

Easter Week Preview: What Christ's Agony in the Garden Teaches About Him, About Us

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HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Easter Week Preview: What Christ's Agony In The Garden Teaches About Him and About Us. Pastor Travis Allen joins us today on The Christian Worldview Radio program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a non-profit listener-supported radio ministry. Our website is TheChristianWorldview.org, and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program. As always, thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support in lifting us up in prayer.

There are lots of things that draw our time and thoughts away from, far and away, the most important person and event in history, Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection, which took place nearly 2000 years ago in Jerusalem. Jesus Christ, the son of God, came from heaven, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life with the whole purpose of offering Himself on the cross to pay the death penalty for man's sin against His Father.

Why would He do this? Here's why. Romans 5:8 says, "God demonstrates his own love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Consider Jesus. In the days leading to His death on the cross, He knew when, where, and how He was going to suffer and die. Above all, He knew that His own Father would be pouring out His just wrath in justice on Him the innocent one, for all the sins of all who would believe.

The Gospel of Luke describes Jesus' state on the night of His arrest as He was in the Garden of Gethsemane. Quote, "Being in agony, He was praying very fervently, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground." That's Luke 22:44. Agony, praying fervently, sweating blood? What? Didn't Jesus just run through this unruffled, like some superhero? No, He didn't. His agony and His actions before His atoning death teach us a great deal about who He is and who His followers are called to be.

Our guest today is Travis Allen. Travis served our country in the US Navy as a member of the SEAL teams and is now the pastor of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado. Travis gave a recent sermon series on the agony in the garden, explaining the deep suffering of Christ in the hours before He would bear His Father's wrath for our sin on the cross.

We hope that this program, leading into Easter Week, along with the April issue of The Christian Worldview Journal, which is scheduled to arrive this week, will help our hearts and minds more deeply appreciate and

worship Christ for who He is, the son of God and only Savior of mankind. Let's get to the interview with Pastor Travis Allen.

Travis, it's so good to have you back on The Christian Worldview radio program. As we head into this Easter Week, could you just give us first a brief chronology of what took place this week leading up to Christ's death on Friday and His resurrection on Sunday, starting with, let's say, Palm Sunday?

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

First of all, David, really good to be back on the program and to have this opportunity with you. It's always good to reconnect our friendship, and appreciate all you do. Everything that's going on with your new *Journal* that's come out, that's really cool to see. I'm just thankful to see what the Lord's doing with your ministry.

If I go back biblically, I think about this Passion Week starting, is Jesus came from Jericho up to Jerusalem. When He came into the vicinity of Jerusalem, He actually went over to Bethany, where the family, Lazarus, Mary, Martha ... That's where they live. These issues of chronology with the Passion Week are debated, and different views and things, but here's what I've come to in my study.

That He arrived there probably on Friday of the previous week into the vicinity of Bethany, and either that night, Friday night or the next day, they had a meal at the house of Simon, the former Pharisee. There was the anointing of Mary that's recorded in John, Chapter 12. Probably spent that Sabbath day there in Bethany with Mary, Martha, Lazarus.

It was the next day, then, Palm Sunday, that would be the Triumphal Entry, when He entered into Jerusalem. Luke 19 records that, where He enters on the foal of a donkey. He went directly to the Temple. There was a Temple cleansing at the beginning of His ministry, which was recorded in John, Chapter 2. Basically business was right back to where it had been, hustling, bustling, buying, selling. It was cacophony, and it was not fit for purpose. It was not being used the way it was supposed to be used as a house of prayer for all the nations.

Then went back to Bethany. The next day, Monday, He comes in and cleanses the Temple. That happened on that Monday, recorded in several places in the Gospels, and drove out the buyers and the sellers.

The next day, He goes back to teach, to heal. He's doing that, obviously, right under the nose of the chief priests and the scribes who were all there attending to the Temple. They don't like that. He's obviously flexed authoritative muscles that they don't think He has a right to flex, so they come in and challenge Him. Luke, Chapter 20 records a whole series of challenges coming from various parties saying, "Who gave you the authority? Where did you get this kind of authority, and who gave it to you? What right do you have to be here? What right do you have to cleanse this Temple?"

