

Greg Locke: The Truth of Christ's Affliction Before the Cross

For many Christians, the immediate pain of what Jesus felt upon the cross comes to mind when they think of His crucifixion. Yet, the reality is He experienced an excruciating amount of pain before He ever found His way to the cross.

In a message on the brutality that Jesus went through, Pastor Greg Locke of Global Vision Bible Church in Mount Juliet, Tennessee, discussed the physical torment Christ went through on our behalf.

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Reading from the American Medical Journal, Locke said, "When the whips would strike the flesh instead of leaving a nice clean laceration, they would dig deeply into the flesh, and they would stay. The flogger would then have to pull the whips out and tore chunks of flesh off with it when it sections of flesh are completely torn off of the bone. After several blows, the back would be so shredded that parts of the spine would be exposed."

As this flogging would continue, even the bowels would be open for all to see.

This flogging matches up perfectly with the 39 lashes that Jesus received on our behalf. "By His stripes, we are healed," isn't just some mantra to be sung because we want to receive healing for something. It's the kind of flogging, and torture, that Jesus went through before the cross that any one of us

would have died on the spot from the pain of having our internal organs exposed to the elements, our flesh being torn and ripped out.

Not only did Jesus experience the torment of this flogging, but He was mocked and made to wear a crown of thorns that pierced through His skull.

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John 19:2-3 reminds us, "The soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put a purple robe on Him. They said, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' And they hit Him with their hands."

This brutally beaten Jesus was beyond physical repair. And through this torture, the people screamed for Him to be crucified, allowing—wanting—a murderer to run free instead. The reality is this: Jesus was beaten mercilessly without reason. God Himself was mocked and murdered all for the sake of the world. Yet, this image of a God who went through torture on our behalf is not one that we readily see American Christianity.

"We have been so damaged by our little pictures that we hang on our wall," Locke said. "Our little graven images of a fake, silly Jesus, an Americanized Jesus, a Westernized, white hippie on a cross. Nonsense. What blasphemy we've taught the church."

As we head into the Easter season, let us pause and reflect on the entirety of the sacrifice that Jesus offered up for us. He received the brutal beating, the one that would lead to the certain death that we deserved. Praise be to Him for giving us the victory we didn't, and could never, earn.

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Abby Trivett *is a marketing copywriter and coordinator for Charisma Media.*