

- A. We've come to the heart of the Creed and the heart of the Gospel, namely the person and work of Jesus Christ. Concerning Jesus' word, the Creed states, "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried."
1. This section of the Creed focuses in on the Cross of Christ.
 2. The Cross of Christ is both incredibly brutal and incredibly beautiful. So beautiful in fact, that we have taken an instrument of torture and terror and turned it into a piece of jewelry that we proudly wear!
- B. The Trials before Pilate (Matt. 27:1-2; 11-14; 24-26)
1. Appointed Governor of Judea by Tiberius and served in this capacity from 26-36AD.
 2. Pilate was essentially a thug-in-a-toga! Hated by the Jews. Was on shaky ground politically.
 3. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and didn't want to condemn him.
 4. But the Jewish religious leadership played their trump card by saying, "If you release Jesus, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar" (Jn. 19:12).
 - i. Their threat was, 'If you release Jesus, your political career is over.' And that threat carried the day.
- C. The Crucifixion of the King (Matt. 27:27-56)
1. Jesus suffers public shaming (27-31).
 2. Jesus suffers physical torture (32-35).
 3. Jesus suffers emotional humiliation at every level (36-44)
 - i. By the soldiers.
 - ii. By the crowds of people.
 - iii. By the religious leadership.
 - iv. By the two men crucified alongside Jesus.
 4. Jesus suffers spiritual death (45-46)
 5. Jesus suffers material death (50)
- D. What a brutal scene. But outwardly it was not unlike many other deaths at that time. So what makes Jesus' death any different and what gives it meaning and makes it beautiful?

Let me give you four things that are happening at the Cross that makes this brutal scene unbelievably beautiful!

1. *He's absorbing the complete wrath of God for you!*

- i. This is the biblical doctrine of propitiation. Propitiation is the turning away of God's wrath by means of a sacrifice.
- ii. God is a holy and just God and He must deal with sin; He couldn't simply overlook it and still be God. Our sin must be dealt with.
- iii. He takes the whole sin dilemma and turns it inside out and the wrath of God that should have fallen on us, falls on Him in the person of Christ.
 1. He takes our place.
 2. He pays our penalty
 3. He bears our burden.
 4. He carries our shame.
- iv. 1 John 4:10

2. *He's Reconciling Humanity to Himself*

- i. Through the Cross, God is making a way for those who have been His enemies, so those who have disregarded Him, to be restored to Him.
- ii. Jesus reconciles us to God—no matter where you've been or what you've done. I want you to see and to sense that your sin is not beyond the power of the Cross. This is what makes the Cross so beautiful!

3. *He's Creating a People All His Own—the Church.*

- i. He purchases it with His own blood. Acts 20:28
- ii. He draws us through His mercy. 1 Pet. 2:9-10
- iii. He entrusts to them the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:18-21

4. *He's Revealing the Father's Love*

- i. On the Cross, Jesus fully revealed to us the love of God.
- ii. Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10
- iii. Jesus reveals to us the love of God, so that our hearts and our affections would be drawn back to Him.
 1. If you're not a Christian, you need to be drawn into His love.

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2. If you are a Christian, you need to dwell upon the extent of God's love for you revealed in the Cross and then fully rest in what He has done on your behalf.