That happens probably on Tuesday. As He leaves after that day, He goes over to the Mount of Olives, and that's where He's staying. He's not staying in Bethany. He's actually camping out with the disciples on the

Mount of Olives, across from the Temple complex, so He can see Jerusalem over there to the west. He's to the east.

That evening, as Luke 21 records and Matthew 24 and 25 record, it's the Olivet Discourse. When He predicts the fall of Jerusalem is going to be right there in Luke, Chapter 21, but also signs of the end and His second coming. He puts all this in a very broad perspective, and orders events for the disciples that night on the Mount of Olives.

The next day, He's back to the temple, teaching, healing, doing what He does. Then, on the Thursday, Luke 22 records preparation for the Passover. That's when Judas goes to confer with the chief priests and their people to betray Jesus to them. Then, while that's going on, in the meantime, Jesus is sending two of His disciples to go prepare them for the Passover. They go do preparation for the Passover.

The Galileans celebrated the Passover on the Thursday night. Then the Judean Passover was on the Friday. They prepare for the Passover, and then celebrate the Passover, and then leave the Passover.

The upper room is most likely the home of John Mark. John Mark grew up in that home. It's his father's residence, and that's where the Passover takes place. When Judas takes the chief priests and the officers of the Temple, like the Temple guard, to go find Jesus, that's probably where they go first. Then they go down to the Garden of Gethsemane where they found Jesus and His disciples there, as He was there, agony in the garden and praying.

Then they arrest Him probably late that night, probably even in the wee hours of Friday morning. Then the time before Annas and then Caiaphas, and then the gathered Sanhedrin. That all takes place. The religious trials, you could say, of Jesus happened then. They confer, come to their conclusion, and say, "Yes, He deserves death."

Early that morning, they take Him right over to Pilate. Pilate is obviously prepared for all this, because Judas and his agreement to betray Jesus, and they had to go directly over. In the early part of Luke 22, they had to go directly over to the Antonia Fortress and secure detachment, a cohort from the Romans of soldiers with arrest authority. Pilate's aware of all this.

Friday morning, the Sanhedrin brings Jesus over to Pilate, and the trial before Pilate. The hearing before Herod, back to Pilate, crucifixion happens very, very quickly. All this is moving very, very quickly, and for a Friday crucifixion. Then the Sabbath begins after that for the Jews.

He's entombed on Saturday. He rises from the dead and victory over the grave on Sunday morning. According to the way I think about it, and the way I see it, that's an April 3rd crucifixion. April 5th would've been ... 33 AD, that would've been His resurrection day.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

The journey to the cross didn't start just when Jesus was born, during the early part of His time and when He was born in Bethlehem. This journey to the cross for Jesus began thousands of years before this, really in the early chapters of Genesis. Travis, what is it about those chapters that are so important to understand as it relates to man's sinfulness and the need for Christ's death, and then His resurrection as well?

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

Just as I hear you describe that, David, I'm struck once again of just the magnitude of the scope and the arc of history, and how the brilliant mind of Christ ... In how He's thinking about not just this massive sweep starting from creation, and fall, and then redemption, and then consummation, the narrative arc of all of Scripture, He's also thinking about details like individual men that He loves and cares for. He's thinking about personalities. He's thinking about preparing His disciples.

On the night that He was betrayed, He tells his disciples in Luke 22, "I have earnestly desired to share this Passover with you before I suffer." He longs for the fellowship, and the friendship, and the companionship of His men. When Judas leaves the Passover meal to go and arrange with the chief priests and the scribes to come and arrest Him, He betrays him to them, Jesus continues on preparing His disciples for what's about to come.

He's got so many little details on His mind. He's got the big picture in mind, a macro picture, but also the micro picture with every individual, every circumstance, and He's got it all under control. There's just an incredible scope there.

