

Fourth Midweek Lent

Mark 15: 33-38 (39)

March 2, 2016

My Fellow Redeemed In Christ,

During This Season Of Lent We Are Focusing On Jesus' Last Words From The Cross. His First Word Was, **Father Forgive Them, For They Know Not What They Are Doing.** His Second Word Was **I Tell You The Truth, Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise.** And Last Week His Third Word Was, **"Woman, Behold, Your Son!" Then He Said To The Disciple, "Behold, Your Mother!"** Which Brings Us Tonight To His Fourth Word Spoken From The Cross: **"My God, My God Why Have You Forsaken Me?"**

I. These Words Of Jesus Are The Most Painful To Hear. Many Other People Had Been Crucified. Indeed, Two Thieves Were Crucified With Him...One On His Right And One On His Left. Their Physical Pain Was Just As Great As His.

A. **But Jesus Was Experiencing Something That They Were Not Experiencing.** He Was Experiencing Something That No One Had Ever Experienced Before Or Ever Will Experience: The Wrath Of God Against The Countless Numbers Of Sins Committed By Billions Of People.. When Jesus Cried Out **"My God, My God Why Have You Forsaken Me?"** Jesus Was Not Simply Thinking That He Was Forsaken Of God. Many People Have Thought That. Perhaps You Have. But Jesus Wasn't Just Thinking He Forsaken Of God.....He Was Forsaken Of God, Being Punished For The Sins Of Every Human Being Who Will Have Ever Lived.. Your Sins And Mine. Jesus Was Experiencing Hell, God's Wrath Against Sin. The Real Essence Of Hell, The Real Meaning Of Hell Is Being Separated From God, Forsaken Of God. In Hell There Is No Love Of God. None. There Is Only His Wrath And Punishment That Will Never End. Here Are A Few Examples Of Hell As Separation From God: Matthew 7: 23: "And Then Will I Declare To Them, 'I Never Knew You;.... Depart From Me...., You Workers Of Lawlessness.' Matthew 25: 41: "Then He Will Say To Those On His Left,.... 'Depart From Me, ....You Cursed, Into The Eternal Fire Prepared For The Devil And His Angels'". 2 Thessalonians 1: 9: "They Will Suffer The Punishment Of Eternal Destruction, Away From The Presence Of The Lord And From The Glory Of His Might." Clearly, Hell Involves A Separation From The Loving Presence Of God That Leaves Only His Wrath And Punishment For Sin. And That's Exactly What Jesus Was Experiencing When He Said, **"My God, My God Why Have You Forsaken Me?"**

B. But. Why Would God Do This? Because Of Love. Love? Yes, Love. Love For You And Me And All Of Mankind. But, What About Jesus? Didn't The Father Love His Son, Jesus? Of Course. You Remember What The Father Said Of His Son At His Baptism And On The Mount Of Transfiguration: **"This**

**Is My Beloved Son, With Whom I Am Well Pleased" (Matt. 3: 17; 17: 5, Esv).** You See? The Father Loves His Son. And Jesus Loves His Father. So When Jesus Died On The Cross, When Jesus Was Forsaken Of The Father. Jesus Agreed To This. It Was Not Done Against His Will, As He Says In John's Gospel: "For This Reason The Father Loves Me, Because I Lay Down My Life That I May Take It Up Again. No One Takes It From Me, But I Lay It Down Of My Own Accord" (10: 17, 18, Esv). No One Took Jesus' Life From Him. He Gave His Life....For You, For Me, For All Mankind. He Was Our Substitute. Our Sins Were Put On Him So That When He Died Our Debt Of Sin To God Was Canceled In Full. He Was Forsaken Of God...In Our Place.....So That We Might Not Ever Be Forsaken Of God, In This Life Or The Next.

Ii. And Now....Well Now...Our Relationship With God Has Been Restored. We Are At Peace With God. The Father Of Jesus Christ Is Now Our Father.

A. Many People Think That Every Human Being Is A Child Of God....But They Are Wrong. We Are All Creatures Of God, Made By God....But We Become Children Of God Only Through Faith In Jesus As The Apostle John Says In His Gospel, "But To All Who...Believed In His Name, He Gave The Right To Become Children Of God" (1: 12, Esv). Because Of Our Sin We Were At One Time Separated From God As Isaiah Says: **"But Your Iniquities Have Separated You From Your God" (59: 2, Niv).** Before The Berlin Wall Was Torn Down It Separated East Germany From West Germany. That's What Our Sin Did With God. And We Built It Brick By Brick...Sin By Sin... But When The Berlin Wall Was Torn Down The Relationship Between The East And The West Germans Was Restored. By Breaking Down The Wall Of Sin Jesus Has Restored Our Relationship With God As Paul Says In Romans: **"Therefore, Since We Have Been Justified Through Faith, We Have Peace With God Through Our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:1, Esv).** What Greater Love Could God Show You Than To Forsake His Own Beloved Son For You As Paul Says In Romans: **"...But God Shows His Love For Us In That While We Were Still Sinners, Christ Died For Us" (5: 8, Esv).**

B. And Just As The Darkness Symbolized God's Judgment On His Own Son....There Was Another Symbolic Act That Shows That We Now Have Access To God Through The Forgiveness Of Our Sins.... This Was Shown When The Curtain In The Temple Was Split Right Down The Middle From Top To Bottom. There Were Two Main Rooms In The Temple. The Larger Room Was Called **"The Holy Place"**. The Smaller Room Was Called **"The Most Holy Place."** And As You Can Tell By The Title The Smaller Room Was More Holy Than The Larger Room Because God Himself Dwelt In That Room. He Dwelt As A Visible Cloud Over The Ark Of The Covenant Right Above The Mercy Seat. This Room Was So Holy That Only The High Priest Could Enter Once A Year To Make Atonement For The People...And Only After He Had Gone Through A Ceremonial Cleaning. The Curtain That Separated These Two Rooms Was Huge: 60 Feet In Height, 30 Feet In Width And Four Inches Thick. And It Was Split Right Down The Middle From

Top To Bottom, Something That Only God Could Have Done. And This Shows That We Now Have Access To God Through Jesus Christ As Paul Says In Ephesians: **“For Through Him We Both Have Our Access In One Spirit To The Father” (2: 18, Nasb).**

Conclusion: **“My God, My God Why Have Your Forsaken Me?”** Such Sad Words. What Could Make The Sinless Son Of God Cry Out In Such Anguish? Only The Wrath Of God Against The Sins Of All Mankind, Billions Of People. How Many Sins Did Jesus Die For? Only God Knows...But If The Average Person Sinned Just Three Times A Day For Sixty Years That Would 657,000 Sins In Just One Person's Life. Today There Are Seven Billion People In The World. And Only God Knows How Many People Have Lived In The Past And How Many Will Live In The Future.....How Many Sins Is That?..... 657,000 Times Seven Billion...I Don't Know But Jesus Was Punished For Every One Of Them...And More. And It Must Have Been Horrible For The Sinless Son Of God To Cry Out: . **“My God, My God Why Have Your Forsaken Me?”**. But..Now.... By God's Grace And Spirit....., We Are Free. Free From The Guilt And Consequences Of Our Sin.....May We Never Forget The Horrible Price Of Our Freedom. **Amen.**