

over to the piano and played one of the rich man's compositions. At first he could not remember the music, but at last it came back to him. Finally the guest arose to go. Mr. Smedley expressed his delight with his company and asked, "Who are you". And the guest answered, "I am the man you might have been", and disappeared. This story illustrates the truth brought out by the passing crowd. Those who neglect Christ on their journey from the cradle to the grave fail to realize the blessings of which they dreamed. But they are not given the opportunity to go back and make amends. They that pass this golden opportunity lose it.

## II. They Had Time to Join His Enemies.

There was no time for Jesus but there was time to blaspheme him, to speak evil or against Jesus. This, in the eyes of God is worthy of death. They used their tongues against him. They insult the Savior of the world.

## III. They Were Guilty of Belittling Truth Which

### They Did Not Understand.

These people passing by said, you who would tear down the temple and build another in three days, save thyself.

See John Bowring - Author of 'The Cross of Calvary' - was governor of Hong Kong in 1825. Before Portuguese colonists had built a massive cathedral at Macao, China, a violent storm wrecked the Bldg. only front wall THE PASSING CROWD remained & on the peak of it stands a great bronze cross depicting the storm & weather. He visited & was impressed. Matthew 27:39-43. That wretched cross & wrote "In the Cross of Calvary, towering over the wrecks of time, all the light of sacred story, gathers round its head sublime".

We would like to fix in mind the passing crowd and get some with curiosity, reverence & indifference - just know that the human highways. If we could (symbolize) the group as typical of the vast throng of people in the earth today and let them get a glimpse of the dying Christ. If they could travel the same way and consider this most important matter. They represent people of (all ages) and of all times. We receive many impressions from these people.

## I. First, Their Opportunity

They that proceed near Calvary faced the (most dramatic) fact in all history. They were not only in Jerusalem when this event took place, but they were close to the spot where it happened. Many of them actually saw Christ hanging from the nails. They could have touched him. Their opportunity was breath-taking.

They could have known the (facts first-hand). There was Mary, the mother of Jesus, near the cross. What a story she could have told them of his strange birth, his perfect

boyhood, of the youth who was different and of the angel voices speaking to her. But they did not have time to listen. They had more important things to attend to. They passed by without even stopping to converse with Mary.

That was also John at the cross. He had heard Jesus teach in parables. He knew him as few other people did. What a story of glory, love and compassion. But they did not have time for John. They were too busy to listen to his thrilling testimony.

There was Pilate in Jerusalem and they could have asked Pilate about it because he declared that the victim was innocent and he washed his hands as a declaration of such. He would have told them of his wife's dream concerning this innocent man, but they did not have time to interview Pilate. They passed by without hearing his story.

There was the penitent thief. Certainly he would have been willing to turn aside long enough to tell them how faith broke upon his soul. He could have told how joy came in when he requested Jesus to remember him.

But they were more interested in other things and they passed by without giving this man a chance to speak with them.

Had this great crowd of people been interested they could have stopped in Jerusalem a while and been there on the day of the resurrection. They could have afforded lodging in Jerusalem to see whether or not this strange prophesy would be fulfilled. But they pressed alongside too busy to stop.

Today →

I read an illustration intitled, "Mr. Smedley's Guest".

He was a wealthy man who had given his life to the accumulation of the world's goods. One evening he sat dozing in his chair. Suddenly awakened by the presence of an un-invited guest, Mr. Smedley did not first appreciate the guest, but his conversation was so delightful that soon he was glad the stranger had come. And he reminded the rich man of the many things he had dreamed of doing. He spoke of a book that had been favorable and which had received wide acclaim. The rich man said that he had never written a book, but the guest gave such a fine description of it that he remembered it in full. Then the stranger went

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exempt from suffering. This is the old idea that if a man's profession of faith in God is genuine, and God really loves him, that God will deliver him out of all dangers. We have the age old illustration of Job. However, if God worked in this way then Jesus would never have been permitted to die.

Closely connected with this error is the one that God's providence always is expressed in protection. The Jews reasoned in this way that if God loved Jesus, then he would provide him deliverance from the cross. This is false and dangerous. Of course, we know that God's providence does protect us and that he guides us and that he is with us. George McDonald used to tell the story of a Christian mother who prayed and had faith in God, but despite, she said, my sons were lost at sea. And then she asked what is at the bottom of the ocean, and the answer came back. It is the hollow of his hand. So we know that God's providence does not always deal with the temporal or the material.

Another error was that those who live upright would never have any afflictions. Jesus suffering on a cross

*Some people (do not want to accept truth) - like the woman who had a belief & she strongly believed it. & what was her belief? She believed she can wear a number five shoe on a man's foot.*

This was untrue. Jesus did not say he was going to destroy the temple. When he spoke of destroying the temple he was referring to his body. He would raise it again in three days. Little did they realize that he was about to fulfill this prophecy within three days. If only they had waited to understand. They refused to give attention. By their actions they left out Christ and they said, you made great acclaim, now look, you are on a cross. Satan had won the victory for just a moment, it seemed. This is a disgusting picture that Matthew presents for us. They mocked among themselves.

