



THE JOURNEY CHURCH

SERMON GUIDE 4.15.2022

WEEKEND OF HOPE 2022 - GOOD FRIDAY
Slaughtered In My Place

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 23:13-25

RECAP:

We gather to remember and reflect on the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Only months ago we celebrated his birth and entrance into the world at Christmas. The Advent season remembers His coming. Christmas is such a joyful time of year, we remember the great love of God for us in sending His One and only Son. But even remembering the Incarnation of the Eternal Son of God should bring to mind the things that necessitated his birth.

Matthew 1:21 ESV - *“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”*

Jesus was born into the world to save his people from their sins. The birth of Jesus reminds us that sin **MUST BE** atoned for if mankind is to be reconciled to God. And we can personalize it more than "mankind". Sin **MUST BE** atoned for if YOU or I to be reconciled to God. It all sounds warm and fuzzy in the middle of Christmas, to reflect upon the Son of God being born in a manger, but the warm, fuzzy feeling quickly evaporates under the horrible, agonizing sight of the old-rugged cross. Jesus' birth was purposed and aimed at leading him ultimately to Calvary's hill. The bloody-birth of Christ on Christmas was a precursor to his bloody-death on Good Friday. This is why he came. Jesus affirms this in **Luke 19:10** when he says, **"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."**

Yet it is important as we reflect on Good Friday and the death of Jesus Christ, not to look at this scene from the perspective of an innocent man wrongly killed, though he was certainly innocent. Many people suffer innocently in our world. Many die on a daily basis because they were the recipients of unlawful, unjust deaths. That is not the perspective we approach Good Friday with. We do not gaze upon the cross and say with tears in our eyes, "It's wrong that this happened! He did not deserve this! What an injustice!" No, we gaze upon the cross and say with tears in our eyes, "I did this. It's because of me! I'm to blame! I'm responsible!"

Scripture: **Luke 23:13-25**

V13 —We see in our text, that Pilate, the Roman Governor, calls together the chief priests, the rulers, and the crowds of people. We don't know for sure how many are there, but you have to imagine that this crowd would have been of some significance. Think about how large a following Jesus' ministry had gained. Not only that, but it is Passover time in Jerusalem, the biggest day on the Jewish calendar. The number of people gathered in Jerusalem would swell up to around 2 million people during the Passover. So we have to imagine that this crowd involved in Pilate's gathering here is fairly large.

V14-16 —Pilate assesses Jesus and declares him innocent. He is going to punish him (flog) and release him.

V18-20 —But instead of Jesus' release, they (the crowd) request someone else's release. The crowds want the death of Jesus so badly that they want Barabbas, a known murderer, granted to them. They do not want to hear Pilate's assessment, they want to see blood.

V21 — The crowds begin shouting "Crucify, Crucify, Crucify." What a terrible thing to request. To be so blood-thirsty as to want to request someone to be crucified so that you can watch them die slowly and brutally is worse than inhumane. To request crucifixion is to request to be an observer of and responsible for someone's death. There may be worse ways to die, but this was certainly not a pleasant way to die. You would essentially drown in your own blood. The act of crucifixion was a horrific instrument of death.

V22 — Pilate tries a third time to convince all who are gathered by asking them, "What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving of death." Pilate has no idea how spot on he really is. In Jesus there was zero guilt deserving of death. This was the sinless

Savior. This was the one who of all the people born in the history of man could it be said that he did not deserve the wages of sin, death. Pilate even recognizes this.

V23 — But Pilate's assessment did not sway the crowd, Scripture says, "But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed." The crowds chanted "crucify" and they did so with urgency, with venom in their voices. And their voices prevailed. Christ was handed over to be crucified.

V24-25 — So Pilate gives in to their demands and releases a man to them thrown into prison for murder and delivered Jesus over to their will. They desired that Jesus to be murdered. They were eager for the spilling of his blood. Pilate relinquishes and gives them what they desire. Jesus is sentenced to be crucified, Barabbas is released. Hours before the death of Jesus would accomplish salvation and atone for sins, we see the effects of it in this scene. The innocent (Jesus) condemned to death. The guilty (Barabbas) set free. An exchange happens here. The one with no sin is condemned. The one with sin and guilt is released. Friends, this is a picture of the gospel. We are Barabbas. Everyone of us. We are the guilty ones. We are the ones who actually deserve the sentence of death. But Jesus took the guilty verdict in our place that we might be set free.

Before we let our anger provoke us to assume that these people have done what is most unthinkable, let's remember that our mocking voices were among the scoffers that day. We were the ones to blame for this. Christ willingly accepted the plight of Pilate's verdict and took the beatings delivered to him and embraced the nails in his hands and feet for one reason, not because the crowds shouted loudly or because Pilate was weak-minded, nor because Jesus was incapable of escaping Roman punishment. Jesus could have called 10,000 angels at any moment during all these events. Remember when Peter cuts off the soldier's ear when soldiers were arresting Jesus, and Jesus stops him. There will be no fighting back. There will be no defense. There will be no attempts at vindicating himself. The innocent one, who has the power at any moment to crush all who stand against him, lets them proceed. Jesus took to the cross because our sin demanded it. Our sin required it. But His love was pleased to satisfy it. He took the beatings, mocking, and shame for us because of His great love for us.