In the early chapters of Genesis, we see not only the creation of the heavens and the earth and how that happened, but He creates mankind in His own image to be image bearers. To be an image bearer means to be in covenant relationship with God. Every order of God involves man joining God in creating with procreation, and then filling the earth, and then exercising dominion over the earth.

We join in with God to be ... I hesitate to say co-regents, but I'd say God being the sovereign and us being His regents on the earth, to fill the earth with His image. His image bearing means being in a relationship with Him, being in a relationship with one another, caring for the earth, caring for its creatures, taking the garden and extending that throughout all the earth. The order, the beauty, the design.

But then we see the fall, where Adam and Eve ... Just this inexplicable sin against God. This treason, that original treason. When I think about Judas Iscariot, his betrayal of Christ, I can't help but go back all the way to the very beginning and see this treachery against our great God that Adam committed.

In 1 Timothy 2, it says that the woman being deceived fell into transgression, but Adam ... he was not deceived at all. he sinned a high-handed sin against his creator. he said, "I know all that you've done. You've brought me into existence. You've given me this beautiful earth, garden, filled it with delight. You've given me

this warning about the tree. Then you've given me this beautiful wife, my compliment, my helpmate in every single way. My life is satisfied. I'm content. I've got anticipation and joy about the future."

Then Satan deceives his wife, his wife entices him, and he makes a decision between that enticement and that deception. He chooses the deception over his design. He chooses Satan over his creator God. That is treachery to the highest degree, and it's inexplicable. It's so hard to understand the sinfulness of sin. It is a mystery. We see that all the way through Scripture, repeated over, and over, and over, is this mystery of sin.

Romans 5:12-21 makes this connection, showing Adam being the head of the human race, and how, through Adam's sin, as I think it's the Westminster Catechism says, "In Adam's fall, we sinned, all." That is true. We all are born with the guilt of original sin, and we're born with a sin nature. We sin by nature and we sin by choice and decision. We're born into this world, we sin, and that's because our head failed. He short-circuited his purpose and his design.

Then Christ comes to take up, and He succeeds where Adam failed. When He's tested, He passes the test every time. He's tested in all points as we are, and yet without sin. He goes through His entire life sinless, perfect, completely fulfilling His mission of redemption, and He's tested. He comes out the end perfect.

This is the final test as He goes into the garden, and He prays through the real temptations and testing that He feels. Not internally enticed, because He has no sin in Him, but to come under the pressure and then the burden of bearing all of our sins, as Isaiah 53 says. As He anticipates the full weight of the wrath of God for all of those sins being poured out on Him on the cross, He prays through that in the garden. All of this is on His mind even while He is tender toward each of His men in teaching them through this time.

He really knew early on in the earliest days of history, back as you mentioned in the garden, that He was headed toward that cross thousands of years later. That's the context for how He got there at the beginning of this Easter Week.

You also mentioned this agony in the garden, and that's what we want to focus on for the interview today. After this short break, we'll discuss some of the key takeaways of Christ's agony in the garden just prior to His arrest and crucifixion.

Again, our guest is Travis Allen, pastor of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado. We have links to His church and His preaching podcast called *Pillar of Truth* at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org.

Travis, I just want to read the passage that you were preaching from on those Sundays. It's from Luke, Chapter 22. I'll just read starting in verse 39 of Luke 22. "Jesus came out and proceeded, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives." This is, again, just like you said, just to the east of Jerusalem, the temple area, not very far away. The disciples also followed Him.

When He arrived at the place, the garden, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation," verse 41. "He," Jesus, "withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done.'" I'm going to ask you about that, coming up.

Verse 43. "An angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him," verse 44, "and, being in agony, He was praying very fervently, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground. When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow, and said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation.'"

Then, just to close this section, in verse 47, "While Jesus was still speaking, behold, a crowd came. The one called Judas, one of His disciples to betray Him, one of the 12 was preceding them." The narrative goes on from there.

