



He has done it!

Sermon for April 17 2022

Easter Worship

Pastor Chris Sicks

Introduction

Some of you are visitors to One Voice Fellowship today. We are glad to have you! We are studying the New City Catechism this year because it is an excellent summary of the central truths of the Christian faith. Today we are looking at Question 16. You'll find it printed in many different languages in your bulletin. I will read the question, and then let's read the answer together.

Question 16: What is sin?

Sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created, rebelling against him by living without reference to him, not being or doing what he requires in his law--resulting in our death and the disintegration of all creation.

Today is Easter Sunday. I considered taking a break from the New City Catechism for today. But as I prayed and asked God to lead me, I thought about the answer to Question 16. I also thought about what Jesus said on the cross. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46) Forsaken means abandoned. To leave someone alone and without help. Why did God the Father abandon God the Son on the cross? Because when the Father looked on his crucified son, he saw him covered in our sin. But because the Father rejected Jesus on the cross, He can welcome us as sons and daughters. That is the tragedy and victory of Easter. Death for Jesus means life for us. And that is what I want to share with you today. To begin, I am going to read a little more from Matthew 27 now. Hear

now the Word of the Lord.

Matthew 27:45–50.

"45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

47 And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah.

48 And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink.

49 But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit."

Together we read Isaiah 40:8:

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever."

Let's pray together.

Father in heaven, we come to you because you are the source of life and truth. Jesus, we worship because you are full of mercy and love. Holy Spirit, please open our hearts and minds to be transformed by the word of God. Amen.

Verse 45 tells us that a mysterious darkness fell over Jerusalem from 12-3pm. Those were the hours that Jesus was hanging on the cross. It was about 3pm when Jesus screamed out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The Greek word in our Bibles means that Jesus screamed. Jesus did not speak loudly or raise his voice. He screamed in agony at this specific moment. Matthew 27:26 tells us that Jesus was flogged or whipped. The Romans used a whip that had pieces of metal in it, to cause maximum pain and damage to the victim. But Jesus did not scream then. When the nails were pounded through his arms and feet, we do not read that Jesus screamed. Why does Jesus scream at this point, in verse 46? It was not because of physical pain. Jesus did not cry out, "My God, my God this hurts so much!" No, Jesus himself tells us why he screamed. It was the scream of an abandoned heart. "Why have you forsaken me?"

We read the Apostle's Creed earlier. It says that Jesus descended into hell. It's important that we don't think of hell primarily as a physical place or a destination. People in hell suffer terribly because they are separated forever from God and from everything good. Jesus experienced the awful pain of that terrible separation.

Jesus had lived for eternity in a close and loving relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Heaven was heavenly because the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit lived together in perfect love. But when all the sins of God's people were piled on Jesus on the cross, the Father turned his face away. The perfect holiness of the Father had to turn away from the sinful worm that Jesus had become. Jesus felt all the judgment of God instead of all the love of God. Jesus lost heaven and tasted hell in that moment. And that is why he screamed, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus was quoting Psalm 22 when he said this.

Psalm 22:1-2 says:

"1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest."

Jesus was clearly thinking about Psalm 22 when he was hanging on the cross. He could feel that God the Father was far away from him. Jesus groaned in pain and cried out, but His Father did not answer. Psalm 22 was written by King David, the ancestor of Jesus. When David wrote his songs and prayers in the book of Psalms, he was writing scripture. The apostle Peter said in Acts 2:30 that David was a prophet. The psalms are quoted many times in the New Testament, because they are full of prophecy about the future work of God. But Psalm 22 is special. This psalm is more about Jesus than it is about David. Psalm 22 is full of details that never happened to David. But they did happen during the crucifixion of Jesus.

Listen to verses 6-8 of Psalm 22 now.

6 "But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

7 All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;

8 "He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"

I would like to show you how Psalm 22 is fulfilled in the gospel reports of the New Testament. Look with me at Matthew 27:39, 41-43.

"39 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads

41 So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying,

42 "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.

43 He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.' "

Do you ever feel shame because of what you have done? Have people laughed at you because you made a mistake or

did something stupid? When I was about 12 years old, I played on the basketball team. I was a terrible basketball player. But during one game, I was standing right under the basket. The boy with the ball didn't want to throw the ball to me, but I was open. I had a clear shot to the basket. So he threw the ball to me, very fast. I panicked. I ducked. The ball flew over my head. And everyone in the gym laughed. My teammates were angry. But the crowd just laughed at me. I never played again. I was so ashamed and embarrassed.

People laughed at Jesus. He was willing to die for our shameful deeds. Not like ducking under a basketball. That was just foolish. I'm talking about the evil, terrible things we do to ourselves and other people. Shameful things, that Jesus was willing to absorb. Jesus never did anything shameful in his life. But he was mocked, laughed at, and shamed for you and me. All of our shame and guilt were nailed to the cross with Jesus. He felt spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical pain. For us. Let's look at how Psalm 22 describes the physical agony of crucifixion.

