

Billy Connolly's Crown of Thorns

By Pastor Jack Glass



Bible Reading: Mark 15 :17-20

17 :And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head

18 :And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 :And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.

20 :And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

In the verses we have just read, we notice a three-fold mockery of Jesus Christ; The soldiers mocked.

A. His Crown B. His Claim C. His Clothes.

First they mocked His crown by crushing the four inch spilled crown of thorns into His scalp and by spitting in His face. This was a sign of their hatred of His kingship and denial of His Lordship.

Secondly they mocked His claim to worship by bowing before Him in mock homage and crying 'Hail King of the Jews.

Thirdly they mocked His clothes by dressing Him in a mock purple robe and by laughing at His appearance.

Today we see Jesus again in the guard room as an object of contemptuous jest, only on this occasion it is in Connolly's guard room where he and his ribald supporters in derision crown the Saviour and mock His crown, claim and clothes. In his skit on the crucifixion of Christ, Connolly does just that to the pleasure of his audience.

Connolly mockingly describes Christ's Crown as a JAGGY BUNNIT and in doing so unleashes all his pent up hatred of Christ and His Kingship. The mock crowning of Christ with the crown of thorns was nothing to laugh about but, on the contrary, a moment of great agony for the Son of God. As the crown of thorns was crushed wickedly into His head He must have suffered excruciating pain. Don't forget that these thorns would probably be four inches long. See Christ as the blood from these wounds flows down His face to congeal with the filthy spittle of the mob. Truly, bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place condemned He stood, sealed my pardon with His blood, Hallelujah, what a Saviour. Connolly re-enacts this horrible mockery of the Son of God.

Connolly also mocks Christ's Claim by calling Him the BIG YIN. What a scornful title for the Lord of Glory. Here Connolly joins the ribald soldiery in their mock worship as they cry 'Hail, King of the Jews'. We shall see as we proceed that Connolly takes a fiendish delight in mocking the deity of Christ. He mocks Jesus on the cross and depicts Him as saying to His Father 'Da, gi'es a brek'. This blasphemous buffoon of the baser sort would turn the solemn scene of our Lord's crucifixion into a comedy. Our Lord cried 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me' and we should thank the Father that He forsook His Son for our sins that He might say to us 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee

Connolly thirdly mocks the Clothes of Christ by referring to our Lord's LONG DRESS AND CASUAL SANDALS. This mockery makes the Lord look rather effeminate and is inserted to make our Lord a laughing stock. So Connolly here joins the scornful crowd of soldiers who mocked the dress of Jesus and joins in their humiliation of Him. The sinless Christ must have suffered extreme humiliation when He was stripped naked by the soldiers, and Connolly joins in this humiliation by depicting Christ in Y-front underwear Surely such sacred things should be treated with the utmost reverence and not turned into burlesque. As the hymn writer says 'O sacred head once wounded with grief and pain weighed down How scornfully surrounded with thorns thine only crown. How pale art thou with anguish with sore abuse and scorns How does that visage languish which once was bright as morn'. If Jesus Christ had been an impostor then He would have deserved to be mocked, but Christ was genuine' Truly this was the Son of God What pain Connolly's blasphemy must bring to the heart of God the Father who said of His Son 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased'. This is no Hitler Connolly is mocking. This is the Son of God. Connolly begins his skit by painting a scene in a pub called The Saracen's Head Inn in Gallowgate, not Galilee (he says that there was a printer's error in the Bible and that it was in Gallowgate and not Galilee that the Last Supper was held. He mockingly comments that this pub was near the Cross, ostensibly a reference to Calvary. This he finds highly amusing. Many of us can thank God for the day we were found near the cross and we can say 'JESUS KEEP ME, NEAR THE CROSS there's a precious fountain, Free to all a healing stream flows from Calvary's mountain'. In this pub the disciples are pictured as being involved in a drunken orgy. Tearing lumps out o the Mother's Pride... (this is a reference to a well known make of bread and is a mockery of the communion bread, which speaks of our Lord's broken body). The drunken state of the disciples is a mockery of the communion wine and is an attack on the precious blood of Christ of which the wine is a symbol. So the solemn feast of the Last Supper is blasphemously depicted as a drunken orgy. Connolly should thank God that He is a long-suffering God, for only this prevents Him from striking down this blasphemous buffoon. Yet Connolly continues in his blasphemy despising the riches of God's goodness and long-suffering not realising that the goodness of God is leading him to repentance. When Jesus Christ was crucified for sin, the men in His day mocked Him though He came to die for sinners. Alas, such great love is still treated with contempt and rewarded with blasphemy There are three things I want to say

