

**The Rock: 04-12-2020****Easter Sunday****First reading:**

**Title:** Forsaken and Redeemed (pt. 2)

**Scripture:** Psalm 22 Focus (Vs. 19-31)

**Theme:**

Redemption for us comes through the forsaken Son. Divine love is seen clearly when God himself (through His Son) does for us what we could never do ourselves.

**Introduction:**

In his book: *The Day the Revolution began*, N.T. Wright, speaking on the events of Good Friday, writes:

"When Jesus of Nazareth died that horrible death of crucifixion at the hands of the Roman army, nobody thought him a hero. His movement was over. Nothing had changed. This was the sort of thing Rome did best. Caesar was on his throne. Death, as usual, had the last word.

Except that in this case, it didn't. As Jesus's followers looked back on that day, they came up with a shocking, scandalous, nonsensical claim that his

death had launched a revolution. By 6PM that dark Friday the world was a different place. They believed that with the event the one true God had suddenly and dramatically put into operation his plan for the rescue of the world.

They saw it as the day the revolution began."

**-TDTRB N.T. Wright**

Friday evening, if you joined in on-line with us, ended with the cry of Jesus: "God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

That moment of pain and abandonment when the Father turned His face away. That moment would have been lost to history as an evil, and frankly malevolent act were it not for the Sunday morning in the garden.

That moment the angel declared:

"Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead..."

**-Matthew 28:5b-7a ESV**

**The Story:**

What a moment in time and history. This divine story of redemption, written by the hands of men, moved along by God's Holy Spirit, telling of how He would fix what his Image-bearers had broken.

For in the moment of Jesus's forsakenness, the redemption of humanity had been secured. Proof..

It wasn't his ministry and miracles. That was the declaration that the Kingdom of God has arrived -and this is what it looks like when Heaven and Earth intersect. NO, the proof..

The empty tomb. Psalm 22, as painful as portions of it are, ends with a promise and victory.

You see, it begins to turn that corner in verses 19-21 when David writes:

"But you, O Lord, do not be far off! O' you my help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog! Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!"

**-Psalm 22:19-21 ESV**

David writes about the purposes of God in being forsaken, mocked and brutalized,

but at the same time, sees His hand of redemption.

Nobody in the recesses of their creative mind would come up with such a story. The best fiction written isn't as good. Why? Because for one, this story is true.

Another thing, more importantly, the hero looks like the failed villain in his call to save villains, who think they are the actual heroes.

You see, when you spend about three years of your life in a ministry which still divides the entire world, not just a tiny strip of land the size of NJ, telling AND showing people what you are the Messiah -

Only to die a brutal death at the hands of the enemy whom you were supposed to liberate your people from, it is not a hard sell to say and think: "You lost, we lost, THAT didn't end the way we thought it would."

Especially when your "king" is hanging there crying out: "WHY! Why have you forsaken me?" Jesus the man, never felt that kind of pain.

Cursed, that's what Jesus was. Just another man full of delusions of grandeur that the powers that be disposed of, just like all the others.

"And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God."

**-Deuteronomy 21:22-23a ESV**

This cannot be anyone's Messiah.

There is no king but Caesar! There is no God but ours! Look at him! He can't save himself -he IS cursed of God!

And they were right, but for the wrong reasons. He couldn't save himself, because he wasn't meant to.

Alistair Begg puts says this: "He freely chose in His sovereign power, to give up His sovereignty."

Just as an aside, if we want to be conformed to Jesus and live a life that honors God and what he has done, what Jesus did for us needs to be deeply understood.

He is the ultimate servant, yet: He was cursed of God, but NOT because he was a failure and false prophet. In fact, just the opposite.

Psalms 22:24 -speaking of the Father toward the Son:

"For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him."

**-Psalm 22:24 ESV**

God's response to the cry of Jesus, the great plot twist in the story is that God may have turned away, but he DID NOT hide his face -He heard AND accepted the derelict cry of His Son.

Divine LOVE. It had to be this way. How do we know? Paul the Apostle tells us, that's how.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith."

**-Galatians 3:13-14 ESV**

Jesus became sin -so that we could be made right. What's the proof of that? The empty tomb. History swings on the hinge of Good Friday and Easter morning. That resurrection day!

The moment death was killed and the stone was rolled away! (Chuck Colson Quote)

Crazy? Yes! Why? Because dead people, at least all the ones I've met, stay dead. Even way back then, people were smart enough to know that. They were not unenlightened country bumpkins.

You know, unlike we the enlightened people who have split the atom, gone to the moon, mapped out the known universe, yet still can't figure out what it means to be human.

We still struggle with being kind to one another, or take care of the only place we have the ability to live on. We even struggle at times with how to manage and maintain good family relations.

Let's be honest here. Intelligence and wisdom are not the same thing. And intelligence does not guarantee wisdom.

We need humility to grow wisdom, and humility is lacking in this world of ours.

But not in this Jewish carpenter named Jesus. No, he humbled himself. Paul again from that beautiful poem in chapter 2 of Philippians:

"...he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

**-Philippians 2:8b ESV**

And this is why God heard his cry. You see, we think he didn't hear because Jesus died.

Wrong! He died because God did hear, and accepted his perfect sacrifice once and for all time.

Heaven broke into our world again and intersected with earth, and Jesus is alive!

Now, if that is true, that this Jesus of Nazareth is alive, then He has to be dealt with, confronted actually. Because we are not left with the option to ignore Him.

If you are "In Christ", a follower of Jesus, when you encounter Him in the word, do you allow Him to encounter you?

To transform you, conform you to His likeness, so you can be useful for His purposes and His calling for you?

"All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations."

**-Psalm 22:27-28 ESV**

That happens first because of what Jesus did. Teach us LORD, to pray for the



nations! Everything else is just too small of a prayer.

HE redeemed us. But He did so in order to send us.

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

**-Matthew 28:18-20 ESV**

Jesus submitted Himself to the plan and will of the Father, because they are perfect. We choose now to do the same (or not).

If not now, it will happen when He returns. Why?

"All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive.

**-Psalm 22:29 ESV**

The whole earth will worship and bow down. Even Jesus did so in perfect submission, and that's why Paul tells us:

"...God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

**-Philippians 2:9-11 ESV**

To you who haven't considered this Jesus, or you are wrestling with Him, I would say to you:

Do not harden your heart. That is the Holy Spirit calling you. How do I know? Because His word promises that. We can only do one of two things with this Jesus:

Accept Him or reject Him. We do not have the option to ignore Him and simply think He was a good man who did some good things, and said some good things, but His life tragically ended too soon.

No, His cry of being forsaken takes us to the end of Psalm 22, because that is the intended end:

"Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it."

**-Psalm 22:30-31 ESV**

We are that future generation -across  
2,000 years of space and time -right here  
in St. Albans VT, and all across this  
world who call on Him as LORD and savior.

And I proclaim to you this Easter  
morning, that HE HAD DONE IT!

This Jesus, who was crucified, and laid  
in a borrowed tomb, has risen and is the  
ascended King.

He is calling you today -Will you listen?  
Do not harden your hearts...I implore you  
on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.