

The Great Ransom (Mark 10:32-45)
The Greatness of the Cross pt. 1
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THE BIG IDEA

The death of Jesus was a Great Ransom to free us from our captivity to sin, evil, and death. The cross does for us what we could not do for ourselves, shows us God's love, demonstrates God's commitment to conquer evil, and reminds us that God's victory comes in unexpected ways.

OPENING

- What is your first or most significant memory of seeing a cross or crucifix?¹

DIGGING DEEPER

- Read Deuteronomy 21:22-23 and Galatians 3:13. Why would the crucifixion of Jesus be a “stumbling block” for Jewish people?
- Read 1 Corinthians 1:17-18. What is the relationship between the good news and the cross? How is the message of the cross described here?
- How does Jesus redefine greatness in Mark 10:32-34? How is this different than how our world defines greatness?
- Theologians sometimes call this the “Ransom View” of the atonement: *“The view that through human sin people rightfully belong to, or come under, the authority of Satan and that to remedy this situation God offered his Son as a ransom in*

¹A crucifix is a representation of Jesus on the cross.

exchange for humankind. But because Jesus could not be kept in hell, he rose on the third day, thereby causing Satan to lose those he held captive."² This is not the only image the Bible uses to explain the cross, but it is an important one. This is the image most emphasized by the Christian church for the first 1,000 years of church history. What questions does this idea raise for you?

- This view is also sometimes called *Christus Victor* (Latin for *the Victorious Christ*) view. How does John 12:31-33 and Colossians 2:15 present the cross as a victory for Christ?

PUTTING IT TO WORK

- Spend some time in silent reflection this week, inviting God to show you where you are still living in captivity to sin. Spend at least 15 minutes doing this. What does God reveal to you during this time? Make a list of what he reveals and keep it on our phone or in a journal throughout the season of Lent.
- Identify one area where you see evil at work in our world today. Spend time asking God to show you how victory might come in unexpected ways in that area.

PRAYER REQUESTS

²Stanley Grenz, "Ransom Theory of the Atonement," in *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (InterVarsity Press), p. 99.