

Sermon Notes, March 26, 2017

The Passion of Jesus: Jesus Thirsted for our Salvation, John 19:28-37

In the weeks leading up to Easter, we're looking at the meaning of Jesus' sufferings and his death in the gospel of John. There are three things we see in this account of his death. And that is *Jesus' strength*, *the nature of his offer*, and *how it can become ours personally and practically*.

1. Jesus' strength

Have you ever really wondered where Jesus got the strength to face what he faced? He faced opposition. He faced suffering. He was always utterly alone, assaulted by the Devil, assaulted by the religious leaders, at the very end assaulted by the soldiers.

How did he get the strength to face the things he faced? We may have simply thought,

“Well, he was the Son of God from heaven. He was this divine being. I guess that's how he faced it.”

That's missing something important. Philippians 2 says Jesus Christ, when he became a human being, emptied himself of his glory. He voluntarily cut himself off from his divine prerogatives. He didn't use his resources. Jesus was able to do the things he did because of his reliance on the Spirit and the Father. Jesus Christ did not use any resources that aren't available to us. He had no access to resources that weren't available to us. Jesus relied on the Spirit and the Father, just like we can.

How did he access the strength of the Spirit and the Father? I believe at least one of the main ways is through his knowledge and his use of the Scripture. Every place Jesus faces something, he handles it with the Bible.

How is it possible that Jesus Christ is taking all this with courage, with dignity, with sacrificial acts of love—for example, taking care of his mother, and with submission? He had the same resources we had. He also had the same frailty we had. It's here that we see that Jesus knew

the Scripture so well, he thought about the Scripture so pervasively, it so saturated and permeated his whole being—his feelings and his will and his knowledge that it shaped him instinctively—to everything he said and everything he did. The Scripture shaped every part of him. This tells us something about the word of God. Jesus completely accepted, trusted in and believed the word of God. The authority of the Scripture rises and falls with the person of Jesus Christ. If he is who he said he is and if he needed the Scripture to face everything in life, how much more do you need it in your life to inform your thinking, your actions and everything you do?

2. The nature of his offer

What is it that he offers us? In the Bible thirst is a metaphor for the spiritual emptiness that comes when God is not at the center of your life. It's one thing to believe in God. It's another thing to know him and have him be the central reality of your life. In Psalm 42, the psalmist says,

“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”

If you put the bucket of your heart down into anything more than the love of God, more than the glory of God, more than the beauty and comfort of God, you will thirst again. You will thirst eternally. In John 4 Jesus says, “Anyone who drinks that water will thirst again, but I have the water that, if you drink it, you'll never thirst again. Indeed, the water I will give you will well up within you as a river of eternal life.”

On the cross, Jesus Christ is experiencing the ultimate thirst. Jesus Christ is experiencing the everlasting burnings. was getting what the whole human race deserved for all of its evil. Jesus Christ was getting what everybody deserved for all of their sins. It was like 10 million suns beating down on him, because he was experiencing the divine everlasting burnings, the divine justice.

Do you know what he's doing? He is thirsting so we could have the living water. He's having the ultimate thirst. He's dying of spiritual thirst. He's experiencing the agony of separation from God, the fountain of living waters, so we can have the fountain of living waters. He's paying for our sins. On the cross, the Living Water became thirsty, securing the salvation that His spiritually thirsty people desperately needed.

3. How can this become ours personally and practically? What does all of this actually mean practically? Jesus says, "It is finished. I did it. I've done it. I've triumphed. I've accomplished it." What has he accomplished? First Peter 3:18 says, "For Christ died for sins ... the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." You need to see Jesus' work on the cross is finished and stop acting as if Jesus' death was something that kind of made a contribution to your salvation, but in some ways you need to add to it and you have to finish it, and that you do that in all manner of ways. If you're trying to add to what he's done, you don't know it's finished. You're not rejoicing enough in what he has done. You're not really taking seriously what he has done. Come to him. Embrace all that he did on the cross for you. Trust in him. Receive him. And then enjoy him and live for him!