

Jesus Identified With Sinners

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Date: 07 April 2019

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[0 : 00] As we begin today, we're going to be talking about the words of Jesus from the cross. You know, Jesus said so many things that the Bible says that all the books in the world couldn't contain what Jesus proclaimed and what Jesus said.

But as we are continuing to march to the cross and as we are following our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we're going to be remembering that time when Jesus died on the cross and praise God rose again from the dead three days later, we think of those words that he said.

And we've been through the first three sayings of Jesus from the cross. Father, forgive them where he shows his pity for mankind. And then he looks over to the thief or to the robber on one side and says, Today you will be with me in paradise.

That shows his power to save. And also, he looks down from the cross and says, Woman, behold your son, showing his provision for those that he loved.

And the next saying that Jesus says that we're going to look at this morning and the events surrounding this saying is a rather difficult saying.

[1 : 20] Because when we think about it and when we hear what Jesus says, it's an extremely difficult saying. This is what Martin Luther said.

As a matter of fact, Martin Luther gave up trying to understand it. He said, God forsaken of God. Who can understand that? Can you imagine?

Jesus Christ, who is God, who had been with God forever past, and all of a sudden is forsaken of God. God turning his back on Jesus Christ.

And as we're going to see this morning, this is a word that identifies Jesus with sinners. Identifying Jesus with sinners.

And identifying Jesus with the sinners' darkness. As we think about the events surrounding the crucifixion and what happened in the atmospheric conditions, we see in verse 45, now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour, there was darkness over all the land.

[2 : 36] Darkness descends on the earth for three hours. Now there have been many explanations that people have tried to explain what was going on. That it was an eclipse of the sun, but it lasted three hours.

We believe, and we take it by faith, that this was a supernatural occurrence. And it coincided with this saying of Jesus when he said, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

This pictures for us, I believe, the darkness brought upon mankind by sin. Because man chose to sin in the Garden of Eden.

All of a sudden, because of that choice, man was separated from God, from that fellowship that he had enjoyed from the moment that he was created, to this time when he chose to disobey God by taking a bite of that fruit that God said, that you should not eat of it, because in the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die.

And so, I believe the darkness is, pictures for us, the darkness brought upon by sin. First of all, we know that the book of Romans chapter 1 verse says, that the mind of man is darkened.

[4 : 00] Romans chapter 1 verse 21 says, Romans chapter 1, the apostle Paul is progressing from those who are non-Jews, those who were not part of God, or not part of the family of faith, family of God.

He says, even those who don't know supernaturally, he says, because although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

So the mind of man has been darkened. And we also know from Ephesians chapter 13, Ephesians chapter 5, that the works of man, that the deeds of man, apart from God, are called the works of

darkness.

Everything that we do on our own, the Bible says, are works of darkness. The only thing that we can do for God is that which is empowered by God's Holy Spirit.

Because everything that we do on our own, the New Testament calls wood, hand, stubble. It calls things that we are doing that are destroyable, things that will not last.

[5 : 15] And Ephesians chapter 6 verse 12 says, That man yielding himself to Satan, Satan is called the prince of darkness.

And I believe that this occurrence of the cross of Calvary is a picture of the darkness brought upon mankind by sin.

And sin, in its end, the end result of sin, brings about eternal darkness. Because in the lake of fire, there will be darkness. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

And it's not going to be a party, as some would try to say. It is going to be total darkness. Can you imagine being in torment forever, hearing the wails, hearing the cries and pain in total darkness, and can see no one else?

Sin brings darkness. And sin ultimately will bring eternal darkness upon mankind. Jesus, however, is the light of the world.

[6 : 18] But yet he dies in darkness to deliver us from darkness. Put another way, Jesus endured the darkness so that we might enjoy the light.

Jesus endured the darkness so that we might be able to enjoy the light of a brand new life because Jesus Christ himself is light.

Colossians chapter 1 verses 12 through 14 giving thanks to the Father who has, listen to this, qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the what?

In the light, Jesus Christ died in darkness so that we might enjoy the light. Verse 13, he has delivered us from the power of darkness and he has conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son above.

And in verse 14, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin. John 8, 12, Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, Jesus, who died in darkness, who endured the darkness so that we might enjoy the light, said, I am the light of the world.

[7 : 42] He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. Jesus died on the cross.

Atmospheric condition at the time when God, I believe it was when God turned his back and could not face sin. When Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin for us, darkness fell upon the land for the space of three hours.

Jesus identified with the sinner's darkness. And then second, Jesus identified with the sinner's uncertainty.

We also see this in the Gospel of Matthew as well. Verse number 46. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice.

And this is what Luther couldn't wrap his mind around. This is why he said, God forsaken of God. Who can understand that? Jesus cries out, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.

[8 : 47] That is to say, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Think about it. How did Jesus normally refer to God?

Father. Everywhere through the New Testament, Jesus referring to God refers to him as Father. But how does Jesus refer to him here on the cross?

God. Where was that father-son relationship? It was gone for those three hours when Jesus hung there on the cross of Calvary. Because all of a sudden, Jesus was separated from the Father.

Because Jesus took upon himself our sin. Your sin and mine. What does the Bible say about God and sin?

God cannot look upon sin. God cannot allow sin in his presence. So how could God and God, Jesus Christ, Jesus, who had sin upon himself, have a relationship with God?

[9 : 57] It was not possible. So Jesus, in anguish, said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Think of the emotion behind that. Think of the pain, the emotional, the psychological pain and anguish. For the first time in eternity, Jesus could not understand how it felt to be separated from God.

