

Mark 19:32-34

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[0 : 0 0] let's bow briefly before god in prayer hallelujah what a savior the words sum up this great man this great god so well and we feel oh lord our limitations in explaining and expressing the thoughts behind him being what a savior and so it's our prayer now that you would pour out your spirit upon us that as we deal with the things of the word of god the god of the word might be manifest i pray especially for any who are not christians yet today that they might go away from this place saying truly he is an amazing savior but more than that that they might leave saying he's my savior and for every christian lord we know that hymn well it's well loved and familiar and therefore the danger is we sing the words without the meaning deliver us deliver us from the routine and the habit of religion and renewing us the life and vitality of a living faith in christ for jesus sake amen i want to focus in on just three verses from the part of the scripture i read i want to look at verses 32 through to 34 and to do that under the heading jesus awesome or amazing devotion jesus awesome devotion we're all aware that first impressions are important the teenagers amongst us will be told at school you must give a good impression you don't want people to think badly of you the mom and dad will have instructed you to behave yourself when you're in public and even with little children it's true isn't it no matter how young they are they make up their mind whether they're going to like you or not just on first impressions it's that instant look that makes them decide whether they're going to smile or cry first impressions are vital and important what kind of an impression would you have got from the lord jesus christ as he was en route to calvary the passage we've read is only a few days before the actual act of the crucifixion and it's quite clear that mark has included material which are designed to help us understand what was going on in the heart and mind of our lord and how it affected him and so verse 32 tells us that there was something about jesus his demeanor his manner his attitude and his outlook which struck the disciples with astonishment and made other people afraid and then he seeing the fear revealed to them what was going on in his heart and mind he tells them all about his intimate knowledge of what waits for him at calvary but i love how the passage finishes and just in case i don't get there let me underline it on the third day he will rise again the whole gospel is contained within these few lines and they're contained as an expression of the savior's devotion to his work to his god and to his people and that's where we want to go this afternoon who can comprehend such things may it please god just to help us to grasp it afresh or maybe even to see it

for the first time and be encouraged thereby to press on in the mark of our high calling in christ jesus i have three subheadings if you take notes he knew what he was doing he knew every last detail and he knew the outcome he knew what he was doing they were on their way up to jerusalem with jesus leading the way and the disciples were astonished while those who followed were afraid he knew what he was doing i believe if you could have been there in that group and you could have seen the lord jesus you would have been struck immediately by his determination his face is set in a specific direction he's got one goal and one aim in mind and that is to be in jerusalem before the passover that he himself might fulfill the scriptures promises that he would be the lamb of god who takes away the sin of the world he's come into the world for that specific reason and it's his resolve his purpose his commitment to delivering men and women from sin and bondage which is controlling all that he says and he does chapter 10 and verse 45 for even the son of man did not come to be served but to serve and how will he serve he will give his life as a ransom for many to give his life as a ransom for many this is the purpose of jesus whole life we need to underline just before we delve further into this that jesus is a real man real flesh and blood real fears and joys and what we're watching here is a real man facing the contemplation of an awesome event which is to take place a few days later for the salvation of men and women he's here because he chooses to be here in eternity the father son and spirit made the plan that when men fell then the second person of the trinity would take human form and he would come and deliver them from their sin and judgment as with many things it's easy at the planning stage here you are as they say where the rubber hits the road you're right at the very edge of that great act in which he will indeed accomplish a salvation which is able to save to the uttermost everybody that calls on him his whole life has been focused on this when he was born joseph was reassured that mary had done nothing wrong with with a revelation of the name of jesus you shall call his name jesus and why lord will i call his name jesus for he will save his people from their sin he will save and then every step every breath that he took every day that he lived he could be counting down to the day he would meet god on calvary and pay the penalty for the sins of his people i need to underline that for you as i do for myself especially as the years roll on and here we have another good friday it's good to come together it's right to worship god it's right to focus in this but is it possible that we could do so without without entering in to the actual events that what that