Travis, take us into the mindset, in this particular moment, of Jesus as He gets really close now to His arrest and crucifixion. We typically don't know very much in advance of when we're going to die, but what was it like for Jesus to know His entire life that the time had come to take upon Himself His Father's wrath for sin? It says here, "He was in agony in praying fervently."

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

I have to only take what I can see written on the page of the Scripture, because to think that I would understand the psychology of any of that, to understand what Jesus is thinking ... This would be shattering to me if I'm thinking about myself, but He's handling it by taking Himself directly into prayer. If we take anything from this example, it's that, for anything we face, we ought to be driven to prayer, watchfulness and prayer. That's our lesson coming out of this passage, but certainly that's what He practiced.

He was watchful, alert, prayerful. He saw this great contest that He's facing. Satan, when He left Him in the wilderness after failing to entice Him into great temptation, into stumbling, falling in any way, Jesus never entered into temptation, not for a millisecond. Satan failed, but then he left Him for a more opportune time, and here's this opportune time to bring the pressure onto Christ.

What does Jesus do? He goes directly to the garden to get away, because He knows exactly what's happening. He knows the timing of this. He's in control of it. All things have been ordered according to His father's will, but He's also handling the timing of it. We see that happening all through His arrest. He's in charge of what's happening even in his arrest. He puts himself into custody. He's not taken into custody, He puts Himself into custody.

Backing up and just looking at this agony in the garden, He certainly felt all the pressure. He certainly felt all the spiritual weight, the relational ... He says Father. He calls his father Father, and He understands that God

being the Father and Jesus as the Son ... We have to understand Son of God in connection to the second person of the Trinity. He is the divine Son, second person in the Trinity. There is no change in the relationship between God the Father, God the Son, not one change, because God is immutable. He does not change.

Anything that we see in His prayer, in the agony, and the stress, and the distress that He feels ... That's all happening in His human nature. In His human nature, He is also Son of God. In His Sonship as Christ, in His humanity, He's seeing the anticipation, a feeling from His Father what a Son ought not to feel from his father. He feels this great weight and sadness of sorrow of this relationship with His Father, not as it should be. Not because of anything He's done, but because of bearing the weight of our sin.

He's in a submissive frame of mind, but He enters in and He prays, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will, but yours be done." When He prays, "If you're willing," there's two Greek verbs for will. One is *thelo*, and one is *boulomai*. When He prays, "If you are willing," that first use of the word for willing, it's the verb *boulomai*. When God is the subject, it refers to God's sovereign will, His eternal counsel, His predetermined plan, decision purpose. He's praying this as a human, as a man, not having omniscience in His humanity.

He says, "Is there some place within the divine decree, some possibility deep within your hidden purpose as yet unknown to my finite understanding, where the removal of the cup might be found? If it be so, then might that provision be revealed now to spare me, if possible, the bitterness of the suffering?" But then He immediately adds, "Yet not my will, but yours be done." Perfect submission. "Not my *thelo*, not my will. That's not my desire that matters here, *thelēma*. It's yours that needs to be done here."

In the first case, He's appealing to His Father's purpose in the eternal decree, which He as a human does not know. In the second case, He's submitting to whatever comes to pass in God's perfect providence, what His *thelēma*, His *thelo*, His will in what He reveals in that moment. He says, "It's not what I want that matters, it's what you want. That's what matters. That's what best. Let that be done." Very, very strong affirmation of His submission here, trusting that the sovereign priority and goodness of God's will is what really matters.

But, at the same time, if He did not suffer this way, we would have right to question His humanity, and yet He does. He prays this in prayer, He leaves it in God's hands, He reaffirms His submissiveness, and He moves forward. He's alert, watchful, prayerful. He returns to His disciples to find them not watchful, not prayerful, not alert, but sleeping instead.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

You brought that out in your message in this series about ... This really shows Christ's humanity here, that asking His Father if there's another way, but, like you said, totally yielded to what the Father's sovereign plan is. This is relatable for us as well. We can ask the same things as we go through our own trials, not as great as this of course, but asking God if there's another way, but immediately submitting to what the will of God has for us that we would follow it faithfully.

