GOD’S CLOSING ARGUMENT

At the end of a court trial, each side’s lawyers get to present their closing arguments in a final attempt to persuade the judge or jury to rule in their client’s favor. The goal is to leave a lasting, often dramatic impression. God technically doesn’t need to defend Himself; He’s God. Because of His position as Almighty Creator, He is truth. What He says literally defines reality, yet He chose to allow His created beings to question Him. This freedom of choice is the only way true love is possible; forced love is never true.

Unfortunately, Lucifer began a rather successful smear campaign against God’s character, first winning a third of heaven’s angels to his side (Rev. 12:4) and later winning humanity over. God appeared to have three clear options when the controversy first began: 1. Immediately destroy all rebels; 2. eradicate all created beings and restart the universe, leaving no record of prior events; or 3. let sin run its course while revealing His character so everyone can decide which side they want to stand on. God had to address the claim against His integrity and love so that sin would never return, so He chose the third option. This slow, careful method of exonerating Himself is crucial for love-based faithfulness to be the modus operandi of all creation. By allowing sin to take its course, all can see its horrific fruit. God also provided the most powerful closing argument ever made: the cross. Jesus’ death definitively addressed all lies about God’s character. For all time and for all to see, the cross established the fact that God is, and always will be, love.
inScribe

Write out Matthew 27:15—28:10 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out Matthew 27:45–54. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

Circle repeated words/ phrases/ideas

Underline words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw Arrows to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse.
Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

Why is it so important to know that Jesus was not killed by Satan, but freely offered up His life?

How does knowing that sinning is spiritually partaking in Satan’s murder plot change how you think about God’s grace?

Read more at
www.inversebible.org/GC06-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks overall seem to point to?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Knowing that Jesus’ death provides you with His pardon and power, how do you choose to live today and every day?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/GC06-4
What relationship do the following verses have with Matthew 27:15—28:10?

Mark 15:6—16:8
John 18:39—20:18
Isaiah 53
Psalm 22
Romans 3:21–26
2 Corinthians 5:21

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with the primary passage?

How does Jesus’ death impact the way you think of yourself and of others?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

What is He saying to you personally through the text of the week?

Prayer Response:

Meditate on Matthew 27:15—28:10 again and look for where Jesus is.
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the passage, what are some personal applications you are convicted of in your life?

What are some practical applications you must make in your attitude toward people who are in need of the gospel?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/GC06-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How can a person who’s heard about the cross from a young age still find wonder at such a familiar story?

How does the cross serve as God’s closing argument in the debate over His character?

Why is it significant that Jesus chose to lay down His life?

How does sinning make us complicit in Satan’s plot to murder God?

In light of the cross, how can we strive to reflect the selfless love and sacrifice that Jesus demonstrated?

Why do you think God didn’t destroy Satan after Jesus’ death and resurrection?

How was Jesus’ faith revealed at the cross?

How do you experience God’s pardon and power?

How does it feel to know that Jesus would have gone through the torture of the cross just for the potential of one person being saved?