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He Bore Our Guilt Shame and Disgrace

Isaiah 50:10

Prayer: *Father God, we do thank you and praise you for the privilege that we have of glorifying you. And Father, we just again as we enter into this part of the service where we open up your book, we look for ways to glorify you anew, ways to glorify you in a deeper, more profound way, and Lord, as we learn more of what it is you've done for us, Lord, that is our venue, to do just that. So I pray your Holy Spirit would be here, that you guide us, that you would accompany us on this journey, that you would open up your eyes, and our ears, and our hearts, and our spirits to what you have for us and it may be of permanent value and I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well, we are back to our examination of the servant songs of Isaiah. There are four different -- at least approximately four different Hebrew poems about Jesus the Messiah that was uniquely crafted by God and placed within the Old Testament book of Isaiah. And in these poems, God speaks through and to and about a Jesus who would not be born for centuries yet. And we know Jesus who had

given up his prerogatives as God to enter into human flesh in all likelihood studied these very scriptures in order to learn and in order to grow in his role as the Messiah. Paul tells us in the book of Philippians that God made himself nothing when he left heaven, to take on flesh and to live the life that we live, each one of us. And moment by moment, Jesus chose to make himself nothing by veiling, that is by hiding from his human nature those aspects of his divinity that would have denied him the ability to live that kind of life. So Jesus as a man had to essentially start from scratch. He had to grow in his learning and his understanding of his role as Messiah. I said before, Jesus really could have lived among us as some type of super hero with all of his attributes but then he wouldn't have experienced the life that we live. So as for Jesus, that meant going back to square one and submitting to being instructed, in this case by his Father. This is what we discover in *Isaiah 50:4*, it says: *The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of those who are instructed to know how to sustain the weary with a word. He awakens Me each morning; He awakens My ear to listen like those being instructed.*

See, Jesus the man had tuned his ear to listen to his father's instruction. He did exactly what James exhorts us to do in *James 1:19* where he says: *Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.* And that was never more true than in the

coming darkness that the servant song was pointing Jesus toward. See, the servant song takes a very dark turn in the next verses which say this in *Isaiah 50:5*, it says: *The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious; I did not turn back. I gave My back to those who beat Me, and My cheeks to those who tore out My beard. I did not hide My face from scorn and spitting.*

See, Jesus had to learn that he would encounter only two types of people on this earth, there would be this tiny minority of those who truly loved him and the vast majority of those who hated him without a cause. I said last time Isaiah's servant song tells us that God so loved the world that he gave his back to those who beat him, his cheeks to those who tore out his beard, and he hid not his face from scorn and spitting. Jesus' gift was his willingness to offer himself to a world that saw kindness as weakness, mercy as foolishness, and grace as something insulting enough to be worthy of killing him. That's the world Jesus offered himself to, and that's what makes his gift beyond measure. You see, without Jesus' explicit permission, nobody could have laid a finger on him. And it's only because he willingly submitted to his Father's will that Jesus was able to be sacrificed as the perfect Lamb of God.

Now it's a big mistake to see Jesus merely as the victim of a corrupt religious and political system that arranged a kangaroo

court to convict and execute him. Really nothing could be further from the truth. See, the fact is, Jesus was his own high priest who controlled every single aspect of his own sacrifice including, including the weather. Joni Erikson Tada once pointed out that as Jesus was being interrogated by the religious leaders, he was still controlling the high pressure weather system that brought cool temperatures into that area that night. You see, it was those cool temperatures that caused Peter to be standing around a fire defending himself from these accusations that he knew this Christ. We remember that it was Peter who bragged that he would never leave Jesus, and Jesus' response to him was to tell him that he would soon deny him three times. The Bible describes Peter repeatedly doing exactly what Christ said he would do, denying he knew Jesus. And Jesus seemingly under the control of the interrogators actually controlling through them his access to Peter. Listen to how *Luke 22* describes it, it says this, it says: *Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." And after an interval of about an*

hour, still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man was with him, for he too is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was speaking, the rooster crowed. 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." And he went out and wept bitterly.