Travis Allen, pastor of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado is our guest today as we talk about what Christ's agony in the garden teaches us about Him and teaches us about us. You just mentioned there briefly just how different Jesus' perspective and His actions were in this moment of, just, incomprehensible testing, just about to be arrested, and tortured, and unjustly crucified, and the whole thing.

You talk about His prayerful posture, yielding to the Father's will. He's alert, and so forth. But you say the disciples, who have been around Him now for three years, handled this moment very, very differently. They were sleeping. They were fearful. They were fleeing. They were rash, cutting off the high priest's slave's ear. They were ... Peter eventually would deny Christ.

There's a big chasm here between Jesus and His disciples. Maybe you could just contrast what the temptation is for us as humans, like ... Christ was human as well, but when we enter into a really difficult moment of test and trial like this, how we're to not follow the example of the disciples, but how we're to follow the example of Christ.

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

Right after the Passover and then the institution of the Lord's Supper in communion, the ordinance that's given to the church, Jesus in Luke 22 prepares His disciples for what's to come. He gives them several little vignettes of preparation.

In one place here, He's warning Simon about what's about to happen. He says, in 22:31 of Luke, "Simon, behold, Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat. But I prayed earnestly for you that your faith may not fail, and you, once you've returned, strengthen your brothers." What does Simon Peter say? He says, "Lord, with you, I'm ready to go both to prison and to death." That's where Jesus says, "I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you've denied three times that you know me."

That happened before they left the upper room. On the way from the upper room to the garden, Matthew records another time that they're having this discussion. Jesus again warns them about they're all ... "Strike the shepherd, and the flock will scatter. That's going to happen to you guys." Again, they're warned, and Peter doubles down. he says, "No, even if everybody else flees, I'm staying put. I'm going to fight for you."

He really does want to stand by His Lord. He really does love the Lord Jesus with all sincerity. But when he comes into the garden and Jesus tells him at the beginning and then at the end, "Watch and pray that you don't enter into temptation," he fails to see the significance of that. He fails to see that, "I'm going to need to draw on a strength that I don't have." Jesus says, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He didn't take that seriously.

Even Jesus. He knew the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. In fact, His flesh was so weak His capillaries couldn't handle the strain. They burst, and the blood became mixed with His sweat and poured out His sweat

pores. The Lord God in heaven deployed an angel to come and visit Him with strength, to strengthen His body. What did He do when His body was strengthened by the angel? He prayed more fervently.

Peter did not understand that. We don't understand that. We can be so dull. What happened when they got up out of the garden? You read it earlier. "While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd came, one called Judas, one of the 12, coming ahead of them. He approached Jesus to kiss Him and betray Him into their hands," and Jesus handled all that.

He wasn't surprised. He was calm. He directed all the traffic. He directed the soldiers. He directed the arrest. He protected His disciples. Peter, by contrast, the disciples, by contrast ... he failed. He pulled out a sword, tried to whack at Malchus, hit him in the head, missed, hit his ear. Jesus has to correct that, lest they be portrayed as insurrectionists and revolutionaries, and undermine His entire cause. That leads into even his denials, his three denials that he makes, and then the rooster crows.

What I think is really interesting, though, and Luke is the only one to record this ... It's fascinating. Says here, after Peter made his third denial in Luke 22:60, "'Man, I don't know what you're talking about.' Immediately, while he is still speaking, a rooster crowed." It says in next verse, "The Lord turned and looked at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, 'Before a rooster crows today, you'll deny me three times,' and he went out and cried bitterly."

What's interesting about that look from the Lord ... There's a lot that maybe we could fill in there. It's a reminder. "Remember I told you this?" But it's also a reminder of, "I've prayed for you." It's almost as if the Lord looks at Peter and says, "Peter, I know I'm in custody. I know you've just failed. I got this. I'm about to die for your sins and the sins of your brothers. I've got this. This is what this is about, is about full reconciliation for you to God. It's about me covering your sins with my atoning death. It's about my righteousness, my perfect righteousness, covering you like a garment. That's about to be accomplished here at the cross. I've got this. I've prayed for you. When you've recovered, restore your brothers. Go minister to them. You've fallen in a great way, and so it's going to give you a great sympathy for all your brothers who fled as well. But when you've recovered, restore your brothers. I'm going to take care of you."