are before us they were on their way up to jerusalem and jesus leading the way and the disciples were astonished that's an interesting phrase is it not they were astonished the lord jesus was where he was supposed to be his timing is spot on but the disciples are absolutely overwhelmed by what they see and what they hear can you see the lord of glory leading his disciples the impression or the picture you get from the new testament is that he went ahead of them he was the leader they were the followers he was the shepherd they were the sheep and in the far east the shepherd goes in front of the sheep i'm sure every boy and girl has been told that in sunday school or in reading their bibles they don't go with dogs behind to drive the sheep he's he's leading the sheep but there's a sense in which he seems to be going too far too quick and right into danger but the fact is he's been dealing with danger all the days of his life he's been able to see and to be involved in the effect of sin and the pain that it brings to people his great work will be on calvary but every day of his life was a preparation for it he finds himself rejected by men scorned by his family instead of being embraced as the great leader that he is men and women want rid of him he's seen the power of sin in people's lives he's come face to face with the blind and the lame he's wept with people as they've stood at their gravesides the lord of glory has been feeling the pain all the days of his life way back in the book of isaiah it says that's exactly what he would do 53 in verse 3 he was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering familiar with suffering and it's because he's familiar with suffering that he's determined to be at calvary to pay the penalty for sin and break the power of sin and deliver men and women from suffering we do not have a high priest says the writer of hebrews who is unable to sympathize with our weakness but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are yet without sin he's different he's lived in the real world he's come face to face with the real pains about it at one point it brings tears to his eyes jerusalem jerusalem how often would i have taken you under my wings but instead he has to weep over them doesn't he look 12 and 50 i have a baptism to undergo and how distressed i am have you given any thought to this concept of our lord jesus being distressed by the effect of sin and even by the contemplation of the horror and pain of calvary he didn't find pleasure in pain in fact hebrews 12 2 comes to me with a great freshness as i studied this passage you know the verse it says let us fix our eyes on jesus the author and perfecter of faith but it was the next part that caught my attention who for the joy set before him endured the cross that's an incredible word isn't it he endured the cross true he did it that friday afternoon on calvary

but i want to suggest to you the reason the disciples are astonished they could see the effect of the cross on his life throughout his life they've been with him as the pharisees rejected him they're aware that there were already plans afoot to to trip him up and to trick him and to find some reason to have him executed when his friend lazarus died and the news came and he then heads back to jerusalem to to to to release him from death's power that the disciples say to him in john chapter 11 verse 8 but rabbi the a short while ago the jews tried to stone you and yet you're going back there they knew that if he went to jerusalem there would be a conflict a conflict in which the lord of glory would die and they were astonished astounded they could hardly believe their eyes if he keeps on going like this it will be the end of him i speak like that because i'm persuaded from scriptures that the disciples didn't understand what was really going on until after the resurrection at this point in their lives they're looking at this man that they love and who's shown such love and demonstrated god's power in their midst they're looking at this man taking a dangerous course and one which may well in their minds end in his demise and their dispersion but if they had read back in the book of isaiah they would have heard the servant of the lord in isaiah 50 writing like this because the sovereign lord helps me i will not be disgraced therefore have i set my face like a flint and i know i will not be put to shame i have set my face like a flint let me take you back i believe if we had been able to see jesus on earth we would not only have seen his loveliness and his power and perfection we would have seen something about him which revealed the determination of a man whose face was set like a flint to take on sin to break satan's grasp on humanity and to satisfy the justice of god on behalf of his people it was no casual sail through life it wasn't simply oh what time it is i need to go to calvary today it was a lifetime's work which would have been revealed in his person there are others who are following him there was always the 12 in the larger group and we're told about the larger group it says and while those who followed were afraid they knew something of the history of the jews the conflict that had gone on between the jewish extremists and the roman authorities and what could they see well they only anticipated deep deep trouble they thought there might be new days like there had been in the past under the maccabees when the jews would be slaughtered and there would be a great uprising it's quite clear the disciples themselves really didn't see much beyond their present lives that's why i went on to read what james and john had said in verse 35 they hear jesus going to jerusalem and they assume that somehow he's going to conquer and defeat the romans and that there's a kingdom and there are good jobs to be had in the kingdom

