

Jesus arrested

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Date: 30 August 2020

Preacher: Chris Fry

[0:00] A warm welcome to the evening service of Calvary Evangelical Church Brighton of Sunday 30th August 2020.

! We're still pre-recording our services and one of the strange benefits of doing so is that we just don't know who may happen to light on YouTube or our website and be listening but we pray that if you're one of those people and this may be the first time you've come across us that you'll really enjoy being with us tonight in this fashion and that God will speak to you through word, song, prayer. May God bless you.

My name is Chris Fry. I'm one of the elders of the church. We start tonight with a reading from Psalm 107 verses 1 to 9.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say this, those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.

Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. They were hungry and thirsty and their lives ebbed away. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them from their distress.

[1:47] He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle. Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.

For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things. For he has a great time to say this, the Lord has a great time to say this.

We've just read nine verses of a psalm that has a total of 43 verses. As human beings we get ourselves into deep, dark trouble. But the Lord has a way of delivering us when we cry out to him. And what a healthy thing it is for us to cry out to the Lord in these days. Not to be silent, but to recognise our need and to call upon him.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, it's so good and right that we should come before you tonight.

[3:01] We thank you that you give us this privilege. We thank you that you are open to our cry. You look upon us in our distress, in our upset, our uncertainty, even in our sinfulness.

You don't neglect us. But you intervene, you come near. We thank you that you know how to deliver your people.

And whatever situations we are facing in our lives at this time, we thank you that you have the answers. We bless you for that certainty that we have as your children.

We look around us and we see the chaos of this world. And we can only pity and ask that you would also join in to those who haven't even got the desire to call out to you.

And we pray that you would be merciful upon them. Please help our leaders in the different countries that they would see their need and cry out to you for wisdom and help to know how they should lead in a good manner.

[4:27] Pray Father for the pressure on families in these days and ask that you would encourage and bless.

Father, we think of the changes happening very soon now with schools going back. And we ask for your blessing in hand upon parents and children and teachers and your protection in this time of uncertainty.

We thank you, our Father, that we are able to make such prayers because of the wonderful work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That he has forgiven our sin. That he offers hope for now and forever. And we thank you that if we belong to you, it is simply because you have shown such sovereign grace and mercy towards us. We haven't deserved this, but you've granted it to us. And we thank you, Father, for the magnificence of your kindness. And those of us who have known you for a while can truly say, you are a God who has kept us.

[5:47] You've looked out for us. You've had your hand upon us. And you will never let us go. For all this we give you thanks.

We bless you. We praise you. We adore you. We ask our prayers in Jesus name. Amen. We're going to sing a song now.

It's an old song, but it's an acceptable more modern tune. When all thy mercies, O my God. When all thy mercies, O my God.

My rising soul surveys. Transported with the view I'm lost. In wonder, love, and grace.

Unnumbered comforts through my soul. Thy tender care be so.

[6:59] Before my infant heart conceits From whom those comforts flow
Through all these granities you lead A joyful song I'll raise For all
these granities too short To utter all my grace When warmth and sickness
oft pass down With health renewed my face And when in sin and sorrow sung
Revive my soul with grace Ten thousand thousand precious gifts My daily
thanks to Him for Nor is the least a cheerful heart That takes those
gifts with joy

Through all eternity to Thee A joyful song I'll raise For all eternity to short To utter all Thy grace
Through every period of my life Thy goodness I'll pursue And after death in distant worlds The
glorious theme renews Through all eternity to Thee A joyful song I'll raise For all eternity to short To
utter all Thy grace Through all eternity to Thee A joyful song I'll raise

For all eternity to short To utter all Thy grace I'd like to read to you a hymn I don't think it's often
sung In fact I think it would be quite difficult to sing But the words are important and challenging It's
a hymn by John Newton And it starts with the phrase I ask the Lord that I might grow I ask the Lord
that I might grow In faith and love and every grace Might more of His salvation know And seek more
earnestly His face T'was He who taught me thus to pray And He I trust has answered prayer
But it has been in such a way As almost drove me to despair I hoped that in some favoured hour At
once He'd answer my request And by His love's constraining power Subdue my sins and give me
rest Instead of this He made me feel The hidden evils of my heart And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part Yea more With His own hand He seemed intent to aggravate my woe
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed Blasted my goods And laid me low Lord why is this?
I trembling cried Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death? Tis in this way The Lord replied I answer
prayer For grace and faith These inward trials I employ From self and pride To set thee free And
break thy schemes of earthly joy That Thou may seek Thy all in me I don't know if you've ever been
in that Same place as John Newton Was because he's clearly speaking From some experience
here He was a man who did walk Close to God And he's praying This prayer that he might grow As
a Christian In faith and love and every grace And if we are Christians That surely is something We'd
all like to do All like to be But as John found out

