

Pictures from the Cross

Psalm 22

INTRODUCTION

- A. A couple illustrations:
1. Illustration about the mother's deformed hand, 6000 Classic Sermon Illustrations. #7666, p. 196.
 2. Illustration about the man saving his little boy from a runaway buggy, Sermons on the Cross, p. 58.
- B. Any parent worth anything would give his life to rescue his child. How many parents have witnessed a child's suffering and would have given anything to take that suffering away?
1. Although we are more than ready to suffer for one of our own children, how many would suffer for an enemy?
 2. Yet, that's exactly what Christ did for us — "God demonstrates his love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).
- C. This morning, we want to think about the suffering that Jesus did for us.
1. Psalm 22 graphically paints pictures of Jesus' sufferings while on the cross.
 - a. We know this psalm prophesies of Jesus, for he quotes the opening line of this psalm
 - b. Many actually think that Jesus may have meditated upon this psalm or even quoted it in its entirety from the cross.
 - 1) We have recorded that Jesus cried the opening cry of this psalm on the cross.
 - 2) Jesus' final cry from the cross was "It is finished." The last line of this psalm can be translated "He has finished it."
 2. Charles Spurgeon said of this psalm, "We should read reverently. putting off our shoes from off our feet, as Moses did at the burning bush. for if there be holy ground anywhere in Scripture it is in this psalm."
 3. Let us take our shoes off our feet. as it were, and see the pictures of the suffering Jesus presented in this psalm.
 4. David presents Jesus as a:

FORSAKEN LORD, vv. 1-2

- A. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me. And from the words of My groaning?," v. 1.
1. Notice that even in Jesus' great agony, he has faith in God.
 - a. The cry from the cross is not merely "God, God, why have you forsaken me?," but it's "My God, My God."
 - b. What a profound lesson for us — even when it seems that God is far off even when it seems that God does not hear to put our faith in him and know that he is our God.
 2. Jesus is attempting to understand why God has forsaken him.
 - a. He can understand why Judas and Peter forsook him — Judas was greedy and Peter was timid.
 - b. But, he cannot understand why his Father, his God, the one in whom he trusts, has forsaken him.
 - c. Surely, there can be no greater agony than feeling forsaken by God. Not only have your friends forsaken you, but the one who is supposed to be there no matter what will not help.
 3. Jesus wonders aloud why God is far from the words of his groaning.
 - a. "Groaning" literally refers to the roaring of an animal. This is the sound an animal makes

- when in distress.
- b. The idea is that Jesus has cried so much, suffered so much, prayed so much, there aren't any words left to express his grief all he can do is moan.
- B. Jesus cried in the daytime and the night, but God did not hear, v. 2.
1. He believed God did not hear, for he did not take away his suffering.
 2. Although Jesus did not receive the answer from God he was seeking, he still prayed.
 - a. "He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Lk. 18:1). Here we see Jesus taking his own medicine, practicing what he preached.
 - b. Jesus remains fervent in prayer, appealing to God because he has nowhere else to turn.
- C. It is a mystery how that the Trinity could have been separated while Jesus was on the cross.
1. What makes this so perplexing is the fact that Christ and the Father are one, "I and My Father are one" (Jn. 10:30).
 2. Yet, why Jesus was forsaken by God is not at all perplexing — he was forsaken because he "bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24).
 - a. Because Jesus bore our sins, he was alienated from God.
 - 1) "You have hidden Your face from us. And have consumed us because of our iniquities" (Is. 64:7).
 - 2) "Because of the evil of their deeds I will drive them from My house; I will love them no more" (Hos. 9:15).
 - b. Because of our sins, Jesus had to endure the desertion of God that should rightly have been ours in eternity.
- D. God could not hear the cries of Jesus, because of our sins.
1. God does not hear the prayers of those alienated from him.
 - a. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear" (Ps. 66:18).
 - b. "Then they will cry to the LORD, But He will not hear them; He will even hide His face from them at that time, Because they have been evil in their deeds" (Mic. 3:4).
 2. While on the cross, Jesus had iniquity in his heart, he had evil deeds, but it was our iniquity and our evil deeds.
- E. You caused Jesus to cry out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me." It was your sins that caused Jesus to endure hell in all its agony and fierceness as he hung on the cross.