but no the savior is going to calvary and i'd like us to have a fresh look at him right here and now today a fresh look because familiarity distorts reality we take things for granted we take jesus for granted we forget that he's the son of god who loved me and gave himself for me well i'm not suggesting you do it willfully it's the nature of life isn't it you remember folks what it was like when you got married that man or woman was the very centre of your life and your every breath and thought was about them you loved them and they loved you and you basked each other in that relationship how long did that continue the freshness wears off and a wise husband or a wise wife knows that it has to be revitalized continually otherwise it just becomes a formality and before you know what's what you're going different ways if that's what can happen between us as human beings how much more when we have a world who's against the gospel when we have satan who's working against the gospel how much more are we likely to just well become familiar you see god's love for us can never be questioned god demonstrates his own love towards us and while we were still sinners christ died for us god so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish we must never ever doubt god's love for us but is your love for god burning as brightly today as the day when he first revealed his saving grace to you now i know not everybody has a dramatic conversion experience but everybody who's a christian has come to a realization of the wonder of this truth that this great god should look upon me with grace and favor and all i want to do just at this point is to call you back from standing on the sidelines to come into the warmth of his love because my bible tells me when we understand his love for us it begets loving us for him we love him because remember how john writes we love him because he first loved us and as i look at my savior here that's where i am max lucado i've used illustrations from his book before it's called he chose the nails not a book i would give a hundred percent recommendation to but the the theme is fascinating he writes he knew the price of those sins was death he knew the source of this those sins was you and since he couldn't bear the thought of eternity without you he chose the nails and because he couldn't bear the thought of eternity without you he chose the nails he set his face steadfast to go toward jerusalem like flint it took the breath away from the disciples oh god take my breath away today and then rather than being caught up in his own circumstances you know how it works folk if you've got a a big occasion in the week ahead a job interview or you're going somewhere important it starts working in your mind you can't stop thinking about it and before you know what's what you're not sleeping and your whole conversation is taken up with it

[20 : 12] you see the lord of glory had good cause had he not to be just concentrating on himself but he doesn't he talks to his disciples with the purpose of preparing them for what's going to happen he took the twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him we are going up to jerusalem he said and the son of man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law they will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the gentiles who will mock him and spit on him flog him and kill him i'll come back to the last part i hope you notice i left it off but he's very very frank he reveals to them you see that he actually knows every last detail of what's going to happen at calvary there will be no surprises for him and yet he still goes he reveals the source of that confidence in luke's account of this very event he adds another phrase luke chapter 18 in verse 31 we are going up to jerusalem and everything that is written by the prophets about the son of man will be fulfilled everything that is written by the prophets about the son of man what's he talking about the lord of glory is telling his disciples that everything he's doing has already been revealed in scripture and that it's his business to fulfill it and that he will actually fulfill it jesus is walking to jerusalem a real man and a real believer filled with the spirit to give himself as a sacrifice on behalf of his fellow men and women and if these people who are with him are going to understand and cope with and survive the events of calvary they need to understand that what's now taking place is what god has planned and that the lord of glory is embracing it because it's part of his plan to deliver men and women from sin and judgment so he takes the twelve aside may i just pause and point out to you the intimacy of this the revelation of his love towards his own in this that though he's facing what can only be described as an indescribable trauma where satan and men will be given free reign to abuse him yet his concern is for his people john 13 1 it was just before the passover feast jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the father and then it says having loved his own who were in the world he now showed them the full extent of his love now if you know your bible he goes on to wash their feet and then he goes on to teach them about the coming of the holy spirit but surely that night is preparation for what's going to happen in the next few days he showed them the full extent of his love dearly beloved you and i who are

Christians know that the power to live the Christian life is not simply because we've been given a duty and a responsibility we have both of those it really is because we have experienced the love of God in Christ we have come to that point where we know that he not only loved disciples back then but he loves disciples today and he helps us he wants us to know that what happened on that first Good Friday was not an accident but the outworking of a plan we end up asking often in life why why is there so much evil in the world well the answer is a simple three lettered word it's called sin the world outside wants some great profound answer that somebody over there is responsible and the Bible says no you're responsible and the Lord of glory wants us to understand that even though he knows that men and women are responsible for sin and the pain and the suffering that goes on in the world yet

God's love is greater than that this is the third time that the Lord Jesus has taught them this very truth and still it hasn't sunk in when Peter made his great confession that you are the Christ the son of the living God and everybody thought we're going to go from here and triumph and conquer the Lord of glory in Mark chapter 8 begins to teach them that the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders chief priests and teachers of the law and that he must be killed and after three days rise again when he's been up on the mount of transfiguration and there he was with Moses and Elijah and everybody thought well you can imagine it would be an incredible event when he comes down from that mountain he tells them again the son of man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men they will kill him and after three days will rise again what's he saying you see men imagine that things in the future develop just by human intervention and he is making it very clear that the only way that there is to be a future for anybody is for God to tackle the effect of sin and sin itself head on and that this will not be an intellectual discussion between two great doctors of philosophy but that this will be a head to head conflict with Satan while Jesus is bearing the weight of the sins of his people we are going up to

