

Refuge City Church — March 29, 2024

Good Friday — “Tragedy Redefined”

Introduction

- As Palm Sunday represents the day we remember Jesus riding in to Jerusalem a week prior to His arrest and crucifixion.
- Good Friday represents His crucifixion and death.
 - All four gospel accounts give us the details of the arrest, trials, and crucifixion of Jesus.
 - Yet in each one, we see the beauty of God’s glory, grace, and truth revealed through what needed to be done on that Friday.
 - In the details of what crucifixion is, we see the tragedy of what that torturous process did to the human body.
 - That may give us some appreciation for what Jesus went through to offer us forgiveness for our sins.
 - In the fulfillment of prophecy, foretold hundreds of years before it happened, we see God’s divine hand over all things; knowing this was the plan from the beginning.
 - Tonight, we look at the purpose of such tragedy and how the death of Christ redefines our lives for God’s glory!

For this purpose I have come...

- **Luke 4:43**, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this *purpose*.”
 - This is the gift of God. Grace lived. Grace spoken. Grace given.
- **John 12:27**, “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ But for this *purpose* I have come to this hour.”
 - The time had come for Jesus to be glorified. To display the glory and grace of God on the cross.
- **John 18:37**, “Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this *purpose* I was born and for this *purpose* I have come into the world— to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”
 - The time had come for Jesus to exemplify the truth of God through His crucifixion.
 - Even the Roman Centurion who witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus declared, “*Truly* this was the Son of God!” [Matthew 27:54]
- **2 Timothy 1:9**, “who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.”
- The life and death of Jesus was given to fulfill God’s purpose that He established from the beginning of time.
 - Prophetic fulfillment

- **Matthew 26:56**, “But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”
- **QUOTE:** “The ultimate explanation of the cross is neither Jewish hostility nor Roman injustice, but the declared purpose of God.” [R.T. France]

The need for salvation

- When sin entered the world, all of humanity has been inflicted with it and has caused deformity and declivity (downward spiral) to this day.
 - **Romans 5:12**, “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.”
- The necessity of Jesus being ‘lifted up’/glorified was to save us from our shame, obscurity, and condemnation.
- Jesus’ blood was shed for the forgiveness of our sins, through the grace of God, due to our vulgarity and hindrance to even get to the cross.
 - Our sin keeps us from claiming the power of the cross on our own.
- Jesus is crucified to right the wrong... To shed light on the deceit and lies of sin.
 - **Romans 5:2**, “Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21**, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

What does it take to receive salvation?

- How do you pay your debts/bills? Probably with money, correct?
- When transportation breaks down, you replace it with new transportation.
- Some need to get a blood transfusion or replacement organs to save their life.
- Worn out clothes? Most likely you buy new clothes.
- Out of food...I would assume you go to the grocery store for food.
- So what does it take when the wages of our sin is death?
 - Life needs to replace life; yet it wouldn’t make sense to replace the dead with dead; you don’t replace dead batteries with other dead batteries.
- That’s why the perfect lamb of God needed to be sacrificed to atone for your sinful/lifeless/dead body.
 - **Hebrews 9:22**, “Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”
 - He exchanged his perfection for our imperfection, His blessing for our curse.
- Consider Adam and Eve [Genesis 3]
 - After they sinned, and their eyes were opened, they recognized their sin and tried to “cover up” the problem [sin & shame] themselves with fig leaves.
 - But after confessing to God, He clothed them with garments of skin [an animal was sacrificed to cover their sin]
 - His covering was far better than their own; yet it was not meant to be the permanent solution.

- Until the proper time for Christ to be sacrificed on the cross, God set aside a special day for the people to atone for their sins [Yom Kippur].
 - **Leviticus 16:8-10**, “And Aaron [high priest] shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel. And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord and use it as a sin offering, but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.”
- So Jesus sacrificed Himself as atonement for our sins, and also acts as our High Priest who blesses us and releases us in freedom.
- **Romans 3:23-25**, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.”
- **Hebrews 5:9**, “In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him.”

The sacrificial atonement [John 19:16-19, 28-30]

“So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”... After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

- For the glory of God, through obedience to God’s ultimate plan of redemption, Jesus suffered and died to forgive us our sins.
 - So that, if we accept the free gift of salvation, are joined/united in Christ, to live our life free from the bondage of sin, to do what He calls us to do, all for His glory!
 - **Romans 5:8-9**, “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.”
- Through the death of Jesus on the cross, God brings you into His family. There is *nothing* that hinders you from being in His presence.
- Jesus is offering you peace & eternal life. The price has been paid.
 - What can be seen as a tragic death, has been redefined as ‘good’ by the grace of God!
- **1 Peter 3:18**, “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.”