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Beloved in the Lord as we turn to God's word this morning, we're going to be resuming our series in Matthew. I don't know if we'll stay with this. So I'm back to mornings I knew I'm almost done Matthew, our series on Matthew and went to that, but we may switch to a new series of the Old Testament. Not sure but for now we're in Matthew 27. Matthew 27. And our scripture reading will be from verse 24 to 38. Matthew 27, verse 24 to 38. And it's been a little bit but we are in the story of the Passion Week, and we are at the point of the crucifixion. The point of crucifixion. Your attention, the reading of God's Word beginning in verse 24, I just want to pick up the last part of the trial of Pilate, Matthew 27, verse 24.

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather than a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person, you see to it. And all the people answered and said, his blood be on us and on our children. And he released Barabus to them, and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. The soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and gathered the whole garrison around him, they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and a reed in his right hand and a bow the knee before him and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews. And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him and took a robe off him, put on his own clothes, put his own clothes on him and let him away to be crucified. Now, as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull. They gave him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when he had tasted it, he would not drink. Then they crucified Him and divided his garments, casting lots that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophets, they divided my garments among them, and for my clothing, they cast lots, sitting down they kept watch over him there, they put up over his head, the accusation written against him: This is Jesus,

the King of the Jews. Then two robbers are crucified with Him, one on the right and another, on the left.

Thus far the reading of God's Word this morning. Our focus will be on verse 27 to 32. We won't quite get as far as we thought, just two points this morning, verse 27 to 32, as we study some more of the events that took place together and alongside of the crucifixion of our Lord and Savior.

Beloved in the Lord, as we got together this morning, the sermon texts and the focus before us is indeed a rather heavy one. Whenever we look and consider the sufferings of Jesus, it is a topic that deserves and requires a certain sobriety and a certain weightiness. This is when the Son of God became sin for us, and while we confess that all through his life he suffered - and indeed he did - yet we also confess that it is especially at the end of his life that the Lord placed upon him the transgressions of all our sin, the fullness of all our sin and the wrath of God that would come with it. As we studied this topic this morning, as we look at the suffering of Christ, we're gonna be looking at under a specific theme and focus and we're looking at it a little bit under the topic of what we would call shame.

We want to talk about the idea of shame. Now, shame is a bit of an odd topic, perhaps for a sermon, but shame is simply the idea, the emotional response, the way we feel, when something in us is revealed as not being what it should be, when, when when we reveal and when it is revealed to others that that we are weak or that we are sinful, or that we are foolish, or that we are not wise, whenever something that would cause us yeah, shame would cause us to be embarrassed is exposed we experience shame. And and as we look at God's word, as we think of shame, this way, it happens in a number of ways. It can be shamed because we're not as strong as we thought we were. Maybe we made a boast about how we could benchpress 200 pounds and when the weight gets on there, and everyone's watching, you know, it hits the chest and we can't budge and have to ask for help. Maybe it's the shame of something where our minds aren't as sharp as they once were. And we find people suddenly staring at us in a conversation and wondering why we don't get it.

And we realize that we're just missing something and our mind is an operating as it once did. And we're ashamed. We're embarrassed. But it can also be the shame that comes spiritually, not only physically and not only mentally, but the shame that comes spiritually when we are not who we ought to be. When we know what is right and we know what is wrong. And if we're Christians, we know what it means to be redeemed - to be called sons and daughters and the Most High God - that we were once darkness but now we're lighting the Lord and we're called to live as children of

light and the shame that comes when we don't live as children of light. It can be a shame that comes when that's exposed or can just be a shame that comes when we realize it. When we've been lured by sin, we've tasted a forbidden fruit and it hasn't delivered and suddenly we're filled with remorse, and guilt and shame over the nature of our actions. Beloved, there's many reasons we can experience shame. As we come to the end of the life of Christ, we might be tempted to think that he experienced shame, might be tempted to think that he experienced shame here as the Son of God took on the weight of our sin, as he is mocked before the Roman garrison, as he falls under the cross and needs Simon the Cyrene to bear his burden for him - when he has come to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And yet, the Bible says something very intriguing about Jesus and the idea of shame. In Hebrews chapter 12, it says that he is the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him - speaking of the cross - for the joy set before him despised the shame, enduring the cross and sat down at the right hand of God. This idea of shame, this idea of an emotion where we feel exposed, beloved in the Lord, the Bible tells us - that even though Jesus experienced things that would be shameful - in a sense - that he despised the shame, that he endure this in such a way that this idea that weakness was exposed, didn't faze him, didn't crush him. But on the contrary, is something that Christ embraced, and Christ endured with joy for the goal of saving sinners. And Beloved, we're gonna just look at that concept this morning of how Christ endured the shame of suffering - and that he did so out of what is an abounding love, an abounding, an incomprehensible love for those who have reason to be ashamed, for those who have reason to feel that embarrassment that comes when our weaknesses are exposed, and how Jesus knows all about weakness, all about embarrassment, all about guilt, all about shame, and yet he derides it all, despises it all. So that he can save the shameful. He can save the shameful. When we see this we want to see the beauty of the love of God as Jesus endures and despises the shame of suffering. We're gonna look at this just in two points this morning. First, we're gonna see how he does this at the hands of the Roman soldiers. And secondly, as he does this in the weakness of human flesh, as he endures and despises the shame at the hands of Roman soldiers and then as he endures and despises the shame, in the weakness of human flesh.

