

# CALVARY

*"The Cross"*

*at the*

*"Crossroad"*



LESSON 4



# CALVARY

*“Cross” or “Crossroad”*

*This is the junction where God meets man to deliver the opportunity to experience a redeemed and reconciled life.*

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# CALVARY – *The Intersection of Divine Intent and Human Will*

There are two prominent ways we learn from the Bible:

- a) **Through instructions** – Eph 4:32 “Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.” This verse teaches us that
- 1) anger isn't automatically sin,
  - 2) it's something we have to be careful about,
  - 3) we're not supposed to stay angry at people.
- (b) **By Example** -- both good and bad.
- The Bible is full of stories that tell us about how people succeeded and failed in various circumstances.
  - As we read them we learn lessons that help us through life.

There are topics that the Bible doesn't instruct us about, that we only learn through the seasons of solitude.

- Some people confuse solitude with isolation, loneliness and extrovert behavior
- Christians might reject the idea because there's no verse in the Bible advising solitude

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Yet the best way to learn about this practice is to watch the life of Jesus; and we're fortunate that the Bible records a number of times when Jesus separated Himself from people.

Solitude can benefit us greatly if we use that time to sort through with the Father whatever is on our minds and in our hearts.

- Carving out alone time with God is a form of worship

In looking through these we can notice different reasons why Jesus spent time alone.

**1. To prepare for a major task** After Jesus was baptized, He spent 40 days praying in the wilderness. After this He was tempted by Satan and then began His public ministry.

- **Luke 4:1-2** Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry

[Matt. 4:1 states He was taken on this retreat by the Holy Spirit **to be tested**]

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- **Luke 4:14-19** Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. <sup>15</sup>And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.
- **Luke 4:16-19** So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. <sup>17</sup> And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: <sup>18</sup> ***"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."***

**2. To recharge after hard work** Jesus sent the 12 disciples out to do ministry; and when they returned He encouraged them to separate from the people who were following them to rest.

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- **Mark 6:30-32** Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. <sup>31</sup> And He said to them, "**Come aside by yourselves** to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. <sup>32</sup> So **they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.**
- After an intensive time of ministry, they needed rest, so Jesus and the apostles went off by themselves.
- Twentieth Century Revivalist Dr. Vance Havner is quoted as saying, 'If you don't come apart and rest, you will come apart!'
- This passage is interesting because despite Jesus attempts to withdraw from the crowds, they still followed Him.
- This brings us to the occasion where He had compassion on the 5000 and fed them
- This important miracle recorded in all four Gospels, depicts the **disciples' solution** to the problem was "go and buy" (V 37), but **Jesus' solution** was "Go and see" (V 38)

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- Starting with what they had-- provided God with the opportunity to unveil the ***miracle of multiplication*** at the hand of Jesus.

[Jesus was the **manufacturer**; the disciples were only the **distributors**]

- **Now there are** various reasons associated with this command to seclusion”
  - 1) First, Matthew 14:13) says, that “when Jesus heard” of the murder of His faithful forerunner and his burial by his followers (Mark 6:29) -- “He departed by ship into a desert place apart”
    - Either to avoid some apprehended consequences to Himself, arising from the Baptist’s death (Mt 10:23), or
    - Next, He wanted time to genuinely debrief the apostolic Twelve with the same interest with which He experienced on the return of the Seventy (Luke 10:17–22)
    - He sought privacy for undisturbed reflection on their preaching and the progress of His kingdom.

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- Finally, no doubt, He was wearied with the multitude of “comers and goers” —depriving Him even of leisure enough to take His food—and wanted *rest*: “Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while
- Under the combined influence of all these considerations, our Lord sought this change.

**3. To work through grief** After Jesus learned that his cousin John the Baptist had been beheaded, He went away by Himself. Yes, even the Son of God grieves.