Jerusalem and everything that is written by the prophets about the son of man will be fulfilled what an invitation there is there to go through every page of your old testament page after page frustrating for a preacher not to be able to just go through them all let me just highlight at the very end of the old testament Zechariah 13 7 awake oh sword against my shepherd against the man who is close to me declares the Lord almighty strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered and I will turn my hand against the little ones go back into your old testament read psalm 22 read psalm 69 read Isaiah 53 dip into Daniel chapter 9 and what you find in each of these places is a description of suffering and shame because sin and pain has corrupted

God's world and the people he's made and the only way for it to be resolved is for a perfect sinless one to take the place of the sinner of the only good man to give himself as a ransom for many when he rose from the dead he took the disciples back through the old testament didn't he look chapter 24 it tells us there beginning at Moses and the prophets he explained to them how the whole old testament was about him is that how you read your old testament boys and girls there's some great stories there aren't there great battles great characters great individuals and it's right you should learn all about them but don't miss the real story whether you're looking at Moses or Joshua or Abraham you're looking at a picture of Jesus and he's not just like one of them he's like all of them and you're not reading your bible until you can see that everything that Jesus did was to fulfill those old testament characters prophecies and predictions he's come says Jesus himself to be like

[29 : 18] Jonah to go into the belly not of a whale but the belly of the earth and like Jonah to come forth again he's come to be like the manna that was given to Israel in the wilderness the bread of heaven I am the bread of life he's come to be a great wise king like Solomon oh dear friends if you could see these things you would be overwhelmed by the beauty but he's also come to crush the head of the serpent he's also come to be like Abraham's son who was laid on the altar on the top of Mount Moriah he's specifically come to fulfill everything that's pictured in the books of Leviticus numbers in Deuteronomy and sorry for missing of Exodus about those innocent animals who were taken and slaughtered because people had done wicked things do you ever get your head around that that some poor sheep could be taken and slaughtered because somebody had sinned why would

God allow such things to tell us we need a substitute we need an innocent substitute and there is only one in all history and his name is Jesus you see sin is such an offence to a holy God that in his demand for judgment and for justice there must be an eternal punishment and there's never been a man or a woman who could satisfy God's demand for justice until Jesus Paul writing to the Romans says for if by the trespass of one man death rain through that one man how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness rain in life through the one man Jesus Christ he's come to undo what Adam did he's come to create a new kingdom in which men and women are forgiven and set apart for his glory and he's doing that willingly

John chapter 10 the reason my father loves me is that I lay down my life only to take it up again no one takes it from me but I lay it down of my own accord I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it again this command I receive from my father he knows where he's going he knows what's going to happen to him he knows the power and the effect of it he will indeed be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law the religious establishment should have embraced him but he pointed out that they were sinners and nobody who's religious likes to know that maybe there's somebody like that today you've been living a good life as far as the world is concerned you're committed to attending church you imagine that when you get to the end of your days God will see that you've been serious and he'll say well done tragically that's not the case all our righteous acts are like filthy rags before

God said Isaiah there's none righteous no not one and these religious leaders didn't like to hear it and in the same way men and women today don't like to hear that they're sinners and they rejected him they don't have the power to kill him so what will happen is they will hand him over to the Gentiles and the Roman executioners were cruel for the pleasure of it I don't know if you remember the film that was produced a couple of years ago called The Passion of Christ I can't remember the Australian man who made it you know who I mean Mel Gibson and all the uproar there was in the press at the time I bought a copy but I've never been able to watch it and the reason for that is in that film Mel Gibson focuses in just on the blood and the gore and the pain and the shame and apparently it's a good depiction but like a good

Roman Catholic he misses out the heart of the gospel it's through hell on earth it's that Jesus is God and that going to the cross at Calvary he overcame and triumphed over sin on our behalf they will condemn him to death and hand him over to the Gentiles who will mock him and spit on him flog him and kill him how on earth did he cope with that for the joy that was before him he endured the cross despised the shame he was looking to the outcome he knew what the result would be and therefore he could put up with the horror of what was going to happen to him then dear friends when you look at Jesus death what do you see do you see there the record of his love for men and women who deserve judgment do you see there the picture of the living

[35 : 06] God who has no toleration for sin bearing the sins of many don't be distracted by the blood and the gore real though it was see there that the greatest trauma was on Calvary when the son of God cried out my God my God why have you forsaken me we know the answer from the Bible there was no other way there was no other good enough to bear the price of sin says the hymn writer he only could unlock the gates of heaven you know how it goes on from there and let us hallelujah let us I hope you're included in the us this afternoon I hope you're not simply here because you're nothing better to do and you thought it would be good to be here I hope you're here because you understand Christ died for me and did so willingly and the most horrible death that could be comprehended

