

WEEK 27

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST

WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 27

Q | Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A | Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

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PRAY *O my Savior, I thank thee from the depths of my being for thy wondrous grace and love in bearing my sin in thine own body on the tree. Amen.*

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WORSHIP GOD BY MEDITATING ON PSALM 17

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COMMIT GOD'S WORD TO MEMORY | 2 CORINTHIANS 8:9

DAY 1 | For you know the grace
 DAY 2 | of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 DAY 3 | that though he was rich,
 DAY 4 | yet for your sake he became poor,
 DAY 5 | so that you by his poverty might become rich.

THE MANAGER

Years ago, I worked as a technical writer for a software company. About two years into the job, my manager abruptly changed occupations, leaving behind a department that had grown from two to five writers during her tenure. Upper management reviewed their options and named their new manager—someone I wasn't expecting or remotely prepared for: me.

To say I didn't feel I was cut out for this new role is an understatement. I struggled through planning sessions with the department head I now reported to, stumbled through meetings with the writers in my assign (all older than me), and doubted every day my ability to meet their expectations.

I wanted to lead my team to success and be found competent and dependable for the company, but I constantly butted heads with the writers I now managed. One of them, whom I'll call Marsha, would openly challenge departmental decisions and directives. My immaturity and lack of leadership training meant that I didn't know what to do with her disrespect, and over the coming weeks my frustration festered.

One day as I led a team meeting about a fast-approaching deadline we were on track to miss, Marsha challenged me in front of the others: "And just *when* are we supposed to get all this done?" This time, I snapped back, "If you can't get it done during business hours, then you'll have to work this weekend." A long argument ensued. The other writers piled on. It was them versus me, and I knew then that I wasn't up to the task.

Several days later after some management-encouraged time off, I was no longer leading the group. I honestly don't remember whether the demotion was my idea or theirs, but I didn't fight it—I wasn't wired to manage people at this juncture of my life. Humiliated, I limped back to my previous role as a peer and started the search for a new job.

Soon I interviewed with an exciting internet start-up—one of those companies with no dress code and a basketball goal in the office to foster creativity and let off steam. The idea of being part of something new and exciting without the corporate atmosphere was life giving.

After two promising interviews, I told my friends I thought it was my job to lose. Several days later the call finally came in. The start-up had chosen another candidate. I was rejected in what I thought was a done deal. My confidence was gone, my shame restored.

But humiliation wasn't through with me yet. The next morning Marsha arrived with a smile on her face and a resignation letter in her hand. She was leaving the company to go work at an internet start-up. I'll leave it to you to guess which one.

DAY 1

READ LUKE 2:1-21

“ The incarnation is a kind of vast joke whereby the Creator of the ends of the earth comes among us in diapers. . . . Until we too have taken the idea of the God-man seriously enough to be scandalized by it, we have not taken it as seriously as it demands to be taken.

FREDERICK BUECHNER

“ Maker of the sun, he is made under the sun. In the Father he remains, from his mother he goes forth. Creator of heaven and earth, he was born on earth under heaven. Unspeakably wise, he was wisely speechless. Filling the world, he lies in a manger. Ruler of the stars, he nurses at his mother's bosom. He is both great in the nature of God, and small in the form of a servant.

AUGUSTINE

DAY 2

READ MARK 15:1-39

“ There may be no greater inner agony than the loss of relationship we desperately want. If a mild acquaintance turns on you, condemns and criticizes you, and says she never wanted to see you again, it is painful. If someone you’re dating does the same thing, it is qualitatively more painful. But if your spouse does this to you, or if one of your parents does this to you when you’re still a child, the psychological damage is infinitely worse. We cannot fathom, however, what it would be like to lose not just a spousal love or parental love that has lasted several years, but the infinite love of the Father that Jesus had from all eternity. Jesus’ sufferings would have been eternally unbearable.

TIM KELLER

“ The whole of Christ’s life was a continual passion; others die martyrs, but Christ was born a martyr. He found a Golgotha, where he was crucified, even in Bethlehem, where he was born; for to his tenderness then the straws were almost as sharp as the thorns after, and the manger as uneasy at first as the cross at last. His birth and his death were but one continual act, and his Christmas Day and his Good Friday are but the evening and the morning of one.

NANCY GUTHRIE

DAY 3

READ JOHN 11:30-36

“ This, after all, is the master-truth of Scripture, that “Christ died for our sins.” To this let us daily return. On this let us daily feed our souls. Some, like the Greeks of old, may sneer at the doctrine, and call it “foolishness.” But let us never be ashamed to say with Paul, “Be it far from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. 6:14).

J. C. RYLE

“ For Christ to be our Saviour there was no other way than the way of the cross. God’s righteousness demanded it, our sin required it, and Satan feared it. And for those who would be saved from sin and its consequences, there is no other way than the way of the cross where God’s holy conscience has been satisfied, sin has been dealt with and Satan has been routed.

FREDERICK S. LEAHY

DAY 4

READ HEBREWS 5:7-10

“I cannot begin to unfold the meaning of the death of Christ without first confessing that much remains a mystery. Christians believe that the cross is the pivotal event in history. Small wonder that our puny minds cannot fully take it in! One day the veil will be altogether removed. And all riddles will be solved. We shall see Christ as he is and worship him through eternity for what he has done. “Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.” So said the great apostle Paul with his massive intellect and his many revelations; and if he said it, how much more should we?”

JOHN STOTT

“Abba! Father!” is not a calm acknowledgement of a universal truth about God’s abstract fatherhood. It is the child’s cry in a nightmare. It is the cry of outrage, fear, shrinking away when faced with the horror of the “world”—yet not simply or exclusively protest, but trust as well.

ROWAN WILLIAMS

DAY 5

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-9

“ The Cross is the abyss of wonders, the centre of desires, the school of virtues, the house of wisdom, the throne of love, the theatre of joys, and the place of sorrows. It is the root of happiness, and the gate of Heaven.

THOMAS TRAHERNE AND BERTRAM DOBELL

“ It may be profitable to linger yet a little time at the cross, that we may again survey its glory, and feel its soul subduing power. In the cross of Christ, all the divine perfections are gloriously and harmoniously displayed. Infinite love, inviolable truth, and inflexible justice are all seen, in their brightest and most beautifully mingled colors. The heavens declare the glory of God; but the glory of the cross outshines the wonders of the skies. . . . In the presence of the cross, we feel that omnipotent grace has hold of our heart; and we surrender to dying love. The doctrine of the cross needs no other demonstration of its divine origin than its power to sanctify the heart and bring it into willing and joyful subjection to Christ.

JOHN L. DAGG