It was the Great Love of our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that caused them to work in perfect harmony to bring forth the possibility of our redemption. The Father designed the plan for salvation and made possible by His grace the redemption of sin. The Son willingly embraced the mission from the Father and stepped out of heaven and

into history to die for our sin, to drink dry the cup of wrath from His Father. The Holy Spirit worked to empower and strengthen the Son, as well as effectually calling sinners to repentance and faith in the sacrificial work of Christ. Our wonderful and loving Triune God has worked in harmony to bring forth our redemption. This is why Jesus came to die for our sin. This is why Jesus willingly endured torture, mocking, and death - because he loved us.

Romans 5:8 (ESV) - *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) - *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Christ died for us. He was made to be sin so that we could become the righteousness of God. We are the beneficiaries and He is the benefactor. We have everything to gain, He needed nothing and gained nothing from doing it.

We may desire to blame the crowd, but friends, we were the crowd. We have crucified him. Our sin is what drove the nails. Our sin was the cause of the cat-of-nine-tails to rip the flesh from his back. Our sin is why the Father forsook His Son. Our sin is why Jesus hung suspended on a cross and DIED. Jesus came, lived, for this moment, to die for our sins. Not sin in general, for real sin. Not hypothetical sin, your sin, my sin. Are you guilty of adultery, lust, fornication before marriage? He was punished for your sexual deviancy. Are you guilty of lying, gossiping, holding bitterness or hatred in your heart, unforgiveness? He was nailed for that lie, for your gossip, because you refuse to forgive. He was treated on that cross, by His Father, the way you and I deserve to be treated for our sin.

Mark 15:16-39

When we hear Mark, the writer of this gospel account tell us of Jesus' last hours, we see quickly that this was no pleasant scene. Oh friends, don't let your familiarity with this story cause you to lose sight of how brutal the death of Christ really was. If we could hear the gasps for air and the sound of flesh being ripped from the bone as weapons of torture struck him, we would see horrendous nature of this event. If we could see the agony on his face, the blood pouring from his wounds like a slightly turned faucet, if we could hear the piercing wailing moan that he uttered in our own eardrums, would we be awakened to just how awful this the thing we call "the death of Christ" really was?

It is true that others were killed in this way as well. Crucifixion was the method of execution that the Romans used universally. Jesus was not alone in this, though he was brutally beaten even before experiencing the cross. It is also true that there have probably been more horrifying deaths experienced. Jesus' death was awful, but is probably not the worse possible execution and level of torture ever experienced, though this is not said to diminish it.

But here is why it is such a horrifying event to imagine and think about, while it may not have been the worst execution ever, and while it may have been the common form for Roman executioners to perform, what separates Jesus death from any other in history is that it was UNDESERVED. Jesus is the only person in human history who has ever lived that did not deserve to die. The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death, so if Jesus had no sin, it means that the wages of sin, death, would be undeserving for him. He is the only person who we can make this claim about. None of us deserve life. None of us deserve to be alive right now. The only thing that keeps us alive, right now in this very moment, is the fact that God allows it by His sheer mercy. We have not earned life. We are not deserving of it. We live because God so allows it. We deserve death. We have earned death. If God was to allow for us to die right now of heart- attack or car accident on the way home, we could never say that it is unfair and that God is cruel, friends the fact that any of us have breath moment-to-moment is because God allows it by His MERCY and GRACE, both the believer and the unbeliever.

If you're a believer, what you see at the cross is what you deserve from God, for eternity. Let that settle in your minds. I want you to think about this for a moment. Unrepentant sinners will spend eternity in hell, separated from God, being punished for their sin. It will never end. That is the punishment for one sinner's sin. Think about this, on the cross, Jesus atoned for the sins of his people, and absorbed the full brunt of God's wrath, that was reserved for them, an eternity's worth, in six hours one Friday. How awful must it have been?

Revelation 5:12 -- *saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"*

He was the Lamb who was slain. The word "slain" in the Greek is "sphazó." It means "slaughtered" or "butchered." Slain is used by translators because it is less violent sounding. The Lamb of God, slaughtered for your sin, butchered for your sin. In my place; condemned.

Take some time to reflect, to think about the sin in your life that brought the Savior's death. Take time to be reminded of the sinfulness of your sin. Many of us, because we have been believers for such a long time, and have tried to live a life of obedience, forget that we are still terrible sinners, when compared to the holiness of God. I don't care how long you have followed Jesus, your actions today still deserve what you observe on the cross, and more. So confess and repent tonight. Declare to the Lord your unworthiness and ask him to create in you a clean heart. Acknowledge your sin tonight before God, and ask for a greater awareness, so that you can live in constant repentance.