We begin in verse 27, just a few things to note for context again, if you're with us before, and perhaps not, the Bible is always and every text of the Bible needs to be understood within its context to be understood correctly. As we go through the Bible in this section, Jesus has already been suffering at the hands of the high priests at the hands of the Jews. That took place in Matthew 26 and when he suffered at the hands of the Jews, the key issue is whether or not he was the Messiah. The words of verse 63, when the high priest says to Jesus, I put you under oath, by the living God tell us if you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God - that was the issue before the Jews, but now that Jesus is before the Romans before Pontius Pilate, the issue is whether or

not he is the king, whether he is the king of the Jews. And of course, that has been the claim Jesus has responded with only the words: "It is, as you say" confirming the accusation of Pilate and he is being tried now as one who is claiming to be a king in opposition to Caesar. In verse 26, we read of how Pilate hands him over to be crucified, but first he is scourged and that means simply that Jesus endured a whipping, a scourging at the hands of the Roman soldiers and that came before what we read in verse 27. So by the time we come to verse 27, Jesus has been beaten at the hands of the high priests. Jesus has endured a scourging at the hands of Roman soldiers, those scourges were exceptionally violent and brutal. The Jews said that no man can be whipped with more than 40 lashes. The Romans had no such caveat. They had no such limitation. And Christ endured the scourging of the Romans. And then Pilate hands him over and there is if you read other Gospel accounts before this, he goes to Herod and is beaten before Herod, and then he returns to Pilate. So, when Pilate hands him over to this Roman garrison - to be crucified - Jesus has already gone through immense and significant and intense suffering. Humanly speaking, beloved, physically speaking, he is an utterly broken man, an utterly broken man. Now remember, the charge against him now and the reason he is being handed over to be crucified is because he has been called the King of the Jews. But when it comes to the Roman soldiers, when Pilate delivers him to be crucified, what comes to him is a man who has been rejected by his own people. A man who has been beaten by his own chief priests, a man who's already been beaten and whipped at the hands of the Roman soldiers. The lacerations on his back were fresh, his clothing was torn. And this man is called the king. Now there's a verse in the Bible and it says that pride comes before the fall, but humility comes before exaltation. Pride comes before the fall, you know, sometimes we can boast of great things and be left exposed. It's a miniscule and trifle compared to what we're reading of. I remember times when I thought I could do things, physically, had a strength physically, only to find I didn't. To perhaps post that I whip my son in a race and come towards the end of the race and think as we are neck and neck now I'll put on the afterburners. Now, I'll dig in and pass him - only to watch my son's heels disappear in the distance.

Christ claimed to be the light of the world. He claimed to be the way to the Father. He said to Philip, how long have I been with you, Philip and still you have not known me? He who has seen me has seen the Father. And now he stands before a group of Romans and they gather the whole garrison says God's Word in verse 27. They gather all the soldiers, all who are on duty come together, this great group of soldiers, and they have before him this beaten and rejected man. They decide to heap scorn upon him What a fool this man is to believe he's the king and so they treat him as a fool. They strip him says verse 28, and put a scarlet robe on him. If you remember pictures of Rome, you'll see Caesar oftentimes depicted with a scarlet robe hanging from his shoulders. It was a sign of royalty, and that time the dyeing of wool was something that was a little more expensive, and to wear scarlet was to be a king to be royal to show a regalness. And so they throw upon this beaten and bleeding man who's been rejected by his own people, a scarlet robe.

