

Stripped of Dignity

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[0 : 00] So his clothes are now matching his dignity. He's the glorious Son of God. And God says, this is my Son with whom I am well pleased.

! Listen to him. And so his clothes and his face radiate with glory. And it's so great that it leaves Peter, James, and John just babbling in the presence of this magnificent King.

And yet, in that moment, Jesus could not save a single soul. Did not save anyone there on that mountain of transfiguration.

And so Jesus, blazing with glory, clothed with clothes that were like lightning, didn't save anyone.

But when he went down to that mountain, he started a different journey to a different mountain.

And he said, the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands. So take your Bibles and turn to John chapter 19. John chapter 19.

[1 : 21] We'll just read two verses this evening. John chapter 19, verse 23.

John chapter 19. John chapter 19.

And this happened that the scripture might be fulfilled, which said, They divided my garments among them. They cast lots for my clothing. So, this is what the soldiers did.

There is a little polite lie that hangs in every Roman Catholic church that hangs around so many people's necks.

You can see it in a Catholic hospital above every bed. It's painted on the greatest Renaissance masters.

[2 : 58] It's drawn on children's story Bibles. It's a polite lie. It's a polite lie. It's understandable lie. It's a lie that leaves Jesus with his human dignity.

And there's something in everyone's hearts that wants that lie to be true. And it's that little scrap of clothes that covers his private parts on the cross.

And it's a polite little lie. It's a lie that would leave him as dignity. It's a lie that would let us make crucifixes and let us hang them on our necks and let us look at them without turning our heads down in shame.

But all of the Gospels tells us that the cross didn't leave Jesus that dignity. We read it.

They took his clothes. And each got a little bit. And then finally the undergarment was the only thing left. And instead of tearing it into four pieces, which would have been worthless to all of them, they decided by lot who would get it.

[4 : 09] They drew straws. They rolled dice. They figured out some way and they decided who got the undergarment. And now Jesus is naked.

The Roman crucifixion was about pain. And it was about humiliation. And it was about physical and even sexual humiliation.

And I know that's hard to hear, but Paul called the cross a scandal. It was a scandal. And it was and it is a scandal.

Because Roman crucifixion was not just a mere judicial act. It wasn't like going to the electric chair. It wasn't like firing, getting thrown in front of the firing squad.

It was an act of state-sponsored terrorism. It was meant to strike utter fear and terror into the viewers, into the people that saw it.

[5 : 14] It was against the law for a Roman citizen to be crucified. Because you wouldn't want to and you shouldn't try to terrorize your own citizens.

That wasn't the point. So you behead your citizens. If it comes time to kill them, judicially you behead them. That's how Paul died. You don't need to terrorize your own citizens.

But the conquered, the enslaved, the nobodies, the people that might rise up in revolt and revolution, the conquered, they were crucified by the hundreds.

And part of that terror was the nakedness. It was physical pain joined to physical and even sexual humiliation.

And so here is Jesus naked. There's nowhere to hide. Complete exposure. Exposed to the eyes of his enemies. Exposed to the eyes of his friends.

[6:18] And he stripped of all of his dignity. You know, dignity allows us to walk around with our head held high without being afraid of being looked at.

I can be seen. I'm not afraid of your eyes reducing me to nothing. After Adam and Eve sinned, their nakedness for the first time became a big deal.

Their nakedness for the first time became something terrible and fearful. And so now people can see me. Now I'm exposed. Now people can see me for what I am.

And so that's what sin does. It steals our dignity. It robs us of our confidence to be seen. And so into the bushes we go. And we start sowing up our fig leaves.

Desperately trying to not be seen. Because we are naked. And we know it. And so now here's Jesus. And he's naked. And he's now. He's not the first Adam.

[7:19] He's the second Adam. And everything that sinful man deserved. And should experience. Everything that sinful man has coming to him.

He receives. And so nakedness is a part of that punishment that we see in the Bible. And it's not just one or two little random places.

When God comes in judgment. In the Old Testament. Being stripped. Being humiliated.

Being naked. Is a part of it. And I just want to read a few passages. Isaiah 47.3 Your nakedness will be exposed.

And your shame uncovered. I will take vengeance. I will spare no one. Babylon. He's. Those words from Isaiah are. To Babylon. He calls them the daughter of Babylon.

[8:17] In that passage. And right before he said this. He says. He compares her to a delicate. Tender young lady. And she won't. Even. Let her feet get wet.

When she's crossing. The river. She's too dignified to work. Too dignified to get her feet wet. When crossing a stream. And God says. I will strip you bare.

And I will show. I will uncover your shame. Nahum 3.5 And this time. It's not to Babylon. This time. It's to Nineveh. He says. I will show the nations.