#### IV. They Attempted to Explain the Christ Without Knowing the Savior.

With their heads high they volunteered information. "He saved others, himself he cannot save". That was a mixture of truth and error. It was certainly true that he saved others. He saved many by miracles. They had witnessed Lazarus being raised from the dead. They knew that he had had power over disease. Himself he cannot save. Certainly those who knew him best would not have said this. Because Jesus did save himself. He saved

it and coming forth from the tomb. He saved both himself and others. The people passing by did not know the Savior. They could not interpret his actions. The priests were only familiar with the sacrifices. They missed the significance of his sacrifice, God's lamb on the cross. Many people went away from that scene misinterpreting and no one told them that the leaders did not know what they were talking about. And since that day, thousands of people have been misled by different kind of so-called religious leaders who were not qualified to talk about the Christ.

#### V. They Put a Price Tag on Their Allegiance. 42 B

If he is the king of Israel, let him come down from the cross and we will believe. They were lying and Jesus knew it. But they are for the moment in control of the situation. They are trying to name the terms by which they will accept him as their Messiah.

What was the price tag they asked for their loyalty. Simply a cross-less religion. Let him now come down from the cross and we will believe. The cross has always been offensive to many who refuse to accept Jesus. The cross

There are many religions, but there is only one with a cross & a crucified Saviour - 7.

cannot be subtracted from a saving and satisfying religion. Without the shedding of blood, the Scripture says, there could be no remission for sin. Suppose Jesus had met the demands of these ancient Jews. Suppose he had come down from the cross. Physicians of Beggars, who are suffering from their own sins, will allow to pay their fines with their own blood to increase their own stocks in hospitals - The Lord does not ask us to pay our transgressions with blood, but He gave His precious blood for the remission of our sins. The life of the flesh is in the blood. There are people today who do not want the cross in

their religion, but it is a supreme demonstration of God's absolute justice. Sin must be punished. If not in the sinner then in the sinner's substitute. There is no salvation for anybody unless somebody pays the full price of eternal redemption. (Hebrews 9:22.) The cross is likewise a demonstration of God's infinite love. The cross was the only channel through which the divine love could flow to

#### VI. They Relied on Popular Religious Notions Rather Than Truth.

The devil is always keen in working through theologians. Because some of those crowd around the cross claimed to have the truth.

There was the error that the faithful would be

to them proved that he was an imposter. That he was not genuine. Job's friends tried to prove the same thing in reference to his suffering. On one occasion there were those who asked Jesus, "Did this man sin or did his parents sin?" These people could not realize that they were wrong. They were dead wrong.

VII. Demanding Action Unworthy of Diety 40 B

Save thyself and come down from the cross. If Jesus had he would have been proved a coward, selfish and without grace and man would have been without hope.

How furtunate it is that our God does not do all the things we want him to do.. He does not deprive the world of a Savior simply because someone does not want a Savior. He does not close off some because others desire death.

Some of you today are asking the impossible. You too are hesitating; refusing to yield to Christ the Savior. Are you demanding something special of God, something unworthy of God. Are you laying down some condition by which you would surrender. Are you trying to get rid of the Christ. Are you asking that he lower his standards of

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justice in order to let you in. Are you asking Jesus to come down from the cross.

### VIII. Their Confirming Condemnation of Their Souls

They prove themselves unworthy. They build a wall between them and passed by.

They will not and cannot pass by the judgement day.

All who fail to stop at the cross and surrender will one day stop at the judgement and submit to the will of the judge.

*all forms of heresy begin with a wrong relation to the cross -*

Calvary was not responsible for their sin, so we can not say it would have been better had they never contacted Calvary. But the cross only brought their sin to light. The sin was present in their nature long before Jesus was crucified. It revealed their wickedness and the sin that dwells in every heart.

A man in London once was asked for his photograph. He replied that they would find one in the third chapter of Romans. The chapter, as you know, describes the sinful nature of man. And in this chapter he had discovered

himself, his true nature, his sinfulness. This discovery turned him to the remedy and he became a true follower of Jesus Christ. The beast of the field follows his nature.

I read the account of Shelly in which the author tells about a strange vision that the poet had just before his death. There stood at the foot of his bed a figure pointing his finger at him, asking, "Art thou satisfied?" Shelly at a terrific cost had sought to satisfy his own desires. *Some of you do not have time to give Jesus your best in service & offering*  
This one was asking him to evaluate the results. Are you satisfied? And soon this figure dropped his hood and the poet found to his amazement that he was looking into his own face. In the dead of the night he had his own soul to confront him with the question, "Art thou satisfied?" We all have the opportunity of stopping by the cross to receive its healing, but what if we pass by with the crowd?