

## Figure A

\*Mention getting into all the Gospels tonight, instead of primarily reading from Matt 26: as we did 2 weeks ago\*. Let's start by reading **@Mark 15:20-23**. So here was Jesus on his way to Golgotha (In Latin the place is called Calvary. Also located in Luke 23:33) it was outside the city of Jerusalem about a half a mile away from where Jesus was scourged (Corporal punishment was forbidden inside the city). The reason why it was defined as "The place of skull" was because of the numerous executions that took place and as a result several skulls were left behind. It was customary for the condemned man to carry his own cross from the flogging post to the site of crucifixion just outside the city walls. He was usually naked, unless it was prohibited by local customs. Since the weight of the entire cross was well over 300 pounds only the crossbar (patibulum) was carried which weighed about 75 to 125 pounds. It was placed across the victim's neck and balanced along both shoulders. Afterwards the outstretched arms would then be tied to the crossbar (As seen in figure A). There were four soldiers alongside Jesus who were in charge of the actual crucifixion and a centurion under whom they served. During Jesus' lonesome journey to Calvary he became faint from the physical abuse that his body had endured. So much that he fell beneath the weight of the cross. A man named Simon was then called upon to help Jesus the rest of the way. Let's turn to **@John 19:17 & 18**. (Focus on the word crucified verse 18) Crucifixion practices began among the Persians. Alexander the Great introduced the practice to the Egyptians and Carthaginians (they were natives of the ancient city Carthage located in North Africa) and the Romans appear to have learned of it from them. Although the Romans did not invent crucifixions they perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment that was designed to produce a slow death with maximum pain and suffering. It was one of the most disgraceful and cruel methods of execution and usually was reserved only for slaves, foreigners, revolutionaries, and the vilest of criminals. Roman law usually protected Roman citizens from crucifixion, except perhaps in the case of desertion by soldiers. So that's just a little background on how it originated.

\*Pause for questions or comments\*

## Figure B & C

Let's turn and read **@John 19: 23-29**. So, what specifically took place during Jesus' crucifixion? First Jesus would be thrown down back first to the ground with his arms outstretched along the crossbar. Then his "hands" were nailed to the crossbar with 5 to 7 inch tapered iron spikes. In ancient times the wrist were considered to be a part of the hand. Research shows that the nails were commonly driven through the wrists rather than the palms. The reason for doing this was so that the weight of the body would have the proper support. Jesus was then lifted onto the vertical beam by the Roman soldiers and when he was secure they would proceed by nailing his feet to the cross one on top of the other. By law the victim would be given a bitter drink of vinegar wine mixed with gall as a poor attempt to numb the excruciating pain. Jesus endured so much suffering from the spikes themselves. Nerves were severed, muscle tendons were destroyed, but

this was only one of the many things our Lord had to endure on the cross.

\*Pause for questions or comments\*

#### Figure D

In addition to the excruciating pain, Jesus also experienced breathing difficulties particularly exhalation. The weight of his body, pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, would tend to fix the intercostal muscles in an inhalation state and thereby hinder passive exhalation. It is likely that this form of breathing would not suffice and that suffocation would soon set in. The onset of muscle cramps and contractions, due to fatigue would hinder proper breathing even further. Adequate exhalation required Jesus to lift his body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows and bringing in his shoulders. However, this maneuver would place the entire weight of the body on the tarsals (nerves in the foot) and would produce searing pain. Furthermore, flexing of the elbows would cause rotation of the wrists about the iron nails and cause fiery pain along the damaged median nerves. Lifting of the body would also painfully scrape his scourged back against the rough wood. As a result, each respiratory effort would become more agonizing and more tiring as time grew.