See the back story to this is that not only did Jesus predict Peter's behavior that night, he also happened to be in the exact place at the exact time so that in spite of the brutal treatment he was experiencing, he managed to lock eyes with Peter the moment he was denying him for the third time. Verse 61 says: *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." And he went out and wept bitterly.*

Peter was haunted by his betrayal of his Lord and Savior. I mean, imagine him cursing and looking right up into the eyes of his Savior. It's what makes Jesus' post resurrection meeting with Peter such an example of forgiveness, and that forgiveness and restoration created in Peter a broken servant's heart that would guide him for the rest of his life. You see, none of that happened by chance. All of it happened by Jesus' explicit permission, and that's why you could say in this servant song that we're looking

at: *I gave My back to those who beat Me and My cheeks to those who tore out My beard. I did not hide My face from scorn and spitting.* Jesus voluntarily gave himself over to be crucified. I mean, he gave himself to that form of physical torment that was so hideous as to become the standard of what physical torture is all about. You know we describe extremes of pain as "excruciating." And most of you know the word literally means "from the cross," excruciate. It's because there on the cross, previously unimagined physical torment had been perfected. But again, physical pain was not really the source of the horror of the cross for Jesus. Any discussion on the physical pain of the cross has got to recognize that it was a form of capital punishment and it applied itself to literally thousands of people. In other words, there was nothing really that unusual or outstanding about the physical horror of the cross. Jesus saw what he had to do physically and he was willing to do it. It was in the other areas that the servant song begins to get into next that we see a separation of the common torture of the cross from the unique torment that Jesus underwent for you and me.

The servant goes on to say this in *Isaiah 50:7-11*, it says: *But the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. He who vindicates me is near. Who will*

contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up."

Here's what the servant is facing, the servant is staring straight into the greatest disgrace the King of the universe could ever imagine. His own creation that was created and designed to offer him worship is now extending to him the exact opposite. *Revelation 4:11* says: *"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."* Now, the very peak of his own creation, the crown of his creation is prophetically seen at the height of their rebellion, and instead of glory, honor and power which the King is entitled to, he is to receive guilt and shame and disgrace. Now, the shame and the disgrace of the cross was self-evident from the beatings and in the floggings and in the mocking that Jesus had to endure. Here's the king reserved to a fate usually reserved to common criminals. And that all came under the heading of physical disgrace and shame. But we add to that. One of the details of psychological and spiritual shame that we seldom discuss, perhaps because of the shame, and that's the great likelihood that Jesus was crucified naked. You see, from the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, nakedness has always been associated

with shame, it's always been associated with disgrace, and with vulnerability. In *Genesis 3:7* after Adam and Eve fall we have: *Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.* You know, being naked in front of a crowd is the stuff of which nightmares are made. Being stripped naked and put on display in front of a mocking crowd who are delighting in your suffering is precisely what Jesus is facing.

You know, we all know the image that we've seen for centuries, whether it's been in paintings or in sculptures, or whether it's simply a concession to common decency, I don't know, but Jesus is always portrayed on the cross as having a loincloth. There's nothing to suggest that that was the case. In fact there's a great deal to suggest that that wasn't the case. You see, the only thing that would have stopped Jesus from being crucified naked would have been the sensibility of the Jews towards the incredible shame of nakedness even among those who were being condemned. But there's nothing in scripture that even suggests that the Romans gave a fig about Jewish sensibility. I mean, we know for a fact that the Jews were outraged at the title that Pilate gave to Jesus as he hung on the cross. *John 19* says this, it says: *There they crucified him, and with two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read*

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." You see, you have to remember also that Pilate was furious with the Jews for having forced his hand with regard to Jesus. What better way to get back at them than to display Jesus as shamelessly as he could, along with a sign saying, hey, Jesus of Nazareth, your king.

We also know that the soldiers took great delight in increasing the shame of every phase of Jesus' punishment. Luke 23:11 says: *And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.* Given the delight that they took in mocking Jesus, do you really think there's anyone in that crowd tormenting him that cared the slightest bit about the shame that his nakedness would bring? All the evidence points to them delighting in adding to his shame by whatever means they could. Add to this what the scripture says in John 19:23, it says this, it says: *When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic*

was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things.

Now the term "tunic" here refers to a technical Greek term for an undergarment, it was called a "chiton." The fact that the soldiers had taken it because it was unique, it was woven of one piece, the fact that they were casting lots for it strongly points to the fact that Jesus was hanging on the cross naked. The shame of it defies comprehension. I mean, imagine a similar treatment being meted out to a president or to a pope? But this wasn't a president and this wasn't a pope. This was God himself. This was God laying down his life for us. And so the next time you're starting to wonder about does God really love me and what kind of love does God have, consider how much you were loved by a God willing to be stripped naked to save you.