[11:54] He thought and hoped That God would somehow solve it So quickly
And that it would be A loving and a gracious And a powerful thing in his
life Instead of which He found it A really tough time When he asked that
prayer Then God showed him The evils of his own heart The sin that was
within him Things that needed to be dealt with And he was shown That he
needed to Have his affections on things above And not on things below He
had an idea of what God should do But God showed him something different
And I think this is a very humbling Thing for all of us To recognise That
what we want And what we aspire to As Christians Is not necessarily the
same As the things that God wants to do In our lives And you may be going
through A tough time at this moment And you might even feel That somehow
God has let you down

And that The Christian life Isn't the life you thought It was going to be But put another way If we can
trust God And know that what he Has in mind For us Is the very very best Then we're able to Also
trust him That What happens within our lives The circumstances Our Our feelings Just how life is

That that is all part of his good purpose And it's not a mistake And Even if he allows Us to be tempted And to Satan To Attack us In a way That is all under his permission And control And It is so good for us to know That we have a heavenly father Who cares deeply for us And he wants the very best for us In every situation of life

May God bless each of you And each of us In our frailty and weakness Just to know that we're in the hands Of the Mighty God Who holds us tight And will see us through to the end Let's pray again Father we thank you for these Sobering words that we have just read We thank you that That this is truth We see it in your word So constantly that What we desire is not Necessarily What is right for us But we trust you To do what is right for us In our lives So Lord carefully and Humbly we do ask That we might

Grow in grace And in the knowledge Of the Lord Jesus Christ And that you would Bring us into that Closer relationship Surely this is a prayer That you will not refuse Surely It's one of the highest Things that we could pray for That we should Come nearer to Jesus And that our lives Should be more and more Like his So we know that If we pray this prayer Sincerely That you will answer it And we pray That you will be kind To do so Pray for ourselves As a church fellowship In these challenging times That we would indeed Desire to be Closer to Jesus And more and more Like him We pray also For each other That we should have That spiritual ambition To edify To build each other up So that as a church

We may Demonstrate The loveliness Of Jesus Christ His body on earth Showing to the watching world How it is That such different people Can love one another So deeply Learning how to forgive How to bear How to carry How to strengthen How to pray How to love How to be thankful How to be gracious Wanting all these qualities To be Ours in greater and greater measure By your grace And the power of your spirit Oh Lord May this be Be the case And we do pray That our Christianity Will not just be A veneer A cloak That we put on On a Sunday But something Which is deeply Rooted in our lives And which is a testimony To this world

[16:59] That we have A most marvellous Heavenly Father A loving Saviour And a powerful And wise Holy Spirit Triune God We worship And adore you We thank you In Jesus name Amen We're going to sing Another song It's a beautiful song Come and see Come and see It's an invitation For us to Come to the cross Of Calvary But tonight I'd also Ask that it might be An invitation For us To come to the Olive Grove To the Garden of Gethsemane As we Consider the Topic of Jesus Being arrested For Even in that Situation there We see something Absolutely marvellous About our Saviour To the garden of Gethsemane Come and see, come and see, come and see the King of Love.

See the purple robe and crown of thorns he wears. So does love rule a snare as he lifts the cruel cross.

Not unkind now, he climbs towards the hill. We worship at your feet, where wrath and mercy meet.

And a guilty world is washed by love's pure stream. For as he was made sick, oh help me take it in. Deep wounds of love cry at Father forgive. I worship, I worship the Lamb who was saved.

[20:14] Come and see, come and mourn. For your sin that pierced him there.

So much deeper than the wounds of thorn and hail. All our pride, all our greed, all our fallenness and shame.

And the Lord has laid the punishment on him. We worship at your feet, where wrath and mercy meet.

And a guilty world is washed by love's pure stream. For as he was made sick, oh help me take it in. Deep wounds of love cry at Father forgive. I worship, I worship, I worship the Lamb who was saved.

[21:42] I worship, I worship the Lamb who was saved. I worship, I worship the Lamb who was saved.

I worship, I worship the Lamb who was saved. Land of earth, born to earth, to restore us to your hand.

Here we bow in awe beneath your searching eyes.

From your tears comes our joy. By your death our light shall spring. By your resurrection power we shall rise.

We worship at your feet, where wrath and mercy meet.

[22:50] And a guilty world is washed by love's pure stream. For as he was made sick, oh help me take it in.

Deep wounds of love cry at Father forgive. I worship, I worship the Lamb who was saved.