Locado writes again Jesus came to the world precisely to die he would not hang on the cross for a few seconds and then get off safely it would not be a matter of a brief agony and intense bravery followed by a cloudburst of adulation he would be taken off the cross a corpse he knew that and yet he came he knew that and yet he came for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross my third point is much shorter than all the rest but it would take up a whole series of sermons I believe they'll be preaching on it here on Sunday morning or somebody will what does it say at the end of the verse three days later he will hallelujah he did rise do you get excited you get these men in front of football set in front of football games on the telly and they're shouting and roaring not just the men she's not here so I can say it my wife is banned from watching football but there are things that really get us worked up aren't there every time I come to this great truth

I say to myself shame on me do I really comprehend what it means that Jesus rose from the dead his long suffering his determination his patience is vindicated and a great historical truth which transforms that horrible Friday into good Friday what was good about what happened this is what was good God's justice was satisfied the price of sin was paid by one who loves his people and on the third day he rose to tell us it was fully accepted Satan was defeated God and men were reconciled the one that the world had despised had conquered and triumphed and these disciples would be empowered by it to become messengers to the world not only was that

Friday a good Friday they have good news you see the gospel is not here to give us advice some people seem to be able to turn it into that don't they they make it a set of rules the gospel is not here to give us good advice the gospel is here as a proclamation the preacher is a herald good news there's full and free forgiveness for every man and woman who will flee to Christ there's a there's a redemption wherein the record of their sins will be blotted out and they will be received by God as children it's not just for the adults boys and girls it's for you I sometimes tell the folks where I preach regularly you're never too young to become a Christian but you can get too old because one day we stop breathing never too young and the sooner you become a

Christian the better because it will save you from a whole wasted existence and if you know that Jesus died in the place of sinners and you know that your heart is a place where mischief works you ever ask yourself why you get into so much trouble well I know you can be an angel sometimes especially when you're sleeping but it's when you're sleeping you're not doing very much is it but as soon as you're up you're into this conflict between mum and dad and brother and sister teacher and everybody else because you're trying to carve your own way through life now that's not entirely wrong or bad but when it's selfish it's sinful and therefore you need to be saved and don't think you're worse than these adults you know what happens to an adult is they just learn how to be clever and covering it up we're all sinful we have in us a principle whereby we're really only interested in number one no matter what we say we care for other people for our own benefit if you think

[41 : 12] I'm being too cynical talk to me afterward the heart is deceitful says my bible and desperately wicked and I'm going to paraphrase it so that none of us will really understand it but God does and what did God do about our hearts he sent his son to die on Calvary a horrible death that you might have a fantastic life now what kind of a fool would leave this place today without Christ if you go through those doors without him as your savior you're back into the misery and on your own Jesus rose from the dead I'm biting my tongue I've gone past my time but there's just so much evidence it's unbelievable sometimes people will say to you well if somebody came back from the dead I would believe and you want to take them and shake them somebody did and he's still alive today and you can come to know him and benefit from them three days later he will rise hallelujah

Easter time is a fantastic time of year a time for great joy and rejoicing Christian is that your kind of Easter truth is we don't need to wait for this one day on the calendar every Sunday is Easter day it was such an exciting thing for the early church that they changed from worshiping God on a Saturday to a Sunday so that they would be the people of the resurrection and that's the message that went out into the world Luke 24 46 he told them this is what is written the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and repent and repentance and forgiveness of sin will be preached in his name to all nations beginning at Jerusalem and here we are in Whitby not the furthest extent of these islands but a good distance from Jerusalem and we are hearing this message we are hearing this truth are you rejoicing today in a

Christ who died for you who paid your penalty and who rose from the dead for your justification as the scriptures say to prove that God had accepted the price he paid and that there is now life and redemption for men forever more it will tell in your life well you'll not always be smiling because life's difficult at times there is a joy that is in the heart because you're in contact with Jesus Jesus and you with nothing in between you've been delivered from sin and judgment by Jesus and you're looking forward to the day when you finally meet him oh dear friends I need to ask you what's your life about Christian if you answer anything else than rejoicing in Jesus Christ you've missed the point all these other things are secondary to him may it be so as you look fresh on Jesus awesome devotion to look at him is to be overwhelmed by God's amazing love and grace amen so now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy to the only God our savior be glory majesty power and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord before all ages now and forever more amen