

For Our Iniquities

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[0 : 00] Well, that was good singing.

And it's an answer to prayer. How many of you pray ahead of the service?! Raise your hand if you do. Pray ahead of the service. Would you raise your hand high so I can kind of see who it is that's praying in advance?

Okay. I'm just... You know what I would like? Just do this so I can kind of see what it would be like visually. Everybody raise your hand. Just kind of raise it like this. Go ahead.

Get it up. Hey, get your hand up. Okay. That's what it should look like.

I mean, those who don't know Jesus, I can expect you to... I understand if you don't pray about the services. But if you know Christ, shouldn't you be begging for him to do a work among us?

[1 : 03] And all God's people, this is when Baptists should say amen. Okay. I mean, I should be praying. Okay. Okay. Listen, I would plead with you.

Don't come to this hour without pleading for God to do a work. It's reasonable.

It's understandable. It's appropriate. And so I would ask that if you know Christ, that you never come to a service anywhere without asking God to make your heart ready to hear the word and without asking God to help that earthly vessel that God has placed before you for that hour to be an instrument of the Holy Spirit, to minister the glory of Christ and make him supreme.

Now, just as a sidebar, tomorrow morning at 840, I'm going to be preaching for 25 minutes to Madison Christian, and that is 25 minutes.

I want you to know it can be done, and not today, but that's tomorrow. But I want you to pray for me, okay? And so next week, if I do remember, and I say how many of you are going to be prayed for the service next week, all of you that know Christ are going to raise your hands and say, I did, because it's a responsibility.

[2 : 38] I'm going to grow in being consistent in my prayer life for the preaching of the word of God and for the singing of God's people and for the supremacy of Christ when we gather to worship together.

And I'll probably ask you, did you pray for me on Monday? Because I have the privilege of preaching to young people, and I will, as you know, I'll probably weave two things together.

One is the gospel, and the other is the goodness of Christ's work in the life of the believer. I'm going to use Ephesians chapter 3, verse 14 through 19, one of those favorites for me. We are together this morning to take the Lord's table, and these elements here in front, the bread and the cup, are really here as we understand from Scripture, in particular in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, don't turn there, that these elements are here to remind us of some things.

We forget things, don't we? Truthfully, we do. And Scripture makes it very clear that reminders are important.

This morning in my personal devotions, I was reading through the account of Joshua crossing the Jordan into the promised land, and God gave instructions that when the people crossed through on dry land, one man from each of the tribes was to pick up a stone and pick that stone up and put it on his shoulder and stagger out and then set it down on the other side.

[4 : 10] And here's what it says. So that in the future, when your children say to you, what meaneth? That's the King James. Hey, what are these stones doing here? That's kind of the contemporary rendition.

Why here? Well, we took those stones out of the River Jordan when God dried it up, stacked all the water up behind it, and we walked over on dry land.

That's why these stones are here. We need reminders. And what we are being reminded of this morning is what Christ did to save us.

You know, one of the things that is a way of kind of judging whether or not you need the reminder would be this.

I'm not going to ask you to turn to your neighbor and say, I love Jesus. But, you know, here's the truth. Your genuine affection and love for Christ are an indicator of just how thankful you are for his salvation.

[5 : 16] And if you're kind of hearing, you know, well, you know, I'm here. Isn't he glad? The thing is, is do you love him? Does his love govern your life?

And one of the purposes of the Lord's table is to kind of encourage our affection for the Lord Jesus. So this morning, what I would like you to do is just quietly, where you sit, just stay to yourself, and you can do it with your eyes open.

Just say, according to Psalm 119, verse 18, here's what it says. It says, Open my eyes that I might behold wondrous truths out of your law. Do something for me, that I can see the beauty of your work and grace, and that that would be the thing that overwhelms me in the face of the adversity and the difficulty and the disappointments that I go through.

I've got to go to work on Monday, and people there don't always like me. And things are going to break, and things are going to go bad, and life's going to have all these disappointments.

And Jesus, this morning, I want to be reminded of how precious you are and how much you love me. I want you to dig in and get a hold of this cold heart and give me an affection for you.

