



APRIL 2007

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It had to have been a difficult and wrenching time for Jesus. For here He was just a few days before He would give up His life for these hero happy people. You know, after all, that's who was in this crowd. It was what today we celebrate as Palm Sunday. All seemed well by the sounds and sight of the crowd. It seemed as though this was it. Here was the King coming and being greeted by His subjects. What greater honor could any King want? Jesus was entering the city of Jerusalem. Though He had been here many times before, this time would be the last. He

Butler Street CME Church
23 Jesse Hill, Jr., Drive, SE
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone 404.659.8745
FAX 404.581.0145

www.butlerstreetcmechurch.org

PASTOR'S *Perspective*

was greeted with tumultuous cheers, loud Hosannas, palm and olive branches strewn everywhere and throngs of people were present with the same type of energy that we might use today to greet a rock star or maybe even the president.

His entire ministry had come to this one day. Here He was in the tension of a great and jubilant crowd but by week's end the noise and excitement of this same crowd would turn to ugly taunting, jesting, jeering and condemnation. Their cry would now be Crucify Him, Crucify Him! What a long way this would be from Hosanna in the Highest! But then that's what Jesus was sent to endure. He gave up the royal courts of glory, though but for a while, to endure the raunchy and ragged corridors of earth. This is what the writer to the church of the Philippians must have meant when it is recorded "but made of Himself no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of a cross!" Isaiah said it this way; "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities by His stripes are we healed" Ah, there it is! My healing could not have come. Your healing could not have come. Our healing and wholeness, free from the grip of sin, could

Anthony M. Alford, Sr., Pastor

never have been made available if He had not endured the cross.

The Cross of Calvary has been called many things and these things and symbols have been debated for centuries. In one such expression, one writer says it was the place where "I first saw the light [and the light was so great] and the burdens of my heart rolled away." Yet another writer says that the cross was "the emblem of suffering and shame but then hastens to add but I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain." The cross of Calvary is for far more than an emblem of suffering and shame. The Cross of Calvary represents life and liberty and the pursuit of a life filled with peace and power over our own failures and undoing. In fact in his letter to the Corinthians the Apostle Paul says it this way: "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

I want to say then that the cross is the power of God at work for us. As the beneficiaries of Christ having remained obedient unto death, we see the Cross of Calvary as our salvation. It is the place of our liberty being purchased. In the words of Fanny Crosby it is indeed "A precious fountain, free to all a healing stream!" Thank God for the Cross of Calvary.