

Sermon Notes, March 19, 2017

The Passion of Jesus: Clothed in Christ, John 19:23-27

We're looking at the meaning of the death of Jesus through the eyes of the Apostle John, the gospel writer. *On the cross we see the words of Psalm 22 graphically fulfilled in Jesus*, and, as a result, Jesus gives us two immeasurable gifts.

1. The remarkable parallel of *Psalm 22*

This has been a mystery. Verse 24 tells us Jesus' being stripped of all his clothing fulfilled a Scripture. Most famously of all, Matthew and Mark tell us when Jesus was on the cross, at the climax or the apex of his agony, he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" which is a quotation of Psalm 22:1. Here you have Matthew, Mark, John and Jesus himself all telling us that if you want to understand the meaning of the cross, you have to look at Psalm 22. The words from this Psalm point readers to one deep reality: Jesus' life and death is fulfilled in Scripture!

Yet, up until the cross, Psalm 22 was one of the great mysteries of the Hebrew Scriptures. It's not until we get to the cross that we see the solution to what's being written in this Psalm.

If we want to understand the cross, what do we learn? Here's what we learn.

First, *Jesus' sufferings are infinite.*

Jesus cries out, "My God, my God ..." Do you know why? He's being abandoned. That's what the stripping means. That's what everything means. He's being abandoned by God. He's receiving the penalty for the sins of the world. We see Jesus Christ experiencing what we deserve.

Jesus Christ, when he was on the cross, losing the love and the face of the Father he had had for all eternity, losing a love infinitely greater than we will ever know, suffered infinitely more than you and I will ever suffer, and because of who he is, God's Son, fully God and fully man, in his suffering he is able to accomplish something infinitely

greater than any suffering we would endure. Infinite suffering is what the cross is about.

Secondly is *infinite faithfulness*.

At the cross Jesus is perfectly obedient to the Father. He's not just dying the death we should've died, being abandoned. He's also living the life we should've lived, being perfectly obedient. And through it all, both Jesus and the Father remain faithful to each other!

It matters that the incarnate Son has not abandoned humanity at the point of his suffering and death. If he had, we would still be in our sins and without hope.

It matters that the incarnate Son was abandoned by God to this death, for in doing so, he identifies with us and stands in for us.

And it matters—indeed—it makes all the difference in the world—that the relationship of purest holy love between the Father and the Son was not broken on the cross.

Thirdly, that brings *infinite redemption*.

Living the life we should've lived so when we receive Jesus, it's not just that our sins go to him, but his righteousness comes to us, not just his suffering pays for our sins, but his faithfulness becomes ours.

That's what the Bible says. "*God made him sin, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.*"

2. On the cross Jesus was giving us two immeasurable gifts

A. *First, he covers our shame.*

In the Bible and in human experience, nakedness refers to shame. On the cross Jesus Christ is being stripped naked. Hebrews 12 tells us he scorned the shame. He took the shame. Isaiah 50 says, "I did not despise the mocking and the spitting. I didn't turn my face away from it." He came to be stripped. He came to be humiliated. He came to lose all his glory. He came to lose all his honor. He was stripped. Why? So, you and I could be clothed. Salvation is about being clothed. He covered your shame. Lastly ...

B. *He puts us in family.*

On the cross, the whole world is coming down on him, and yet near the very end he's still thinking about his family responsibilities. That flies directly in the face of modern Western individualism. That's saying family is incredibly important. In Jesus, people who believe in Him, people who are in Christ, have a stronger bond than they do with the members of their own blood family. Hebrews says, "Both the one (Jesus) who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters."

The Bible is saying if you're a Christian here today, then every other Christian here, whether you really know them or not, is your mother, your father, your brother, your sister, your son, or your daughter. In family relationships, there is something unconditional about it. Be in the family Christ put you in.