He claims to be a king, and so they put together a crown for him - a crown of thorns. They press it upon his head. And then a king is often given a scepter by which he rules a scepter, which is the sign of his power and authority he holds in his right hand, notice the detail the Bible here, it gives remarkable detail. Instead of giving a scepter, they give him a reed, a stick with bend in it, and they put it in his right hand, the same hand a king would use to hold the symbol of his authority and power. They bow the knee before this broken man. They mock him and they say "Hail, King of the Jews". And after they have treated him as a mockery, the Bible tells us they spit on him. Have you ever been spat on? It's a sign of great derision, when someone spits on you. A sign of great disdain. Imagine and we don't know how many the soldiers were. We're told by history that a Roman garrison had 600 soldiers. They wouldn't all be on duty at once. We don't know exactly how many it was perhaps 100. You imagine as these men - having marked the Savior - show their contempt for him by spitting upon him. And taking that sign of authority - that reed they put in his hand - and beating him across the head, and taking them off to be crucified.

Now Beloved in the Lord, if this was me, if this was you, and we'd claim to be somebody, and this was the result, it would be utterly breaking wouldn't it. Then Jesus says to us in, Matthew 20:28, the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and give his life a ransom for many. Do you remember what we read about and the idea of kings in Deuteronomy 17? Do you remember how we've been talking about that a little bit lately, and we've read about how kings were not to multiply horses, or chariots for themselves. They're not to multiply silver or gold for themselves. They're not to multiply wives for themselves. How a king was according to the Old Testament in Deuteronomy 17, meant not to bring things to himself, but to use things for the good of the people. Do you see the beauty of Christ? When he endures what the world would count his shame, but he does so as a king, as one who came not to multiply honor for himself, not to multiply gold for himself, not to multiply this but to give his life a ransom for many. And as he takes the scorn and the mockery and the ridicule of the world, Beloved in the Lord, this shame that the world heaps upon him, he takes with open arms, doesn't he? He could have escaped at any time, he could have called 12 legions of angels and yet here as this Roman garrison heapes scorn upon him, Jesus answers not a word. Why? Because the shame of our sin and the shame of our rejection, who are we to be as human beings, who are we made to be as God's children? In Psalm 8, David speaks about the beauty and the honor with which God has robed mankind. He says it in these words, and I should always mark the page because the wind makes it tough. But Psalm 8: Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your Name, in all the earth, who have set your glory above the heavens. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, the stars, which you have ordained, What is man that you are mindful of him, and the Son of Man that you visit him? For you have made him a little lower than the angels. You have crowned him with glory, and honor and you have made him to have dominion over the works of your hands. You have put all things under his feet, sheep and oxen, beasts of the field, birds of the air, fish or the sea, oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your Name, in all the earth!

Do you hear how David speaks of the human race? He speaks of them as kings and queens, as those who've been given dominion crowned with honor and made just a little lower than angels, but what do we look like in reality, beloved? Are we kings? Are we queens? When we turn from the holiness and the majesty of which God has made us and we embrace the rebellion of turning from a holy God and living as a law unto ourselves and plunging our world, our society, and our lives into a ruin that looks nothing like royalty. Yet here is the Son of God, the spotless lamb, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, beaten, lacerated, bleeding, mocked, spat upon, and 100% a King. 100% a King who did not come to multiply for himself gold and silver who came to lay down his life a ransom for sinners. He despised the shame. He despised it, because this was something he would willfully endure. you So that youi would not. Is not the fear of standing before a holy God, the fear that our sins would be exposed? The fear that our failings would come to the fore? I've heard so often of saints who come to the last days who've lived such godly lives all through life, fearing and suddenly wondering if they'll make it to heaven. It is just so - Oh, every time I always think of Christian crossing the final river in pilgrims progress, and he's going through the river and his friend Hopeful is with him and Hopeful goes through the river and is bold and knows he's going to glory and feels the the bottom of the river is firm beneath his feet, and knows he'll soon enter the glory of heaven. But Christian is overwhelmed by the waves. He's overwhelmed by the current, he can't feel the bottom, the water crashes over his head, and he cries out: "Heaven is not for me". And Hopeful says, "I hear the angel singing", and Christian says "They sing to welcome you, I won't make it." Is not the fear of the sinners heart that when we are exposed, we will be nothing of the royalty that God has made us and yet is not the glory of redemption that Christ has born even this, that we might be whiter than snow, that we might never be kings and queens, princes and princesses, clothed with scorn. But we might be more than conquerors through him who has loved us and given his life for us. That's the gospel hope. That's what we confess. That's what we believe. That's what we teach. That's where our thanksgiving stems from. We know the shame of sin. Don't be surprised when you look at a world and you see it doing things that are shameful. And don't think God is surprised either. He's not. Because Jesus Christ endured even this, that the shameful might be led to rejoicing, the guilty might be pardoned, that Christ may be all in all.