[6 : 41] And so, with that prayer resonating in your heart, I would ask that you turn in your Bible to Isaiah chapter 53. Isaiah chapter 53 is a passage that, for believers, many of us know, all we like sheep have gone astray.

It is a passage that is probably one of the most well-recognized Old Testament texts. In the Jewish community, it is one that is hardly known at all.

And that's not really an accident, because it is one of the clearest indicators in the Old Testament of the Messiah and his redemptive work for us.

The idea of him dying and being a substitution for our sin is undeniably clear in this passage, and it is a convicting passage.

Keep your finger in Isaiah chapter 53. I took you there to begin with, but turn back, if you would, just for a bit. We're just going to go for a second, but go to Acts chapter 8. In Acts chapter 8, we find a very interesting little situation where Philip ends up being taken by the Holy Spirit to minister to a guy who's kind of trudging along in a chariot, and he's reading the book of Isaiah.

[8 : 17] And guess what chapter he's in? Surprise. Surprise. Chapter 53 of Isaiah. And now, in verse 32, it says, Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this.

Like a sheep, he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation, justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth. And the eunuch said to Philip, About whom, I ask, does the prophet say this about himself or someone else?

And as we look at that passage just for a moment, we understand that here is this Ethiopian eunuch who had traveled to Jerusalem to learn more about Judaism and to kind of grow in his budding faith and in the hope of the Messiah and his desire to have his heart satisfied is met on the road when Philip opens up the Scripture and says, Hey, this is talking about Jesus who came and lived and died and rose again for our sins.

And so what I want us to do this morning is kind of ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand what it is that the Spirit of God communicates in Isaiah chapter 53.

[9 : 53] Let's begin, first of all, with understanding the tragedy of an unjust rejection. As we take up Isaiah 53, we find that the early verses kind of move us to sympathy.

Who's believed what he has heard from us and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire him. You know, the average picture that most of us have of Jesus is some incredibly handsome kind of rugged dude that, you know, he's just the embodiment of perfection.

The way Isaiah describes him is that he was so nondescript that had we been looking in the crowd, we would, ooh, there he is.

Remember how Samuel the prophet was kind of challenged by what we see on the outside? I mean, after all, we are drawn to the outside. Isn't that right? Right. And here it says, this is the Holy Spirit kind of giving us, this is better than an artist's rendition because it's the Holy Spirit telling us the truth.

[11 : 10] It says, hey, we wouldn't have been impressed looking at him. Not only that, but when you read through the scriptures, you find that Jesus in his temperament and character was not this, you know, crowd-pleasing, you know, big stomping dude that, you know, whenever he walked into the room, he's like, ooh, there's Jesus.

He was kind of a quiet guy. It says that a guttering wick he would not snuff out and a bruised reed he wouldn't break. He was a gentle and tender guy. And so you probably ask yourself, why in the world would someone that was so nondescript and didn't really go out of his way to offend people, why would he end up being hated and so abused and someone who made people angry and made them disgusted?

How does a humble person end up like that? Well, I want you to understand that what the scriptures make very clear when we kind of piece the thing together is that Jesus was rejected because he addressed the world's sin.

I want you to think about that just for a minute. Jesus was rejected because he pointed out the world's sin. Let me have you look at a couple passages that just kind of confirm this truth so you get it clearly in your own mind in the scriptures.

Turn in your Bible to John 1. John 1. In that introductory portion of the book of John, we find there in verse 10 and 11 that the apostle says this, he was in the world and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

[12 : 48] I mean, hey, the guy who did it all is in the room and nobody knows he's there. He came into his own, talking about the Jews, and his own people did not receive him.

I mean, if anybody should have known who Jesus was, it was the Jews. And why? Because they had received the message of the prophets regarding the coming of the Messiah.

If you go back to the very beginning in Genesis, you remember after Adam and Eve sinned, God said there would come someone who would bring redemption.

And very interestingly, if you kind of read in between the lines, so to speak, the first child that Adam and Eve had, do you know what Eve was thinking?

She was thinking, this is the one. This is the one. This is the one who's going to help us in our mess. And over and over again throughout the generations, the idea and the ambition and the desire of the sincere believer in the Old Testament was, someday God will provide the perfect sacrifice, the Messiah, who will be our Redeemer and our Savior.