RIDICULED SAVIOR, vv. 6-8

- A. Jesus was a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people, v. 6.
1. Jesus was comparable to a worm.
 - a. Worms are helpless, stepped on, killed for our own recreation, and no one cares.
 - b. When was the last time you lost sleep because you put steal all the way through a worm so you could fish?
 - c. Jesus was just like that worm — killed and no one cared.
 2. Jesus was reproached and despised by the people. Just how much Jesus was despised is evident when the people asked that a murderer, rather than Jesus, be released to them.
- B. All the people ridiculed Jesus, vv. 7-8.
1. All those who saw Jesus ridiculed him.
 - a. The crowd ridiculed Jesus, the chief priests and scribes ridiculed Jesus, one of the thieves ridiculed him.
 - b. They were thinking, "If this really is the Messiah, he can't be dying on a cross. He's supposed to save Israel from the Romans."
 2. They shoot out the lip. In the East, the protruding of the lower lip is a way to show great contempt.
 3. They say, "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"
 - a. Here the ridicule our Savior endured centered on his faith in God.

- b. One's faith in God is something immensely personal, something one holds very dear to him, yet those at the cross ridiculed Jesus for his faith.
- C. Jesus had to endure this ridicule because of us — Because of our sins, Jesus was forced to hang on the cross and endure this ridicule, endure this mockery.

WRITHING SAVIOR, vv. 14-18

- A. He was poured out like water, v. 14. The exact meaning of this phrase cannot be ascertained. but the meaning is probably extreme weakness and exhaustion.
- B. All of his bones were out of joint, v. 14. The posture one had to assume while hanging on the cross would surely cause the bones in the arms to be pulled out of joint.
- C. His heart was like wax, melted within him, v. 14.
 - 1. Again, extreme exhaustion is probably in view.
 - 2. He is so weak, because his heart has melted like wax in the sun.
- D. His strength was dried up like a potsherd, v. 15.
 - 1. The sun was scorching the Lord's bare body and zapping all his strength.
 - 2. His strength had become like a potsherd, a broken, dry piece of pottery.
- E. His tongue clove to his jaws. v. 15.
 - 1. One side effect of crucifixion was extreme thirst; our Lord experienced that intense thirst.
 - 2. In fact, the Lord said from the cross, "I thirst" (Jn. 19:28).
- F. He had been brought to the dust of death, v. 15.
 - 1. "Dust of death" stands for death itself
 - 2. "Dust" often stands for death — "All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him" (v. 29).
 - 3. Jesus was at the point of death.
- G. Jesus' hands and feet had been pierced, v. 16.
 - 1. Huge spikes were driven through the wrists — which in the Orient were considered part of the hand — and the feet.
 - 2. The piercing of the hands and feet severed nerves in the arms and legs; this caused unbearable pain to shoot through one's body.
- H. Jesus was able to count all his bones, v. 17. Because the nerves in his arms and legs had been severed, he could feel every pain in his body all the more intensely.
 - 1. Jesus suffered much for our sins.
 - 2. This suffering he endured was because we had sinned.
 - a. When instituting the Lord's Supper, Jesus said, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28).
 - b. Jesus died, gave his lifeblood, so that we could have the remission of our sins.
 - 3. How does it make you feel that Jesus bled and died that you could have remission of your sins?

CONCLUSION

- A. This morning, I hope that you firmly fix in your mind these pictures from the cross.
- B. "I gave My life for thee. My precious blood I shed, That thou might'st ransomed be, And quickened from the dead; I gave, I gave My life for thee, What has thou giv'n for Me? I gave, I gave My life for thee, What hast thou giv'n for Me?"
 - 1. Jesus gave his life for you.
 - 2. Have you given your life for him?