

## Mark 15:33-34 (NLT2)

*At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"*

We have all seen and maybe even have paintings of the cross, or three crosses, with this beautiful sunset and a gleaming light behind it. We will even add scripture to this picture and post it on social media, or hang it on our walls, which is fine. But have you ever thought that these pictures are not true? There was no perfect cross, all smooth and straight and perfectly cut with nice square edges, but rather it was more like splintered beam of wood and was full of blood from the one that was crucified on it or may have been used for numerous crucifixions. The reason for the splintered wood is to cause added pain to the one hanging on it as the splinters would dig deep into the back as well as the back of the legs and arms and head.

Now this is not an image that we want to see, or even think about, because if we saw the true cross that Jesus hung on, we would realize that it was not a pretty sight as it may have bits of flesh and blood all over it. And we do not want to see the cross that way, so in a sense we whitewash it (Paint over it) to hide all those imperfections and ugliness of the cross to make it more pleasing to the eye.

So when you think about that, think about this. Are we watering down what Jesus truly went through on the cross for us by having these false images of a beautiful cross, a with a pretty sunset behind it and a silk purple cloth draped over it? I don't know about you, but when I see that, yes it reminds me that Jesus died on the cross for all of our sins, but it also waters down the horrendous death that He died for us.

Scripture tells us.

† **Hebrews 12:2-6** *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*  
*For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:*  
*"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."*

I wonder if we truly "*consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.*" which means to stop remembering that picture of the cross with a beautiful sunset behind it, and remembered ALL that the Lord Jesus

endured on the cross for our sins; if we would have a closer and deeper relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ? Because if we try and make the cross a pretty thing to look at, are we also making our sins a pretty thing that He died for on the cross? The things that Jesus went through on the cross was not a pretty picture, so let's not sugarcoat what our Savior went through on the cross for us all.

- † **Hebrews 12:2-4** *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.*
  
- † **Acts 5:41** *So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.*