Secondly, we want to move on to a shame of a different kind - shame of a different kind. I love the humanity of Christ and I think we see it so beautifully in Matthew 27. Three of the four gospel writers tell us about how Jesus was not strong enough to carry his cross. When we put the different Gospel accounts together, we know that Jesus began carrying his own cross, he had to start off carrying his own cross. But that somewhere along the way, undoubtedly because of weakness in our Savior, he was no longer able to carry the cross. And so they take a man Simon the Cyrene, and they compel him - the Roman soldiers, remember could compel, cough force the citizens and the people - especially if they weren't Roman - to do anything. They could - Jesus says, You know - "He who compels you to walk one mile go with him two", because the Roman soldiers had the authority to, to just commandeered people and make them serve them. A very

difficult situation to be in, and Jesus called them to do it, and to go above and beyond in the calling. But they compel this man, Simon, the Cyrene to bear the cross. There's a few interesting things about Simon and what it means to be Cyrene. Cyrene was a city in North Africa in the current day country of Libya, just west of Egypt and they had a strong and significant community of Jews there. The name Simon, almost assuredly indicates that Simon the Cyrene was Jewish. Perhaps an immigrant or somebody who traveled and settled into Jerusalem, perhaps his parents did. But he was there. Mark gives us the names of Simon sons, Alexander and Rufus and a really neat point, if you just like archaeology is that in 1941, they discovered a Syrian Jewish burial site, a burial cave, of Cyrenian Jews and in that cave inscribed above one of the resting places for a body is the name Alexander, the son of Simon. That's just really cool. The cave dates back to pre AD 70, which means before the destruction of Jerusalem, and in there, they have found in a place for Cyrenian Jews to be buried, the name Alexander the son of Simon. We don't know if it's one of his sons or not, but anyway, that's who Simon was. He was a Jew, in Jerusalem from North Africa. And he was compelled to bear the cross of Christ.

Now the reason and the question is why? Why? And the very, very simple answer is simply this: in his current state, Jesus was not physically strong enough to carry the cross. He was not physically strong enough to carry the cross. I don't know if you've ever wondered if Jesus had some kind of supernatural help on the cross. If his suffering really didn't touch him, if somehow he was separated from it, never felt the pain, never felt the weakness of what it meant to be man. Beloved, if you have ever wondered that question, there's 1000 ways to answer it and this is one. The answer is no. He was fully human. Therefore, he knew what it was to thirst. He knew what it was to suffer. And he knew what it was to have earthly strength fail. I've ever gone through a workday and by the end of the workday, your legs are shaking, or your hands can't grasp what they could hold at the beginning of the day, they simply no longer have the strength to do it.

I remember once I was a gym teacher, and I was climbing a climbing wall, I'd taken my gym class to an indoor climbing wall and I was climbing the climbing wall. It was one of the last climbs the day and the students were all watching me climb the climbing wall. But I was done. I was cooked. I had nothing left. And as I tried to grab on to the little hand holds my hand is just trembling and the muscles in my forearm were just seizing up. And so I took my hand, and I wedged it behind one of the handholds so I couldn't fall out and I tried to use it to haul it up, so I would look like I could actually get the job done in front of my class. I came down when I finished and they clapped because I made it to a certain point. And the owner of the gym came over to me and says, I saw what you did. You know how stupid that was? Because if you fell, you would have broken your wrist in a heartbeat.

You ever had a time when your earthly strength failed? Do you know Jesus did? A time when he's pushing upon his legs to put one foot in front of the other, his back is straining, his arms are straining to carry the cross piece of the cross. And yet he doesn't have enough physical strength left after being beaten - four times - to do what his body commands it to do and he can go no further. Do you know Jesus gave the last ounce of his strength to save your soul? And he knew true human weakness. Hebrews says, "In as much that as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared in the same." He knew what it was to be fully human, and why? Hebrews 2:14 goes on to say, "That through death, he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetimes subject to bondage." Why did Christ take on human flesh? Because, in order to be the penalty for our sin, in order to be the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, he had to have a body subject to failure. He had to be fully man. That means, beloved, that on the road to Golgatha, his strength failed. And on the cross, his body utterly broken, he knew death. He knew the failing of human strength. Not only may you be forgiven, but that as those redeemed in Christ, the failure of human strength in us would only be temporary.