I worship the Lamb who was saved. I worship the Lamb who was saved. I worship the Lamb who was saved. Our Bible reading tonight is from the book of Matthew.

Gospel of Matthew chapter 26 and verses 47 to 56. 47 to 56 Jesus has been speaking to his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane and we read in verse 47 while he was still speaking Judas, one of the twelve arrived with him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them the one I kiss is the man, arrest him going at once to Judas

I'm sorry, going at once to Jesus Judas said greetings Rabbi and kissed him Jesus replied friend do what you came for then the men stepped forward seized Jesus and arrested him with that one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest cutting off his ear put your sword back into its place Jesus said to him for all who draw the sword will die by the sword do you think I cannot call on my father and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels how then will the scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way at that time Jesus said to the crowd am I leading a rebellion that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me every day I sat in the temple courts teaching and you didn't arrest me but this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled and all the disciples deserted him and fled this narrative is reflected also in the gospels of Mark and Luke and with a significant amount of additional material in the gospel of John as well it's clearly important that we ponder we linger at this point all the gospel writers feel there's something significant for us to lay hold off here and as I was meditating on this passage

[26:52] I was thinking what a what a visual passage it is how we can see with our mind's eye what is going on there's so much at stake here it feels like a shakespearean tragedy but with one vital difference which we'll come to later so I thought we might deal with this passage under four headings or four acts a scene is in a theatre act one sadness sadness sadness now three of the gospels record the scene Jesus was sorrowful and troubled in that garden grove Matthew 26 and verse 37 Mark says that he was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death

Mark 14 verse 34 and Luke tells us that he being in anguish dropped sweat like drops of blood Luke 22 verse 44 it's a rather terrible scene there are 11 prone figures on the grass the ground there's this smattering of olive trees and the one active person in all this is the Lord Jesus Christ he's in an agony of spirit as he's calling out to his father and not really discerning the father's will because he knew that but so overwhelmed by the enormity by the dreadfulness by the agony of what he was facing that he feels compelled to pray a prayer and asking if it's possible could this cup this deep suffering this wrath of God be taken from him but it seems that heaven is silent no compromise is offered from the father and no compromise is suggested by Jesus neither of them in their dialogue pretend that there is some medium way some way in which the awfulness of what is about to happen can be somewhat subdued relieved become less no there's a divine purpose which father son and holy spirit had fixed from before time and it's being inflexibly played out and here's a sadness there's nothing from the disciples they're either asleep or speechless they have nothing to say no comfort no felt closeness these are the ones whom Jesus loved and these are the ones who loved Jesus but now they're dumb they have nothing to offer well one could appreciate they're out of their depth one could appreciate they haven't a clue what is about to unfold they haven't seen the spiritual dimensions of all these matters but still it's a very very sad scene isn't it when Jesus appears so alone so under pressure so overwhelmed it says to the point of death now the only voice that's heard in the garden on this evening is that of

Jesus himself speaking sometimes to the sleeping ones speaking sometimes to those who look startled and shocked puzzled the only comfort that is recorded in the gospels that is given to Jesus at this point appears to be an angel from heaven he was strengthened by an angel from heaven I wonder what that must have meant I wonder what it looked like what it felt like he was strengthened there was something about the visit of that angel a messenger from heaven a messenger from the throne who was able to give him something that gave him some measure of strengthening just

enough to carry him through just enough well here's that first act it's sadness sadness it's full of poignancy and there's a lot of silence a lot of silence apart from the groaning the groaning of the Lord

Jesus as he pours out his heart to his heavenly father if it be possible may this cup be removed from me but of course it wasn't there wasn't any other possibility he had to tread this path he had to go this way oh we thank God tonight that he was willing to do that willing to do that to obey his father and for love of the world act two unrighteous confusion the silence is broken the disciples are now fully awake it's dark and there's a rude interruption Matthew 26 47 says while he was still speaking that he's speaking to his disciples Luke 22 47 says the same and Mark 14 says just as he was speaking well there's no courtesy involved here nobody waiting in the wings until the speech has finished no they just barge in who are they enter left enter right

Judas Judas the apostle a large crowd John says also a detachment of soldiers and they're carrying variously clubs and swords lanterns and torches what an eerie picture this is what a shocking thing what a threatening thing in an olive grove in the twilight or early dark that this should be happening at all it seems like an intrusion it is an intrusion it's an aberration it's not how things should be in that place it's very threatening there's noise and bustle and some confusion and there's a scuffle Simon Peter as identified in John's gospel is the one who struck the high priest's servant cutting off his ear gruesome thing isn't it

