

Introduction: The trumpets’ call

- I. The importance of sounding a clear call
  - A. Trumpet signals in battle let soldiers know what they were commanded to do
  - B. The Bible explains the one unacceptable thing was playing an uncertain sound
    - *“...Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle?” 1 Corinthians 14:8*
  - C. An uncertain signal would confuse soldiers and make them ineffective
  
- II. Being Clear About Substitutionary Atonement
  - A. Atonement: Payment made to satisfy the demands of justice
  - B. Substitute: To take the place of another
  - C. All other faiths call for self-atonement
  - D. Biblical Christianity makes provision for someone else to pay for our wrongs
  
- III. The Timeline That Leads Up To Substitutionary Atonement
  - A. The Garden of Eden
  - B. Passover
  - C. Day of Atonement
  - D. John the Baptist
  - E. The Last Supper
  - F. The Crucifixion
  - G. The Day of Judgment
    - The question will be asked: “Who will atone for your sins?”
    - You can ‘self-atone’
    - You can choose substitutionary atonement through Christ

Conclusion: “How do we respond to sacrifice?”

**Monday** -- Yesterday we learned from Bill Hybels about Jesus as the “Lamb of God” who made the ultimate ‘Atoning Sacrifice’ for our sins. (I hope this week you are ready to make your sacrificial gift for our Veterans Memorial Plaza!) Jesus predicted His crucifixion many times. Read *Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; and John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32-33*. Several aspects of Jesus’ passion are predicted; (1) it occurred by divine necessity in *Mark 8:3*. (2) Jesus would be vindicated by being raised from the dead; and (3) the death itself entailed glory, seen in the “lifted up” sayings which imply exaltation in *John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32-33*.

**Tuesday** -- By the time of the crucifixion, the Jewish Sanhedrin was no longer allowed to initiate capital punishment; only the Romans could do so. Furthermore, only Roman soldiers could carry it out. Roman customs were followed in the scourging, mock enthronement, bearing the crossbeam, and the crucifixion itself. The site on a hill and the size of the cross (the use of the hyssop reed shows it was seven to nine feet high) showed their desire for a public display of a “criminal.” The Jewish elements in the crucifixion of Jesus were the wine mixed with myrrh (*Mark 15:23*), the hyssop reed with vinegar (*Mark 15:36*), and the removal of Jesus’ body from the cross before sunset (*John 19:31*).

**Wednesday** -- The four Gospels look at Jesus’ crucifixion from four different vantage points and highlight diverse aspects of the significance of His death. Mark and Matthew centered upon the horror of putting the Son of God Himself to death. Mark emphasized the messianic meaning, using the taunts of the crowds to “save yourself” (*15:30-31*) as an unconscious prophecy pointing to the resurrection. Matthew took Mark even further, pointing to Jesus as the royal Messiah who faced His destiny in complete control of the situation. Jesus’ vindication was found not only in the rending of the veil and the centurion’s testimony (*Matt. 27:51, 54* paralleling Mark) but in the remarkable raising of the Old Testament saints (*vv. 52-53*) which links the cross and the open tomb. For Matthew the cross inaugurated the last days when the power of death is broken, and salvation is poured out upon all people. Plan now to attend tomorrow’s Maundy Thursday service at 7:00.

**Thursday** -- Luke has perhaps the most unique portrayal, with two emphases: Jesus as the archetypal righteous Martyr who forgave His enemies and the crucifixion as an awesome scene of reverence and worship. Luke omitted some aspects of the crucifixion (earthquakes, wine with myrrh, cry of dereliction) and overturned the taunts when the crowd “*returned home beating their breasts*” (*23:48 RSV*). Luke included three sayings of Jesus which relate to prayer (found only in Luke): “*Father, forgive them*” (*v.34*, contrasted with the mockery); “*today you will be with me in paradise*” (*v. 43*, in response to the criminal’s prayer); and “*Father into thy hands I commend my spirit*” (*v. 46*). A wondrous sense of stillness and worship color Luke’s portrayal.

**Friday** -- Tonight is our Good Friday Service. John’s narration is perhaps the most dramatic. Even more so than Luke, all the negative elements disappear (the darkness and taunts as well as those missing also in Luke), and an atmosphere of calm characterizes the scene. At the core is Jesus’ sovereign control of the whole scene. The cross becomes His throne. John noted that the inscription on the cross (“JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS”) was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek (*19:19-20*), thereby changing it into a universal proclamation of Jesus’ royal status. Throughout the account to the final cry, “*It is finished*” (*v. 30*), Jesus was in complete control.