

Descent Into Hell

Scripture Reading — Matthew 27:45-50

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Matthew 27:46 —

Many of my memories from being in college some 30 years ago have become a blur. But I remember well a chapel talk once delivered by my sociology professor. He reminded us that whenever we pray "Lord, forgive my sins," we are really asking our Savior to "go to hell" for us. Is grace cheap to God? One cynic on his deathbed has been quoted as saying, "I love to sin. God loves to forgive. Truly the world is admirably arranged." The hellish cry of our Savior on the cross, however, calls such arrogance to account. Only his journey through the agonies of hell makes our forgiveness possible. As Isaiah 53:6 reminds us, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." But Christ's journey into the pit strengthens my resolve to follow him. I can no longer be careless about my disobedience when each cutting word and selfish deed cost Jesus so much. My petty anger and constant selfishness had staggering consequences for Christ. For Jesus, the words "Lord, forgive me" meant a terrible journey. But because Jesus made that journey for me, I will not have to take that road. Regardless of how tough life gets, hell is not on my itinerary. My life is lived in my Lord's embrace.

Prayer

Lord, forgive me for overlooking how much it cost you to bring forgiveness. Your grace is not cheap. Inspire me to be thankful for all you have endured for me. Through Jesus, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#)

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