

The Nails of the Cross

Lesson Text: **John 20:24-29**

INTRODUCTION:

A. Lesson Text: **John 20:24-29**

24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

B. While nails are mentioned at least nine times in the Bible, John 20:25 is the only reference to them in the life of Christ.

1. Growing up around a carpenter's shop, no doubt, Jesus well understood the normal use of nails.
2. Nails were used to hold things together.
3. Must have been crude and ugly. Not smooth like those we purchase and use today.

C. Our text referred to the nails used to crucify Christ.

1. Roman nail . **ILLUSTRATION:** Display a replica of a Roman nail.
2. Man used three nails to hold Christ on the cross.
 - a. One through His right hand.
 - b. One through his left hand.
 - c. One through His feet.
3. The pain and agony of nail Christ to the cross must have been unbearable.

D. May I suggest that there is something more important about these nails.

Those three nails did more than nail Christ to the cross:

1. They nailed down the **FAITHFULNESS OF GOD**.
2. The nailed close the **DOOR OF JUDAISM**

3. They nailed together **CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH**.
4. They nailed together the **BLOOD AND BAPTISM**.
5. They nailed closed **EVERY OTHER WAY**.
6. They nailed down the **LOVE OF GOD**.

THEY NAILED DOWN THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

A. The Bible shows the complete ability and dependability of God.

1. **2 Corinthians 1:20** - For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.
2. **Romans 4:21** - And being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.
3. **Ephesians 3:20** - Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.
4. **Philippians 3:21** — who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body,
according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.
5. **Hebrews 11:11** - By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.
6. **Titus 1:2** - in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began."
7. **Hebrews 6:18** - That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

B. Consider the difficulties:

1. 4,000 years of time was involved.
2. The right tribe and family.
3. Wars, famines, captivities, slavery, apostasy after apostasy.
4. A remnant spared.
5. Christ came into this world in Bethlehem.
6. Then, true to His Word, the death of God's only begotten Son on the cross at Calvary.
 - a. **Romans 8:32** - He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?
 - b. **Galatians 4:4-5** - But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law
To redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

C. While it is true that God will carry out all His promises, it is equally true that he will carry out all his threats.

1. **John 3:16** - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
 2. **John 8:24** - "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."
 3. **Matthew 10:32-33** - "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.
"But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."
 4. **Mark 16:16** - He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
 5. **Revelation 2:10** - ". . . Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."
 6. **Hebrews 10:26-27** - For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.
 7. **Matthew 25:46** And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
- D. Thus, the nails of the cross nailed down the fact that God will keep His promises, even at the cost of His Son's death on the cruel cross of Calvary.

THEY NAILED CLOSED THE DOOR OF JUDAISM.

- A. We are not under the Old Testament system.
1. **Colossians 2:14** - Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.
 - a. Handwriting wiped off a black board or marker board, is no longer there. If it is still there, then it hasn't been wiped off.
 - b. A spot on a window or a mirror that is wiped off means it isn't there anymore. If it is still there, then it hasn't been wiped off. I believe you see the point Paul is making.
 - c. A law that God has wiped out is a law that is no longer there.
 2. **Hebrews 9:15** - And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance
- B. The Old Law served only as a schoolmaster, looking forward to the coming Seed. But having accomplished that, it was cast out with its system of bondage.

1. **Galatians 3:19** - What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.
 - a. The Old Law was added to make man aware of His sins.
 - b. The Old Law was added to make man aware of his need for A Savior— The Messiah.
 - c. The Old Law was added until the Seed (Christ) should come and provide God's salvation. Now that the See (Christ) has come, it is no longer needed. The "till" established its duration.
 - d. Jesus Christ did exactly that.
- C. Nailed shut are the requirements of the law.
 - a. Nailed shut are the law's requirements of the priesthood.
 - b. Nailed shut are the law's requirements of burning incense.
 - c. Nailed shut are the law's requirements of Sabbath keeping.
 - d. Nailed shut are the law's allowing instrumental music.
- D. To try to return to that system is to fall from the grace of God. **Galatians 5:4** - You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
 - a. Trying to practice things under the law now done away with results in two major predicaments.
 1. "Estranged from cross" Estranged means -
 - a. "To alienate the affections"
 - b. "To make hostile or unsympathetic"
 - c. "To remove a customary place or relation."
 2. "Fallen from God's grace." Fallen from God's "unmerited favor."