Disgrace and shame and guilt were the essence of what the cross was all about. But here's the problem. The servant in the servant song rejects them all. I mean he says in verse 7: *Therefore I have not been disgraced; he says: Therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.* In

verse 9, he says: *Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty?* Well, here then is the question: How can this Jesus, this suffering servant who suffers infinite disgrace, shame, and guilt on the cross, how can he deny it all? Particularly since *Hebrews 2:12* affirms it specifically, it says this, it says: *Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

So we ask how can Jesus say, "I have not been disgraced" when the King of the universe is splayed out in front of the entire universe beaten, bloodied, and probably naked? How can he say, "I shall not be put to shame" when his enemies have triumphed, when his friends have deserted him, when his disciples have all scattered like sheep without a shepherd? When his own father with whom he's had intimate fellowship for all time is forced by his holiness, by his absolute perfection to abandon him for the wickedness of the sin he has become? And make no mistake about it, scripture declares that Jesus was not just nobly shouldering the burden of our sin. He wasn't just coming to the cross bearing our sins with him, he was coming to the cross having become our sin. *2 Corinthians 5:21* says: *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* You see, Jesus didn't come to the cross separately bearing with him the sin of

lying; he came as the lie itself. He didn't come just to bear the sin of lust; he came as the physical embodiment of all the lusting that had ever been done by his sheep from Adam until the last one of us breathes our last. The same was true of pornography, of drug addiction, brutality, wife beating, jealousy, envy, and the countless other sins that he had willingly become in order to rescue us from ourselves. He became our sacrifice. You see, in the Old Testament, the high priest, he had to place his hand over the sacrificial lamb in order to quantify and objectify the sin that would then be placed on the head of that animal. Jesus was the Lamb of God, and all the sin that you and I would ever create was objectified, quantified, and placed on his spotless head in such a way that God would look at him as at sin itself. There on the cross God saw in Jesus the collective evil of all of his sheep looking backwards to Adam and forwards to the day of judgment, and there God attacked the evil that sin had stored up for thousands of years looking backwards and who knows how many years going forward by punishing the one who had become sin on the cross. God's wrath instead of spilling out individually on the heads of the guilty one was objectified, quantified, and then placed on the head of Jesus.

So then we ask, how can Jesus ask in the servant song, "Who will declare me guilty," I mean, when his purpose in going to the cross was to be a guilt offering to redeem and ransom his sheep? How can

he say in the servant song, "I have not been disgraced and I shall not be put to shame," when shame and disgrace were the hallmarks of what he endured?

Well, for the answer to that, let me turn to something very prosaic. Let me go from the heights pretty much down to ground level. Something very common. Let me turn to one of my own personal weaknesses, and that's NFL football. You see, I had the sad fate this year of rooting for the Giants. I've had that same sad fate every year but as most of you know, it was a terrible year for the Giants. But one of the things football fans do it if they can't watch the game, they set their DVR and they record the game and they watch it later. Now, how you do this depends a lot on your own personality and what type of fan you are. I mean, I know people who tape the game, and then they wait sometimes even for days never finding out who won or who lost just so they can enjoy the drama unfolding as they watch the game. I'm not like that at all. You see, I tape a game and then I want to know instantly in the end who won and who lost because I want to know ahead of time, if my team lost, I'm not wasting my time watching them. You see, because here's how it works. If I see a spectacular play and everybody's jumping up and down and they're all celebrating and I know in the back of my mind we lost anyway, I don't see the point of watching it. No matter how good it looks temporarily, I figure

ultimately my team's going to lose, so why, what's the point?

A VOICE: You haven't watched any football.

