

[Isaiah 53:3-6](#)

**Jesus: Man of Sorrows**

**Introduction**

What is the most sorrowful time you've ever experienced? For me, it was a night in January 1997 when my wife, Julie, and I received a call that our brother-in-law had been shot and killed outside of his home in Pittsburgh. His wife, and then three small children, experienced unspeakable sorrow and grief.

Likewise, in one night the Lord Jesus Christ, Man of sorrows, endured unspeakable sorrow and grief in three (3) separate events. There was the agony of the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal by Judas, and the denial by Peter. These were not random events. Through Christ's suffering, God orchestrated everything to accomplish His rescue mission. In His amazing grace and rich mercy, God made the only way for rebels, beggars, and misfits like you and me to be rescued from the darkness of sin and brought into His marvelous light of eternal life. So, the main point of this message is as follows:

Jesus was:

- In agony
- Betrayed
- Denied

We were:

- Forgiven
- Redeemed
- Accepted

**1. Jesus' agony - our forgiveness**

It was the night before the Lord Jesus would go to the cross and be crucified. He was in agony as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane knowing full well that He would be forsaken by His heavenly Father. Indeed, God would turn His back as Jesus bore the sins of the world on the cross. In fact, Jesus quoted the Psalmist, King David, as He was crucified. Here's [Psalm 22:1](#).

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? [Psalms 22:1](#) (ESV)

Ironically, the place where Jesus and His disciples frequented would be the place where He agonized over being crushed by God for the good of sinners like you and me. Yes, this was God's plan for His beloved Son to be put to grief on a cross for the punishment of sin. Here's [Isaiah 53:10](#).

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief...  
[Isaiah 53:10](#) (ESV)

The Man of sorrows in his hour of trial realized that He would drink the cup of God's wrath. Jesus said the following: "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death..." ([Matthew 26:38](#)). "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will,

but as you will.” ([Matthew 26:39](#)) And being in agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground ([Luke 22:44](#)).

Take a moment to seriously contemplate the staggering weight of Jesus' agony. What impact does it have on you and me when we realize that the sinless Man of sorrows suffered for sinful, sorrowful mankind to be reconciled to God? To help in answering that question, here's [2 Corinthians 5:21](#).

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. [2 Cor 5:21](#) (ESV)

Do we believe it? That's good news; that's the gospel. Even so, the agony and sorrow of Gethsemane would be followed by the harsh reality of more grief in the betrayal of one of Jesus' disciples, Judas Iscariot.

## **2. Jesus' betrayal - our redemption**

Imagine Jesus being betrayed by one of His friends, a friend that He had chosen to follow Him as one of the twelve disciples. And not only that, but the betrayal would be with a kiss. Yes, Judas had told the elders and chief priests that the One he kissed would be the man to seize. Here's [Matthew 26:49-50](#).

<sup>49</sup> And he came up to Jesus at once and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” And he kissed him.

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, “**Friend, do what you came to do.**” Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him. [Matt 26:49-50](#) (ESV)

Remember, only a short time beforehand at the Last Supper, Jesus had washed the feet of all of His disciples, including Judas. Indeed, this was a display of unmeasured love; it was the kind of gracious, redeeming love that only Jesus has. Yet, Judas chose to reject the grace of God in Christ instead of embracing the redemptive power of Jesus' blood. Here's [Ephesians 1:7](#).

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace... [Eph 1:7](#) (ESV)

Recall that our text from Isaiah stated that Jesus has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted ([Isaiah 53:4](#)). That's what redemption, which means being bought with a price, is all about. The Man of sorrows, who was innocent and betrayed, became a curse in order that people like us, deserving judgment, guilty of sin, and separated from God, would be redeemed and made right with God.

What about you? Have your sins been nailed to the cross and cleansed by the redeeming blood of Jesus? If not, you're in the same predicament as Judas, a man who turned against Jesus; a man who had chosen death instead of life. Today, turn to the Author of Life. Trust in Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Him ([John 14:6](#)). That's what another one of Jesus' disciples did, even though he denied him three times.

### **3. Jesus' denial - our acceptance**

After the agony of Gethsemane and the betrayal by Judas, yet another excruciating sorrow occurred as Jesus was denied by one of His disciples, Peter. This was the man who was one of the first disciples; Jesus had chosen him to be in His innermost circle of friends. Yet, this was the man who denied he knew Jesus not once, but three times. In the gospel of Luke, the account of Peter's denial indicated that Jesus looked at Peter after the third denial. Here's [Luke 22:61-62](#).

<sup>61</sup> And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “**Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.**”

<sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly. [Luke 22:61-62](#) (ESV)

When Jesus turned and looked at Peter, he deserved an “I told you so” look. What he got was the look of “I love you so”. If we're in Christ, He loves us and accepts us no matter what. Even on our worst day, Jesus' look will be one of love, tenderness and compassion. How about you and me? What will our look be when our spouse, or our children, or a close friend messes up? Will it be a look that could kill or the look of love? Because the latter says: "I accept you; I love you."

Whether we'd like to admit it or not, we're a lot like Peter. We like to do things our way; we're like sheep who have gone astray ([Isaiah 53:6](#)). Our lives are a mess; we're prideful; we're weak; we're failures in so many ways. However, the person who is a follower of Christ, just like Peter, has the assurance that in spite of ourselves, Jesus' love and acceptance is always there for us. Indeed for those in Christ, we are accepted in the Beloved to the praise of His glorious grace ([Ephesians 1:6](#)).

### **Conclusion**

Here's some final thoughts. What is the reason for Maundy Thursday? Why is Good Friday good? Why celebrate Easter Sunday? Because God's power was displayed in the grief and sorrow of the cross. The founder of the faith of all those who trust Him endured inexpressible suffering. Yet, all those forgiven, redeemed and accepted in Him are His joy and delight. If that's you, He despised the shame and agony of being forsaken, betrayed and denied for you ([Hebrews 12:2](#)). When Jesus said “It is finished” ([John 19:30](#)), God's rescue mission was accomplished. Hallelujah to Jesus, the Savior! No longer Man of sorrows, but seated in majesty at the right hand of the throne of God.

So, I'd like to end this sermon where it began with [Isaiah 53:3-6](#).

<sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. <sup>4</sup> Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. [Isaiah 53:3-6](#) (ESV)