"14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast;
15 my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death."

During a crucifixion, the victim's shoulders are pulled out of joint. Hanging by your arms also makes it extremely hard to breathe. Your lungs work much too hard, and they put pressure on your heart. The pain and effort of hanging on the cross makes the victim very thirsty. Look at how Psalm 22:15 is fulfilled in John 19:28-30.

"28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

29 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.

30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

Next, I want to look with you at Psalm 22:16.

"16 for dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet"

Verse 16 clearly describes what happened at the cross. A company of Roman soldiers and a crowd of angry Israelites encircled Jesus. Then soldiers pierced his hands and feet with nails, to fasten his body to the cross.

Look now at Psalm 22:17.

"17 I can count all my bones--they stare and gloat over me;"

With his body hanging from his arms, the skin of Jesus' chest was pulled tight. Everyone could see his ribs pressing through the skin as he breathed heavily. People were staring at his suffering body. Rome wanted everyone to see how

criminals and rebels were punished.

Remember that Psalm 22 was written 1000 years before Jesus was born. But the details in this psalm are incredibly specific. You can believe and trust your bible, my friends. It is the true and living Word of God.

Look at Psalm 22:18.

"18 they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."

"Cast lots" means to gamble. To throw dice or something to see who wins the prize. Compare verse 18 to what John reports in John 19:23-25.

"23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom,
24 so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be."
This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things,"

We have seen how Psalm 22:1-18 described the crucifixion and death of Jesus. I think these next verses describe Easter morning. Jesus did not remain dead. His life was delivered from the grave.

Psalm 22:19-22.

19 "But you, O Lord, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid!

20 Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog!

21 Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

22 I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you"

After his resurrection, Jesus told the women at the tomb to go tell his brothers that he was alive. And then Jesus went to see his brothers himself. He ate and drank with the disciples. Jesus explained to them how the Old Testament was full of prophecies about the Messiah.

The resurrection of Jesus was the most-important event in human history. It was the start of the Christian church. Everything we believe, everything we do, everything we anticipate about heaven, it is all based on the resurrection of Jesus. If you are still skeptical or confused about the resurrection, please tell me. I would love to have tea with you and talk about it! This is too important to ignore your doubts or questions. God wants you to have confidence in the truth of these things, because it will change your life forever.

After the resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days on earth with the disciples. Then he ascended into heaven. Before he left, Jesus told this to the disciples in Acts 1:8.

8 "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere--in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Do you see the geographical spread of the gospel described in verse 8? That is exactly what happened in the early church. It is also what Psalm 22 described 1000 years before it happened. Let's look at these verses from David's psalm. Look for the geographical references that Jesus spoke about in Acts 1:8.

Psalm 22:23, 26-28.

"23 You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

26 The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord!

May your hearts live forever!

27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

28 For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations."

I love verse 27, because it describes what we are experiencing here at One Voice Fellowship. "all the families of the nations shall worship before you." Jesus lived and died to bring people like you and me, from every corner of the planet, into one family of God.

We started this sermon talking about how Jesus quoted Psalm 22 verse 1. He also knew the end of Psalm 22. I think the last two verses explain why Jesus was willing to endure so much suffering. Let's now look at the last two verses of Psalm 22, and then conclude today's teaching.

30 "Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;

31 they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it."


Posterity means the coming generations. These verses predicted that many people in the future would "proclaim his righteousness." They would tell future generations "that he has done it." He has done what? Jesus put an end to sin and death. That's what he did. This is the reason Jesus was willing to suffer so much physical pain. Jesus was suffered separation from his father, and felt the isolation of hell, because he knew it was the only way to accomplish his mission. Look at what John reports about the death of Jesus in John 19:30.

30 "When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

Jesus finished his earthly mission, even though it hurt so much. It is painful to read through Psalm 22 and think of all that Jesus endured. But the psalm ends with those glorious words of hope: "He has done it." "It is finished." When we walk out of church tonight, I want you to remember that. Tomorrow we will return to work, to school, to another week of living in this fallen world. People will be unkind to us. We will be unkind to other people. We will make mistakes and suffer from conflict and disease. Sin and brokenness continue to be problems today because Jesus has not returned yet. But we can be patient and forgiving. We can repent and let the Holy Spirit change us. We can live with hope and joy this week. Because we are saved and born again, through the finished work of Christ. "He has done it!"

Let's pray now in the name of Jesus, our Savior who died and rose to life again, to save us and give us new life.

Father in heaven, your love for us is hard to comprehend. But the cross helps us understand. When we think about your beloved son on the cross, we understand the depth of your love for us. Please help us remember it this week. When Satan tempts us to despair, and reminds us of our guilt and shame, remind us of the cross. Help us cling to the truth that "it is finished. "He has done it!" Therefore, we are free, and forgiven, and loved, and your children forevermore. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

 One Voice Fellowship