

NEED A BIGGER CROSS
Sermon Series: "Faces at the Cross"
March 1, 2017 Mark 15: 16-26 & 37-39
The Church of the Covenant

Tonight's Communion meditation, NEED A BIGGER CROSS, kicks off Pastor Kay and my sermon series in Lent and Holy Week entitled "Faces at the Cross". We will be exploring those faces that surrounded the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary that fateful day of Good Friday. This sermon title came from our own wonderful Building Superintendent, Ralph Farabee, as we were discussing the positioning of the cross in the chancel area tonight. We were talking about how we will at the end of the service come forward and nail all our sins to the cross symbolizing how at Calvary all our sins were taken away by Jesus' blood when our sin was nailed to the cross. Ralph smiled and said: "NEED A BIGGER CROSS". Yes, Ralph you are right; for all of our sins to be nailed there we do indeed NEED A MUCH LARGER CROSS...for not only our sins are nailed there; but indeed all the sins of the world, all that ever have been, and all the sin that shall ever be. NEED A BIGGER CROSS...

I then got to be thinking about our text for tonight. It is where the soldiers are mocking Jesus before they cruelly crucify Him. And they take some terrible thorns, with long spikes, and braid them together into a mock crown and mash them down onto the brow of the Savior of the world. Mark describes it thusly: "*And plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on him (on Jesus)*" (Mark 15: 17) The thorns prophetically are the symbols of our sin. After Adam and Eve sin and are kicked out of the Garden of Eden one of the curses that follow them is "*Thorns infest the ground*" (Genesis 3: 18) Wherever they go the prickly weeds of their sin follow them. The thorns are the symbols of their sin. The crown of thorns thrust into the head of Jesus are representations of our sin cast on Jesus at the cross. His crown was also His cross. His Kingly crown was our sin. Only the Lord of Lords and King of Kings could have bourn our sin for us. His regal majesty and Kingly powers could only bear our sin on His own brow.

But they needed A BIGGER CROWN OF THORNS. Because that crown of thorns couldn't possibly be big enough to equal all our sin. And by the way, they NEED BIGGER NAILS. Because there aren't enough nails large enough to equal or to truly represent our sin. And by the way, they NEED A BIGGER SPEAR. Because it was our sin that pierced the side of Jesus, that pierced the heart of love that sent Jesus into our world. NEED A BIGGER CROWN. NEED BIGGER NAILS. NEED A BIGGER SPEAR. NEED A BIGGER CROSS. For all our sin. For all the sin of the world. For all our sin to be nailed there we NEED A BIGGER CROSS...

So what face shall we focus upon tonight? What face at the cross will we consider? I say we look at the face of our Lord and Savior Jesus. I say we look up into that wonderful face. I say we dare not blink nor turn away. I say we had best look Jesus right in the eyes tonight. I say we better see the blood running down his face from His head pierced by the crown of thorns. I say we better see Him as the bruised reed bruised for our iniquity. I say we better look at His face and that crown of thorns and hope to God that cross is big enough to hold all our sins tonight.

And when we look into the face of Jesus, what do we see? We see love and mercy written there. We see kindness in the eyes of a Savior who loves us. Passion and pain mixed with love. As the blood flows mingled down over His forehead and into His eyes and down His chin, as we realize it is our sin that has plaited the crown of thorns, and nailed His hands and feet, and pierced His great heart of love...as we look into the face of Jesus...all we can see is wondrous love written there...all we can see is the love of God on the face of Jesus...the glory of God in the face of Jesus...

Because, beloved, there may not be a cross large enough to hold our sin and guilt. But O, the heart of Jesus is big enough to hold our sin. We may NEED A BIGGER CROSS...but Jesus does not NEED A BIGGER HEART to bear our sin...Look into the face of Jesus tonight. Look there and see the wondrous love of God written there. Amen and Amen.

By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, Pennsylvania
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!