Your nakedness. And the kingdoms. Your shame. I will pelt you with filth. I will treat you with contempt. And I will make you a spectacle. It's not just the other nations though.

Ezekiel 16. Speaking to Judah. I will gather all your loves. With whom you found pleasure. Those you love. As well as those you hated. And I will gather them against you.

[9:15] From all around. And I will strip you in front of them. And they will see all your nakedness. They will strip you of your clothes. And take your fine jewelry. And leave you naked. And bare. So what is the punishment for sin?

It's exposure. It's letting everyone see your shame. It's turning you. Into a spectacle. But now on the cross.

Look. Look at who's naked now. Look who's stripped. And ridiculed. Look whose enemies are gathering.

All around him. It's not God's enemies. It's not the daughter of Babylon. It's not cruel Nineveh. It's not adulterous Judah.

This is my son. Whom I love. That's him. And he's naked. By divine appointment.

[10:21] Did you notice this? This happened. That the scriptures might be fulfilled. And he quotes the scriptures. And then it says. This little thing. So this is what the soldiers did.

The word of God had said. This is what is going to happen. And hundreds of years later. It falls down. And there's. Four or five soldiers. Four soldiers.

And this is what they did. Yes. The soldiers did it. But they did it. That the word of God. Might be fulfilled. Because the father.

Was carrying out a plan. And the son. Was saving. His. People. He was saving sinners. And so Jesus is naked to save us.

Because that's what it means to suffer. For sin. That's the judgment. You get dragged out of the bushes. Whatever clothes of self-righteousness you've been wearing.

[11:23] You're left naked before the eyes of him. Whom you must give an account. No one. Will strut into hell with their head.

Held. High. High. The bottom falls out. The last shred of protection. The last shred of covering is taken from you. And you are reduced to a nothing.

A vacancy. A nobody. And. That's what we all deserve. Because that's how we've treated God. As a nobody. As a weightless.

Person. Person. And yet. Behold the love of. Our father. Behold the love of Jesus. He's stripped me naked.

Bend your holy. Searching. Penetrating. Eyes on me. Undo me. Ruin me. Embarrass me. And so.

[12 : 28] He who was so high. Now sinks to the very. Bottom. He who was dressed in clothes. Like lightning. Was now just. A dirty. Bloody.

Naked man. On a cross. For me. And for you. Dear child of God. And he was. He was stripped of everything.

Of all of his dignity. So that you could be clothed. So that it would never happen to you. So that you could. Walk with your head held high. As a child of God. That you could enter into the.

To the presence of the Lord. With confidence. He was naked. So that you could be. Dressed. I want to end tonight.

Just with a few words. Of pastoral. Application. If. If you live in shame.

[13 : 26] Look at who knows about shame. If you know the. The deep shame of. Of sexual abuse. Of wrongful nakedness.

You have a high priest. Who knows. That kind of shame. Of being. Wrongfully. Stripped. And he doesn't know it.

From the outside. He knows it from. The inside. And if you have sin. In your life. That is deeply. Shameful. So now I'm talking about.

A different kind of person. If you have sin. In your life. That is deeply. Shameful. That you can't shake. You're not a victim. No. You did. What you did. And now.

When you think about it. You burn. With shame. Shame. I want you to see. Look at who took your sin. Look who took your shame.

[14 : 24] Who bore the shame. And yes. You have done something. Terrible. Whatever it is. But tonight. Jesus reminds you. I have loved you.

We sang it this morning. Love you. And I freed you. From your sin. Well. Whichever.

Shame. You fall into. Whichever shame. You know. And for all of us. We need to. Remember this one thing. And it's from Philippians. And this is what. Paul says.

That Christ. Jesus. Who being in very nature. God. Did not consider equality. With God. Something to be grasped. But made. Himself. Nothing.

Nothing. Taking the very nature. Of a servant. Being made in human likeness. And being found. In appearance. As a man. He humbled himself. He humbled himself.

[15 : 23] And became obedient. To death. And then. In parentheses. Or as a dash. Or something. Paul says. Even death. On a cross. And everyone.

Knew what that meant. Therefore. God. Exalted him. To the highest place. And gave him.

The name. That is above. Every name. That at the name. Of Jesus. Every knee. Should bow. In heaven. And on earth.

And under the earth. And every tongue. Confess. That Jesus Christ. Is Lord. To the glory. Of God. The father. He's not a nothing.

Anymore. He's not a nothing. Anymore. So tonight. We remember the cross. But tonight. We're having communion. And fellowship.

[16 : 16] With a risen. Exalted. Glorious savior. Who went down. To the depths. Of the shame. To lift us up. And to bring us. With him. That's what we're doing.

Tonight. Tonight.