THEY NAILED TOGETHER CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

- A. Attitudes concerning the church:
 1. "The church is not essential in one's salvation."
 2. "You can join the church of your choice."
 3. "Church membership is optional for the saved."
- B. The nails were driven to purchase the church.
 1. **Acts 20:28** - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
 2. **Ephesians 5:25** - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.
 - a. Christ "loved" the church.
 - b. Christ "gave Himself for her."
- C. Some will:
 1. Some will forsake the church.
 2. Some will resent the church.

3. Some will ignore the church.
 4. Some will divide the church.
- D. The church and Christ are as much a unit as husband and wife, joined together by the nails of the cross. **Ephesians 5:31-32** - "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."
 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

THEY NAILED TOGETHER THE BLOOD AND BAPTISM

- A. Friends, it is only through the blood OF CHRIST that we have redemption IN CHRIST.
1. **Revelation 7:13-14** - Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"
 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
 2. **1 Peter 1:18-19** - knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
 3. **1 John 1:7** - But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- B. Three facts that show beyond question the relationship between baptism and blood.
1. The Bible says we are washed from our sins in His blood. **Revelation 1:5** - And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.
 2. But the Bible also says we are washed from our sins in baptism. **Acts 22:16** - And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
 3. It is through the blood that we have remission of sins. **Matthew 26:28** - For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
 4. But it is through baptism that we have remission of sins. **Acts 2:38** - Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

5. It was in Christ's death that His blood was shed. **John 19:34** - But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.
6. But we are baptized into His death. **Romans 6:3-4** - Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

C. The nails of the cross have joined baptism and the blood of Christ. Man cannot draw out these nails by removing baptism from God's plan for salvation.

1. **Mark 16:16** - He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
2. **1 Peter 3:21** - The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

THEY NAILED CLOSED EVERY OTHER WAY

- A. A hymn says, "I must needs go home by the way of the cross, there's no other way but this." This is indeed true.
 1. **John 14:6** - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
 2. **Acts 4:12** - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
- B. People will say that there are many ways of salvation. The Bible reveals only one door. **John 10:1** - Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
- C. The Bible emphasizes the designation of one in **Ephesians 4:4-6** - There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism;
One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

THEY NAILED DOWN THE LOVE OF GOD

- A. **Romans 5:8-9** - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
- B. Many things seem to hide the love of God from us.
 1. Sin may seem to hid the love of God from us - but it really shouldn't.

2. Sickness may seem to hide the love of God from us — but it really shouldn't.
 3. Pain may seem to hide the love of God from us — but it really shouldn't.
 4. Unkindness may seem to hide the love of God from us — but it really shouldn't.
 5. Grief may seem to hide the love of God from us — but it really shouldn't.
- C. But look at the nails!
1. Consider Jesus' cry for help in the garden.
 - a. **Matthew 26:29** - He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."
 - b. Yet, God made the choice of love.
 2. Consider the pitiful cry from the cross.
 - a. **Matthew 26:39** - And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
 - b. Yes, God made the choice of love.
- D. **Hebrews 13:5** - ". . . For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." • This fact has been nailed down by the nails of the cross.

CONCLUSION:

A. A great hymn says:

When I survey the wondrous cross, On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, his hands, his feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled
down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.

B. Poem: *The Three Crosses* by Helen Franzee Bower

Three crosses on a lonely hill.
A thief on either side.
And in between, the Son of God . . .

How wide the gulf - how wide!

Yet one thief spanned it with the words,
Oh Lord, remember me";
The other scoffed and turned aside
To lost eternity.

Forsaken is the hilltop now.
And all the crosses gone.
But in believing hearts of men
The center cross lives on.

And still, as when these sentinels
First met earth's wondering view,
The presence of the Lord divides—
Upon which side are you?

C. The nails of Christ did more than nail Christ to the cross.

1. They nailed down the **FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.**
2. They nailed closed the **DOOR OF JUDAISM.**
3. They nailed together **CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.**
4. They nailed together the **BLOOD AND BAPTISM.**
5. They nailed closed **EVERY OTHER WAY.**
6. They nailed down the **LOVE OF GOD.**

D. Are they enough to nail down

1. Your conviction?
2. Your conversion?
3. Your commitment?

E. **God's Plan for man's Salvation**

