

## Why Did Jesus Stay On The Cross?

Introduction: As Jesus was being executed, the words came from nasty, taunting observers, “He saved others, himself he cannot save” (Matthew 27:42). Despite their sarcasm, there was some truth in what they were saying. Today, we look at the sense in which the statement was untrue and then we look the truth that was in their words. Then we ask, “What does it mean to us?”

1. Describe the preceding events.
  - A. Early in the week, he entered the city to cheers of a crowd.
  - B. After raising Lazarus from the dead, he is marked as one for death.
  - C. He was betrayed and arrested as a common criminal.
  - D. The cheerers had become the “head waggers”.
  - E. Imagine the pain in the words found in Matthew 27:37-42, 49.
  
2. Some ways in which there was no truth in their remark.
  - A. They were implying he was powerless to do anything about it.
  - B. They were denying all the things that he had done that showed whom he was. (Fulfilled prophecy; teaching; lifestyle; miracles, etc.)
  - C. His not saving himself could easily bring into question whether he had actually helped the ones that his followers said he had helped.
  - D. He could have come down to make a point of his power, but that would have been opposed to the reason he had to stay there.
  
3. Some ways in which their remark was truthful.
  - A. If he were to save himself, he would not have been able to save others.
  - B. He was the “sacrificial lamb” that had the capability to save us from the judgment of a just and righteous God.
  - C. Consider the consequences if had accepted their challenge.
  - D. He had to die that you and I might live.
  
4. How should his decision to remain affect our behavior?
  - A. If you are not a Christian, you should know that the very best that heaven could do to save you from your sins was done.
  - B. To the non-Christian: Consider an illustration to show the importance of not forgetting what was done for you.
  - C. To the Christian: To truly live we must die. John 12:24
  - D. To the Christian: Self-sacrifice and service is what God wants. Mark 8:34
  - E. To the Christian: Hear a story of a truly selfless man.

Conclusion: I am convinced that Jesus left for us the model for our lives when he chose to accept his death. He knew that was his purpose. Until we accept the power in that example, we will never fulfill our true reason for being here. I close with the words from

an anonymous author, "Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul. Love is the only angel who can bid the gates unroll". We must defeat ourselves to win life's war.