

St Martins C3 – March 29, 2026

The Power of the Cross – How?

Sermon Notes:

Today we continue to explore the power of the cross, looking at how Jesus deals with the legal demands against us on the cross; considering how it is effective and what it achieves for us.

We explore this through the progression of 4 aspects:

1. Penalty
2. Powerful
3. Participation
4. Peace

Penalty

We start the story with a problem. It is a personal problem and a universal problem. It is the problem of sin. *Read Romans 3:10-18.* We're all sinners and we all deserve judgement, death, under the law of God.

The compounding challenge is God's righteousness, his perfection. For God to be just and righteous he needs to properly deal with that sin.

But Good News – Gospel News.

Read: 1 Peter 2:24, Colossians 2:14

Jesus' death is a sacrifice that satisfies the penalty of our sins.

By what mechanism is he permitted to take our place?

How is it effective for us? To you? To me?

It's because the work on the cross is **Powerful**.

Read: 1 Cor 1:15-17; Philippians 2:6-7

The effectiveness of Jesus' death lies in the unique combination of his nature as fully God, fully human and yet being without sin.

Because he was fully human, he could represent humanity and pay the penalty for sin, which is death; because he was fully God, his sacrifice possessed infinite value, sufficient to atone for the sins of all mankind.

Participation

Read: Luke 9:23, Luke 14:27, Matthew 16:24, Matthew 10:38, Gal 2:20, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Jesus doesn't just substitute himself into our place.

He joins us in our situation.

He joins us, and all creation, under the wrath of God

Suffers the penalty, on the cross

Raised on the third day – the first fruits of the resurrection, conquering death

Then, calls us to take up our cross and follow him.

On the cross, the sin of humanity was counted against Jesus, and the perfect righteousness of Jesus was credited to humanity.

You have Jesus' righteousness.

By satisfying the righteous legal demands against us, Jesus brings **peace**.

The peace that existed at the beginning of creation, all earth and man in harmony with their creator which had been shattered by the problem of sin; has been restored by the Power of the Cross.

The cross enables peace between God & man; and between all creation. Not only does Jesus bring peace. He is our peace.

Read Colossians 1:20, Ephesians 2:14-16.

There is a now, but not yet, in all of this. We see in a mirror darkly; this world is still under the curse; yet hope and strength for now and hope and confidence for the future.

There was a problem, with a just penalty, that applies to us all.

The cross is powerful to save, as Jesus is fully God and fully man; he has participated with us under judgement so that we can participate and receive his righteousness; and in doing so ends hostility bringing peace to you and to me; us with God and with each other.

Resources for Connect Groups:

Key Point

We can have confidence that Jesus' work on the cross makes a real difference in our lives and our situation in the face of God's justice and the grip of sin.

Questions:

What stood out to you from this week's message?

What does this message tell you about God and humans?

If someone were to ask you why Jesus died on the cross, what would you say?

Why is Jesus being fully human, and sinless, important for the work of the cross?

Why is Jesus being fully God important for the work of the cross?

Why is it personally helpful to understand how the cross is effective for salvation?

Read Ephesians 2:13-18 and discuss the peace that Jesus brings on the cross.

In what way(s) is Jesus a participant with us rather than just a substitute for us?

In what way(s) do we participate (or share) in who Jesus is and what he accomplishes, through the cross?

What does Jesus' powerful work on the cross achieve for us?

What is one thing you can do in light of what we have studied?

SOAP Bible Study

Monday Devotion - Penalty

The issue of sin is both a personal problem and a universal problem. The penalty for our sinfulness is deserved, and God is just to judge. Heavy stuff, and important to feel the weight of it to rightly appreciate the lengths God goes to make things right.

Scripture: Romans 3:10-18

As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Observation (What stands out to you?)

Application (What will you do?)

Prayer (What do you want to say to God?)

Tuesday Devotion – Good News

Although sin is a massive issue, it's not the end of the story. God steps into history in the person of his son Jesus and provides the way of full and complete salvation; through our faith in his work for us. Jesus' death saves.

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:23-25

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls

Observation (What stands out to you?)

Application (What will you do?)

Prayer (What do you want to say to God?)

Wednesday Devotion - Powerful

How is it that Jesus dying on the cross over 2000 yrs ago is effective on our situation before God? Because it is powerful. Because Jesus' nature fulfills all the requirements of the penalty as well as being fully divine that it transcends time and place to reach forward in history to each one of us.

Scripture: Philippians 2:5-11

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Observation (What stands out to you?)

Application (What will you do?)

Prayer (What do you want to say to God?)

Thursday Devotion – Participation

On the cross, the sin of humanity was counted against Jesus, and the perfect righteousness of Jesus was credited to humanity. You and I, as believers in Jesus have Jesus' righteousness. That epic participation also then makes sense of why we are called to follow in the way of the cross; rather than just receive and check-out.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So, from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Observation (What stands out to you?)

Application (What will you do?)

Prayer (What do you want to say to God?)

Friday Devotion - Peace

By satisfying the righteous legal demands against us, Jesus brings peace. The cross enables peace between God & man; and between all creation. Not only does Jesus bring peace. He is our peace.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:13-18

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Observation (What stands out to you?)

Application (What will you do?)

Prayer (What do you want to say to God?)