I want to draw your attention to Connolly's Crown of Thorns that he has weaved to crush into the Saviour's scalp.

1: The first is **The THORN of the MOCKERY OF THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.**

2: The second is **The THORN of the MOCKERY OF THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST.**

3: The third is **The THORN of the MOCKERY OF THE CONQUEST OF CHRIST.**

The THORN of the MOCKERY OF THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

Connolly mocks the Character of Christ in the following points:

CHRIST'S DEPORTMENT... He pictures Christ entering the pub 'steamin, haudin oan tae the table'. In other words the inebriated Christ has to sit down because He cannot keep His feet. Of course there is nothing new in this blasphemy. The same was said in the gospel. In Matthew 11:19 Christ said 'The son of man came eating and drinking' they say 'Behold a gluttonous man and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners'. You see the same lie was used almost 2,000 years ago, to say that Christ was drunk is to say that Christ was a sinner for drunkenness is a sin. This then is an attack on the person of Christ. So any Christian who finds Connolly's skit on the crucifixion funny is laughing at the denigration of the deity of the Lord. Shame on you for laughing at your Lord being dishonoured. Thank God that He was a friend of publicans and sinners and that by His death He died for our sins. Because of this we can sing 'There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains'.

CHRIST'S DRESS... This is also mocked as we have already remarked. One cannot help but feel that there is something more sinister behind Connolly's description of our Lord's dress. When he describes our Lord as wearing a LONG DRESS AND CASUAL SANDALS is there a hint that the Lord was effeminate? We hope that this is not another blasphemous attempt to depict our Lord as a transvestite or a homosexual. As we have already stated, here is Connolly mocking, like the soldiers in our New Testament passage the dress of Jesus, and clothing the Lord in the garments of shame and derision.

CHRIST'S DEEDS... According to Connolly, as the Lord enters the pub He says, 'Im nackered daein aw they miracles. Look at aw they punters walking about ootside wi' beds under their arms'. Earlier in the skit he mocks our Lord's miracle of turning the water into wine and thereby attacks the glory of the Lord. For in this miracle He manifests forth His glory (John 2). So the deeds of Jesus are mockingly attacked. Again we have the echo of an old satanic attack when the deeds of Jesus were attacked by saying 'He casts out devils by the prince of the devils'.

CHRIST'S DECLARATIONS... Connolly mocks the very sayings and prophecies of Jesus. In the imaginary pub scene, Christ is asked to make a speech and He says 'I'm am going to give you a prophecy'. It is then that one of the disciples asks 'Who is going to win the 3.30 race tomorrow?' Here is yet another blasphemy. Even such vulgar words as these 'Judas you get oan ma tits' are attributed to Jesus Christ. But what saith the scriptures. 'They marvelled at the wonderful words that proceeded out of His mouth'. 'Never man spake like this man'. Again this sin is similar to the sin of the soldiers in Luke 22.64 when they said 'Prophecy unto us O Christ who is he that smote thee?'

CHRIST'S DEITY... The Deity of Christ is mocked by Connolly when one of the disciples says to Jesus 'Tell us one of they stories about your father in heaven and the punters wi' the wings'. An obvious attack on the deity of Christ, and His previous existence in heaven. This is all treated as

a fairytale. **THUS THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST IS ATTACKED AND CONNOLLY ENJOYS EMBEDDING THIS THORN.**

The THORN of the MOCKERY OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION.