- **Matt. 14:12-13a** Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. <sup>13</sup> **When Jesus heard it**, He departed from there by boat **to a deserted place by Himself**. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities.
- There appears to be a direct connection between **V 12 and 13a – When Jesus heard it**
- Yes, even Jesus needed to indulge in human feelings and their emotional affect – emotions which a bustling multitude would prevent

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- As the news concerning Jesus and His mighty works spread, Herod Antipas heard about Jesus and His miraculous powers.
- Herod ruled from 4 BC to 39 AD over a fourth of Palestine (hence the title the tetrarch), including Galilee and Perea.
- His father Herod the Great had killed the Bethlehem babies (2:16) and this Herod would judge Jesus when He was on trial (Luke 23:7–12).
- Herod concluded that Jesus was John the Baptist ... risen from the dead (Luke 9:7).
- Matthew's last reference to John the Baptist was John's sending messengers to Jesus to inquire about Him (Matt. 11:2–14).
- Herod had arrested John ... because John had publicly condemned Herod, who was living with Herodias, his sister-in-law [his brother Philip's wife]
- He wanted to execute John but was fearful, for the people loved John and thought him to be a prophet; therefore, he only removed John from the public imprisoning him.

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- But at a birthday celebration Salome, Herodias' daughter danced and she delighted Herod so much that he foolishly promised her anything she wanted.
  - Her request was one prompted by her mother – give me the head of John the Baptist on a platter.
  - Though this request greatly distressed (*lypeō* -- to be grieved or sad to the point of distress) Herod, he was caught in a trap for his oath (14:9).
  - John's disciples gave his body a decent burial, and reported to Jesus what had happened.
  - Herod's act was another illustration of the rejection of Jesus, for Matthew connected the ministries of these two men that what happened to one was viewed as having a direct effect on the other.
  - Herod, by rejecting the King's forerunner, was rejecting the King who followed him.
4. **Before making an important decision** Early in His ministry Jesus spent the whole night alone in prayer; and the next day He chose His 12 disciples.

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- **Luke 6:12-13** Now it came to pass in those days that He **went out to the mountain to pray**, and continued all night in prayer to God. <sup>13</sup> And when it was day, He called His disciples to *Himself*; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:
- Moses had followed a similar pattern of seclusion which is practiced by Jesus
- On the mountainside, Moses prayed and receiving instructions about **helpers** (Exd. 19:24; 24:1-2; 31:12) and **successors** (Num. 27:15-23; Num. 20:23-29).
- The work with which the next *day* began shows what had been the burden of this *night's* devotions.
- The Man Jesus directed His disciples to pray for “laborers” just before sending themselves forth (Matt. 9:37; 10:1), so here we find the Him in **prolonged communion** with His Father as He prepared to appoint men who would be leaders in the Church
- This is a good example for us to follow in our own ministries (**James 1:5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.)

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- The prime OT example of asking God (James 4:2-3) for wisdom is 1 Kings 3:5-9 (*Solomon in Gibeon*); for God is always recognized as its source (Prov. 2:6).
- Whether Jesus engaged in auricular communication or it was a wordless communion with God we are not told, but what is important is the choice to separate from the noise, interference and corruption of society.
- Swiss doctor and writer Johann Zimmermann, put it this way, ‘solitude is an opportunity for “self-collection

**5. In a time of distress** Hours before Jesus was arrested He went to the Mt. of Olives and went a short distance away from His disciples to pray.

- This action is encouraged by God – **Ps. 50:14-15** “Offer to God thanksgiving, And pay your vows to the Most High. <sup>15</sup> **Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.**”
- These verses serve as a correction in failed worship to God and lists three solutions:

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**1) Offer Sacrifices of Thanksgiving** -- every sacrifice must be a sacrifice of thanksgiving because the real giver in every act of my giving is God.

**2) Pay Your Vows to the Most High** – vowing to God honors Him as the owner of all things by looking back at the time he helped you and by expressing trust that he will keep on doing that in your fulfillment of the vow.

**3) Call upon God in the Day of Trouble** -- God is infinitely resourceful and it is an honor for Him to respond to the needs of His people

- David said in **II Sam 22:7** (Psl. 18:6; 120:1 [Hezekiah]) “In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

- Jesus when in great emotional agony knowing what He was about to face.

❖ **Luke 22:39-44** Coming out [of upper room], He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. <sup>40</sup>When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation

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<sup>41</sup>And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup>saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." <sup>43</sup>Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

6. **To focus on prayer** Many times in Jesus' ministry He spent time alone in prayer.

