prophet Zechariah had written: "On that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity." (Zechariah 13, 1)

The entire concept of piercing the body should make us sick. Look at how popular the piercing of the body is today! Satan has turned a disgraceful ugly act and made it attractive. Have you ever wondered how the idea of piercing the ears, nose, face, etc. came about? I wonder if body piercing got its origin after Christ's Body was pierced in Satan's sick attempt to continue the mocking of Christ!

Types of Crosses

When we think of the word cross, what usually comes to mind is an upright beam projecting above a shorter cross piece. This is the form of the cross which traditional Christian art depicts Christ dying upon. In fact, the Romans used 5 different types of crosses for crucifying people back then. It was unknown which type of the cross Christ was crucified on. The Greek word for "cross" is STAUROS and the Latin word is CRUX. The word primarily means "an upright stake or beam."

The five different forms of the cross are:

CRUX SIMPLEX – a single vertical stake on which the victim wasted or nailed. (similar to a number 1)

CRUX COMMISSA- (St. Anthony's cross) in the form of a capital T.

CRUX DECUSSATA- (St. Andrew's cross) in the form of the letter X.

CRUX IMMISSA- (Latin Cross) the traditional 2 beams similar to a lower case t.

Greek Cross- upright and length wise beams of the same length similar to a + sign.

Satan has changed the symbol of the cross into something beautiful and respected in the "Christian society." Many people wear them around their neck; you see them on Bibles, bumper stickers, shirts, in churches outside of churches. Catholics make the cross pattern with their hand and somehow we link these acts to being a good religious person. We should be offended by anyone who holds this view or anything giving praise and glory to anything in the shape of a cross. Gal 5:11 speaks of the "offense of the cross." Christ died on this symbol that many find attractive. If your son died from a gunshot, would you wear a symbol of a gun around your neck to remember him?

In conclusion with this study, it is our responsibility to identify ourselves with the sufferings of Christ. Fortunately for us, they will never be to the extreme of Christ's. Christ took on the worst kind of sufferings so we may never have to go through them to that extent. Even those who perished hundreds of years ago for the cause of Christ, didn't endure the depths of the sufferings Christ did. Just as we are told in reference to Christ's work on earth in John 21:25 that the "world itself could not contain the books that should be written," this would also include His sufferings that were not mentioned in His Word as well. We will suffer if we hold to rightly divided truths. It's our responsibility to make those sufferings positive and for the glory of God. So I will end this study with a question, "are you suffering for Christ?"