I think that look is a look of love. It's a look of knowing. It's a look of, "I've got this. Sin is about to be atoned for, and the Father will accept this sacrifice and raise me from the dead. From now on, it's resurrection glory."

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

I have never heard Christ's look to Peter explain that way. It hearkens to the passage in John 13 which says, "Jesus, knowing that His hour had come, that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." What comforting news that is, that Christ is always seeking the believer's restoration after we sin.

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

It's shocking to the senses for Jesus to anticipate that God, the protector of the righteous, Father to the Son, would hand Him over to His enemies, and, far worse, that He would withhold His own consolation, that He'd suspend His comfort from His Son. We must confess and acknowledge what is perhaps the greatest crime of all in our sinfulness, that we should be the cause of robbing the only beloved Son of God of one second of the comforting influences of His relation to God. The fountain of all His comforts and joys was stopped because of your sin and because of my sin. The audacity of our sin, the presumption, the insolent arrogance for all of our sins.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

It's often portrayed, Travis, that the greatest suffering of Christ ... The physical aspect of it is emphasized all the time. Mel Gibson's movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, and being flogged, and bleeding, and hardly looking human ... That's so emphasized, the physical suffering. That was terrible, beyond what any of us could understand, for sure, but it wasn't uncommon at that time for people to be crucified.

You emphasize here in that clip from your sermon that the relational suffering ... The fact that, at least for a time, God wasn't there to be in this close, comforting relationship with His beloved Son. You said there's a relational suffering.

Earlier in the message, you talked about that there's a spiritual suffering that Christ went through. In other words, the imputation. We always think of imputation as God crediting the believer with Christ's righteousness. There's another kind of imputation that took place at the cross, and that's God crediting our sin to Christ's account and then punishing Him for it.

Two questions in one here, Travis. The spiritual suffering and the relational suffering ... How to better understand what actually took place as the Father poured out His wrath on His son for our sin, to the point that Jesus said, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" quoted from back in Psalm 22:1. How do we better understand this spiritual and relational suffering at the cross, and not just get too, maybe, partially distracted by the physical pain and suffering He went through?

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

When we see how the unbelieving world processes what they're watching in the crucifixion, and you mentioned Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*, is a very good example of that. In order to get to the gravitas and the pathos, to just process that, they have to portray it in terms of what physical pain they must have felt ripping apart flesh, bleeding, the nails being driven, all that graphically and vividly portrayed in a very gaudy way in a film like that.

But that's how people have to process it, because they don't understand. They're not processing it in a biblical, doctrinal way, understanding it spiritually. That's really what we see in Scripture.

In fact, Scripture really does minimize the gore and the vivid nature of the cross. It really does veil all of that, because it really is emphasizing much more the sin-bearing aspect. It's portraying things that we all live with every single day.

You mentioned the word imputation. Imputation, an accounting term meaning to reckon to, to account to. 2 Corinthians 5:21, "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." That's talking about a double imputation, the imputation of our sins to Christ, a reckoning of our sins to Him, to, though He doesn't deserve it, treat Him as we deserve to be treated, but then a reckoning of His righteousness to us, so that God would treat us, though we don't deserve it, with the merit, and the reward, and the favor that is only due to the Son. That's that double imputation that happened in Christ and His ministry.

But there's a previous imputation, and that imputation has to do with the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to all of his progeny, to all of his children. That's all of us. We're all born with that guilt of Adam's sin. It's a doctrine of original sin, and we're born under that guilt. We're then born with a nature because we're fallen. We're born with that nature, and we experience this reality of sinfulness all the time.