- To make decisions without interference sometimes we must isolate
  - When Abraham's servant started out to look for a wife for Isaac, he prayed for divine guidance
  - Later on he said, "I being in the way, the Lord led me..." (Gen. 24:27).
- But isolation is never from the source from Whom we seek answers and relief
  - **John 16:32** Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me

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- **Luke 5:16** So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.
  - **Matt 14:23** And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain **apart to pray**: and when the evening was come, **he was there alone**.
  - **Luke 9:18** And it came to pass, as **he was alone praying**, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?
  - **Luke 9:36** And when the voice was past, **Jesus was found alone**. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.
  - **John 6:15** When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he **departed again into a mountain himself alone**
- Like Jesus, whenever we need to make spiritual decisions, withdrawal from the bust active surrounding to a place of solitude and peace is a good practice
  - Jesus withdrew from the world so He could spend time in prayer.
  - He went alone to think His way through decisions.
  - He went into the wilderness for forty days before beginning His ministry.

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- He prayed all night before choosing the twelve apostles.
- He spent time alone in prayer before every major decision or circumstance in His life and ministry on earth.

What Jesus did is no different than what we also must do if we are going to make the right priority decisions in life.

There was an article in Psychology Today in 2012 entitled “*6 Reasons You Should Spend More Time Alone*” by **Sherrie Bourg Carter Psy.D.**

Ms. Carter noted that in today's constantly connected world, finding solitude has become a lost art as we tend to equate a desire for solitude with people who are lonely, sad, or are antisocial

- So she listed what she considered to be healthy and psychological benefits to solitude:

- 1) Solitude allows one to reboot their brain and unwind.** Constantly being "on" doesn't give the brain a chance to rest and replenish itself.

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❖ Removing distractions provides the chance to clear the mind, focus, and think more clearly.

❖ It's an opportunity to revitalize your mind and body at the same time.

**2. Solitude helps to improve concentration and increase productivity.** When we remove cognitive distractions, we are better able to concentrate, which will help you get more work done in a shorter amount of time.

**3. Solitude gives one an opportunity to discover yourself** and find their own voice. When we are part of a group, we're more inclined to go along with what the group is doing or thinking, which aren't always the actions one would take individually.

**4. Solitude provides time for one to think deeply.** Daily responsibilities and commitments can make our to-do list seem as if it has no end. This constant motion prevents one from engaging in deep thought, which inhibits creativity; lessening productivity.

**5. Solitude helps you work through problems more effectively.** It's hard to think of effective solutions to problems when you're distracted by incoming information, regardless of whether the source is electronic or human.

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6. **Solitude can enhance the quality of your relationships with others.** By spending time with ourselves and gaining a better understanding of who we are and what we desire in life, we're more likely to make better choices about who we want to be around.

[<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/high-octane-women/201201/6-reasons-you-should-spend-more-time-alone>]

Despite knowing these benefits, it can be a challenge to find time alone in a world that seems to never sleep. Here are a few ideas to help you find more time to spend with yourself.

- **Disconnect.** Set aside some time each day to unplug from all the ways you connect with others. Turn off your cell phone, Internet and TV.
- **Get up or Get in Early.** Wake up a half hour or an hour earlier than everyone else in your house, and use that time to create, produce, problem solve, meditate, or whatever makes you happy. This strategy also works if you can get to work before everyone else arrives, and before the phones begin to ring.

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- **Close Your Door.** It's simple, but can be very effective -- purpose “**Me-time.**” For those in leadership we set ourselves as magnets for questions.
- **Use Your Lunchtime.** Don't spend your lunchtime working at your desk or running errands. Once a week, or even just a couple of times a month, commit to spending lunch with yourself. Walk. Sit in the sun outside. Go to a park and eat. Enjoy the time you have alone.
- **Schedule solitude.** Literally. Mark off time in your day planner or calendar for spending alone with yourself. Any time that you can spend alone with yourself to reboot, meditate, focus, relax, create, produce, and/or think deeply is better than no time.

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**On Zoom**

Fuel

For

Courage

**SUNDAY 7:00 PM**

**ZOOM ID 890 6756 9781**

**PASSCODE 510309**

# Man 2 Man

**MENS ZOOM FELLOWSHIP**

**Saturday April 10, 2021 - 8:00 AM**

IRON SHARPENS IRON,  
AND ONE MAN  
SHARPENS ANOTHER

**ZOOM ID**

**833 7785 8650**

**Password: 114660**

**FACILITATORS**

**Rev. Guy Bowens**

**Min. Nate Cheers**

**PROVERBS 27:17**

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