So for the first time, Jesus identified with a sinner's uncertainty. Why are we here? What's life all about?

If God cared, why wouldn't he? Now Jesus is saying, my God, my God, I can't understand it. Why have you forsaken me? He knew cognitively.

He knew in his mind why. But all of a sudden, he felt it. And isn't it different in life when we know something in our head, but yet when we're hurting and we're in pain, it doesn't always make sense here.

[11:04] And it hurts. And Jesus hurt. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Think about it. Jesus, who was always so certain about everything.

As a 12-year-old, he confounded the experts. How could this kid know things that we don't even know? Actually, he knows them better than we know them. So Jesus, at 12, confounding the leaders of the synagogue, at the wedding of Cana, feeding the 5,000, when the storm was raging on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus was secure in himself.

He was asleep in the bow of the boat. He wasn't worried. He wasn't uncertain because he knew that he controlled the sea. He controlled the wind. He controlled the elements.

Jesus, who had never been uncertain in eternity past or even while he was growing up, could all of a sudden identify with a sinner's uncertainty.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Think about it. The lost man, the lost person, the person who doesn't know Jesus Christ lives in a world of uncertainty.

[12:15] What's all this about? And is tossed about with whatever the wind of emotion is driving him or her at the moment. So the person who lives in darkness, the Bible says, those who do not know Jesus Christ are living or walking in darkness.

You know it's also possible for a believer to walk in darkness when we're not following Christ and we're following our own steps, our own path. The Bible says that the Word of God is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

Jesus is the light. And people are asking today, why am I here? What is life all about? And this uncertainty can lead to agony of the soul.

That's why there are a lot of people who are hurting around us. Isaiah said the wicked are like the troubled sea. Think of the spiritual agony of sin.

Living a lifestyle that eats away at your soul. And there are many who are in that lifestyle today. And it's eating away at their soul. Eating away at their very life.

[13:24] Many today are feeling this agony of soul that comes from sin. And think about this.

Anyone who's hearing this message this morning by way of our website or our podcast, Jesus feels it with you because he felt it on the cross.

He felt that uncertainty of why? Why, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why does it feel so bad? Why does it hurt so much?

He endured the uncertainty on the cross for us. Jesus endured the uncertainty of the cross that he might be able to provide us with the certainty that we have a brand new life and an eternity to spend with him.

And then number three, also in verse 46, I believe that we see Jesus identifying with the sinner's separation from God. He says, why have you forsaken me?

It was impossible for the father to look on him as he took the sinner's place. This is what John R. Rice for many years ago said. He said, to understand this, to understand God turning his back on Jesus and the way Jesus felt when he was separated from God, he said to understand this, you would have to be sinless and go to hell in that state.

[14:53] To know that you don't deserve to be there. To know that you have no sin. You have never sinned in your entire life. And you are totally and completely separated from God.

As we said earlier, he doesn't say father here. But he takes a place of a lost soul and calls him God. He was forsaken that we might never be forsaken.

Hebrews 13, 5. He says, let your conduct be without covetousness. Be content with such things as you have. For he himself has said. So what did Jesus endure on the cross?

He endured that period of time being forsaken of God. Jesus felt what it was like to be forsaken of God. And so Jesus in turn says to those who follow him, he says, don't worry.

I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. Isn't that wonderful to think about? That Jesus endured the agony of the cross for us.

[16:01] Jesus endured the darkness so that we might enjoy the light. Jesus endured the uncertainty of being separated from God so that we could be sure of our salvation.

And Jesus is enduring this being forsaken of God for this some three hour span.

So that he could promise to us. I'm back and I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.

As we think about this saying on the cross. As we think about this darkness over the land for this three hour period. I believe a picture of man of the darkness of sin.

I see this as a picture of man's mind being blinded by sin. And he's saying we no longer have to walk in darkness. But we can come into the light.

[16:59] As a matter of fact, he says, we have full authority to be able to do that because Jesus Christ died in our place. And he offers us, as we said a couple of weeks ago, full pardon.

If we will receive that pardon from him. So, it's not necessary for anyone to continue in darkness. We don't have to stay there.

You might be there today. You might feel uncertain. You might feel like life is eating away at your soul. But you don't have to remain there.

It's not necessary for you to continue in pain. Continue in darkness and uncertainty. Because Jesus died on the cross in our place. So that if we simply trust him.

And receive the free gift of eternal life. And a brand new life that his Holy Spirit brings to us. We can enjoy peace with God.

[17:59] And we can enjoy the peace of God. As he provides that to us. It's also, for those who are following Jesus, it's our responsibility to help others to see the light.

It's our responsibility. As we heard this morning from our Gideon speaker. That God's word has the power. It is living. It is powerful.

And it will not come back. It will not return to God without accomplishing its purpose. Jesus endured the agony of the cross. Jesus endured the darkness.

So that we might enjoy the light. And for those listening to this message who may not know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Will you turn from sin and trust Jesus as your Savior.

Let's pray. Our Father, we thank you so much because you sent for us your unique Son.

[19:07] Who knew no sin. Who became sin for us. Took upon himself the sin of mankind. And endured the darkness, the separation from you for our sake.

That three days later might be raised again to prove that you were satisfied with a payment of sin. The penalty was paid. Father, we thank you that our Lord Jesus Christ lives today. And who has promised us that he will never leave us. Or ever, never forsake us.

Thank you, Father, so much. You are an awesome God. We give you our lives today. Surrender to you. And we pray this.

In Jesus' holy name. Amen. Amen.