Here is Connolly's description of the Crucifixion. Because Christ is a joiner He is ordered by the Roman authorities to carry the cross up to the top of the hill Calvary. As He climbs the hill wearing His 'JAGGY BUNNIT' He slips on alsatian's dirt and falls to the ground. Just at that moment along comes Simon the Pieman (Simon of Cyrene) and offers to give Christ a hand. Having reached the top of the hill, Simon departs. Christ (the big yin) exhausted from His efforts, lies down on the cross to prevent His good dress from being soiled by the grass. He falls asleep only to waken and find that someone has made off with His good dress and pawned it, leaving Christ wearing only His Y-front underwear. He has also been nailed to the cross while He slept and an inscription placed above the cross says 'Mad mental rule OK' Two Roman soldiers see Him and sticks the cross with Christ impaled on it into a hole in the ground. As He hangs there, as Connolly puts it, fed up hanging around along comes this little Roman soldier and sticks a spear into Him. Christ is so angry says Connolly, that He tries to get his hand away from the cross to hook or punch the soldier. But alas His hands are nailed. He tries to get a foot away to boot him, but alas His foot is nailed so He (that is Christ) just pees on him (urinates on him). That roughly is Connolly's description of the crucifixion. **THE SUPREME BLASPHEMY.** Could this be the sin against the HOLY GHOST Has Connolly been given up to a reprobate mind? If not he is certainly in great danger. Let us pray that he has not yet crossed the Rubicon. Let me take you to Calvary and show you the true scene. Behold the Lamb of God. See from His head, His hand and feet sorrow and love flow mingled down, did ere such love and sorrow meet or thorns compose so rich a crown. See His fingers and toes curl up with pain and agony as the cruel nails pull at the tendons of His hands and feet. See His scourged back, ploughed like a field, chafe against the splintery cross. See the sun beat down with its sub-tropical heat on His totally naked body. The artists depict Christ wearing a loincloth but there was no loincloth. The sinless One suffered the great humiliation of being naked before the eyes of sinful men and women. See the wound in His side; and all the other wounds, open like lips saying I love you. And as we have said: see the crown of thorns imbedded in His scalp and the crimson streams running down His bespattered face, and say "My Jesus I love thee, I know thou art mine, for thee all the pleasures of sin I resign. I love thee for wearing the thorns on thy brow, if ever I loved thee Lord Jesus 'tis now". Think also of the spiritual sufferings when Christ was crushed beneath the chariot wheels of God's justice as the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all Truly, He loved me and gave Himself for me as my sinless substitute. I thank God for one who took my place and died as a punishment for my sins if you are a true Christian you will hate this blasphemy of Connolly and rise in red hot indignation against it and be determined to love and serve Christ all the more. The thorns are a mark of the curse placed upon Adam for his sin. The ground was to bring forth thorns and thistles because of Adam's disobedience. Christ then took our curse upon His head and Connolly delights in placing the mark of the curse there. **HE CURSES THE CHRIST.**

Connolly calls himself the **BIG YIN**; the title he gives to Christ. Who does Connolly think he is, a Messiah? Yes, he is a false prophet raised up by Satan under the cloak of comedy to blaspheme Christ and mock the gospel hoping to destroy its credibility. But better men than Connolly have tried, only to fail "Christ's name for ever shall endure' He will build His Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against' it.

3. Finally, **The THORN of the MOCKERY OF CHRIST'S CONQUEST.** That is His resurrection. His triumph over the grave, Connolly depicts 'Christ in an air raid shelter like a pun O mince with these two china's wi' wings'. Eventually he has Christ sitting on a cloud looking down, and so the trash goes on.

Let Connolly be warned. There has been a resurrection of Christ. Up from the grave Christ arose with a mighty triumph o'er His foes. He has burst the gates of hell and the day is coming when all

who are in the grave will hear His voice. Some shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation and some to the resurrection of life. Connolly faces a resurrection to damnation if he does not repent of his blasphemy and cast himself on the Saviour for mercy. The Saviour says 'him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out'. That even includes Connolly, but let him not presume on the grace of God.