[35:13] Jesus kindly healed the man but the other disciples were all for joining in as well Luke 22 verse 49 tells us should we be drawing our swords strange thing to me that the word sword is even mentioned in this context in relation to the disciples is that what they did normally carry swords but they all seem to be carrying the sword tonight what a mess what a chaotic mess Jesus reminds them all how differently and simply this arrest could have been done think firstly of Judas the sad betrayer oh that it should have come to this that a professing disciple should be so shipwrecked oh how sad that he became

Satan's tool in this process oh the choices that he had made what was he feeling as he approached that garden grove 30 pieces of silver is it really really worth what he was about to do and yet the die was cast he was committed a strange thing really because the gospel accounts give a slightly different record of what appears to have taken place Matthew and Mark both speak about Judas having made a plan which he conveyed to the chief priests and elders and clearly others in the crowd now that large gang of people who were accompanying him basically you'll know who it is because I'm going to give him a kiss but it didn't quite work out like that we find in

Luke that he was about to do this and something else intervenes and John has a clarity on this because he says that Jesus took the initiative and said who are you looking for and when they say Jesus he says I am he this is before Judas has a chance to offer that kiss well maybe all those things were coming together in some fashion but he is Judas at his sort of key moment and it's rather taken away from him oh what a wrecked man he had become by the poor decisions he had made in those last few days and then secondly there's an unnecessarily large number or a brutal crowd hired mercenaries no doubt alongside the soldiers how are they going to feel for the rest of their lives have they been involved in something like this what have they been paid to do their job and then the armed disciples as I've said it's a bit strange that this appears to be the first time in the gospel record that we read of them carrying arms at all why were they doing it

Jesus didn't need a single sword to defend himself he says don't you realise I could call upon 12 legions of angels to come to my rescue instantly if that was the plan just to give you some idea of the maths on that a legion in the Roman army would comprise 6,000 men 12 legions 72,000 72,000 angels well one hardly imagines that 72,000 angels would be needed to deal with the situation one angel would probably be quite sufficient but Jesus is just making a very solid point that if that had been the plan Jesus was completely able to call at an instant on his armies of angelic powerful beings well here are the armed disciples acting in a sort of muddled confused manner

Peter striking out his in impetuous way it's a very low moment of shame and confusion the sad betrayal the brutal crowd the armed disciples noise confusion scuffle oh it's a mess what sadness unrighteous confusion nobody's behaving well here that's to put it mildly unrighteous confusion act three righteous obedience and this is where we can gladly say that the plot departs from a typical Shakespeare tragedy we see the righteous one acting in righteous obedience at every stage in this

confusion

[40:58] Jesus acts righteously and in fulfilment of prophecy he points out to each and everyone that the obvious hasn't happened the time and place of sensible arrest without this charade of betrayer's kiss well they could have obviously arrested him in the daytime they could have picked him up in the temple courts it could all happen in a very simple rather than convoluted and chaotic manner but it didn't because God's detailed purpose needed to be fulfilled and Jesus is the one and only one who is following that pattern to the letter again and again in the gospel records of this particular incident Jesus is saying the scripture must be fulfilled so what scriptures might be being fulfilled here well

I'm not sure we can be completely clear on that point but let me suggest Isaiah 53 verse 8 which says by oppression and judgment he was taken away yet who of his generation protested that seems to fit the case doesn't it and there are many other verses in Isaiah 53 that shed light upon these hours before and during Jesus' crucifixion by oppression and judgment he was taken away rough justice arrested on what basis just the women desire of the chief priesthood holders or maybe Zachariah 13 verse 7 awake awake sword against my shepherd against the man who is close to me declares the

Lord Almighty strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered and I will turn my hand against the little ones strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered we find the gospel records mournfully ending this particular little act in the garden with the disciples fleeing the sheep will be scattered oh a really low moment the sword has been awakened against the shepherd the man who is close to me declares the Lord Almighty yes the father allows all this to take place to his son and the shepherd is taken away and the sheep are scattered these words were written hundreds of years before

Jesus was born but that makes no difference and they're not worn out they're now at this very moment being fulfilled there is a must about the fulfillment of the scriptures Matthew 26 verse 56 and not only the written scriptures but his own words here's John chapter 6 verse 39 these are the words of Jesus and this is the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all those he has given me but raise them up on the last day yes the gospel record of this time in the garden also picks up on those words of Jesus and what a comfort for us to know that those disciples who fled the scene maybe that was the end of the story for them but of course it wasn't because it was the father's will that