Look at EVERYTHING our Lord endured for us. He experienced betrayal, unjust trials, thirst, hunger, beatings, being mocked, being scourged, spikes being driven through his wrist and feet, breathing difficulties, JESUS ENDURED THE CROSS for each and every one of us. Q) After going through all of this what would we think of the very people who did this to us? Let's turn to **@Luke 23:33** and read what Jesus' reaction was to the very people who crucified him. Even in agony Jesus managed to ask the father to forgive them. So how do we deal with our problems on an everyday bases? Do we become easily frustrated? Are we quick to lose patience? Or maybe we just don't like it when things don't go the way we expected. Whenever we come across difficult situations in life we need to think back to the cross and the attitude our Lord had for us. **@Romans 5:8&9**, Christians must never forget that we are a part of something the Lord suffered & died for (Acts 20:28). Let's turn and read let's turn to **@Eph 2:12-16**, **@1 Peter 1:18&19**,



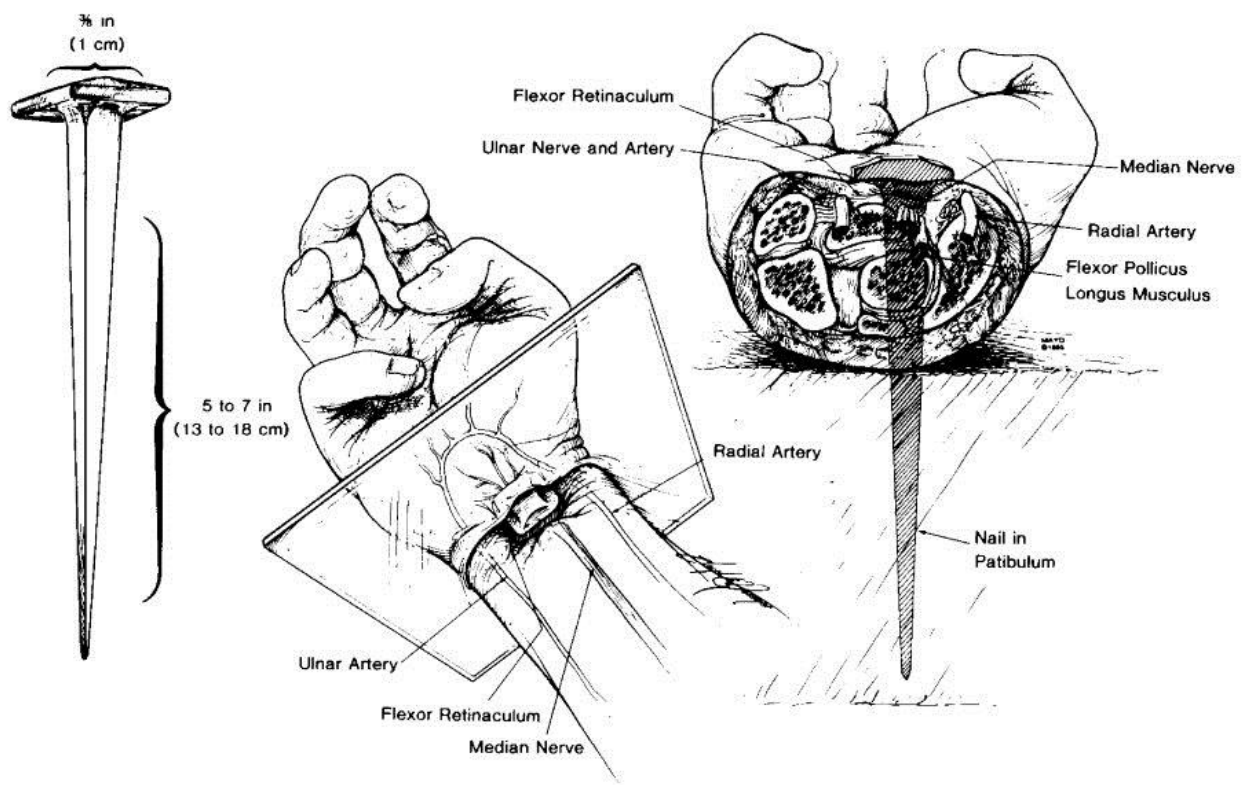


Figure B

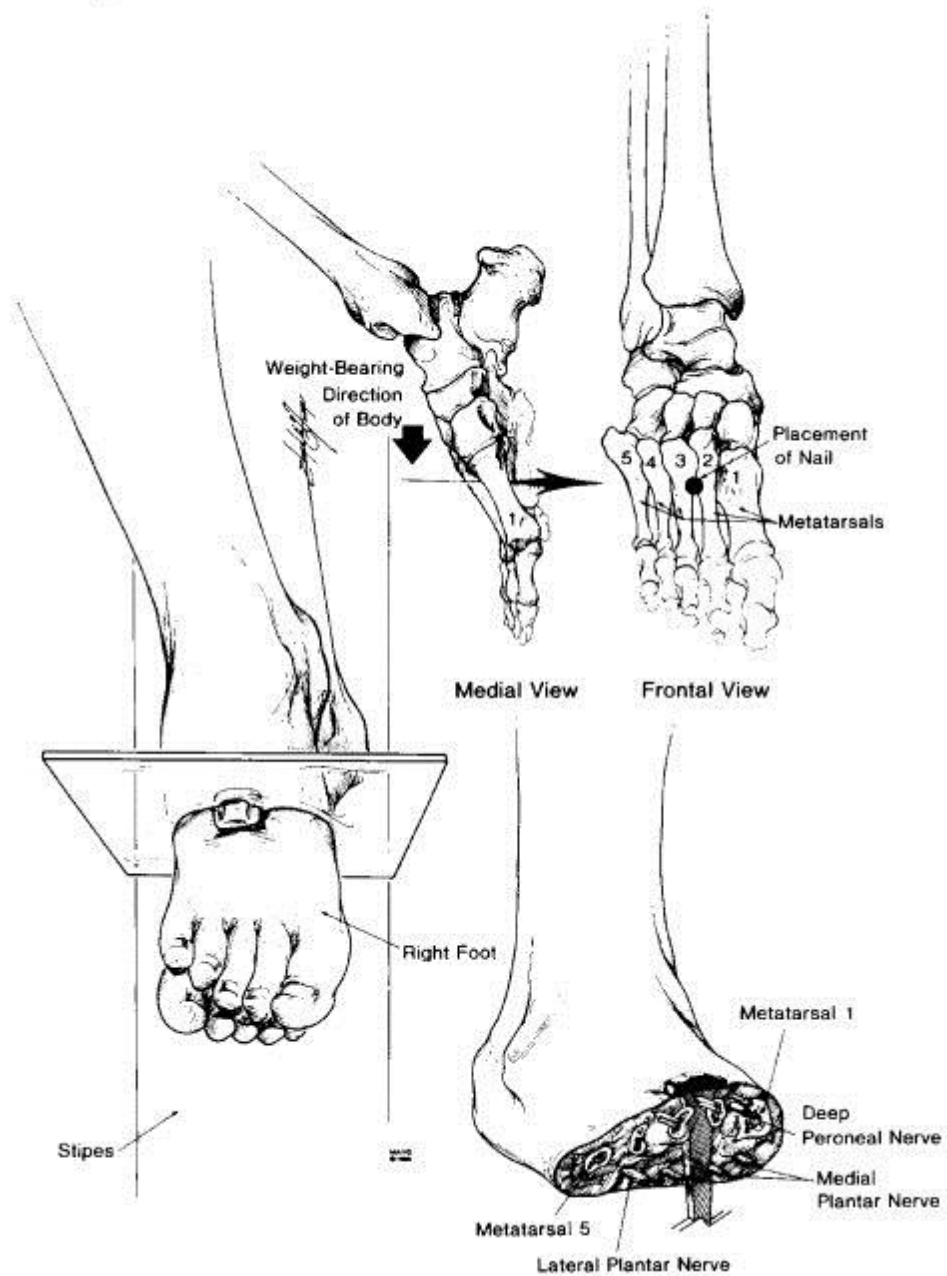


Figure C

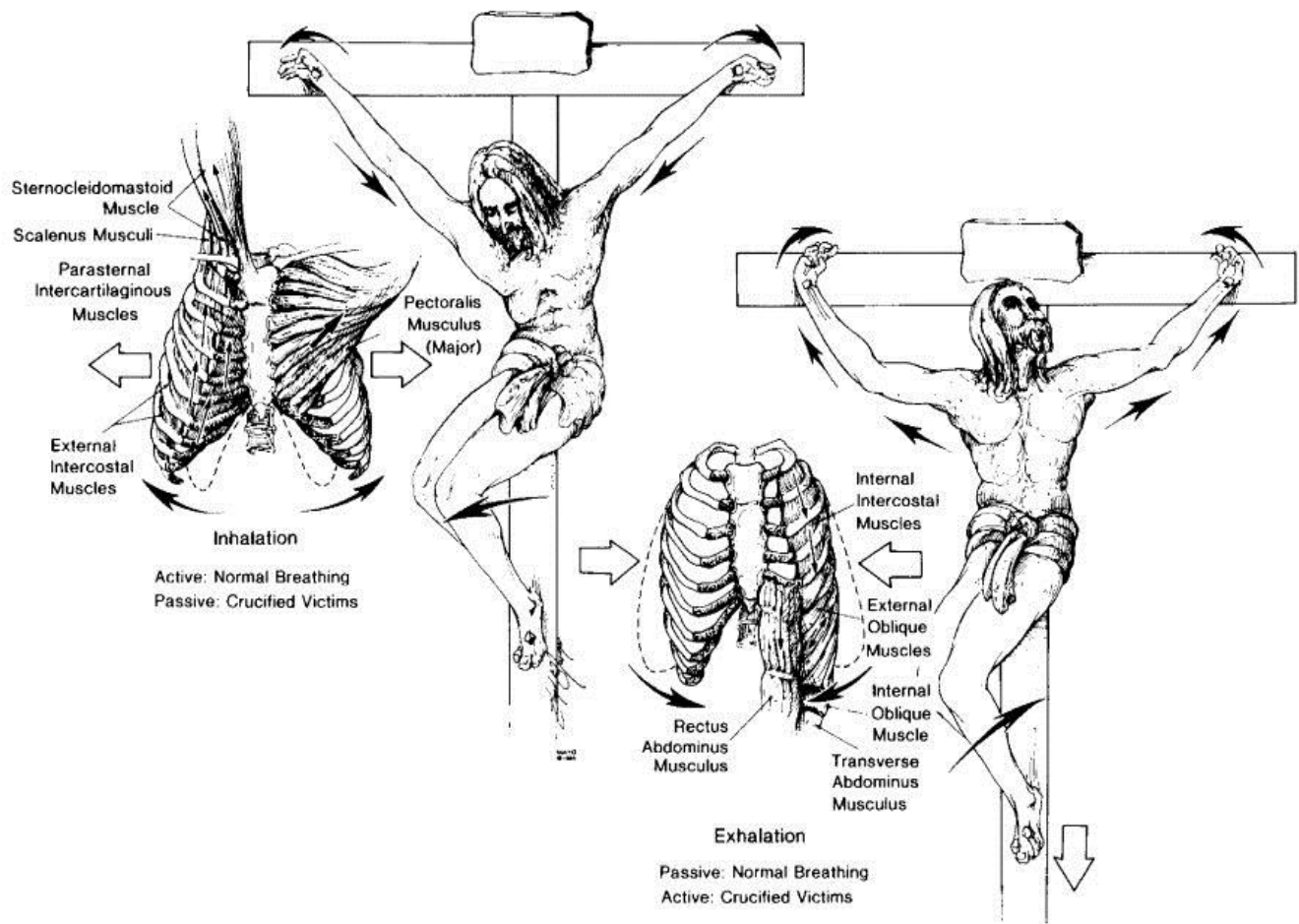


Figure D