No, I've watched quite a bit of it I must say. And similarly, I know if my team has won, if I know that they've won, I can see all kinds of terrible things happen on the field, I can see these miscues, I can see fumbles and interceptions, and as I'm watching it in the back of my mind I can know, well, it doesn't matter because in the end we win. Well, what does that have to do with Jesus' attitude in the servant song? How does this relate to Jesus seeing no disgrace, no shame, and no guilt on the cross? Well, the answer is actually very simple. Jesus has seen the tape. He looked right through the shame and the guilt and the disgrace to an empty tomb and he knows he's won. He can look at the disgrace even of being crucified naked, he can see the shame of being mocked, spit on, and beaten, he could know that he took on the collective guilt of all of his sheep, and that by perfectly executing his role as sacrifice and sacrificer, he would rise triumphant from the grave, having dealt a final blow to the guilt that held us all prisoners by taking our sins with him to death. *Colossians 2:13* says: *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of*

debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

You see, God is very clear here about how this debt was canceled. You know, God cannot just declare by divine fiat, "Okay, your sins are now forgiven." You see, if he had done that, he would have been all powerful but he would not have been all just, because justice demands that sin be paid for. And God makes it clear that the wages of sin is death. He set that penalty aside the only way he could, by taking it on himself, by nailing it to the cross. And his enemies considered the cross to be the ultimate in guilt, in shame and disgrace and they reveled in what they thought was their ultimate victory. They never realized that Christ would use against them their own weapons. You see, by dying in our place, he not only denied the accuser his right to us, but by rising from the grave, he demonstrated the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, love over hatred, and truth over lies. That's why the next verse says: *He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.* That's why he's able to say prophetically in his servant song in Isaiah 50, he says: *But the Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my*

adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

Jesus continues the servant song by calling on us to put our trust in him. He says: Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who equip yourselves with burning torches! Walk by the light of your fire, and by the torches that you have kindled! This you have from my hand: You shall lie down in torment. You see, the servant speaks next: To the darkness that surrounds us all, to the choices that we make to deal with that darkness, and the consequences of those choices. See, every one of us has to choose light or darkness. Jesus said in John 8:12: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." That's our choice. You can trust in the light of Christ to lead you out of the darkness or you can attempt to defeat the darkness by the light of your own fire. The problem is is the darkness seldom identifies itself as the darkness. I mean in almost always just masquerades as the light.

You know, it's been said many, many times the battle of the ages is

never between good and evil but between different ideas of what is good. We just saw that played out in these Duck Dynasty controversies. You see, both sides took their positions and then labeled the other side as the darkness. We had advocacy groups and television pundits describe Phil Robertson's comments on homosexuality as vile and bigoted. On the other side we had Robinson's defenders who saw his statement as a long overdue counterattack in the culture wars. Let me say right here, right now, 'cause I mentioned this before last week, I'm not a huge fan of the Duck Dynasty show. I've tried to watch it a couple times. I don't get it. I just -- it just goes over my head. I don't -- but let me tell you what I did get, and I mentioned this last week. You see, in the midst of the clamor over what is true and what is false, what is light and what is dark, lies one very critical fact about this controversy, and that is that Phil Robertson was essentially paraphrasing from Paul's letter to the church of Rome in Corinth. And so if you have a complaint with the substance of his remarks, you're probably going to have a complaint with the author of those remarks and with God as well. And whether or not I'm a fan of his show, I love and admire the courage of Phil Robertson to say what he said right into the teeth of Hollywood's darkness. You see, the servant warns us that embracing that darkness has dire consequences: *Walk by the light of your fire, and by the torches that you have kindled! This you have from my*

hand: You shall lie down in torment. That's not good news.

You see, for so many years now we've been presented with a gospel that is so long on good news and so short on bad. So much so that so many people feel that there is no bad news, and God help you if you should suggest that there is. The bad news of the gospel is truly very, very bad. But it's not something that you hear very often. You know, I've heard it -- if I've heard it once, I've heard it a thousand times, no matter what the status of the person at the time of his death, might have been a mass murderer, the head of a drug cartel, or a leading atheist, it doesn't matter, we are always told at the moment of his death, "Well, at least he's at peace now." That's darkness masquerading as light. No one wants to say if someone who's just passed away what the servant said: *You shall lie down in torment.* But God is unequivocal that there are consequence to bad life decisions, and the worst of all bad decisions is the decision to spurn the grace of God. Listen to what *Hebrews 10:29* says: *How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people."* It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Now I don't have the time right now to go into a lengthy discussion of hell and it's horrors, but understand, I think most of you have heard the fact that Jesus spoke far more about hell than he did about heaven. Tim Keller says this, he says: "Jesus constantly depicted hell as painful fire and outer darkness, a place of unimaginably terrible misery and unhappiness. If Jesus, the Lord of Love and Author of Grace spoke about hell more often, and in a more -- in a more vivid, blood-curdling manner than anyone else, it must be a crucial truth." We live in a time when the idea of a literal hell is considered laughable. Popular evangelical authors write best selling books that tell us that hell is a myth of bygone days before. But Jesus didn't mince words. This is what Jesus said in *Matthew 10:28*, he said: *"Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."* See, the reason why understanding the doctrine of hell is so critical is simply because the awful reality is that hell awaits every single person who does not have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. You know, we may try to encourage ourselves into thinking that God will never punish an innocent person with hell, and that is absolutely true. But God also says there's no such thing as an innocent person. Every single one of us is born shaking our fist at God. Those who've never heard of Christ will never be condemned for rejecting a