Jesus, by contrast, because of the virgin conception, He was born not after the same pattern as us. He was specially created, once again. He came into this world without a sin nature, and yet He carried the burden of our sins and that guilt to the cross. It says in Isaiah 53, "He was crushed for our iniquities. Yahweh was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to," it doesn't say ... Not to physical pain of His nerves firing, but put Him to grief. It's the grief and the sorrow that's emphasized in Isaiah 53. The crushing that He feels is for our iniquities. Not the crushing of blows from soldiers, but the crushing of God in a spiritual sense.

That spiritual sense is ... It cannot be separated from the relational suffering as He's pierced through for our transgressions. Who's doing the piercing? Is it the Roman soldiers? Certainly they pierce His side after He's dead, but He drank the bitter cup that was reserved for you and me. It's the piercing sorrow of death, as Edersheim puts it, bearing His shaft in His own heart. The one who fired that arrow is God the Father.

Jesus, when He's on the cross, He cries out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" Dealing the spiritual suffering, which is all connected to a relational suffering, because of His perfect relationship with the Father as a son, not only in His divinity, but in His humanity. He is the second Adam, and He traces His lineage right back to the Father, right back to God.

He feels this spiritual and relational suffering when He cries out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" on the cross. That is the cry of David in Psalm 22:1. He's calling everybody at the cross who's there witnessing this, "Go back to Psalm 22," and see that Psalm is Messianic. It predicts all this and it interprets all of this. By the end of that psalm in Psalm 22, He has accomplished the Father's will, and He is rewarded, and He wins. That's the victory of the resurrection.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

It's just all so profound and perfectly planned. Thank you for that answer, Travis.

Travis Allen, pastor of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado is with us today. Final question for you. We've talked about how the journey to the cross started in the very early chapters of Genesis, in the fall of man, in the fall of Adam and Eve, and how that was then transferred to all of us that we're all sinners, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death.

We also talked about Christ's agony in the garden, and what He was doing right before His arrest and crucifixion. He was faithfully praying, but He was weakened. He was in anguish. He knew the wrath of His own Father that He was so close to was going to be poured out on Him, the spiritual and relational distancing, or the punishment that He was going to bear.

For someone listening today, someone coming into Easter Week, we all get distracted by things going on in the news. Maybe it's the stock market. Maybe it's the tariffs, the political talk right now, the wars in different parts of the world, the current events that catch our eye on social media, the recreational things we do. Busy with work, relationships, and other things that take up our time and our thought in life.

What would be your closing exhortation, Travis? For someone who needs to understand and believe that the most important person and moment in history was Jesus coming to live, to die, to rise again, and how this is so relevant, and how they can enter into this eternal relationship with Christ based on what took place this week nearly 2000 years ago.

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

I just wish I could stop everybody in their tracks, turn off all sounds, all media, and cause them to just stop for a moment and reflect. Why am I here? Why am I drawing breath? Why do I enjoy sunrises? Sunsets? Why do I enjoy relationships? Family? Why do I enjoy the good things that I enjoy in life? What's it all for? Where'd all this begin? Why do I do as I ought not to do? Why do I do what I shouldn't do? What is wrong with me? Then, where am I heading? Where's all this going?

I'd like to point people back to the early chapters of Genesis to explain all those issues of origins, and purpose, and meaning to see that God created humanity in His own image. We are image bearers. When I look around, I see a world that is completely off the rails with understanding their image-bearing purpose. We're created to bear the image of God, which means we're created to be in relationship with Him.

That is the true energy in life, and joy in life, and passion in life, is to know our God, the one who created us, and to share His vision of reality, to share His view of all things. To join Him in His work, to love Him with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and then to turn around and love other image bearers. Just as we care for ourselves, we care for them. We want to see everybody know their God.

But then we understand, from Genesis, Chapter 3, everything went off the rails when Adam sinned. In the same pattern of the temptation of Eve, and the transgression of Adam and Eve together in doing what God forbade them to do, we have to see that, man, the path of our temptation and sin, and then entering into

temptation and entering into sin, and falling into transgression, and that the death that results from that ... Spiritual death with no relationship with God, death of relationships with other people, the selfishness, the greed, the lust, the different disordered passions, all that is a result from our sin and our sinfulness.