Jesus should not lose any of those who have been given to him except the traitor and not just not lose them but raise them up at the last day the resurrection day all of this is an act of wholehearted obedience to his father's will if he had departed from this course in any aspect the plan of salvation would be fatally undermined Jesus life obedience stained marred his righteousness to be the spotless lamb of God taken away if he had departed in any one instance from the will of his father as expressed in the scriptures he would not be fit to be the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world satan in his dark forces would have achieved a victory we would not be able to trust in a spotless savior act four alone but in control so we come to the end of this theater how long 30 minutes 40 minutes we don't know how long all this took in a strange sort of way it was a short piece of work but with internal ramifications but of course it's not theater it's not a piece of play acting where the characters take off their masks and gowns and go back to their everyday lives no everyone has been deeply affected this is real life the final act before the following scenes rushing to

[47:19] Jesus crucifixion he's alone Matthew 26 56 then all the disciples deserted him and fled might well look as if it's all over however messily done the chief priests have got their man and they can anticipate this is the end of Jesus how wrong how incredibly wrong Jesus is alone Jesus is under arrest it seems that he's in the power of others but he is actually in control he's always been in control from Bethlehem to Gethsemane this is just one more example of his control no one could see it then but we can we know what happens next and we know what happens ultimately mock trials false accusations

Jesus is in control Jews and Gentiles concocting a death sentence but Jesus is in control it's a real death and even in that death Jesus is dying upon a cross and forgiving those who have mocked and scourged and belittled and ridiculed him well it's an amazing thought isn't it and those dear disciples they fled away Jesus is praying for them on the cross and they won't fall ultimately Jesus is in control even remembering and dying for the sins of those who treated him so badly there's a real burial that does look like the end a body to be embalmed that looks like the finish but Jesus is in control there's a real resurrection and Jesus is in control of that there's a real ascension into heaven and Jesus is in control and thrown at God's right hand

Jesus is in control given the name that is above every name Jesus is in control all things we put under his feet Jesus is in control and he will come again and it will be clear to all that Jesus is in control king of kings and lord of lords this is the one that we've viewed through four acts in the garden of gethsemane at his arrest what a tawdry wretched kind of scene that is but it is transformed by the thought that Jesus is in control and there's no mistake about what is happening there's no confusion about what is happening it's all part of God's eternal purpose and it's heading to a most curious and wondrous conclusion because Jesus is in control now I want to say to you dear people tonight what side are you going to find yourself on on this matter of who is your lord who is your master who is going to be in control of your life well in that gethsemane scene we can see that to a person they have no anticipation of the control of Jesus nor we're willing it appears to come under that authority well may we not be found like that ourselves may we not be found like those who betray him threaten him or flee from him but may we be those who bow the knee to him and say

Jesus you are my saviour and my lord I belong to you I come under your authority I accept your full control over every aspect of my life you are the one I want to follow you are the one I want to love you are the one I want to serve may that be a powerful driver in our lives every day of our lives more and more and increasingly so as we see the emptiness and the folly and the wickedness of this world that we realise this isn't our real home this isn't where we belong we belong under the throne and the authority of Jesus Christ and we want him to be lord of all in our lives may that be so amen let's pray father we thank you for these this precious piece of scripture that on the one hand looks so dispiriting and discouraging but when we read between the lines and when we see what Jesus is actually doing we recognise that this is really wonderful that he was prepared to endure the cross despite the shame and is now seated at the right hand of god we thank you our father for your kindness your goodness your graciousness that not only have you sent your son to be the saviour but you equipped him in every possible way to be that saviour and thank you lord Jesus that you didn't give way you didn't give in even though it was the hour of darkness and the very height of the satan's activity we thank you that not in a tiny respect did you depart from your father's will or your willingness to die for the sinful rebellious world to be a genuine saviour so that genuine forgiveness can be given for genuine sin for this we bless and praise you and we ask that you would receive our love our service and our worship amen let's close with our final song

[54:01] Jesus thank you may god bless you all and i hope you can join this site again and receive again the word of god may god be with you the mystery of the cross i cannot comprehend the agonies of calvary you the perfect holy one crossed your son who drank the bitter cup reserved for me your blood has washed away my sin

Jesus thank you the father's throat completely satisfied Jesus thank you once your enemy now seated at your table Jesus thank you by your perfect sacrifice i've been brought near your enemy you've made your friend pouring out the riches of your glorious grace your mercy and your kindness knows no end your blood has washed away my sin

Jesus thank you the father's rock completely satisfied Jesus thank you once your enemy now seated at your table Jesus thank thank you lover of my soul i want to live for you lover of my soul i want to live for you I want to live for you.

The blood has washed away my sin. Jesus, thank you. The Father's love, completely satisfied. Jesus, thank you.

Once your enemy, now sitting at your table. Jesus, thank you.

[57 : 58]