

“Jesus For Us”

03-20-16

We like to think that Jesus had a choice on that first Palm Sunday. He could either travel into Jerusalem where He would die in a few days or go another way somewhere else. From our view, He certainly had that choice, but because of His love for us and His perfect obedience to His Father, Jesus continued on the path that would lead to our salvation.

Jesus Was Willing to Give Up Everything for you! So we begin this Holy Week celebrating Jesus and what He’s done with *“Hosanna! Hosanna in the Highest!”*

Look at Philippians 2. This was the last of Paul’s letters to be written, and it’s the only one written as Paul’s a prisoner in Rome. This section tells us a lot about what Jesus has done for us as He came down to earth to save us.

The life of Jesus is the most powerful example of self-sacrifice! He was willing to leave His throne in heaven to come down to earth to suffer and die for all mankind! Verse 5-6, *“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.”*

Jesus was willing to give up His place in Heaven to come and take care of us! He was willing to accept limits to His power and majesty in coming to be with us. Instead of holding on to what He was given as the Son of God, Jesus chose to let it all go and to come be with us! Jesus was willing to make incredible sacrifices for our salvation!

As part of the self-sacrifice of Jesus, He laid aside His glory to live as a servant. Verse 7, *“but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.”* But what do we know about his servanthood? **Jesus was A Willing Servant**. He wasn’t forced to be a servant, He willingly made Himself one! **Jesus Was A True Servant**. He took on the very nature of a servant. This wasn’t just a disguise, He actually took on the qualities of servanthood!

Jesus was a Human Servant. He didn’t take up the role of a heavenly servant like an angel, He took up human form and became a human servant, being in human likeness. He lived with human flesh, serving human needs. That is an ultimate humiliation for Almighty God, but love drew Him to it! Verses 7-8, *“but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”*

Jesus Fulfilled His Purpose. Our text shows that even as a humble servant, He was willing to take even more humbling steps to complete His mission. It was humbling enough for Jesus to lay aside glory for human flesh. But, He was also willing to give His life for others!

As a humble human being, **He Humbled Himself to the Cross**. He was obedient to the plan of God from Genesis. Jesus came to carry out this mission and resolved to complete it. As He said in Gethsemane in Matthew 26:42, *“Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”* He was willing to die the most humiliating death - death on the cross! But in that moment, by the shedding of His blood and the breaking of His body, Jesus opened the way for forgiveness and salvation.

Jesus Was Victorious

Verses 9-11, *“Therefore 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.”*

These are verses of victory! Victory for Jesus as He’s returned to His rightful place of glory! Victory for Jesus as all the earth bows in humility before Him! Victory for Jesus as everyone confesses that Jesus Christ is no longer servant but Lord! **His Victory Means Victory for Us!**

Victory over Death and Hell! Look at 1 Corinthians 15. Our sinful lives deserve Hell! God said, *“The wages of sin is death.”* So our lives don’t deserve anything good! Verses 54-57, *“When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Victory For Everyday Life! Listen to John 10:10, *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

Victory Over Temptation and Sin! 1 Corinthians 10:13, *“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”*

Victory That’s Complete! 1 Corinthians 15:57, *“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. All this victory occurred because Jesus suffered and died on the cross and rose victorious that first Easter morning for you and all mankind!*

Even on this day when there were shouts of *“Hosanna”*, because of our disobedience and sin, we joined a new crowd shouting *“Crucify!”* It’s good for us to see the pain of Roman crucifixion. It’s graphic, but it’s real for Jesus’ own death and what He did for us!

What is crucifixion? A medical doctor provides a physical description: The cross is placed on the ground and the exhausted man is quickly thrown backwards with his shoulders against the wood. The soldier feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flex and movement. The cross is then lifted into place.

The left foot is pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees flexed. The victim is now crucified. As he slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain.

The nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As he pushes himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, he places the full weight on the nail through his feet. Again he feels the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the bones of his feet. As the arms fatigue, cramps sweep through the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain.

With these cramps comes the inability to push himself upward to breathe. Air can be drawn into the lungs but not exhaled. He fights to raise himself in order to get even one small

breath. Finally carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream, and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically he's able to push himself upward to exhale and bring in life-giving oxygen.

Hours of this limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain as tissue is torn from his lacerated body as he moves up and down against the rough timber. Then another agony begins: a deep, crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

It's now almost over. The loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level--the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues--the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. He can feel the chill of death creeping through his tissues. Finally he can allow his body to die.

Even after hearing a graphic description of what Jesus went through, the Bible records all this with the simple words in Mark 15:24, "*And they crucified Him.*" What wondrous love Jesus has for you and all the world.

Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!