[14 : 14] And so here is Isaiah sharing the truth about Jesus. And when Jesus came, he was rejected by the Jews.

And really, when you ask yourself, let me understand that a little bit, or go forward a little bit. You're in John, so stay there just for a second and go to John 3, verse 19. By the way, it doesn't hurt to look at it.

Everybody smile at me. I'm talking to you. Do you know why we have Bibles in the pews? How many of you, just put your finger on a Bible in the pew.

Go ahead, just touch it. I don't want people touching hands doing this. I mean, let's be good about this. Just touch the Bible in front. The reason we have Bibles in the pews is so you can get a hold of them if for some reason you forgot your own.

It's all right. Go ahead and use one of these. In fact, listen to me. If you want to take one home, if you don't know where your Bible is this morning, take it home. Take the one that we have in the pew home.

[15 : 13] We have more. We'll replace the one you take and we'll be tickled pink that you took. Hey, take a Bible home if you don't have one. You got that? Everybody heard me say that.

Well, anyway, let's go back to verse 19. It says, and this is the judgment, the light, that's Jesus' code, right? The light has come into the world and people, what? They love the darkness.

They love the darkness. What? I don't mind when people expose other people's sins. In fact, I don't mind helping them do that.

But my sins? Here's what it says. It says, they love the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

How many of you have ever been driving down the road and you hit that place where, you know, the sheriff's department decide to set up one of those little, you know, radar devices that sits on two wheels and what does it say?

[16 : 15] You know, they always put it, providentially, they always put it, you know, about 100 yards or 100 feet behind a posted speed sign, right? The limit on this road is 35 miles an hour and then right down the road, they have this other thing that's going to blink, blink, blink, and as you zip along, what's it saying?

And you're driving 53. And you think, why is that there? I don't need that. Until you see somebody else park just a little further and you think, you know, okay.

So here's what it says. It says, they don't like the light because their deeds are evil. And there in the passage in verse 20, it says, for everyone who does wicked things hates the light.

Why was Jesus rejected? It's because he turned on the light and exposed the reality of men's hearts and they hated seeing the truth about themselves.

When I deal with marital counseling and often when Pastor Saul deals with counseling and Pastor Andrew deals with counseling, one of the things that we end up in the situation is saying to the people who are in our office is you got a problem.

[17 : 28] Now, they're fully persuaded that the other party who came with them has problems and it's kind of like an epiphany. It's kind of like, what, me? Me? Yeah.

In fact, not only do you have a problem, but you're the only one who can fix it. And unless you fix your problem, the problem is probably going to stay about as bad as it is.

And here is John telling us that people, when they were brought into face-to-face conviction with the reality of their sin, they didn't like it.

And kind of the idea that Jesus is some ancient bearded dude floating around just kind of smack-talking with people is not the Bible story. Do you follow that? I mean, he was right in people's space and he wasn't arrogant or argumentative, but his heart, which communicated the glory of his Father, brought conviction to the heart of every person.

He fully revealed God's judgment against sin and man's absolute inability to save himself. And so, when you kind of stop and think about this humble individual who is rejected, understand that really behind it is the second thing we need to find out, and that is that there is a terror in sin.

[18 : 52] We tend to not think about sin as being all that bad, at least the sins we do. I mean, for a fact, we do them over and over again. Isn't that right? And we have a wonderfully well-developed vocabulary about our sins.

Instead of calling them things like blatant, arrogant, stubborn, rebellious acts against the holy God and the creator of this universe, we call our sins by things like, I made a mistake.

I mean, everybody does, right? I drop my pencil. I kick my dog. You know, whatever thing. I made a mistake. Or we have a well-developed, I mean, the way I am is because of the people that I live around.

If you knew my parents, you would sin too. I mean, you'd have the same problems. Do you follow? Hey, everybody has a reason for being the jerk they are. I was sharing with Connie the other day.

Pastor Saul was in there and we were talking a little bit about ministry, and I said that there was a time in my life where I had disciplined an individual who was a dentist in one of our state correctional institutions.