To understand, then, when we look to the cross, that's what explains the cross. Why would God put His own Son on an implement of such torture and shame? It's because He's conveying to the world, "That's what it cost for sin to be atoned for, to take my one and only Son, my Beloved Son and put Him up as a sacrifice for the sins of all who would ever believe."

He put His son on the cross, exposed Him to open shame, and ridicule, and punishment, and ultimately death. That's what our sin does, and that's what our sin did to Him. That's what it cost for God to redeem humanity, is for that sin bearer to take upon Himself all of our sins.

That's why He had to be also divine in His nature. Jesus was not only human, feeling all the things that we feel, and yet without any sin. But He has a divine nature, in that He is able to absorb the eternal wrath of God due to every single one of our sins. He's able, in His divine nature, to absorb that eternal wrath and to atone for it, to cover it over, because He is an eternal person as well in His divine nature.

To see then that God, the Father, not only put that sacrifice up on the cross, buried Him as a real physical death and burial, but then physically raised Him from the dead to demonstrate that death would have no hold on Jesus Christ, that the sin was atoned for, and He accepted that sacrifice so that all who believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life.

If I could speak to every individual in our world and have a private conversation, I'd want to unpack this and take them through the early chapters of Genesis, take them through the Gospels, take them to the cross, take them to the resurrection, and help them to see that, under our first federal head, Adam, we're all in sin. But under the federal head, Jesus Christ, if we'll trust Him, we'll put our faith in Him, if we'll obey Him and love Him, He changes us from the inside out. By His Holy Spirit, He causes us to be born again, taking out the heart of stone, putting in a heart of flesh, giving us a new nature, taking up residence within us so that we can truly bear God's image, and which is perfectly portrayed in Jesus Christ, who bears the image of God.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Travis, thank you for explaining the good news, the Gospel. Through repentant faith in who Christ is and what He did on the cross, that God will forgive us and reconcile us to Himself, and give us eternal life after we die.

The eternal life starts now, actually. What good news. For anyone listening today who has never understood or believed that, do it right now, this week, today! This is the most important issue in all of life.

Travis, thank you for your faithful preaching of the word of God, and for coming on and drawing out some important truths about Christ and about us as He went off to His crucifixion on the behalf of believers. All of God's best and grace to you, Travis, your family, and Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado.

GUEST: TRAVIS ALLEN:

God bless you too, David. Have a great Resurrection weekend with your church and your family. I know it's going to be wonderful for us, too.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

I trust you can see that Travis is a very sound believer and faithful pastor. We encourage you to get more acquainted with his preaching ministry by subscribing to his free preaching podcast, *Pillar of Truth*, on the podcast app on your device. Or just visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, for direct links to him.

Reminder over Easter to encourage the young adults in your life to attend The Overcomer Course, June 20th and 21st at Stone House Farm in Jordan, Minnesota. Details at our website or in the April issue of *The Christian Worldview Journal*, which arrives this week.

Here's a Bible reading recommendation for this Easter Week. Read Luke Chapters 19 through 24 with your family, just about a chapter a day. Let God speak to you in His Word about Christ's agony in the garden, His atoning work on the cross for sin, and then culminating with His victorious resurrection and ascension into heaven.

This is it, the pinnacle and point of life. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy, Chapter 1, "It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."

If you haven't been saved by Christ through repentant faith in His work for you, call us or go to TheChristianWorldview.org and click on the page, *What Must I Do to Be Saved?* Receive God's most gracious offer to have Christ pay the penalty for your sin so that you can be forgiven, reconciled, and have eternal life.

Thank you for joining us today on The Christian Worldview and for your support of this non-profit radio ministry. Until next time, think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm.

The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript, or find out, "What must I do to be saved?" go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll-free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener-supported non-profit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation.

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