

## Love Hurts

Jesus' suffering was all about **our pardon** (our forgiveness).  
God's justice required that payment for sin be made.  
And God's love made that payment for sin. (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)

### Jesus died so that God could forgive sins.

#### 1. Sin costs.

##### Option 1: Make the person pay (suffer) for what he did.

- A. What works with this option?
  - ✓ On one level it **covers** your costs.
  - ✓ It may serve a **deterrent** to such actions in the future, for the perpetrator or for others.
- B. What are some possible problems with this option?
  - ✓ Sometimes the perpetrator does **not** have the resources to cover the costs.
  - ✓ Sometimes the motive for demanding payment is **revenge**.
- C. When we think of God and us, the offended Person is the holy Creator to Whom we own obedience. And He says in the Bible that the offense is so great that we have **nothing** with which to pay. (Romans 6:23)
  - ✓ Can God maintain His just character, and simply look the other way, and let sin slide, because He loves us?
  - ✓ Option one doesn't work so well for us because the debt of sin is **too great** for us to pay.

##### Option 2: Forgive the person.

##### Don't make him pay for what he did; bear the cost yourself.

- A. What works with this option?
  - ✓ Forgiving someone **freeing**.
  - ✓ Does forgiving mean that you deny that what was done was wrong or that it hurt you?
  - ✓ Does forgiving mean that you do not hold someone accountable, that you never confront them with what they did?
- B. What are some possible problems with this option?
  - ✓ Forgiveness is a form of **suffering**.  
The forgiver absorbs the other person's debt onto and into himself instead of taking it out on the other person.
  - ✓ In this sense, forgiveness **hurts** the forgiver.
  - ✓ When you understand forgiveness this way, you begin to understand the cross. God went to the cross to **absorb** the price of our sin into Himself.

#### 2. Love absorbs the cost of sin.

- A. When you forgive, you absorb the other person's debt onto and into yourself instead of taking it out on the other person. This hurts you.
- B. You see this in the incarnation, when God became human in the person of Jesus Christ. Yes God became man so as to identify with mankind, to represent humanity on the cross, to die as one of us for the sins of all of us. But don't miss the expression of **love** in the incarnation. (1 Ptr 2:24)
- C. Jesus suffered *for us* and *with us*. (See Keller, Jesus The King)
  - ✓ He suffered *for us* in that He paid for our sins by dying in our place. In so doing He **satisfied** the demands of God's justice.  
*The result of the Cross is the costly forgiveness of sins.* Justice wins.
  - ✓ He suffered *with us* in that He voluntarily experienced human suffering and injustice. He **identified** with the oppressed of the world. He experienced and absorbed all the hits and hurts that we do in this life.  
*The pattern of the Cross is the reversal of this world's values.* Mercy triumphs.

#### 3. God restores us to relationship with Himself and to function according to His design.

- A. God's goal was to reconcile with us. (1 Peter 3:18)
  - ✓ He restores us to the **friendship** with Himself for which He created us.
  - ✓ He restores us to **function** according to God's design, now and forever.
- B. His resurrection is promised to us.
  - ✓ Physical, bodily resurrection is **restoration** to the creation design.
  - ✓ Living forever forgiven and forever friends with God in the new heavens and earth. Eden restored. (Rev. 21:1-6; 22:1-5).

*Message:*

*Sin costs. Love absorbs. And God restores.*

#### So What? Now What?

- The pattern of Jesus' life and death is seen in our lives:

Substance, not vanity.	Generosity, not greed.
Humility, not pride.	Purity, not immorality.
Peace, not fear.	Hope, not despair.
Purpose, not boredom.	Primary, not peripheral.
Forgiveness, not bitterness.	
- God says, "I've paid for your sin. Come get forgiven and restored."  
What do you say?  
*"Yes Lord, I accept Your sacrifice in my place. Forgive me. Restore me."*