[20 : 04] How many of you understand what I just said? And he worked day in and day out as a dentist dealing with people who had advanced dental difficulties, and he said, you know, one of the interesting things of working in the prison system is that he never ever up to that point had met anybody that deserved to be there.

everybody that he ever dealt with had been put into prison unjustly because of other people's behavior or lies or whatever else, and they had never done anything to deserve the treatment they were receiving.

And so, one of the things that Isaiah helps us understand is that sin is a pretty ugly thing. It really is. And I want you to get your hands around this by thinking about it in personal terms.

When we sin, we attempt to un-God God. Sin is a monstrous offense against the creator and the God of this universe.

Every sin that we ever commit shouts things like, you're not in charge. How many of you ever had your kids say that to you at one point? You know, it's like they let you know that you're not in charge.

[21 : 19] Oh, yes I am. And there's the door if you don't think so. You know, well, people say, you're not in charge or what you think is not important. I'm amazed at how often we don't really realize we're saying that when we say that.

Do you understand what I'm saying? Whenever we sin, it's not just an accident, it's a conscious, deliberate choice to do certain things. And you see this in children so clearly.

Wally, don't put your finger in the light socket. You know, that's what you say. And Wally goes over there and just to kind of amplify the opportunity, he digs through your drawer and finds a paper clip so he can get in there deep enough.

And then he pushes that thing in there and what happens? The law of justice helps him understand that what you said was incredibly brilliant. But you know what?

You tell kids, don't do it and what do they think? I mean, you have parents here. You ever had a kid? Don't do this. Watch me. You know? And so, what you think is not that important.

[22 : 27] You're unkind. You just don't want me to have my way. That's true. You're so controlling. You're just so petty.

Well, if I had different parents that loved me more, I would get my way. Yeah, and man, man, man, man. And then you have this little, I hate you. How many of you ever had children say that to you?

How many of you have I hate to tell you I've had it? My kids grew up by the grace of God, but I've had a couple of my children say to me on occasion when I would not let them have their way or I was disciplining them for some of their sinful misbehavior, they would, this was kind of early in the stream.

They learned as they grew that it wasn't a good thing to say that because what it did was it was a force multiplier. How many of you understand what I mean?

Isn't that code, force multiplier? I hate you. Really? Well, I'm going to help you with that. And here's the thing.

[23 : 29] I don't want us to miss the point. Here is, the fact is our heart hates the justice and the holiness of God and he tells us what's right and what's wrong.

I want you to understand that the supreme offense of sin brings the supreme wrath of God. Why is it that somebody else had to die in my place for my sin?

Why is that? It's because sin is a supremely offensive thing to a supremely infinitely holy God.

So, there you are in McDonald's. You're hungry and a fry drops on the floor. Some of you are going to kick it under the table and pretend that it didn't happen.

I'm going to pick it up because I paid for it. I'm sorry. I know you're just going off on that one but I grew up in boarding school in India and let me tell you something.

[24 : 38] I'm figuring that floor is infinitely cleaner than whatever I was in when I was growing up and it's like I paid for that puppy and I'm having it. I may dust it off just to be careful.

But, if I'm at Ruth Chris Steakhouse and I've never been there in case you're wondering but Ruth Chris Steakhouse is where you're supposed to go when you want really good steak and, you know, so you're at Ruth Chris Steakhouse and the potato falls off my plate and falls on the floor I'm saying, hey, take it back.

See, the little sins that we think are okay are horribly offensive to God and we don't think that but they are. dealing with an individual who every third or fourth word to me is I'll be honest with you.

I've said to him, hey, let me try to understand this. Are you saying you're not honest between those things? Look at Isaiah chapter 53 verse 4 and 5 would you please?

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows and we esteemed him stricken, smitten, by God and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions.

[25 : 57] He was crushed for our iniquities and with his stripes we are healed. Those words describe the judgment of a holy God against every sin.

and I want to tell you apart from the sense of the terror of God's holy judgment we remain completely indifferent to sin.

That's the truth. True gospel preaching declares the holiness of God and the blackness of the human heart.

One of the joys that I have in gospel preaching and sharing the gospel with individuals wherever it is whether it's here or in a car with someone or on a work environment wherever it is you know one of the things I like to say is that guess what Jesus stands ready to forgive you for all of your sins and wipe away the debt and the shame of your life instantly.

