

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE 3 Nails, 3 Crosses, 3 Days

SERIES

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SYNOPSIS Easter Sunday speaks to us in 3 important ways.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ 3 NAILS, 3 CROSSES, AND 3 DAYS

Here we are on Easter Sunday, one of the most important days of the Christian faith. Easter is all about the death and resurrection of Jesus, by which the penalty for sin was paid, and the pathway to salvation was paved. Today, I want to focus on a series of “3’s” in the Easter story.

Many numbers in the Hebrew language tend to have a deeper meaning. Three, *shelosh* means harmony, new life, and completeness. It appears in the Bible 467 times, fewer than the number seven, but more than most other symbolically numbers. For example, there were three patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There were three gifts from the Wise Men – gold, frankincense and myrrh. And so on. But there’s more... Sometimes three is used as what is called an emphatic Semitic triplet to describe the intensity of something. God is not just holy. He is holy, holy, holy.

Later, we’ll talk about the significance of Third-Day patterns.

But, first, let’s talk about the **3 NAILS**. After his unjust trial and conviction, Jesus was brutally beaten with a cat of nine tails, which often killed the victim. But Jesus survived. He was also beaten mercilessly and had his beard plucked out. As well, he had a garland of thorns jammed upon his head. By the time he was at the place of his crucifixion, he was a bloody pulp of a man. Yet, he survived and there was more to come.

He was not tied to the cross as some movies have depicted it. He was nailed to the cross with Roman spikes. Our Lord was impaled through the hands and feet and firmly attached to that cross. Jesus was literally nailed to that cross. But there were also three elements nailed to that cross as well...

☞ On the one hand, our **Sin was nailed to the cross.**

1 Peter 2:24 CSB

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree...

Colossians 2:14 NLT

He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

☞ On the other hand, our **Shame was nailed to the cross.**

Galatians 3:13

When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing.

Hebrews 12:2

Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame.

Between the two nails in his hands, he covered us completely. All our sins and all our shame were paid for at the cross. I think many believers readily accept the fact that our sins were covered, but aren’t so sure about the shame. But, it’s true. He paid the full price for both, our sin and our shame.



☞ Then, with the nail through his feet, Jesus stood in as our **Substitute, nailed to the cross**. He suffered the punishment and paid the penalty that we should have experienced.

Isaiah 53:5

But he was pierced for *our transgressions*, he was crushed for *our iniquities*; the punishment that brought *us* peace was on *him*, and by *his* wounds *we* are healed.

2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT

God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for *our sin*...

Jesus was our **Substitute**, covering our **Sin** and **Shame** when he was nailed to that cross.

And, in the full story, there were not only three nails; there were also **3 CROSSES**. Jesus was hung on a cross between two others. Each cross also represents something significant for us.

☞ The thief to the left of Jesus is the **Cross of Rejection**. This man hurled insults at Jesus and questioned his claims. “If you’re really the Messiah, save yourself and save us.” He had a **distorted view of Jesus**. He was in **denial** of his own condition, and he was **deceived** by his own heart and attitude. Jeremiah 17:9 talks about the heart being deceitful above all other things. The modern idea encouraging you to follow your heart is all wrong. Your heart and your emotions will lie to you. Many people fall into this category of deception and denial, with a distorted view of who Jesus really is – and they end up rejecting him.

☞ But, on the other side of Jesus was the thief on the **Cross of Reception**. This man started in the same attitude as the other and initially **insulted** Jesus right along with him and the crowd. (Matthew 27:44). But somewhere along the line, he had a change of perspective and broke away from the attitude of the other thief. He came to the point where he **feared** the Lord. In Luke 23:40, he realized that he was being punished justly for his own sins, but realized that Jesus had done nothing wrong. He even asked Jesus to remember him in the Lord’s kingdom. Jesus replied, “today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43). This man **conceded his own guilt, called upon the Lord, and ultimately, collected the promise. He went from jeering to fearing to revering the Lord**. This is the way to be saved.

☞ Then, we come to the middle cross, upon which our Lord was crucified – the **Cross of Redemption**. This is where justice met mercy. On this cross we see the **penalty for sin** in the brutality of the crucifixion. But, we also see the **passion of our Lord**. He loved us so much that he took our place, suffering in our stead. And, because of all of this, we can have **peace with God**. Isaiah 53:5 says the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

On the Cross of Redemption, the perfect Lamb of God was sacrificed. He tasted death for every person (Hebrews 2:9) and his blood was shed for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:28).



🔊 (click now to start music) He took our place and we're saved by his grace. When his blood stained the cross, he paid the full cost, so that we might be saved.

Song: His Blood Stained the Cross

So, there were 3 nails which covered our sin and shame through our substitute, Jesus. And, there were 3 crosses, representing some who reject Christ and some who receive Christ, because he is our redemption.

But, there were also **3 DAYS** which speak to us today...

We've already seen the significance of "3's" in the bible, but the significance of 3 days is even more impressive...

- On the third day — Abraham looked up and saw Mount Moriah from afar, where he would offer his son as a sacrifice to God. (Genesis 22:4-5)
- On the third day — Pharaoh released his chief cupbearer from death-row. (Genesis 40:20-21)
- On the third day — God descended to Mount Sinai in fire and the people met with God before he revealed The Ten Commandments to Moses. (Exodus 19:16-19)
- On the third day — After coming to the river and preparing themselves, the Israelites crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. (Joshua 1:11; 3:2)
- On the third day — after asking God for release, King Hezekiah was healed of his fatal disease. (2 Kings 20:5)
- On the third day — After fasting, Esther entered the palace to thwart a death plot against her people. (Esther 4&5)
- On the third day — Jonah was freed from the belly of the fish. (Jonah 1)

And, after Jesus was nailed to the cross and shed his blood for us, he was in the grave for three days. But, he didn't stay there. This is what separates Jesus from all other religious and spiritual leaders throughout history. **Jesus rose from the grave.**

🔊 And, because of his third-day **resurrection**, we can be **released from death-row**, be healed and **restored**. We now have access to the Promised Land and can be **reunited with God**. Because of his third-day resurrection, we can also rise again and enter the palace of the King of kings, since we are freed from the penalty of sin.

The entire story of Easter is Good News. Jesus paid the price we could never pay. But his resurrection is the ultimate Good News. Because he's alive forevermore, we can also live for all eternity in the presence of God. Jesus died for us, but that's not all – **he's alive and well today!**

Song: He's Alive (David)