Christ they never heard of; however they will be condemned for rejecting the evidence of God's power and nature that he has placed before every single one of us. Romans 1:18 says this, it says: *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.* See, understand the doctrine of hell and you understand that most of this world is on a slow march off an eternal cliff, and they don't realize it because out of sighting is literally out of mind. And nobody understands that better than the one who reigns in hell himself and that is the devil himself. He knows all too well what Jesus said in Matthew 7:13, he said this, he said: *"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."* You see, our minds, our hearts, and our souls should be gripped with this awful truth and it should drive us to share our faith, but I hate to say this, it seldom does.

Penn Jillette, have you ever heard of Penn & Teller, the magicians,

very famous? Penn Jillette is a very famous half of a duo known as Penn and Teller, they're well known magicians, they work out of Las Vegas, they're on TV all the time. Penn Jillette has established himself as a leading atheist thinker. He's interviewed Richard Dawkins and other prominent atheists, he's been on numerous television shows sharing his absolute certainty that there is no God. And he also publishes a number of You Tube videos in which he goes into his philosophy, and I came across one of those a few years ago, and I was so moved by it that I showed it to my Wednesday night class. And I wanted to explain to you why this atheist has something very powerful to say about sharing the gospel, but then I thought, why not let him speak to you in his own words? So I want to cue the video right now. This is a five-minute video by Penn Jillette. I think you'll understand why. It's kind of self-explanatory. (Video playing)

There's a reason why I played this video. You see, I wanted you to hear this message not from a preacher but from an atheist. You see, we've been given the ultimate privilege of sharing the gospel, and along with that comes this ultimate responsibility. It's our job to tell folks there's a truck bearing down on you, and there's a certain point where love demands that you risk the social awkwardness like he said of tackling them. You see, this businessman took that risk. You know, Mr. Jillette says: "This

guy was a really good guy. He was polite and honest and sane and he cared enough about me to proselytize and give me a Bible." He said, "Now I know there's no God, and one polite person living his life right doesn't change that, but I tell ya, this was a very, very, very good man!" You see in that video how moved this guy was, this big, smart sophisticated atheist, and he's moved. I mean, he may not have understood the gospel but he clearly grasped the love that sought to present that gospel to him. And the businessman, God bless him, he understood how high the stakes were, he was willing to take the social risk of sharing the gospel.

And here's my question. Are we willing to take that risk? I mean, he did it for a complete stranger. I'm asking the question are we willing to share the gospel with those that we know and love who we also know are hell bound as well? See, hell is so bad and God is so good that Jesus was willing to suffer the ultimate in guilt and shame and disgrace to rescue us from it. He could stare at the cross and say like he said in his servant song: *Therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty?* Because like I said, he had already seen the tape, not just the tape but the entire future itself. And he had determined not just to nail our guilt, our shame, and our disgrace to the cross, but to triumph over them all

by raising from the dead. He triumphed over the prince of this world because by dying in our place, he was able to pay the price of hell itself for every single one of his sheep. And when he rose from the dead three days later, he had taken the very guilt, shame, and disgrace and made it a source of praise, honor, and glory that will never end. Again, *Colossians 2:15* says it best, it says this: *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands, this he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.* That's the best news human ears will ever hear. Let's go find someone to tell it to. Let's pray.

Father God, we do praise you and thank you for the gift of your Son. It's incomprehensible and it's hideous to even imagine the idea of you being crucified naked, but it's likely that that's what took place, and it's incredible that you would be willing to go that far for us. Oh, how He loves us. Father, what a privilege we have been given. What an incredible responsibility to know that people are marching right off an eternal cliff. The truck is bearing down on them. Give us the grace, give us the wherewithal, give us the will to risk the social sanction of giving them the

gospel, I pray in Jesus' Christ. Amen.