I like and I know that to be true. Yesterday I was driving back from teaching a group of deacons over in Dayton in one of our sister churches and as I was praying and thinking about this morning for some strange reason my little pea brain began to think about some of the wicked things I did as a child and as a young man and I wasn't it wasn't like I thought let me see let me see what kind of bad things did I do I had such a variety that I there's lots of choices and I was just driving along and you know I found myself for a moment just overwhelmed with the shame and guilt for some of the things I had done and then I thought to myself and those things have been forgiven because Jesus died and rose again and he put his blood over top of those offenses and you know me by the way I'm a kind of an emotional guy you figured that one out it's like I was going from tears to joyful tears you know it's like man

[28 : 07] Jesus has forgiven me and I don't have to have that burden and that debt and that shame and that fear of judgment weighing on my soul and I know for certain that all my sins have been forgiven because of Christ it's gone it's gone Spurgeon wrote something that I posted in the bulletin on Wednesday night and I want to recite it here and I want you to think with me about what he had to say possibly much of the flimsy piety the word piety is talking about sense of concern for godliness possibly much of the flimsy piety of the present day arises from the ease with which men attain to peace and joy in these evangelistic days hey try God too many think lightly of sin therefore think lightly of the Savior he who stood before God and has been convicted and condemned with a rope about his neck is the man to weep for joy when he is pardoned to hate the evil of which he has been forgiven and to live with a desire to honor the

Redeemer with whose blood he's been cleansed and so this morning as we look at these elements and I want you to think with me about them we're going to take bread that reminds us that Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins do you understand that that's what you're taking when you take that bread you're saying Jesus died in my place he satisfied the debt of my sin and if your heart truthfully is not affected with affection for the Lord Jesus Christ at that moment when you think about that I got to tell you there's something that's not right that's something's wrong I'm not telling you you're not saved but here's the purpose of this table it is to refresh and to kindle and to stir our affections for the Lord of glory who has saved us and has died in our place and if you are not affected by the thought of him taking your place you don't think much of where you were and you know what the cup says this is

I made a promise it's called the cup of the new covenant and the cup of the new covenant says this whole business of salvation is not Tim's doing or your doing but it is the work of God he has done a work in drawing me first of all to the misery of seeing the blackness of my heart and realizing I cannot save myself and crushing me with the truth I stand condemned before a holy God and then opening up to me the sweetness of the gospel that says and there is complete forgiveness in the blood of Christ I'm going to ask the men to come as we come to this table this morning and let me encourage you to know that as we take these elements this bread and this cup they are things that those who know the Lord Jesus Christ should take and if you would sit just for a moment men

I would encourage you to take them with a clear conscience with a sensitivity and the scriptures encourages us to come to this table having asked the Lord to search our hearts to see whether there is any unconfessed sin and let me tell you something one of the things Tim Kenoyer knows is it's fairly easy to let sin kind of glom on you know get attached and it's like I'm okay with that and then my wife will help me know no you're not or the Holy Spirit will say no you're not and so this morning we need to pray and say is there something I need to deal with so that when I take these elements I don't take them in that shameful state of indifference to what offends God let's pray and ask him to give us a clear conscience holy father this morning as we come to this table and we remind ourselves that Jesus died in our place we understand that to take this bread and take this cup is in one way it's really a public affirmation we're saying to other people

I know Jesus as my savior and he's real to me and he's important I've been saved by him my life belongs to him and I live my day and draw my breath so that the way I live and the way I talk and the things I think all reflect back favorably on Jesus and holy father this morning if as we prepare our hearts our conscience troubles us and we recognize that that anger that we're quite comfortable with and think is justified is offensive to you or that private struggle with lust that nobody else knows about that bothers you or that covetousness that is never satisfied with things grieves!

[33 : 45] that we would humble ourselves this morning and ask that you would first of all forgive us and then that you would do whatever it takes to cut that out and that's our prayer that this morning would be a time and a place where we as believers rededicate ourselves with thanksgiving to the one who paid the price for our sins and we ask this in Jesus name amen