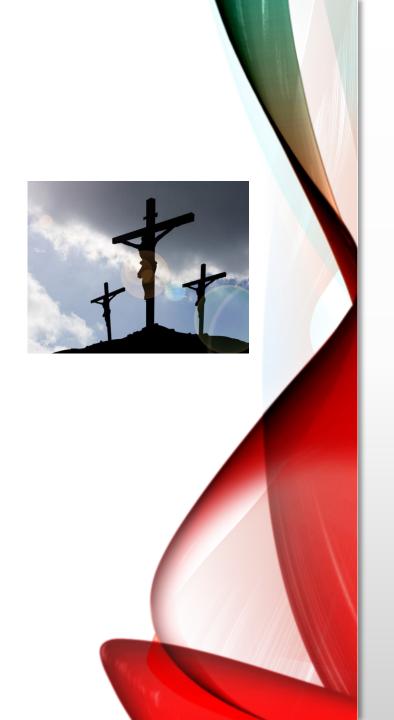
THREE CROSSES THREE MEN



Luke 23:26-47



THREE CROSSES

- Of the three, one in the middle is most important
- Isaiah (Isa 52:13 53:12) drew picture of the crucifixion 700 years before it happened
 - Made Christ's cross most prominent in careful detail
 - Stated Jesus would be "numbered with the transgressors"
 - Two other crosses on which thieves were crucified not given same importance
- Luke's gospel (23:26-47) tells story behind three crosses
 - Rejection
 - Repentance
 - Redemption



BACKGROUND

- Cross has become a symbol
 - We see payment for our sins
 - Full price of redemption
- Words of Jesus' enemies, those crucified with Him, and His own words remind of facts concerning the one who died on the cross in the middle
 - Enemies and rulers—hatred, insults and sarcasm
 - With Him—one selfish and one rebuking & repentant
 - Jesus—love and forgiveness



CROSS OF REJECTION

- Not everyone saw Christ as redeemer
 - Troublemaker or imposter
 - Helpless king dying a hopeless death
- Summarizes all who reject Jesus—hurled insults and mockery
 - Listened to the crowd, rulers, and soldiers?
 - Experiences? Angry at the world?
 - Hiding a life of sin behind hatred?
- Serves as our warning
 - Don't listen to the crowds—still ridiculing Jesus
 - Satan at work



MAN OF REJECTION

- Thief was hanging on the cross and could blaspheme all he wanted—he was condemned to death
- Represents world that wants to be saved without acknowledging the judgment
 - If You are the Messiah, take away the judgment;
 let us escape and You with us
 - Show us what you can do



CROSS OF REPENTANCE

- Thief on this cross saw that Jesus was innocent
 - Initially, made fun of Jesus but was led to see truth
 - Not necessarily a nicer guy than other criminal
 - Didn't listen to crowds, soldiers, or his experiences
 - Rebuked the other criminal
- This cross convicts us of our sins and connects us to His cross of redemption



MAN OF REPENTANCE

- This thief was willing to suffer for the evil deeds he had done so he could be freed from them (Luke 23:40-41)
- Freed from his burden of sin through acknowledgment and judgment
- Received assurance that he would be with Jesus in paradise (Luke 23:42-43)



CROSS OF REDEMPTION

- God chose his Son to bring salvation to mankind (Col 1:19-20)
- God balanced the books of His justice on it
- God planned to let his anger at sin and all of sin's consequences to fall on Jesus (Gal 3:13)
- Jesus bore our sins in his body on the tree... (1 Pet 2:24)



MAN OF REDEMPTION

- None other than Jesus Himself
- Took our sins on His body—was made sin for us
- God did what was impossible for the law—He condemned sin in Christ's flesh (Rom 8:3)
- When this work was finished, Jesus gave up his spirit



THREE CROSSES

- One holds a man dying for sin (redemption)
- One holds a man dying <u>in</u> sin (rejection)
- One holds a man dying to sin (repentance)

 We are allowed to see and hear the message of the cross in the middle, the cross of redemption