You know, the truth is that every single one of us here today will one day face death and one day face judgment - unless Jesus returns before it comes. For some of us that death may come suddenly, it may be a car accident, it may be a stroke or a heart attack. But the vast majority of us will have stages in our life where our bodies grow older and we'll no longer be able to do what we once could. I met a dear saint who I pastored over 10 years ago recently. And in 10 years I grew older, and in 10 years they grew older. And as I was walking beside them, they're walking on uneven ground and they had their cane and they slowed down and they said, I'm sorry, Pastor. I'm sorry. I can't walk very quickly anymore. They held on to someone else's arm to stable them. We have seniors in our church who know what it's like to find their vision failing, their legs weaker than they used to be. Maybe you've experienced this somewhat already. Sometimes we can be ashamed. Don't be ashamed that we're not as strong as we thought we were. But you know, Jesus takes this as well. He experienced the shame of a body that would break down and fail, that he may cloth you with immortality. The body of the loved one you lie in the grave will be raised victorious, no longer subject to corruption, no longer subject to decay, no longer subject to weakness, but a resurrected body clothed in the power of Jesus Christ that we can forever be in the presence of God Almighty with exceeding joy. To know the voices that once were strong, that cracked in old age have been restored to sing the praises of God with greater clarity and power than they ever knew on Earth. The shame of death is taken away, beloved, the shame of death. The shame of death is removed as Jesus Christ bore our human flesh, felt the weakness of flesh and despise the shame that he might overcome, so those who stand by faith in Jesus Christ might be more than conquerors through him, who love them.

Beloved in the Lord, if you're feeling the weakness of human flesh, if you're going through that with someone you love, please point them to Jesus Christ, please point them to the one who overcomes even this. The One who will clothe them in immortality. He knows our weakness, he knows our frailty, he does not despise us when we are weak. He does not shove us off into a home and forget us, beloved, he loves us, to the very end of our days, and he experienced all the weakness of human flesh that he might redeem us body and soul to be his beloved children. This is the beauty of seeing the cross in the eyes of faith. Knowing that what he suffered there is suffering not for himself. That's why he didn't feel the shame. Why he can despise it. This is the very thing he came to overcome. Beloved in the Lord, is this your hope? Is this your joy? When you come to know your own weakness, spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, when you're ashamed because you're going through anxiety, when you're ashamed because your body's not as strong as it was, when you're ashamed because the sin of your heart somehow caught the best of you again and you've been plunged into ruin. Do you know your Savior and endured shame for you that you might be redeemed in him and never face it again? The sufferings of Christ, the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, how deep the Father's love for us, that those who would feel shame in themselves might never need to feel shame again, when they turn to Jesus, may know the victory that overcomes. Beloved in the Lord, may God help us to know that victory, to encourage our brothers and sisters, when they go through shame, of the victory that is found in Christ. May the Lord grant us to know the beauty then of the Savior who has born it all that sinners might be redeemed, the lost exposed and called to saving faith, the found encouraged strengthened, revealed in weakness only so our hope can be better rooted in the one in whom all hope is fulfilled. May the Lord help us to sing his praise from this day, to all eternity, the praises of the Lamb of God who took away the sin and shame of all who call on him. Amen. Let's pray.

Father in heaven, Lord, we thank you so much for the cross. And we thank you so much for the beauty that is found even in the sufferings of Jesus. Even in those moments in which we might feel the greatest shame because he suffered there for us and it exposes what we deserve, yet Lord here there is such tremendous beauty because here we read in living color, the love of God the Father, that he would not spare his only begotten Son, but freely give him up for us all. Here we see the power of God, to face fully all that sin would break and to overcome, to experience the shame of all it is found in the brokenness of the human condition, and to be victorious that we may know victory through Jesus. And we pray, Lord, that this day you will grant us that hope and confidence that is found in Jesus. You will help us to know the forgiveness of all our sin. That Lord, we bear it no more. We are made whole, we are made knew. And that Father, you will grant us to know that even in times of physical frailty, emotional frailty, when our weaknesses are exposed, that Jesus has known it all, and he is bringing a day when all will be restored, all will be made new and in the strength and power you give, everything will be returned to you: in honor, in praise, in worship, in service, as the incorruptible gives praise to the one who has not been corrupted ever. And Father we pray you will hasten that day, prepare us for it, help us to suffer well, help us to

encourage our fellow believers in it, help us to call the last to know the one who suffered for them, and may Your kingdom come and your will be done. We ask in Jesus name, Amen.