

**MATTHEW 27:31**  
**OUT WITH YOU!**

*“And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.”*

Have you ever seen a TV show or movie, in which a visitor has made himself so unwelcome at the house of his host, that he gets his hat crumpled down on the top of his head, is shown the door, and tossed out? While lying on the ground, the door opens and his suitcase is tossed out after him, No welcome anymore! The text for today is similar. Jesus, unwelcome, is shown the way out from Pilate's chamber of justice to crucifixion.

In spite of all Pilate's efforts to conciliate the leaders of the Jews and get them to accept his verdict of “I find no fault in this man,” Pilate did not prevail. Jesus had been sent to Herod's court, but Herod sent back. Jesus had been offered as the once-a-year-released-prisoner instead of the murderer Barabbas, but the leaders instigated the crowds to ask for Barabbas. Jesus had been flogged and then humiliated with a purple robe, with a crown of thorns, and with spit; but the crowds without pity shouted, “Crucify Him, Crucify Him!” Pilate washed his own hands in front of the crowd declaring his innocence if this just man faced a lawless end, but the people shouted, “His blood be on us and on our children!” (I shudder at the magnitude of those words). Finally Pilate appealed to the Jews strong sense of nationalism, “Shall I [*a Roman*] crucify your king?” but the chief priests exclaimed, “We have no king but Caesar!” (Pilate must have muttered under his breath, “Now I've heard everything—the Jewish leaders claiming Caesar in Rome as their king!”) Pilate either had to stand up strong and make a “just” decision releasing Jesus, or be “popular” and bend to the will of the spiteful crowd saying, “Ok. He dies by crucifixion.” Pilate chose the latter.

It's hard to stand up to the emotional will of the multitude. When people get worked up about things, they do not listen to reason—whether it's law and justice, politics, voting to go on strike, or matters at church. I remember one time in college, some members of our class drew up a paper petitioning the faculty to allow underclassmen to ??something to do with cars on campus??. I didn't have a car at the time and had no desire to sign the petition. I was made to feel like an oddball, and signed it. Granted, this was not an issue of right or wrong, but how many times do you go along with the will of the crowd in order to retain your popularity or your approval from others? It can be very hard not to stand for what you know is right. Sometimes fathers cave in to children because of all the “ruckus” that will follow. Pilate chose to give Jesus the “Out with You” and reject Him.

To be rejected is no easy burden. Maybe there was a time when your name was on an election ballot for a position that you actually wanted and were very interested in filling, but you were not chosen. You were rejected. How did it feel? Or maybe you entered some other kind of contest or show, only to finish much lower than you anticipated. How did it feel? Imagine Jesus, King of kings, and Lord of lords, being shown the door by those He came to save. If that were you, would your blood be stewing or boiling inside your veins? Yet Peter tells us, *When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He did not threaten; but committed Himself to Him who judges justly. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we—having died to sin—might live for righteousness. By His stripes you were healed. (1 Peter 2:2-24).* He was willingly humiliated for your sins, that you may be exalted in Him. “I will take the door, for their sake.”

*They took off the [scarlet] robe which they had put on Him.* That robe was a mock token of “royalty.” But it had to go. It could go with Him lest it give the impression of some sort of real honor. Besides, why waste a robe like that on one about to die a scoundrel's death? The crown of thorns perhaps remained; we do not know. Many paintings show the crown of thorns still on His head when Jesus on the cross with. The crown of thorns could not be mistaken for any real “honor.” The reed/stalk/stick used for a scepter was likely discarded in the process.

*They put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.”* He would “go out” wearing His clothes. Not that those actual threads were so important, but He would leave as He came—a nothing—a criminal found guilty in court and sentenced to punishment. A criminal leaves with his guilt still clinging to him, wearing his clothes which identify him. Jesus went forth with His clothes and “His” sins. They were ours, not His; yet He went out a sinner. The Old Testament prophet Nathan spoke to King David about the everlasting kingdom to be established

by David's descendant—none other than Jesus. God said: *I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men (II Samuel 7:12-14).* Jesus would not commit iniquity! but He would be punished—for our sins. In God's eyes it was as if He Himself had committed them.

Through Jesus our robes of sin, our deep corruption of sin, have been removed. We are clothed with His robes of righteousness. *You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on [been clothed with ] Christ (Galatians 3:26-27).* Also *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels (Isaiah 61:10).* Ephesians talks about putting off the old man of sin and putting on the new man of faith and life in Christ. "Putting off" and "Putting on" are the Greek words use for clothing. Jesus was "ushered out" so that you and I through Jesus are "ushered in." Live for Him.! When you put on a new, or clean, set of clothes, aren't you a little careful about getting them dirty? The same is true in Christ. Forgiven and clean in Jesus, don't go right back to slopping in the mud, muck, and manure of this world of sin. This evening your hear again that in Jesus you are forgiven and clean. Don't go home this evening or get up tomorrow, with business as usual—same old sins. By the power of the forgiving Savior and His Holy Spirit, keep His will.

Jesus got the "Out with You!" *They led Him away to be crucified.*" Jesus was cast out of the city of Jerusalem. He would die separate from the city of God's temple and Presence. The leaders and many of the people did not want Him. Unwittingly they fulfilled the Old Testament. Do you remember the Great Day of Atonement celebrated every year in the Jewish community? That was the one day each year that the high priest was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place, that separate area of the worship tabernacle/temple, where the Ark ("box") of the Covenant was with The Ten Commandments inside and the Mercy Seat or Atonement Cover on top. On the Great Day of Atonement the chief priest would make atonement for himself and for all the people, for their sins against God and against His tabernacle. A bull would be offered for himself and its blood sprinkle on the Mercy Seat and Ark of the Covenant, the Most Holy Place, the Holy Place, and the altar Then high priest would choose two young goats by lot. The first was slaughtered and its blood, in atonement for the people, sprinkled on Mercy Seat and Ark of the Covenant, the Most Holy Place, the Holy Place, and the altar (Leviticus 16:11-24). The second goat became the scapegoat. The high priest would place both hands upon the head of the goat and confess all the sins of the people. The scapegoat would be lead away into the uninhabited wilderness, released never to return. Sins gone. In the same way, Jesus was both goats together. His blood was shed before the Father in heaven to atone for our sins. Also He was cast out of the city to die taking all our sins with Him. Likewise with other sacrifices, the blood was offered and the unused parts of the animal burned outside the camp/city. So also Jesus. *For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate (Hebrews 13:11-13).*

This passage from Hebrews goes on: *Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come (Hebrews 13:14).* Whatever scorn, whatever rejection, you have to carry on this earth for the name of Jesus, it is really no problem at all. Let them cast you out. Go out willingly. This life is temporary, fleeting, and of no lasting value. The better life, the eternal life with Him, is yet to come!

Thank Jesus for getting the "Out with You!" so that you get the "In with Him" into heaven. What can you say? "Show me the door!"

So be it! Amen!

Pastor Kanzenbach---